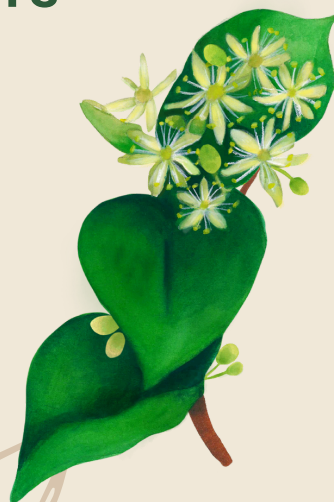




TRANSFORMING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: LINDEN TREE MONTESSORI SPONSORSHIP PACKET

EMPOWERING ALL CHILDREN THROUGH
HANDS-ON CHILD LED LEARNING.

Give to our growing community
of life long learners



Linden Tree
Montessori
A Wildflower School



Greetings,

At Linden Tree Montessori, we are building a tuition-free, public Montessori program that empowers every child through an accessible, high-quality, holistic and equitable learning environment. Our approach nurtures the whole child through hands-on learning, independence, academic competence, executive functioning, curiosity, creativity, a life-long love of learning, connection to nature and strong community and family partnerships.

We are excited to share that we have secured a facility at 1889 Genessee Ave. and are in the final stages of lease execution. This milestone allows us to move from vision to implementation—creating a permanent home where children ages 3–12 can learn, grow and thrive.

To bring this space fully to life, we are launching a **\$100,000** fundraising campaign to support critical startup and first-year needs. These investments include facility readiness, classroom environments, licensing and safety requirements, and essential programming supports for children and families.

Initial funding priorities include:

- \$25,000 for lease startup costs (deposit, first month's rent, and associated fees)
- \$50,000 for Montessori classroom materials, furnishings and learning environments
- \$10,000 for facility improvements and child-centered upgrades
- \$15,000 for licensing, compliance and opening costs

Beyond opening, we are also seeking partners to help us build a fully equipped, enriching environment. Additional needs include classroom technology, outdoor and play equipment, art materials, and ongoing supplies that sustain daily learning and family engagement.

Our program will operate Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM, offering a full-day Montessori experience along with afterschool enrichment and community-based programming. With strong interest and enrollment from local families, this facility will serve as a vital and growing hub for education and support in our neighborhood.

We invite you to partner with us in creating an accessible, equitable model of education that meets the needs of today's children and families. Your tax-deductible contribution will directly support the launch and sustainability of this work. Together, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of children and families in Columbus and beyond.

With gratitude,

- Founding Teacher Leaders, Breana Smith and Linds Miller

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Executive Summary

Linden Tree Montessori is a pioneering leader in early childhood education and proudly the first tuition-free public Montessori charter school in Columbus, Ohio. Founded and led by a diverse team of innovative teachers, our mission is to make authentic Montessori education accessible to all children, challenging the notion that Montessori is reserved for the affluent.

Our school emphasizes nature-based learning, cultural appreciation, restorative justice, and family empowerment through school choice. By integrating these values, we nurture creativity, independence, and critical thinking—preparing children not only for academic success but for life and liberation.

As an anchor within the Linden community's revitalization efforts, we view education as a catalyst for both social and economic growth. Research confirms that high-quality early learning generates measurable and lasting benefits. A 15-year evaluation of Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) showed that every dollar invested produced nearly four dollars in community value. Conversely, limited access to affordable childcare results in reduced employment, lower family earnings, and long-term social costs.

Guided by the Wildflower model, Linden Tree Montessori operates with 30–50% lower overhead than traditional schools, ensuring sustainable and efficient use of resources.

Since our inception, we have built strong partnerships with Wildflower Schools, as well as local organizations and community members across Columbus, to expand learning opportunities beyond the classroom.

Looking ahead to the 2026–2027 school year, we have secured a permanent facility that will allow us to expand programming, access state childcare funding, and deepen our community impact. Through our continued commitment to equity, innovation, and excellence, Linden Tree Montessori stands poised to cultivate the next generation of compassionate leaders and change-makers in Columbus and beyond.

About Linden

Linden is a historic neighborhood in northeast Columbus, located just a few miles from Downtown and close to many of the city's major institutions, employers, and transportation corridors. Linden had been affected by redlining and the addition of Interstate 71, causing a population shift from the community. However, today the community is shaped by a strong network of residents, families, businesses, and partners working together to build a healthier, safer and more connected future.

Linden has long been home to hardworking families and a resilient local culture, and today it remains a community with significant potential for growth and investment. Through the resident-driven One Linden Community Plan, local leaders and partners have created a shared vision focused on housing, education, employment, health, business development and neighborhood connection.

