



California Montessori Alliance

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Commission on Teacher Credentialing

651 Bannon Street, Suite 600

Sacramento, CA 95811

Re: Child Development Permit Recommendations

As California strives to expand access to high-quality Early Learning programs, it is crucial to establish a pathway for credentialed Montessori teachers to obtain a Child Development Permit. Recognizing Montessori credentials within the state's Early Childhood Education (ECE) framework is vital to ensuring preschool children have access to diverse, high-quality educational experiences.

Educators who hold a degree in any subject area, coupled with a Montessori credential from Association Montessori Internationale (AMI), American Montessori Society (AMS), or a program accredited by the federally recognized Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE), should be eligible for an equivalent ECE II and/or ECE III permit. These credentials represent rigorous, post-secondary training that includes comprehensive practicum components and aligns with the high standards required for quality early childhood education. The table below outlines the education and field experience requirements for both ECE II and ECE III levels. MACTE is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as an accreditor for Montessori teacher education programs.

ECE II		ECE III	
Domain	Montessori ECE Credential	Domain	Montessori ECE Credential
Education Experience	AA in any field with a Montessori credential	Education Experience	BA in any field with a Montessori credential
Field Experience	540 hour supervised field experience in ECE Montessori setting	Field Experience	540 hour supervised field experience in ECE Montessori setting

Currently, eleven states recognize Montessori credentials for state teacher licensure, not only at the early childhood level but also for K-12 education. In California, the recognition of Montessori credentials would align with the state's goals of increasing access to quality early learning programs and expanding the pathways for educators to enter and advance in the profession. For example, Colorado has recently awarded 30 credits for the Montessori credential toward childcare center director requirements, acknowledging the depth and rigor of Montessori training.

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) already recognizes ECE units completed in nationally accredited private programs, including Montessori. It is essential that the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) also recognizes these units, ensuring that educators with Montessori credentials can teach in various environments without facing unnecessary barriers.

Recognition of Montessori credentials would contribute to California's broader objectives for early childhood education by providing a diverse and inclusive pathway for teacher certification. Montessori training programs cover essential topics such as child development, instructional methods, social-emotional learning, culturally responsive teaching, and differentiated instruction, all of which are critical components of high-quality early education.

Graduates of MACTE-accredited programs complete rigorous training that includes a minimum of 33 credit hours, including a full academic year of practicum. Acknowledging these credentials toward Child Development Permits will allow California to better meet its goals of providing three- and four-year-olds with access to enriching preschool experiences.

Recognizing Montessori credentials within California's ECE matrix will help expand access to quality early childhood education across diverse communities. By valuing the equivalence of Montessori training with traditional ECE qualifications, the state can ensure that all children have access to enriching learning environments, fulfilling its educational objectives and addressing the diverse needs of its communities.

In partnership,

*California Montessori Alliance*

Emma Johnston León, *Board President*

Pat Yulo, *Vice President*

Mary Beth Ricks, *Treasurer*

Megan Ricks, *Secretary*

Robin Stearns, *Membership*

## Appendix A: Child Development Alternative Qualifications Alignment

### MACTE Clock to Credit Hours

#### Description

This image is from the MACTE Clock to Credit Hour overview. It outlines the higher education credit hour equivalence and defines Clock Hours (aka Contact Hours), and Practicum (aka Supervised Field Experience). MACTE is recognized by the United States Department of Education.

#### MACTE Clock Hour to Credit Hour Teacher Preparation Equivalency

The Montessori Accreditation for Teacher Education Council (MACTE) uses clock hours to outline the requirements for an adult learner enrolled in a MACTE accredited Montessori teacher education program.

**Academic clock hours** include lectures, demonstrations, and integrated practice with materials. They do not include written and oral exams or break times.

**Out-of-class work** includes independent research, material making and practice with materials, projects, practical application, album preparation, practice.

**Practicum** hours include supervised teaching, observation, interaction between adult learners and materials, interaction between adult learners and children, integration of knowledge with practice, preparation and care of the environment, communications, demonstration of skills, and supervised practice.

This conversion chart can be used to clarify the college credit comparability of the following preparation levels. It in no way indicates students from these institutions are entitled to, or will receive, equivalent transfer credits. The chart simply equates the work completed to traditional college credit equivalency for the purposes of teacher preparation recognition relevant to state registries and/or teacher licensure pathways.

