

Adopted: 8.19.25

Revised:

## **Staff Evaluation and Professional Development Policy**

### **Purpose**

This policy outlines the evaluation and professional development framework for all school staff. It ensures compliance with Minnesota statutory requirements, supports staff growth, and promotes high-quality instruction aligned with SRMCS's mission of providing a strong Montessori education to all students.

### **Policy Statement**

Swan River Montessori Charter School (SRMCS) is committed to supporting the professional growth of its employees and maintaining accountability through a structured, standards-aligned evaluation process. The SRMCS Administration is responsible for ensuring that all evaluations and staff development efforts align with the school's mission, vision, and strategic goals.

### **Evaluation Process by Staff Category**

#### **A. Licensed/Certified Staff**

SRMCS follows a comprehensive teacher evaluation model in compliance with Minnesota statutes.

This model includes:

#### **Core Evaluation Elements**

1. A three-year professional review cycle for all licensed teachers that includes:
  - a. An individual growth and development plan
  - b. A peer review process
  - c. At least one summative evaluation every three years conducted by a qualified and trained evaluator
  - d. Peer review in the years when a summative evaluation is not conducted
2. Use of student growth measures accounting for 35% of the summative evaluation
3. Two formal observations annually by trained evaluators

4. A Fall goal-setting conversation between teacher and evaluator
5. Use of an observation rubric that incorporates:
  - a. Culturally responsive methodologies
  - b. Longitudinal data on student engagement, academic connection, and other outcome measures aligned with:
    - i. The Montessori curriculum
    - ii. Academic literacy
    - iii. Oral academic language
    - iv. Achievement outcomes, including for English learners

*Note: While SRMCS has an existing evaluation process in place, this policy formally updates and expands that process to meet all current statutory requirements.*

## **B. Non-Licensed Staff**

Non-licensed staff (e.g., Educational Assistants, Paraprofessionals, hourly and salaried support staff) will participate in an annual Spring summative evaluation, which will assess:

1. Accomplishments and strengths
2. Areas for development and growth
3. Job knowledge and skills
4. Quality of work
5. Communication, cooperation, and teamwork
6. Attendance and reliability
7. Professionalism

Staff will be provided the evaluation rubric in advance and encouraged to submit relevant documentation of their work.

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## **Ongoing Staff Development**

SRMCS will provide professional development throughout the year to ensure continuous growth and excellence in instructional practice. Staff development is intended to:

- Improve student achievement using Montessori best practices in academic and experiential learning areas
- Support diverse learners, including at-risk students, students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and gifted students
- Deliver culturally inclusive curriculum aligned with state diversity rules and Montessori cultural learning continuums
- Foster collaboration, including mentoring and peer coaching programs
- Promote positive school culture through social-emotional learning, conflict resolution training, and behavior expectations
- Develop leadership skills among instructional and site-based leadership staff

## **Highly Qualified Support Staff Requirements**

### **Training Requirements**

As required by Minnesota Statutes §§ 120B.363 and 121A.642, all Special Education Paraprofessionals and Educational Assistants must complete training in:

- Student characteristics
- Teaching and learning environments
- Academic instructional techniques
- Behavior management and ethical responsibilities
- Emergency protocols and confidentiality
- Reporting obligations and school discipline policies
- Building orientation and job-specific expectations

This training must be completed before the first instructional day or within 30 days of hire and may be delivered digitally or in person. It may also include collaborative planning with teaching staff.

### **Annual Compliance Certification**

SRMCS Administration will certify annual compliance with training mandates and submit documentation to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) as required.

### **Highly Qualified Status Verification**

Educational Assistants and Paraprofessionals must be deemed highly qualified through one of the following:

- Completion of 60 or more college credits from an accredited institution
- Holding an Associate's Degree or higher
- Passing a state-approved paraprofessional assessment, including:
  - a. Paraeducator Assessments (MN passing scores: 65% in Instructional Support, 70% in Knowledge & Application)
  - b. ParaPro Assessment (MN passing score: 460)

The Minnesota Voluntary Paraprofessional Credential (administered by PELSB) is encouraged but not required.

### **Documentation**

SRMCS Administration will collect and retain both digital and hardcopy documentation verifying all required qualifications for applicable staff.