



Association of Illinois Montessori Schools

April 10, 2020

The Honorable J.B. Pritzker
Office of the Governor
207 State House
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Governor Pritzker:

The Association of Illinois Montessori Schools applauds and supports the decisive actions you and your office, including the GOECD and ISBE, have taken to slow the progression of the COVID-19 outbreak in Illinois, including the closure of all public and non-public schools and child care facilities. We strongly support the inclusion of our private Montessori programs in this mandate, as we hold the safety of our children and families at the highest priority.

Illinois has historically been a state rich in high quality Montessori programs. The Illinois Montessori community represents over 250 schools and child care facilities, most of which are small non-profit businesses that educate and care for approximately 25,000 Illinois children. Except for those that are providing emergency care for essential worker families, our schools and child care facilities are closed. Nearly all of our schools are in danger of economic disaster and permanent closure, and those school communities are in danger of losing their family support network.

We urge you to include private Montessori Schools and child care facilities equitably in any federal or state relief funding extended to public schools. The families that rely on our schools for education and child care will be devastated if they lose their school communities especially as they are already vulnerable to having suffered losses due to employment instability or illness.

You can keep our Illinois Montessori community alive as an example for other states by including private Montessori schools equitably in funding, especially that funding provided by the recently passed CARES Act. Our schools take our responsibility for quality education, child care, and public safety seriously, and we too will need essential supports such as cleaning supplies and services, continued professional development for teachers engaged in remote learning, technology supplies, and for maintaining employment of staff.

We appreciate your consideration of our request to be included equitably in funding that will support Illinois schools, families, and students through this difficult time.

Sincerely,

The Association of Illinois Montessori Schools