**Based on the U.S. Department of Education, 37.5 clock hours are required for every credit hour. It should be noted that affiliate organizations exceed the threshold hours set by MACTE.**

Levels	Ages	Total Required	Academic In Class	Academic Out of Class	Practicum In Class	Practicum Out of Class	Additional Required Hours	Additional Out of Class	Cumulative Clock Hours	College Credit Equivalency
Infant /Toddler	0-3	600	200	400	400	240	0		1240	33
Early Childhood	3-6	600	200	400	400	240	0		1240	33
Elementary I	6-9	800	200	400	400	240	200	120	1560	42
Elementary II	9-12	800	200	400	400	240	200	120	1560	42
Elementary I-II	6-12	1200	375	750	400	240	425	255	2445	65
Secondary I	12-15	1200	200	400	1000	600	0		2200	59
Secondary I-II	12-18	1500	500	1000	1000	600	0		3100	83

MACTE 2021

The source document is available upon request.

## AMS Montessori Credential Requirements

### Description

The below standards and subsequent table display the requirements outlined in the AMS Handbook for Teacher Education Affiliation (March 2022). This Handbook details the complete AMS Teacher Education Program requirements and standards for AMS-affiliation. These are aligned with MACTE Competencies. AMS training programs grant the credential, MACTE accredits the training program.

### ***Specific Standard:***

#### **6.2.7 AMS COMPETENCIES - EARLY CHILDHOOD COURSE**

*AMS has adopted the MACTE Competencies for the Early Childhood specialist. See the most current MACTE Guide to Accreditation.*

#### **Minimum Required Elements from any MACTE-Accredited Early Childhood Teacher Preparation Program**

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Credential Program Coursework</b>	<b>Contact Hours</b>	<b>Units</b>
6.2.5.1	Montessori Principles and Philosophy	32	3 units
6.2.5.2	Child Development, Child, Family, and Community	28	3 units
6.2.5.3	Early Childhood Observation	28	3 units
6.2.5.4	Practical Life	32	3 units
6.2.5.5	Sensorial	32	3 units
6.2.5.6	Early Childhood Mathematics	32	3 units
6.2.5.7	Early Childhood Language	32	3 units
6.2.5.8	Classroom Leadership	*	*
6.2.5.9	Life and Physical Science	*	*
6.2.5.10	Social Studies	*	*

6.2.5.11	Art, Music, Movement	*	*
6.2.5.12	Parent Involvement / Education (Parent-Educator Partnership)	*	*
6.2.5.15	Year-Long Project	*	*
<b>Coursework Totals</b>		<b>300</b>	<b>27 units</b>
		<i>216 hours set 84 allocated between other subject areas</i>	

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Supervised Field Experience</b>	<b>Contact Hours</b>	<b>Units</b>
6.2.6	Early Childhood Practicum	540	6 units

*\* indicates that the allocation of hours is at the discretion of the teacher education program provided that the syllabus includes the designated content.*

## Sample Montessori Credential Coursework Outline & ECE Units from a MACTE-Accredited Program

### Description

The table below is from Montessori Teacher Academy, a MACTE-accredited, AMS-affiliated Teacher Education Program. Contact hours refers to Academic Clock Hours, as outlined in the Clock to Credit Hours (page 3). More detailed [course descriptions](#) available upon request. These course descriptions are from [Montessori Teacher Academy](#), a MACTE-accredited and AMS-affiliated Teacher Education Program located in Dana Point, CA.

Note that AMS-affiliated programs are permitted to rename courses so long as they include the required content (from page 4-5).

### Sample Credential Coursework Outline from Montessori Teacher Academy (Dana Point, CA)

Courses	Contact Hours	Asynchronous Hours	Unit Equivalent
Montessori Principles and Philosophy	32	100	3 units
Child Development, Child, Family, and Community	30	100	3 units
Early Childhood Observation	28	50	3 units
Practical Life Curriculum	32	20	3 units
Sensorial Curriculum	32	20	3 units
Early Childhood Mathematics Curriculum	32	20	3 units
Early Childhood Language Curriculum	32	20	3 units
Classroom Leadership	42*	20	3 units
Life and Physical Science	16*	20	1 unit

Social Studies	12*	20	1 unit
Art, Music, Movement	12*	20	1 unit
Early Childhood Practicum - Supervised Field Experience	540	60	6 units
<b>Totals</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>33 units</b>

## Sample Course Descriptions

Montessori Teacher Academy, Excerpt taken from the MTA Program Catalog

### **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

The Teacher Education Program begins on a rotational basis, twice a year. The summer component happens during the four weeks in June, Monday to Friday, from 12:00 to 7:00 pm. The fall/winter component meets on Tuesdays from 6:00 to 9:00 pm and on Saturdays from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. The Montessori Teacher Academy offers the following courses:

#### **MONTESSORI PRINCIPLES AND PHILOSOPHY**

*Component Hours: 32 contact hours, 100 asynchronous hours, 3-unit equivalent*

This course looks into Maria Montessori's life and the birth of her Method in the early 1900s. It reflects on the growth of the Montessori Movement over the years and the influence that world events had on the system. This course explores the key elements of the Montessori philosophy, absorbent mind, sensitive periods, mathematical mind, spiritual and moral development of the child, etc., through readings, lectures, discussions, assignments, and evaluations. It examines how the Montessori principles, materials, teacher, and environment relate to and respect the developing child from birth through 6 years.

