



# **The Minority Voice Demands More Choice: Why that Choice Should Be Montessori**

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**THE MINORITY VOICE DEMANDS MORE CHOICE:**  
**WHY THAT CHOICE SHOULD BE MONTESSORI**

**I. SCHOOL CHOICE—NOT FOR ALL**

Innovation in education is necessary to improve the academic outcomes of this country’s most underserved youth. America’s public education system historically has disenfranchised students from marginalized communities from access to a quality education. “School choice” is often touted by right-wing conservative politicians as a way to provide a quality education to said marginalized communities. Former President Donald Trump even said in a press conference that “school choice is the civil rights statement of the year, of the decade, and probably beyond, because all children have to have access to quality education.”<sup>1</sup>

But school choice started as a deeply racist policy by white supremacists to protect segregation.<sup>2</sup> Because the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision ruling only applied to public schools, white southerners viewed school choice as a loophole for evading desegregated schools. Today, white flight continues and is still veiled under the guise of school choice. The emergence of charter schools has proven just that—white parents as a collective tend to choose predominantly white schools.<sup>3</sup> In fact, a white law school student, during a class about school

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<sup>1</sup> Wesley Whistle, *Trump: School Choice Is The Civil Rights Statement Of The Year* (Jun. 16, 2020), <https://www.forbes.com/sites/wesleywhistle/2020/06/16/trump-school-choice-is-the-civil-rights-statement-of-the-year/>.

<sup>2</sup> DAVID M. HOUSTON & JEFFREY R. HENIG, *THE ‘GOOD’ SCHOOLS: ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE DATA, SCHOOL CHOICE, AND SEGREGATION 8* (Annenberg Brown University 2021) (“By closing or defunding public schools while providing [w]hite families tuition grants to attend private segregated academies, districts deliberately cultivated school choice as a strategy to sidestep the Supreme Court’s order to desegregate public schools.”).

<sup>3</sup> *Id.* at 10 (“The empirical research suggests that, overall, the proliferation of charter schools has been more likely to increase rather than decrease racial, ethnic, and economic segregation within school districts.”).

choice, mentioned that she used tax vouchers to send her child to a “better” school since she lived in a majority Black and urban school district. “[E]ven when race-neutral proxies, [such as test scores, safety, or overall academic quality], are controlled for, some empirical research still suggests that whites will avoid schools with high numbers of students of color, particularly Black students, and will instead choose predominately white schools.”<sup>4</sup>

As a result of this new age of white flight, predominantly white schools end up hoarding valuable education resources that should be used on schools with high minority enrollment or schools in low-income areas.<sup>5</sup> But, these predominantly white schools are usually those of more prestige like charter schools or private schools—which can receive public funding under school choice. And prestige schools are usually in predominantly white neighborhoods while traditional schools are usually in minority neighborhoods. See the pattern? In this system, Black and Brown majority schools will always be underfunded. Moreover, because of the location of most of these schools, minority students are burdened with earlier mornings and longer commutes.<sup>6</sup>

School choice ultimately creates barriers for low-income or minority communities. If you want to send your child to a charter or magnet school, the process is incredibly complex. It involves wait lists, lotteries, and elaborate applications that can be particularly challenging for

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<sup>4</sup> Erika K. Wilson, *The New White Flight*, 14 DUKE J. CONST. L. & PUB. POL’Y 233, 260 (2019); see also Susan L. DeJarnatt, *School Choice and the (Ir)rational Parent*, 15 GEO. J. ON POVERTY L. & POL’Y 1 (2008).

<sup>5</sup> ‘School Choice’ Mantra Masks the Harm of Siphoning Funds from Public Education, THE CENTER FOR PUBLIC DEMOCRACY, <https://www.populardemocracy.org/news-and-publications/school-choice-mantra-masks-harm-siphoning-funds-public-education-0> (last visited Dec. 1, 2022).

<sup>6</sup> Cody Turner, *The Promise And Peril Of School Vouchers*, NPR (May 12, 2017, 6:00 AM), <https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2017/05/12/520111511/the-promise-and-peril-of-school-vouchers>.

those who do not speak English or lack access to a computer.<sup>7</sup> Processes like these create de facto segregation and discrimination.

