



## Fact Sheet

### Overview

Fountainhead Montessori School focuses on nurturing the skills that power successful lives, and by doing so, attracts parents who want their kids to be independent, and independent thinkers. This allure is the direct result of founder Sarah Cole Zimmerman's extensive work in special education, unwavering focus on maintaining the high standards of true Montessori education, and her personal, real-life parent quest to find a preschool program that would meet the advanced needs of her daughter.

Ms. Zimmerman founded Fountainhead in 1972 (starting with six children), while under the tutelage of Miss Domicile Petrutis – a student of Dr. Maria Montessori's in Nice, France (1934). Fountainhead (a member in good standing of the American Montessori Society) now has four campuses in the San Francisco Bay Area (Dublin, Danville, Livermore and Orinda), offering a wide variety of programs encompassing the needs of children from 18-months to 12 years. In addition, Fountainhead provides a level of convenience for parents almost unheard of among private schools – including full transparency of costs (no nickel-and-diming, and no hidden costs) and customization of fees and scheduling to fit a family's needs.

A closely held nonprofit organization, overseen by a Board of Directors, Fountainhead avoids active fundraising – to keep its independence and avoid conflicts of interest. Since 2003 the school has been run by its first pupil, Executive Director Shandy Cole (Ms. Zimmerman's daughter), whose deep exposure to Montessori education, as well as an architectural, business administration and tech background, allows her to guide Fountainhead's strategic direction; ensuring the school maintains its reputation as being different and independent, as well as at the forefront of Montessori education.

### Programs & Educational Environment

Fountainhead provides an environment that can challenge a huge range of students, in an individualized manner. The main, age-based, year-round programs focus on each child's individual development: Toddler (18 Mo-2yrs), Prep (2-3.5yrs), Primary (3-6yrs), Extended Primary (4-6yrs), Transitional Kindergarten/Kindergarten (4.5-6yrs), Lower Elementary (6-9yrs), and Upper Elementary (9-12yrs).

Besides these programs, academic offerings also include Spanish/Mandarin Immersion and other enrichment programs, as well as Summer Camps and Discovery Camps, and artistic, cultural and self-exploratory activities tailored to the individual needs of students, as well as before- and after-school care. In these programs, a child can make guided, but self-oriented, choices that: 1) develop the whole person, as well as intellectual and academic aptitude, 2) safeguard their ability to be independent and think independently, and 3) ensure that their schooling also prepares them for life.

To strengthen this supportive environment, each of the campuses is a dedicated facility set up to promote a child's well-being and enhance the Montessori methodology. Also, ninety percent of head teachers –educators qualified to know the potential and needs of the age groups with whom they work – have over ten years of Montessori classroom experience. And, seventy-five percent have a bachelor's degree or higher, with many holding advanced degrees.

### Montessori Teacher Training Program

To further spread the true Montessori philosophy and method, Fountainhead also developed a dedicated, accredited Teacher Training Program ([Fountainhead Montessori Adult Education](#), or FMAE) – providing college credit, granted in cooperation with California State University, East Bay Continuing Education. Attuned to the scheduling and financial needs of teachers et al. unable to attend or carry a full-time course load, FMAE makes accessible to these educational professionals an American Montessori Society Early Childhood Credential.

### Headquarters

Fountainhead Montessori School is a private, non-denominational, fully licensed nonprofit school headquartered in Dublin, CA.

### Contact Information

For media queries and more in-depth information, please contact [Maria Gonzalez](#), Gonzberg Agency (direct line: 415.930.9103), or [Karen Kinney](#), Fountainhead Montessori School Director of Admissions (main line: 925.820.1343). For more information, please visit: [www.fountainheadmontessori.org](http://www.fountainheadmontessori.org)