#### **CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CHILD, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY**

*Component Hours: 30 contact hours, 100 asynchronous hours, 3-unit equivalent*

This course focuses on the development patterns of children. It looks at philosophies and pedagogies of past and current theorists, emphasizing children's intellectual and emotional development during the first six years of life. It covers current trends in family dynamics and local community resources.

This course looks at the interactions among children, family, school, peers, media, and community, emphasizing ethnic diversity, social class, gender roles, and their impact on behavior, values, morals, and attitudes. It covers current trends in family dynamics and local community resources.

#### **EARLY CHILDHOOD OBSERVATION**

*Component Hours: 28 contact hours, 50 asynchronous hours, 3-unit equivalent*

This course component provides a framework for observation and reflection that promotes connections between theory and practice. The Observation component will help develop skills using direct observation as a primary tool for studying children and as an aid in

developing teaching strategies tailored to individual needs and classroom dynamics. This course component requires an independent study of a minimum of three 3-hour observations before the Internship begins. Six (6) additional 3-hour observations are completed during the Internship program. Additional hours are spent on observation of individual children. Observation techniques will be studied during the contact hours. Observation reports provide students with the preparation and practice for accurate, objective observation of children.

## **PRACTICAL LIFE**

*Component Hours: 32 contact hours, 20 asynchronous hours, 3-unit equivalent*

Young children entering a Montessori classroom first experience the familiar materials of the Practical Life area. The exercises have objects typically encountered in everyday living experiences such as cleaning, pouring, dressing, and polishing. Children need to master these fundamental exercises to live comfortably in the real adult world. This course presents the philosophy and rationale of the Practical Life area. It provides guidelines on the lessons presented and grouped in five major categories: care of the self, care of the environment, grace and courtesy, control of movement, and food preparation. These activities help the child develop coordination, concentration, personal independence, and a sense of order.

## **SENSORIAL**

*Component Hours: 32 contact hours, 20 asynchronous hours, 3-unit equivalent*

The Sensorial area consists of materials that educate and refine the children's senses. The child learns to recognize similarities and differences, discriminate between similar objects, grade similar objects. This is essential for later mastery of tasks involving math and language. The primary purpose of the Sensorial exercises is not to master their correct usage, but rather that "the child train himself to observe; that he be led to make comparisons between objects, to form judgments, to reason and to decide." (Dr. Maria Montessori - Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook).

The Sensorial materials are designed to simplify learning and awareness of the environment by isolating the difficulty or quality to be determined, isolating the senses, encouraging mastery through repetition, possessing self-correction, and presenting an attractive appearance to the child. Children develop the organization and patterning skills that are inherent in math and language concepts. This course includes the philosophy and rationale of the Sensorial area and the presentation of the Sensorial materials aiding the development and refinement of the senses.

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD MATHEMATICS**

*Component Hours: 32 contact hours, 20 asynchronous hours, 3-unit equivalent*

Montessori believed that a child's mind was mathematical and based on the order and perceptual awareness found in the development of the senses. The acquisition of mathematical principles develops logically from concrete to abstract and simple to complex. The child who has mastered the basic concepts involved with the Practical Life and Sensorial materials progresses naturally to Math activities. This course covers the philosophy and rationale of the Montessori math curriculum and the presentation of the Montessori math materials that aid in the development of mathematical concepts and skills: the introduction to numbers, counting, the decimal system, the four basic operations of the decimal system, memorization of facts, and fractions.

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD LANGUAGE**

*Component Hours: 32 contact hours, 20 asynchronous hours, 3-unit equivalent*

Language development is of prime importance in the early childhood years. The Language course covers the philosophy and rationale of the Language area and its materials. Major topics covered are the materials and exercises that foster receptive and expressive language experiences, visual and auditory perceptual experiences, vocabulary development and enrichment, reading and writing development, grammar, poetry, creative writing.

## **LIFE AND PHYSICAL SCIENCE**

*Component Hours: 14 contact hours, 20 asynchronous hours, 1-unit equivalent*

Montessori's theory of the interrelated curriculum joins biology, history, science, and geography as holistic Cosmic Education. This course explores activities that focus on the characteristics, parts, and classification of plants and animals and demonstrates simple science experiments that children can do independently. Students will become familiar with the Montessori presentations in these subject areas related to contemporary educational thought.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

*Component Hours: 22 contact hours, 20 asynchronous hours, 1-unit equivalent*

This course explores history through Montessori presentations of the concept of time, seasons, and timelines. Adult learners explore geography by studying globes, landforms, puzzle maps, flags, and earth formation.