The solution is not to fund charter or magnet schools with tax dollars, but instead to improve the public schools already in place. Most importantly, the quality of education provided in public schools must be developed. School choice advocates have the right idea that different students succeed in different environments, but school choice actually deepens inequities instead of curing them, as illustrated above. Instead, different education programs can and should exist in our public schools, and Montessori schools are a great example of these types of programs.

## II. THE MONTESSORI METHOD

Maria Montessori was the pioneer for the Montessori method. It followed the concept that children’s desire to touch and manipulate everything around them can be used as a way of self-education. The first set of Montessori schools were opened in extremely impoverished areas or in areas to aid children traumatized by World War I. These children flourished. “In particular, they made rapid and enthusiastic progress in their writing skills, encouraged by a system—movable letters, cut from sandpaper and pasted on boards—that was based on play, rather than on rote memorization.”<sup>8</sup> Yet, as a *New Yorker* piece perfectly articulated, “the obvious irony of

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<sup>7</sup> Moriah Balingit, *For parents of rising kindergartners, school choice can add options — and stress*, THE WASHINGTON POST (Sept. 26, 2016, 2:09 PM), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/education/wp/2016/09/26/for-parents-of-rising-kindergartners-school-choice-can-add-options-and-stress/>.

<sup>8</sup> Jessica Winter, *The Miseducation of Maria Montessori*, THE NEW YORKER (Mar. 3, 2022) [https://www.newyorker.com/books/under-review/the-miseducation-of-maria-montessori?gclid=CjwKCAjw8JKbBhBYEiwAs3sxN8vDZAIh-pVPZolmQvB4Hw6NnXQWcrPV99kqDmiZn9M9uWW0mdCq1xoChq4QAvD\\_BwE&gclid=aw.ds](https://www.newyorker.com/books/under-review/the-miseducation-of-maria-montessori?gclid=CjwKCAjw8JKbBhBYEiwAs3sxN8vDZAIh-pVPZolmQvB4Hw6NnXQWcrPV99kqDmiZn9M9uWW0mdCq1xoChq4QAvD_BwE&gclid=aw.ds) (last visited Dec. 11, 2022).

Montessori's crusade on behalf of the poorest and least powerful in society is that its most visible legacy is selective private schools for the élite."<sup>9</sup>

The Montessori method did away with rewards and punishments. Maria saw how the focus on grades and tests can discourage meaningful learning and that traditional schoolrooms, through competition, can foster violence. Her method promotes freedom and allows the child to choose how or when they want to learn.

Today, these are the characteristics that make a Montessori classroom special. Classrooms are arranged by age groups of three years: infants up to three years old, three to six, six to nine, and nine to twelve. Older students can lead and guide the younger ones when they are struggling. The younger students can benefit from peer learning and moving at their own pace. Lessons are taught one-on-one or in small groups which allows for individualized education. Teachers can meet students where they are by allowing them to pursue more rigorous work if they are ahead.<sup>10</sup> Allowing the child to learn at their own pace is one of the foundational principles of Montessori.

Another key characteristic is the work cycle—an uninterrupted block of time for children to pursue learning independently. The child is given the freedom to choose from the many activities the teacher has prepared specifically for them. It is extremely important that this work cycle is not interrupted by group work or for any other reasons. This time fosters independence and “without enough time to delve into their learning experience and to complete their learning, children will have a fragmented and incomplete experience.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> *A Guide to Montessori Lessons*, MONTESSORI FOR TODAY, <https://montessorifortoday.com/a-guide-to-montessori-lessons-plus-example-lesson-plans/> (last visited Dec. 17, 2020).

<sup>11</sup> *What is a Montessori Work Cycle? Examples for Every Age*, MONTESSORI FOR TODAY, <https://montessorifortoday.com/what-is-a-montessori-work-cycle-examples-for-every-age/> (last visited Dec. 17, 2020).

