



## **40 Years of Dedication to Children with Special Needs**

### **What does it mean to be a NJ private approved school for the learning disabled?**

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) implements state and federal laws and regulations governing special education and administers federal funding to ensure that students receive full educational opportunities through the development of their Individual Education Programs (IEP), planning for the transition from school to adulthood and highly specialized services under the least restrictive environment provision. Sometimes these services cannot be delivered within district and an out of district placement is warranted in order to meet the student's special needs. The NJDOE monitors out of district school placements, see [www.state.nj.us/education/specialed](http://www.state.nj.us/education/specialed) and Montgomery Academy is one of over one hundred and seventy five specialized schools which serve over twelve thousand students with (dis)abilities in the Garden State.

### **What makes Montgomery Academy different?**

Montgomery Academy offers students an intimate, family-style learning community in which they can truly be themselves. We celebrate each student's individual learning styles, qualities, and strengths which were perhaps overlooked or misunderstood in more conventional school environments. We provide a comprehensive system of therapeutic supports and instructional opportunities in which the student is empowered to make choices that are right for them. As a not for profit 501c3 organization governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees, we have both the freedom and the awesome responsibility to design and deliver a curriculum which is first and foremost about the student. Montgomery Academy has a forty year history of honoring the learning styles of our students. We are successful because of the powerful partnerships created amongst and between the students, staff, families, Board of Trustees, and larger community.

### **What about the staff?**

Our community of learners consists of a dedicated, trained, experienced and highly qualified staff which delivers our innovative curriculum in very small and engaging classes. Staff members interact with students not only as classroom instructors, but in all aspects of school life and a strong emphasis is placed on communication between school and home. The staff meets daily, incorporates weekly counseling sessions, Life Space Interview (see [www.reclaiming.com](http://www.reclaiming.com)) techniques, technology, and a range of multi-sensory options in their teaching practices. The majority of the faculty members hold advanced degrees and all participate in relevant professional development opportunities towards bringing new strategies into the classroom. The professional staff consists of Certified Teachers, Assistant Teachers, a Certified School Nurse, Speech Language Pathologist, Social Workers, a Guidance Counselor, Outreach Workers, and a consulting psychiatrist under the guidance of a Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction, Principal, and Executive Director.

### **What is the average class size and ratio of staff to students?**

Classes host between six and twelve students, dependent on content area. In most classrooms we have two adults to ten students.

### **How do I know if Montgomery Academy is right for my child?**

As parents, you know your son or daughter best. We provide integrated instruction in core academic areas, social skills development, life-skills development, organizational strategies, recreational activities, cultural enrichment, self advocacy, health and wellness, community service and career/college exploration and transition. The staff communicates at a daily meeting where insights are shared towards helping each student have a rewarding and productive day. The best way to determine if we are the right match for your child is to communicate with your local Child Study Team and to come to our campus and see our mission in action. See also ASAH's publication "The Private School Option for Children with Disabilities: What Parents NEED TO KNOW" [www.asah.org/parents.html](http://www.asah.org/parents.html) and/or contact the ASAH Parent Assistance Line by dialing 1.877.287.2724.

### **What is the application deadline for gaining acceptance to Montgomery Academy?**

Ours is a rolling admissions process based on Individualized Education Plan and Child Study Team approval.

### **You are known for your excellent therapeutic and social skills programs, but is the school academic enough?**

Eighty percent of our 2009/10 class went on to continue their studies at four year programs and community colleges such as Kean, Rutgers, Drew, Pace and NJIT. Our students have the option to visit about ten area colleges each year and we administer the PSAT here on site. We continue to forge relationships with national institutions, especially those that have made a genuine commitment to bright and interested students like ours who thrive with appropriate support. We also have a great return rate for students who are ready to go back to their home schools. It just goes to show when students really get their needs met, they are more likely to achieve their personal, long range goals and objectives – not just the ones in their IEP.

### **My child's IEP addresses transition. What about programs that will help s/he transition to adulthood?**

Make It Real is a comprehensive transitional program designed to help students cultivate and acquire the crucial tools necessary for independent living, university study, and lifelong job satisfaction. The programs are integrated into the school day and stress academic, employment, social and self-advocacy skills. It's all about preparing for the work of life! We introduce students to a wide range of opportunities based on their interests and work with them to develop resume writing, interviewing and specific functional skills needed for college and meaningful employment. Career Day, college trips, job exploration and internships allow for countless, real-life teachable moments. Make It Real segments give students the tools they need to become life-long, independent learners in our complex and changing world.

### **Is there an active Home-School Association or Volunteer Opportunities?**

Our community of learners provides a network of referrals to support your family and your child beyond the school day and after graduation. The school supports an emerging alumni group and the Parents and Teachers of Montgomery Academy (PTMA) through its supporting Foundation. The PTMA organizes and hosts several workshops and activities during the school year. Signature events include "Parents Night Out", a Halloween Party, Ice Cream Socials, the "Positively Social" bowling outing and the Teacher Appreciation Breakfast. Speakers and special events are periodically scheduled along with Back To School Night and PRIDE Night. The PTMA is part of the Montgomery Academy Foundation and all are welcome. Additionally, families are encouraged to participate in Club100, an annual fund initiative which raises money for special projects. Please ask for a copy of our "Parent Guide to Giving and Getting Involved" for more information about how you can contribute your time, talent or treasure.