

# sedgefield MONTESSORI

Igniting intellect, independence and innovation

## Introduction to Secondary Montessori

Montessori at the secondary level is focused on linking the adolescent to the real world. We see students move toward *valorization* through both a rigorous academic program and by focusing on the social, emotional, and character development in every student.



## What is Valorization?

*Valorization of the Personality* is Montessori's term for the adolescent's process of becoming a strong and worthy person. Valorization comes gradually to the adolescent as they realize they are useful and capable of effort. This is accomplished by the work of the mind, hands, and heart. It happens when adolescents have appropriate responsibilities and expectations and when they are able to experience the joy that comes from successfully meeting challenges. Character building occurs as the result of restitution when they have made poor decisions.

## Teacher/Student Classroom Dynamic

The adult/adolescent relationship is critical at

this stage. We are committed to working alongside our students, not just before them, further engaging them in learning. The adult guides the adolescent to think deeper, respect others and themselves, and pique their curiosity.

## Field Experiences

An important aspect of the secondary school curriculum involves the practical application of academic knowledge and skills. Opportunities to "learn it and live it" include participation in activities outside of the classroom to support Montessori's philosophy that adolescents must participate in commerce, engage with an authentic audience and can best assess their skill development through real-life experiences. Our program offers a variety of field study opportunities through camping (twice a year), GIS Day, Leadership Day (ropes course), rock climbing and Education Day at BB&T Stadium.

## Micro Economies

The micro economy comprises a variety of occupations in which the students learn business management, math, finance and communication skills. The money from the micro economy is handled by a student bookkeeper and treasurer. The funds raised are invested back into the micro economy. Through this process, the adolescent becomes part of a community and is able to see themselves as an important part of something larger. This transformation takes place as the adolescent sees his contribution as important in the function of the community. The occupations are not competitive, but instead emphasize cooperation. They begin to understand that "everybody does better when everybody does better".

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## Service Learning

Everyone in the Montessori secondary program is responsible for the environment. This instills responsibility in the adolescent. Outside the classroom, service work is not just community service, but organized service projects that have a meaningful impact on the community. The students become aware of the value of hard work and the need for stewardship in service.

## Seminar

Our community-building seminars teach the adolescent effective communication, active listening, respect, and self-evaluation. This opportunity empowers students to have controlled conversations and respond to one another's comments in open-minded, respectful ways. The seminars teach them that it is okay for all of us to not always see the world in the same way.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q Why should my child continue with a secondary Montessori education?**

**A** A Montessori education builds upon itself from year to year. A Secondary Montessori program incorporates elements of elementary Montessori, while introducing students to experiences that help them become capable, confident people. Students are exposed to and given tools to be successful with a variety of academic challenges, as well as social, emotional, and physical challenges, all of which help grow them into well-rounded human beings.

### **Q How does the Secondary Montessori program compare to an IB program?**

**A** In addition to being academically rigorous, Montessori includes many opportunities for character development as well as the application of real-world skills by participating in opportunities both in and out of the classroom including, but not limited to: leadership development, conflict-resolution, and innovative field studies. The Montessori Secondary Program does not have entrance requirements in the form of grades, yet performs competitively with area IB schools in terms of state assessment proficiency levels as well as student growth.

### **Q Does Sedgefield Montessori offer Honors level classes?**

**A** Yes, all core classes offer honors level classes and because courses are mixed age and ability, a student not in the Honors class has multiple opportunities to access Honors level material. The students in the Honors course are also exposed to rigorous Extension Opportunities, which allow them to "go deeper" with their learning, moving ahead at their own pace and oftentimes, challenging themselves to content above their grade level.

*"We both went to Montessori school and I think it was part of that not following rules and orders, and being self-motivated, questioning what's going on in the world and doing things a little bit differently that contributed to our success."*

Larry Page, CEO, Google

*"I believe Sedgefield was a wonderful experience in helping me prepare for high school by giving me a chance to challenge myself. Sedgefield has wonderful teachers that encouraged all of us to improve our own learning by pushing us to make better decisions for our education."*

Ryan Kennedy, former Sedgefield Montessori student