The work cycle allows children to pursue the activities and topics (including sensory, language, mathematics, geography, culture, music, art, and practical life) they are most interested in. It gives children practice setting up an activity and cleaning it up, which encourages an organized mind. It allows children to gain all they need from a learning experience without interruptions or ending too soon.<sup>12</sup>

The Montessori classroom—called a prepared environment—is also essential and differs from a traditional classroom. The teacher prepares the environment for the students, typically on trays, so that the student can learn and transport the materials with as much independence as possible. The classroom is purposefully organized in such a way that is easy for children to put items back where they belong and clean up after themselves without needing help.<sup>13</sup> Through this method, Montessori students are not rewarded with gold stars or grades. Instead, they are self-motivated to learn and attain optimal development.<sup>14</sup>

### **III. HOW THE MONTESSORI METHOD WORKS BETTER FOR ALL**

In 2010, Latta Elementary School, a public school in a small rural town that only has two stoplights, began transitioning from a traditional public school to a public Montessori school.

The school administration chose the Montessori method because they wanted to come up with a

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<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

<sup>13</sup> *Id.*

<sup>14</sup> Pamela Li, WHAT IS MONTESSORI, PARENTING FOR BRAIN (Oct. 27, 2022), <https://www.parentingforbrain.com/what-is-montessori/>. “The researchers suggest that a Montessori curriculum boosts childhood and adult well-being by focusing on activities that promote self-determination (children in Montessori classrooms choose their own work most of the time and feel like they are in charge of their own educations), meaningful activities (children only take part in activities for which the underlying reasons are clear), and social stability and cohesion (classrooms span three years during which children have the same teacher and peer group).” Mark Travers, *New Research Highlights The Long-Term Benefits Of A Montessori Education*, FORBES, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/traversmark/2021/12/28/new-research-highlights-the-long-term-benefits-of-a-montessori-education/?sh=260bc4353970> (last visited Dec. 10, 2022).

solution to the current program that would raise the rigor while being fair and equitable—so that every student in the classroom was learning.<sup>15</sup>

The principal of Latta, Dollie Morrell, wanted a program that had more than just reading and math. “Social-emotional is a huge part of Montessori,” she says, “we’re actually providing for the whole child and not just reading and math, science and social studies.” One of the teachers at Latta echoed this sentiment—“we’re not just teaching them standards and content, but we’re trying to teach them how to be a person. They’re learning how to respect others. They’re learning how to take care of themselves and their environment...not just two plus two.”<sup>16</sup>

Latta Elementary has shown that Montessori education can work for *every* child and should not just be for privileged children in the private sector.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, South Carolina in general has proven this. Furman University conducted a study around the Montessori programs in South Carolina—the state with the most public Montessori programs in the country.<sup>18</sup> Their Montessori programs are mainly found in Title I schools, and most students are low-income.

The data from this study, conducted for the school year of 2015-2016, shows the positive outcomes Montessori program had on students. 52% of Montessori students met or exceeded state standards in English and language arts (“ELA”), 46% met or exceeded state standards in math, 70% met or exceeded state standards in science, and 80% met or exceeded state standards in social studies. When compared to non-Montessori public school students across the state,

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<sup>15</sup> Nora Fleming, *A Public School Makes the Case for ‘Montessori for All’*, EDUTOPIA (Apr. 25, 2019) <https://www.edutopia.org/article/public-school-makes-case-montessori-all/>.

<sup>16</sup> *Id.*

<sup>17</sup> *Id.* (At Latta Elementary, more than 70 percent of the 661 students receive free or reduced-price lunch and nearly half are students of color.).

<sup>18</sup> DR. DAVID J. FLEMING, DR. BROOK CULCLASURE, DR. GINNY RIGA, & ALEXIS SPROGIS, AN EVALUATION OF MONTESSORI EDUCATION IN SOUTH CAROLINA’S PUBLIC SCHOOLS, (The Riley Institute at Furman University 2018), <https://www.furman.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/195/rileypdfFiles/MontessoriFullReportforprint.pdf>.

