

A Pre K-8 Montessori School in Greater Fulton Hill

A Proposal From the
Greater Fulton Hill
Civic Association



Why a School in Greater Fulton Hill?

- A community of 4,600 persons located beyond Church Hill, bordering Eastern Henrico and Varina to the east and Shockoe Bottom to the west
- 1 in 3 GFH residents is a child under the age of 18. Nearly 1,000 youth ages 3-13.

Why a School in Greater Fulton Hill?

GFH is an urban village without:

- a school
- library
- adult education
- job training or
- health center

Why a School in Greater Fulton Hill?

- 48% of GFH residents, 25 years and older, do not possess a high school diploma or the equivalent.
- 41% of GFH residents live on less than \$15,000 per year.

Why a School in Greater Fulton Hill?

Challenges of GFH

- Truancy
- Substance Abuse
- Teen Pregnancy
- Domestic Violence
- Poverty
- Poor Nutrition
- Gun Violence

One Approach to Resolving the Challenges

- 30 years ago, GFH children were bused to schools in Church Hill.
- GFH residents wish to work together with all parties to establish a PreK-8 Montessori School in the community.

What is the Montessori Method?

- Developed by Dr. Maria Montessori
- The child, the teacher, and the classroom play equal roles in the child's success.
- Uses hands-on learning materials that are appealing to the children
- Children develop academic strengths, social/emotional well-being, and fine/gross motor skills.

What is the Montessori Method?

- The teacher observes, records, and assesses how each child interacts with the materials.
- The teacher intervenes to reinforce lessons.
- The teacher introduces the child to the next skill-based challenge when he/she has mastered the previous lesson.

Why Montessori?

- Montessori Schools work.
- Produce self-directed, discerning, problem-solving young people who enter the workforce prepared to work and able to innovate.
- Over 5,000 public Montessori schools in 120 school districts across the nation.
- Hartford, Conn., Milwaukee, & Cincinnati are among those achieving outstanding results.

Individualized Instruction is a keystone of the Montessori method.

- Focus is on individualized learning
- Focus on respect for the students
- Focus on self-initiated discovery
- Students advance through the academic curriculum at their own pace
- Students are assisted by older students and teachers who are monitoring their daily progress

Montessori classes use multi-age groups

Multi-age groupings:

- Reduce competition
- Maximize curriculum options
- Provide a real world atmosphere that plays a vital role in socialization

Multi-aged Groups

- Preschool: Ages 3- 6
- Elementary I: Ages 6 – 9
- Elementary II: Ages 9 - 12

Montessori schools involve parents in the educational process.

Parents:

- are taught how to utilize Montessori methods at home
- are regularly updated on the progress of their children
- are encouraged to observe their children in class
- attend workshops
- volunteer in meaningful ways

Educational Success

- When a child has developed a life-long love of learning
- When he/she experiences success in future educational and professional settings
- When he/she begins to contribute to the well-being of his/her local and global communities.

Educational Success

Children who have been through a Montessori preschool typically outscore children who have been through other preschool programs in all areas of learning.

Support for GFH's Goal

- Neighborhood Resource Center is piloting a half-day summer Montessori program for 3- and 4-year olds.
- Funding is being sought to make the program available year-round.

Cost

- Save money in the long-run
- Training costs for teachers - \$6,000 per teacher
- Teacher salaries are comparable with public school salaries
- Tuition for students is less than \$12,000 per year per student
- Richmond Public School District currently pays \$12,000 per year for each student

Cost

Tuition costs at Richmond Montessori School
(a private Montessori school in the west end):

Toddler-Primary (ages 2 ½ - 5): \$7,150

Kindergarten – 5th grade: \$10,250

Middle School (6th – 8th grade): \$10,500

**ALL LESS THAN WHAT TAXPAYERS CURRENTLY
PAY TO EDUCATE A CHILD IN RPS SCHOOLS**

Site

- 3.8-acre site in Fulton at the corner of Government Road and Admiral Gravelly Blvd.
- Vacant land is owned by RRHA
- Site was designated for a school in the City's 1982 Master Plan
- Single-family homes within walking distance of the proposed site
- Additional homes are being constructed in the remaining lands between Fulton Hill and Williamsburg Ave.

Schools Anchor Neighborhoods

- Families with children choose neighborhood-based on schools
- A public Montessori school sends a message that Richmond is serious about providing innovative educational opportunities that have a proven track record.

Schools Anchor Neighborhoods

What better anchor for existing residents; what better magnet for prospective home-buyers

than a community-supported PreK – 8 Public Montessori School in Greater Fulton Hill