

Program Planning Summary to the  
South Carolina Commission on Higher Education

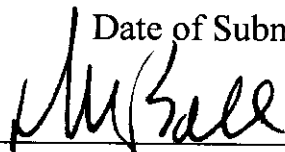
Establish a Montessori M.Ed.  
Program

College of Education

Lander University

5-15-06

Date of Submission



Daniel Ball, President

## **Montessori Teacher Education Program**

### **Designation as New Program proposal or Modification and number of credit hours in program or modification and proposed date of implementation:**

This proposal is to establish the M.Ed. program for Montessori teacher education to begin implementation in January, 2007.

The program will include 36 credit hours. 27 credit hours will be in the area of Montessori education and 9 credit hours will consist of core graduate education courses as defined by Lander's catalog. Courses will fulfill academic and practicum requirements for teacher certification by the American Montessori Society. Students will be able to select either early childhood or early elementary specialization.

### **Justification of need for the proposed program:**

Interest in Montessori education throughout South Carolina is increasing. In 1991 there were no public Montessori programs in the state. Today, just fifteen years later, thirteen South Carolina public school districts offer Montessori programs, most offering instruction in multiple classrooms or school sites. At least three publicly funded schools in South Carolina have total Montessori programs, Brockman Elementary in Richland District One, The Children's School at Sylvia Circle in Rock Hill District Three and East Cooper Charter School in Charleston County School District. In 2001 Montessori was designated one of the early childhood curricula accepted by the SC Department of Education. In 2005 and 2006 Governor Mark Sanford signed proclamations declaring the last week in February Montessori Education Week in South Carolina.

On a practical level, the greatest limiting factor for increasing Montessori classes is the availability of professionally prepared and certified teachers. The Lander University Montessori Teacher Education Program is the only university-based Montessori teacher preparation in South Carolina. In 1997 Lander first began offering Montessori teacher education courses; and in 2002 its early childhood program became fully accredited and began an affiliation with the American Montessori Society. Accreditation was awarded by the Montessori Accrediting Council for Teacher Education (MACTE) for a seven year term. MACTE is one of only three accrediting agencies authorized by the USDOE to accredit teacher education programs, the other two being NCATE and TEAC. Lander's proposed M.Ed. in Montessori Education will allow students the option of applying course work to either AMS 3-6 or 6-9 certifications.

### **Anticipated program demand and productivity:**

As South Carolina school districts expand their Montessori programs into elementary grades they are looking for teachers who are trained to implement the curriculum and instruct children in the use of the materials designed for their grade level. Currently there are teachers in many public Montessori classrooms, who may hold a valid SC teaching credential for that level, but lack the specialized Montessori preparation and credential.

Many have received preparation for other grade levels because that is all that has been available to them. To provide evidence of a highly qualified teaching staff, schools need to cite Montessori certification as one criterion. Further, in order to receive accreditation from any Montessori agencies, they must demonstrate that teachers are credentialed for the level that they teach. This is of particular interest to districts that offer extensive Montessori programs. Both SACS and NAEYC participate in a joint accrediting program with the American Montessori Society. Schools are evaluated on larger issues of institutional stability by SACS or NAEYC, and criteria specific to Montessori, i.e. teacher qualifications and classroom materials, are assessed by AMS evaluators.

Minimum academic contact clock hours, as mandated by MACTE, are 360. Areas to be included are: Montessori Philosophy, Child Development, Curriculum Design, Mathematics Curriculum, Sensorial Curriculum, Language Curriculum, History, Geography Curriculum, Biological Sciences, Sciences, Movement and Physical Education, visual Arts and Crafts, Music and Practical Life.

**Assessment of extent to which the proposed program duplicates existing programs in the state:**

No other university in South Carolina has a Montessori teacher education program. There will be no duplication of existing programs.

**Relationship of the proposed center to existing programs at the proposing institution:**

The proposed program will be a part of the Department of Teacher Education at Lander University. MACTE competencies will be correlated to Lander University's Department of Teacher Education Conceptual Framework, as defined by its Five Learner Outcomes.

**Relationship of the proposed program to other institutions via inter-institutional cooperation:**

The proposed program will be administered solely through Lander University.

**Total new costs associated with implementing the proposed program (general estimates only):**

There are no new costs involved in implementing this program.

**References**

Lander University 2005/2006 Catalog

MACTE Commission Accreditation Handbook, June 2005

**Proposal for a Master of Education in Montessori Education Degree  
(Early Childhood Specialization)**

This program of study leading to the Master of Education in Montessori Education degree consists of 36 semester hours of course work and other learning activities in the following areas *at the 600 level*:

- 1. Foundations of Education (Core courses 12 hours)**
- 2. Curriculum and Instruction (Montessori core 18 hours)**
- 3. Related Study (6 hours of supervised field-based practicum)**