Montessori students were more likely to have met or exceeded the state standards in each of the four subjects.<sup>19</sup>

The data also shows the impact a Montessori program can have on students' behavioral outcomes. Montessori students consistently demonstrated higher school attendance than non-Montessori students. Furthermore, Montessori students were significantly less likely than similar non-Montessori students to have had a disciplinary incident or have served a suspension during the school year.<sup>20</sup>

#### **A. Montessori Makes the Difference in Minority Children**

Black, Hispanic, and lower income children in the United States often rank lower in academic achievement measures than white children and middle-income children. However, research has shown, that children with opportunity gaps, whose scores tend to be lower in most schools, do as well or better in Montessori schools than in their districts at large—in both math and ELA.<sup>21</sup> While there are no clear reasons as to why this is true, scholars have theorized that it is due to the structure of Montessori teaching. As mentioned, the teaching is done by materials, not people. Teacher expectations play a huge role in a child's progress in conventional settings. By reducing the role of the teacher in conveying learning, as Montessori does, children who are often the recipient of bias have a better chance at succeeding. Second, the practice where children and teachers stay together for three years has shown to be the most helpful to minority children.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *Id.*

<sup>20</sup> *Id.*

<sup>21</sup> ALLYSON L. SNYDER, XIN TONG, & ANGELINE S. LILLARD, STANDARDIZED TEST PROFICIENCY IN PUBLIC MONTESSORI SCHOOLS (Journal of School Choice 2022).

<sup>22</sup> *Id.* at 111.

Another study suggests that less racial disproportionality in discipline exists in public Montessori schools.<sup>23</sup> In traditional schooling, discipline typically means suspension from class which results in lost learning time.<sup>24</sup> Students of color are referred, suspended, and expelled at rates far higher than white students.<sup>25</sup> They are also subject to longer suspensions than white students. Unfortunately, Black males experience the highest levels of discipline disproportionality—they are 3.3 times more likely to be suspended or expelled than white males.<sup>26</sup> Suspensions from school can lead to repeat offenses, elevated dropout rate, and juvenile incarceration. According to state accountability tests, out-of-school suspensions have been linked to low academic achievement due to the reduced opportunities to learn.

This is another area in which the Montessori method could significantly benefit students of color. The racially disparate use of exclusionary discipline does result in unequal opportunities to learn. Because Black children are often subject to unfairly harsh disciplining, they often receive lower grades than their white counterparts.<sup>27</sup> Again here, the fact that teachers stay with their

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<sup>23</sup> *Id.*; see also KATIE E. BROWN & AIMY S.L. STEELE, RACIAL DISCIPLINE DISPROPORTIONALITY IN MONTESSORI AND TRADITIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY USING THE RELATIVE RATE INDEX 15 (Journal of Montessori Research 2015) (“Discipline disproportionality refers to the over- or underrepresentation of certain groups in office disciplinary referrals, suspension, and/or expulsion.”).

<sup>24</sup> *Id.*

<sup>25</sup> KATIE E. BROWN & AIMY S.L. STEELE, RACIAL DISCIPLINE DISPROPORTIONALITY IN MONTESSORI AND TRADITIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY USING THE RELATIVE RATE INDEX 15 (Journal of Montessori Research 2015).

<sup>26</sup> “Unfortunately, we were not surprised by the findings, considering what we know about the role of racial bias in painting school adults’ views of African American youth as less innocent, older and more aggressive than their white peers. Regardless of the behavior that African American youth engage in, that behavior is viewed by educators as more worthy of harsh school discipline like a suspension,” said study coauthor Ming-te Wang, PhD, professor of psychology at the University of Pittsburgh.” AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION, *For Black students, unfairly harsh discipline can lead to lower grades* (Oct. 7, 2021) <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2021/10/black-students-harsh-discipline>.