The plan organizes this vision around 10 Big Ideas, including stabilizing and expanding housing options, supporting student success, reimagining Cleveland Avenue, connecting residents to employment, reducing crime, supporting entrepreneurs, and building community investment. These priorities reflect Linden's commitment not only to improving quality of life, but also to ensuring that growth benefits current residents and future generations.

For sponsors and community partners, Linden offers an opportunity to invest in a neighborhood with deep roots, active collaboration, and momentum for positive change. Support in Linden helps strengthen programs and partnerships that advance education, youth opportunity, family stability and long-term neighborhood vitality.



About our teacher leaders



Breana Smith – Primary

Breana holds an American Montessori Society (AMS) Primary Montessori credential along with a Montessori Special Needs and Montessori Parent/Infant and Toddler Facilitator certification. She also holds a B.A. from The Ohio State University in International Studies with a Specialization in Development Studies, a Minor in Spanish and an American Sign Language and Deaf Studies certificate. Breana loves to emphasize a love of nature and care of the environment in the Montessori curriculum as well as her love of languages and cultures. Outside of the classroom she is a mother and lead teacher at her church and started a business to help educate families more on Montessori and Positive Parenting. Her number one goal is to make Montessori more accessible to families as she believes everyone deserves high-quality education with an emphasis on the whole child.



Linds Miller – Lower Elementary

As a child, Linds attended the first public Montessori elementary school in the United States. This educational approach inspired a love of learning, nature, community and of the Montessori method itself. After four years of teaching in traditional education classrooms, Linds got their Masters in Montessori from Xavier University in Cincinnati, as well as their Ohio state teaching license and 6–9 Montessori credential. Linds graduated from the AMS Emerging Leaders Fellowship, giving them the opportunity to learn and collaborate with other Montessori educators around the country. Linds brings 12 years of Montessori teaching experience to the Linden Tree team and is thrilled about the opportunity to help bring tuition free quality Montessori education to Columbus.

Community Needs

In Columbus, early childhood education outcomes reveal a critical need for innovation and expanded access. Currently, only 36.5% of students demonstrate kindergarten readiness. Within Columbus City Schools, just 31% of children are proficient in reading and 21% in mathematics, compared to state averages of 61% and 53–55%. The district's graduation rate of 78% also falls below the state average of 88%, reflecting persistent gaps that begin early in a child's educational journey.

Families face additional challenges in finding affordable, high-quality early learning options. Columbus City Schools earned an overall 2-star rating on the Ohio School Report Card, with 1-star ratings in early literacy and graduation, indicating the district needs significant support to meet state expectations. This indicates widespread demand for improved early learning opportunities that combine academic, social and emotional development.

Academic disparities are compounded by a high rate of students with special needs, creating an urgent demand for differentiated instruction and robust literacy, numeracy and social-emotional learning (SEL) supports. Poverty in many neighborhoods further intensifies students' social and emotional challenges, underscoring the importance of holistic, trauma-informed education.

For families with neurodiverse children, the situation is even more pressing. Few early childhood programs in Columbus are equipped to provide inclusive care that honors individual learning differences. Too often, these children are misunderstood or excluded from traditional preschool settings, leaving families with limited, costly, or inconsistent options. Nearly 80% of Ohio voters view access to affordable, quality child care as a "state of crisis" or "major problem," (Cleveland.com) and 34% of parents say child care costs prevent them from saving or getting ahead financially.

These conditions make it clear that Columbus families need access to an early learning model that is inclusive, relationship-centered, and developmentally responsive—one that meets children where they are and supports the whole family. Linden Tree Montessori is positioned to meet that need by expanding access to tuition-free, high-quality Montessori education within the Linden community.

An invitation to invest

In order to fulfill Linden Tree Montessori's mission of providing accessible, exceptional education for children in the Linden neighborhood and beyond, Linden Tree Montessori is launching a community campaign to raise the additional \$100,000 in one time revenue needed to open by August 2026. After year one of operations, the school's economic model ensures our budget is stable and sustainable through tuition and public funding streams.

Linden Tree Montessori School Startup Budget

Total Startup Costs*	\$500,000
Already Secured Low Interest Startup Loan	-\$100,000
Wildflower Charter School Startup Grant	-\$300,000
	<hr/>
	\$100,000

REMAINING NEED **\$100,000**

*TOTAL ONE TIME STARTUP EXPENSES	\$100,000
Facilities (first month's rent + fees + security deposit)	-\$25,000
Facility improvements and child-centered upgrades	-\$10,000
Furnishings + Materials + Technology and Office Equipment	-\$50,000
Licensing + Safety + Opening Costs	-\$15,000

See page 6 for more details

Linden Tree Montessori

Donation Tiers + Benefits



Linden Tree Montessori is a 501c3 organization.
All donations are tax deductible

LINDEN LEGACY TIER (\$50,000+)

Roots that endure for generations of learners

All Canopy Tier benefits +
Exclusive feature in newsletter and press release.
Premier recognition in all promotional materials.
Reserved seating/free individual entry into school curated events
Enhanced visibility on the website and social media platforms.

