



Sophia Montessori Academy

A Catholic School in the Byzantine Tradition

To Our Dear Sophia Families,

As Sophia Montessori Academy's Board of Directors, we are reaching out with difficult news concerning the future of the school. At the end of this academic year (2024-2025), Sophia Montessori Academy will cease operations and close. This is a painful, but unanimous, decision which the Board has not taken lightly, and we know that it may bring with it many unexpected challenges for your families. As such, we would like to highlight some of the reasons for this decision and also to address what to expect going forward.

While Sophia is financially able to finish out this academic year—in no small part due to the incredible generosity exhibited at the Gala—the Board has determined that operating in future years will not be feasible. The school ultimately lacks the necessary enrollment to meet rising costs. Though actions have been taken to avoid this outcome and increase enrollment, several challenges to the school have proven insurmountable.

The school began operations in its current location in Fall of 2023. While the vision for Sophia always included plans for growth, the move from the previous location was forced when the landlord provided notice that the building would be sold, and the lease would not be renewed. In order to operate in the coming school year and satisfy childcare licensing requirements, any new space would need to be within a specific geographic area and could not require too much build-out. The options were severely limited, and it was a grace to find the current location at St. Francis de Sales.

However, with the growth of our space, financial projections for the growing school included increases in enrollment. These projections were based on then-expressed interest in expanded Montessori education, coupled with past trends. Unfortunately, Sophia's enrollment has not grown at the pace anticipated or needed. On the contrary, the school has seen reduced enrollment over the past three years, and projections for next year suggest that enrollment will remain flat, at best.

While many avenues have been explored in the hope of reaching new families for Sophia Montessori, the demand has not been commensurate to that which the school needs to be sustainable. Much of this is outside of Sophia's control, including an increasing trend toward other schooling models and an overall decrease in school enrollment throughout the state. Coupled with this is the reality of costs involved with authentic Montessori education; our tuition cannot "compete" with parochial or public schools, especially while inflation adversely impacts so many household budgets. Efforts to expand the school's donor-base have also been met with limited success. Other efforts to procure funding have been less fruitful than hoped for, and grants that have helped us in the past are no longer available.



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With all of these obstacles, we do not see a viable path for Sophia Montessori Academy to remain open. Through a great deal of deliberation and prayer, it has become clear to the Board that moving forward with closure is the right decision.

We know that it will take time to discern what will be next for your children. In an effort to alleviate some burden of the search, we will be following up with some basic information about enrollment at area parochial schools, including contact information for enrollment and important enrollment dates and will continue to pass on new information that may be helpful.

This closure is a difficult matter and we want to be available to you if you have questions or concerns. To facilitate this, we have set up an email address, board@sophiamontessori.com, for all inquiries related to Sophia's closure. Emails to this address will go directly to Sophia's Board, and we will strive to respond to any inquiries within 2 business days. Please do not address questions or concerns directly to Pauline or any of the staff. This email has been set up to help them focus on the remaining school year and to better answer your needs and questions concerning this difficult decision.

Please know that you and your children are in our prayers as you navigate this change. We ask for your continued prayers for our director, Pauline, the teachers and staff, and the Board, which will continue to serve the school until its closure. Second to our prayers, please know that we are committing our time and effort to help our Sophia families through this transition and will continue to put together resources and answer questions.

Sophia Montessori Academy was formed with a vision inspired by the Holy Spirit, and we know that the quality education and beauty it has offered our children over the past seven years will remain with them throughout their lives. This school was given to us in accordance with God's abundant providence and through His providence is coming to an end. We offer prayers of gratitude for His gift of Sophia Montessori and the entire SMA community.

In Christ,
Sophia Montessori Academy Board of Directors