<sup>27</sup> *Id.*

students over the span of three years is extremely beneficial. Montessori teachers get to know their students better which reduces the likelihood that the behavior of students of color will be misinterpreted. The highly individualized format of the Montessori classroom also allows Montessori teachers the time and space to develop a deep knowledge, mutual respect, and trust with their students of color. Additionally, the hands-on, collaborative nature of Montessori education can be more engaging for students of color. Montessori allows students to move and talk freely which translates into students of color being able to engage in behaviors that would usually be disproportionately disciplined in a traditional setting.<sup>28</sup>

#### **IV. HOW THE ESSA CAN BETTER PROMOTE INNOVATION**

To make a real difference in communities that have been persistently disenfranchised due to a long history of systemically racist policies, there should be more flexibility for Title I public schools to transform into more innovative programs. This will allow both chosen public school students and assigned public school students to reap the most benefits. The goal of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)—which is right in its handy title—does not make room for every student to succeed. There needs to be less stringent regulations on how a low-performing schools can be helped. The ESSA and its governing bodies emphasize the importance of rigorous evidence to ensure interventions, like alternative teaching methods, can be successful and not wasteful of tax dollars. However, the irony is astounding when 80% of public schools in the United States are still failing.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> KATIE E. BROWN & AIMY S.L. STEELE, RACIAL DISCIPLINE DISPROPORTIONALITY IN MONTESSORI AND TRADITIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY USING THE RELATIVE RATE INDEX 23 (Journal of Montessori Research 2015).

<sup>29</sup> Grace Chen, *Why 82% of Public Schools are Failing*, PUBLIC SCHOOL REVIEW (Sept. 3, 2020) <https://www.publicschoolreview.com/blog/why-82-of-public-schools-are-failing#:~:text=Education%20Secretary%20Arne%20Duncan%20estimated,test%20in%20educating%20our%20children.>

According to the Department of Education (DOE), Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (“Elementary Act”) was created to “to ensure economically disadvantaged children receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, by helping to close academic achievement gaps” and providing federal funds to local education agencies (LEA)—dubbing schools that receive these funds Title I Public Schools.<sup>30</sup>

Prior to the Elementary Act becoming law, the federal government had very little involvement in education, opting to leave it as a state and local matter.<sup>31</sup> However, this triggered many subsequent reauthorizations that amended and expanded the act, such as the ESSA. With the ESSA came an accountability provision that claimed to allow States more flexibility to help struggling schools.<sup>32</sup>

The ESSA established that, beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, each State would identify “a statewide category of schools for comprehensive support and improvement.”<sup>33</sup> Once these schools are identified, the local education agency, along with principals, superintendents, teachers, and parents may develop and implement an improvement plan for the school that would boost student outcomes and achievement.<sup>34</sup> To implement new programming in a public school, the intervention strategy needs to be evidence-based. The Elementary Act was also amended by the ESSA to include these evidence-based strategies as a way to improve schools. The

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<sup>30</sup> U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, *Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies (Title I, Part A)* <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/index.html> (last visited Dec. 17, 2022).

<sup>31</sup> LAWS, *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*, <https://education.laws.com/elementary-and-secondary-education-act> (last visited Dec. 17, 2022).

<sup>32</sup> EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT ACCOUNTABILITY, STATE PLANS, AND DATA REPORTING: SUMMARY OF FINAL REGULATIONS, <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essafactsheet170103.pdf> (last visited Dec. 17, 2022).

<sup>33</sup> Every Student Succeeds Act, 114 P.L. 95, § 1003 (2015).

<sup>34</sup> *Id.*

Elementary Act requires “at least one study to provide strong evidence, moderate evidence, or promising evidence to support a proposal.”

The Department of Education (DOE) outlines guidance on how to successfully choose and implement interventions that improve outcomes for students.<sup>35</sup> The DOE also points to the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), its statistics, research, and evaluation arm, in order to find the necessary data and reports.<sup>36</sup> IES then outlines where to find evidence-based interventions—the main resource being The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC).<sup>37</sup> However, the WWC was established by the Department of Education “to provide educators, policymakers, and the public with a central, independent, and trusted source of scientific evidence of what works in education.”<sup>38</sup> It is not clear whether this is the only *acceptable* resource where evidence-based interventions can be found, but it seems to allude to that.

The WWC website lists all the “highest-quality research on a given intervention or practice in education.”<sup>39</sup> But, when the keyword ‘Montessori’ is searched, there are no results found in the intervention report database.<sup>40</sup> The only thing on the Montessori Method, of use, on WWC is the below:

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<sup>35</sup> *Non-Regulatory Guidance: Using Evidence to Strengthen Education Investments*, <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/guidanceuseinvestment.pdf>.