LINDEN CANOPY TIER (\$20,000+)

Sheltering limitless learning under strong branches.

- All Light benefits +
- Logo on selected event materials.
- Special ribbon-cutting recognition – remarks and named sponsorship visibility.
- Personalized plaque displayed at the facility

LINDEN LIGHT TIER (\$10,000)

Illuminating possibility and opening doors for young learners.

- All Roots benefits +
- Priority placement on the donor wall.
- Logo listed on website and flyers.
- Thank-you mention at events.
- Opportunity for volunteer engagement with Linden Tree children and families.

LINDEN ROOTS TIER (\$5,000+)

Planting strong foundations for tomorrow's learners.

- All Leaves benefits +
- Invitation to school events and community celebrations.
- Invitation to the ribbon-cutting ceremony.



LINDEN LEAVES TIER (\$2,500+)

Adding strength, shade and support to our growing school community.

- All Fruit benefits +
- Recognition on donor wall inside school.
- Logo or name included in promotional materials.

LINDEN FRUIT TIER (\$1000+)

Supporting the growth of children, families and community impact.

- All Seeds benefits +
- Thank-you mention at select events
- Recognition on our website and social media platforms.

LINDEN SEEDS TIER (<\$1000)

Helping plant the first seeds of a thriving Montessori community.

- Inclusion in annual donor acknowledgments.
- Thank-you mention in school newsletter, as appropriate.

What will my investment do?

Your support will open doors for Columbus children and families who have long been denied access to exceptional Montessori education. Together, we will build a beautiful, licensed facility where every child, regardless of financial means, can experience authentic Montessori learning in a safe, nurturing environment.

Your contribution will help us move from vision to reality by covering essential startup costs that are not funded by public programs. This includes facility preparation, licensure, classroom setup, and the materials needed to launch strong. Our goal is to raise \$100,000 for launch only — not ongoing operations — because our long-term model is sustained through public charter funding for K–12 and Publicly Funded Child Care (PFCC) for PreK.

What Your Dollars Deliver:

Your contribution helps us:

- Secure and prepare our classroom space.
- Complete licensure requirements and become eligible for PFCC.
- Purchase Montessori classroom furniture and learning materials.
- Add facility upgrades, including classroom sinks, PreK bathroom and water fountain.
- Provide technology such as Chromebooks, tablets, staff computers, a copier/printer, and walkie talkies.
- Stock supplies for art, cleaning, snacks, and special events.
- Support outdoor learning and physical education through playground equipment, gardening tools, field trip experiences, community partnerships and gym gear.

Startup Focus Only

We are seeking \$100,000 for launch costs — including facility prep, licensure, and materials — because these are the critical needs that allow us to open well.

Businesses, families, and foundations who believe in equity can help fill this gap and create a safe, thriving hub for PreK–8th learners in Linden.



Academic programming

The Montessori method has garnered significant attention in early childhood education due to its evidence-based effectiveness. Research indicates that children exposed to Montessori education demonstrate notable cognitive, social, and emotional benefits. Studies have shown that Montessori-educated children exhibit higher levels of academic achievement, critical thinking skills, and executive function compared to their peers in traditional educational settings for children across all income levels and demographics (Lillard, 2017). Longitudinal research has highlighted the lasting impact of Montessori education, with students demonstrating enhanced outcomes in areas such as academic performance, social competence, and self-regulation well into adulthood (Dohrmann et al., 2007).

The Montessori method's emphasis on hands-on learning and individualized instruction aligns with principles of developmental psychology, fostering intrinsic motivation and a love for learning (Kahn & Kellner, 2020). Montessori environments promote the development of executive function skills, including self-control, working memory, and cognitive flexibility, which are essential for academic success and lifelong learning (Diamond & Lee, 2011). Montessori's individualized learning approach effectively functions like an IEP for every child — supporting all learners, regardless of neurotype or learning style.

Practical Life activities form the foundation of the curriculum, focusing on tasks that promote independence, concentration, and fine motor skills. The Sensorial area fosters the refinement of the child's senses through materials that encourage exploration and classification of sensory impressions such as color, shape, and texture. In the Language area, children engage in activities aimed at developing oral language skills, vocabulary, and literacy, using tactile materials like sandpaper letters and movable alphabets. Finally, the Mathematics area introduces mathematical concepts through hands-on activities and manipulatives, enabling children to build a solid understanding of arithmetic operations before progressing to abstract representations. These four areas provide a comprehensive framework for children to explore and develop foundational skills in a nurturing and child-centered environment.








Linden Tree Montessori

A Wildflower School

Thank you for joining our community

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**Now
Enrolling**