## **ART, MUSIC, MOVEMENT**

*Component Hours: 12 contact hours, 20 asynchronous hours, 1-unit equivalent*

This course explores history through Montessori presentations of the concept of time, seasons, and timelines. Adult learners explore geography by studying globes, landforms, puzzle maps, flags, and earth formation.

### **CLASSROOM LEADERSHIP**

*Component Hours: 28 contact hours, 20 asynchronous hours, 3-unit equivalent*

This course starts by looking at the characteristics of the prepared environment, how they affect classroom dynamics, and the role the environment plays in the children's behavior. Classroom Leadership is a vital component of the smooth workings of a classroom. It covers strategies and techniques in communication with children and adults, leading to a climate of cooperation, attention, and trust that help develop respect in the community. Additional lessons cover theories of discipline and individual techniques, lesson planning, record-keeping, parent involvement, and administration of schools.

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD PRACTICUM**

*Component Hours: A minimum of 540 contact hours, 60 asynchronous hours, 6-unit equivalent*

The purpose of the practicum phase is to provide the adult learner with an opportunity for personal and practical experiences in a Montessori environment with children ages 2½ through 6 years. It provides a period of observation, internalization, and further study to bring together the theory and practice of Montessori education. This course gives the adult learner time to practice the curriculum lessons, develop new materials, and learn to manage the daily routines that respond to the developmental needs and interests of the children. It is the adult learner's responsibility to secure a practicum placement. The site must be a Montessori school that the Montessori Teacher Academy approves and that agrees to support the program's practicum standards.

### **CREDITS OFFERED**

Montessori Teacher Academy graduates receive E.C.E. units of credit (non-transferable) from this institution in the form of an official transcript. These units meet the requirement specified in Title XXII of the California Code of Regulations and accepted by the State of California, Department of Social Services.

### **COURSE OVERVIEW**

The Montessori Teacher Academy publishes this Catalog to familiarize the adult learner with various aspects and requirements of the program.

The Montessori Teacher Academy Teacher Education Program is a twelve or twenty-four-month program divided into the following courses:

**ORIENTATION:** Before enrollment, the adult learner begins with an initial orientation.

**COURSE COMPONENT I:** *INDEPENDENT STUDY / ASYNCHRONOUS*

- Specific reading assignments from required Montessori texts in Principles and Philosophy.
- Observations in a Montessori classroom.

**COURSE COMPONENT II:** *ACADEMIC WORKSHOP*

- Lectures on:
  - ◆ Montessori Principles and Philosophy (32 hours)
  - ◆ Child Development, Child, Family and Community (30 hours)
  - ◆ Early Childhood Observation (28 hours)
- Presentation on Montessori Materials in:
  - ◆ Practical Life Curriculum (32 hours)
  - ◆ Sensorial Curriculum (32 hours)
  - ◆ Math Curriculum (32 hours)
  - ◆ Language Curriculum (32 hours)
  - ◆ Science/Social Studies/Art, Music. Movement (48 hours)
  - ◆ Classroom Leadership (28 hours)
  - ◆ Parent Education (6 hours)
- TOTAL = 300 hours

**COURSE COMPONENT III:** *PRACTICUM IN A MONTESSORI SCHOOL*

The practicum period allows the adult learner to fully experience what is involved in being a Montessori Teacher in a classroom from a practical viewpoint. The practicum period will go for nine consecutive months, ideally to coincide with the academic year.

During the practicum, the adult learner will:

- Work a minimum of 540 hours as a Montessori teacher assistant under the supervision of a Master teacher. These hours will be scheduled a minimum of 4 hours a day, 5 days a week, for 9 months.
- Attend scheduled Theory meetings.
- Attend scheduled Cultural Subject Workshops.
- Make 9 observations in Montessori classrooms.

- Prepare and personalize the Albums.
- Be evaluated by the supervising teacher.
- Be observed and assessed by the trainers.

**COURSE COMPONENT IV: EVALUATION**

The adult learners are evaluated to determine competency in understanding the Montessori philosophy and principles and use of the Montessori materials.

Requirements for evaluation process:

- Successful completion of all written assignments.
- Completion of all reading assignments.
- Completion of all observations and written reports.
- Passing grades on all quizzes and mock exams.

Evaluation will begin when the adult learner has completed all of the above requirements.

The evaluation consists of:

- Oral examination on use of Montessori materials.
- Written examination on Montessori principles, philosophy, and materials.
- Presentation of Albums.

Upon completing all requirements, the student is awarded the Montessori Teacher Academy (AMS) Montessori Early Childhood Credential.

**TOTAL CLOCK HOURS:** The total clock hours required for the completion of the program is 1074. This includes 300 Academic, 540 practicum, and 234 independent study (asynchronous hours).