<sup>36</sup> INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES, <https://ies.ed.gov/aboutus/> (last visited Dec. 17, 2022).

<sup>37</sup> *Identifying and Implementing Educational Practices Supported By Rigorous Evidence: A User Friendly Guide*, NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION EVALUATION AND REGIONAL ASSISTANCE [https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/evidence\\_based/appendix\\_a.asp](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/evidence_based/appendix_a.asp) (last visited Dec. 17, 2022).

<sup>38</sup> *Id.*

<sup>39</sup> WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE, <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/> (last visited Dec. 17, 2022).

<sup>40</sup> WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE, <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Search/Products?productType=2> (last visited Dec. 17, 2022).

As of December 2005, no studies of Montessori Method were found that fell within the scope of the Early Childhood Education review protocol and met WWC evidence standards. Therefore, the WWC is unable to draw any research based conclusions about the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of Montessori Method to improve outcomes in this area.<sup>41</sup>

This is likely causing a significant barrier for local education agencies and their supporters to implement the Montessori method. What legislators describe as a “more flexible” way to help struggling schools may not be that flexible at all. Although this discussion focuses on the Montessori method, the same logic can be applied to any innovative schooling program. The constraints of what statistical data can and should be used to champion different education methods ends up stifling said innovation.

## V. CONCLUSION

In 2022, there are 98,609 public schools in the United States. Of those, almost 60% are Title I public schools.<sup>42</sup> Charter programs dominate with a whopping 7,644 schools. And there are only 570 public Montessori schools.<sup>43</sup> These stark differences highlight the lack of flexibility and innovation the ESSA allows. Not only that, but the data table does not include these other education methods, whatever they may be.

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<sup>41</sup> *WWC SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE FOR THIS INTERVENTION Montessori Method*, WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE, <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Intervention/487> (last visited Dec. 17, 2022).

<sup>42</sup> *Table 9. Number of Title I, magnet, and charter schools and percentage of students served, by state: School year 2001–02*, NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS, [https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2003/overview03/tables/table\\_09.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2003/overview03/tables/table_09.asp) (last visited Dec. 17, 2022).

<sup>43</sup> NATIONAL CENTER FOR MONTESSORI IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR, <https://www.public-montessori.org/montessori/#:~:text=There%20are%20more%20than%203%2C000,than%20570%20are%20public%20programs> (last visited Dec. 17, 2022) (This includes district, magnet, and charter schools).

The grueling process detailed by the ESSA, compounded by the limited resources the WWC provides, makes it near impossible to take any action. Policymakers and legislators need to either loosen the accountability guidelines or make a real effort to validate the numerous studies that highlight how other teaching methods are successful. This could be in the form of a pilot program. A percentage of Title I public schools are transformed to a number of innovative programs, such as Montessori. The data is then collected and disseminated to local education agencies, superintendents, principals, and the like, to inspire a broader audience to transform their schools.

As has been stated, people in the position of making important education decisions may have the power to do those things, but they are lacking the tools. This is notable if they are trying to convince a broader community. Many are not persuaded by the Montessori method—majority being Black and Latinx parents—but this is mainly due to lack of awareness of its benefits.<sup>44</sup> Most of these programs are only enjoyed by the white elite and, believe it or not, the good word does not trickle down.

For these reasons, we need to better equip our local education decisionmakers, especially those who are people of color. Our public school system is failing and efforts like these could help real innovation happen. Education is not one-size-fits-all and the government needs to stop treating it that way. Over 70% of Black and Latinx parents have indicated support for school choice and a desire for their children to receive a higher quality education.<sup>45</sup> However, under current school choice policies, these families are not given a real choice.

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<sup>44</sup> Mira C. Debs & Katie E. Brown, *Students of Color and Public Montessori Schools: A Review of the Literature*, 3 J. MONTESSORI RSCH. 1 (2017).

<sup>45</sup> *Survey Shows: More than Half of American Families Look(ing) for a New School – Winter 2022*, NATIONAL SCHOOL CHOICE WEEK (Dec. 9, 2022), <https://schoolchoiceweek.com/how-parents-feel-about-school-choices-2022/>.