

MPCS  
FAMILY HANDBOOK  
GRADES 1 - 8



Mountain Phoenix  
*community school*

08/01/2022

Education through Imagination

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# INTRODUCTION

Mountain Phoenix Community School (MPCS) is a Jefferson County public charter school that offers a curriculum guided by the Core Principles of Public Waldorf Education. Rich in the arts, music, experiential learning, and scientific inquiry, Mountain Phoenix's learning environment allows children to experience the expansive, imaginative joys of childhood, while inspiring them to become creative thinkers who can solve tomorrow's problems. Students emerge from MPCS with a mastery of skills in alignment with state standards and a lifelong love of learning. Two highlights of our program include:

- **An Artistic Approach to Education.** Well-developed programs in music/orchestra, environmental stewardship, drama, foreign language, movement arts, and handwork enliven the academic curriculum and strengthen the foundation for academic success.
- **A Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum and Learning Environment.** We recognize the stages of child development and foster academic growth in a supportive environment that values each child's learning style and level. MPCS is dedicated to fostering student success through an understanding of each student's personal rhythm and supporting the unique unfolding of their emotional and social intelligences.

The Family Handbook is intended to be a guide to the policies and procedures that support the daily healthy functioning of the school.

Thank you for taking the time to review this handbook at the beginning of the school year. The online presentation of this handbook is designed to allow for easy access when needed and foster environmental stewardship by reducing paper use. Parents will be given notice in the event that any mid-year changes are made. We are grateful your family has chosen to join us as we create a school community that will provide an atmosphere of warmth to surround and support the children in our care. If you have any questions about the contents of this handbook, please contact the school's Director of Education or Director of Enrichment and Student Support, as appropriate.

## MPCS GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### School Vision

The *vision* of Mountain Phoenix Community School is to prepare students to lead in the world as resourceful, courageous, and compassionate global citizens who will take initiative to bring healthy change to their communities through conscious, informed, and independent thinking while empowering others to do the same.

### School Mission

Through a dynamic curriculum based on the core principles of Public Waldorf Education, the *mission* of Mountain Phoenix Community School is to cultivate each student's capacity for creative thinking, effective communication, and interest in others that inspires thoughtful, responsible action in the 21st century world.

### Core Principles of Public Waldorf Education

MPCS is committed to the Core Principles of Public Waldorf Education adopted by The

Alliance for Public Waldorf Education:

1. **Image of the Human Being:** *Public Waldorf education is founded on a coherent image of the developing human being.*
2. **Child Development:** *An understanding of child development guides all aspects of the educational program, to the greatest extent possible within established legal mandates.*
3. **Social Change Through Education:** *Public Waldorf education exists to serve both the individual and society*
4. **Human Relationships:** *Public Waldorf Schools foster a culture of healthy relationships.*
5. **Access and Diversity:** *Public Waldorf Schools work to increase diversity and access to all sectors of society.*
6. **Collaborative Leadership:** *School leadership is conducted through shared responsibilities within established legal structures.*
7. **Schools as Learning Communities:** *Public Waldorf schools cultivate a love of lifelong learning and self-knowledge*

Please read more details about the Core Principles of Public Waldorf Education [here](#).

### Commitment to Equity, Accessibility, Inclusivity and Diversity

Mountain Phoenix Community School strives for an equitable and accessible educational experience and environment for all. Our community embraces diversity in all its forms, including, but not limited to, differences in ethnicity, cultural and religious heritage, sexual orientation, gender expansiveness, socioeconomic background, geographic origin, and family structure. We provide our students with a rich, inclusive curriculum that reflects the world in which we live and fosters a safe atmosphere where every member of the community is respected and multiple viewpoints can be peacefully expressed.

Diversity within our community is an asset. For this reason, we actively cultivate this diversity in all aspects of school life including the composition of our student body, employees, Governing Council, and other parent/caregiver volunteer groups. We commit to work through the tensions that arise in the midst of genuine community and to use those tensions as a vehicle to critically and fearlessly self-reflect.

We believe this commitment to equity, accessibility, diversity and inclusivity will help prepare today's children for tomorrow's world. Our commitment to diversity and inclusiveness is integrated into our community's values as we hold ourselves accountable to operating in alignment with the Core Principles of Public Waldorf Education.

### Waldorf Pedagogy Anti-Discrimination Statement

As a Jefferson county charter school guided by the Core Principles of Public Waldorf Education and in acknowledgment of our school's explicit value of diversity and access, we at Mountain Phoenix Community School accept the difficult truth that Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Waldorf education, expressed beliefs that, by the standards of equity we strive for today, can be considered discriminatory. Our school formally denounces any such beliefs and statements made by Rudolf Steiner. It is imperative that we seek to understand why such statements were

historically part of our educational philosophy. We believe it is necessary to fundamentally question Steiner's teachings to determine how they have negatively affected the development of Public Waldorf education, especially with regards to questions of discrimination on the basis of race, gender identity, sexual orientation, class, ethnicity, culture and religious beliefs. Our school community believes public Waldorf education should be based on the idea that all human beings have the right to be treated equally and respected when they raise their voices against discrimination.

### Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination

As a public entity, Mountain Phoenix Community School is bound by state and Federal laws regarding equal opportunity and non-discrimination. The school is dedicated to the principles of equal opportunity and prevention of harassment in all of its practices. We prohibit unlawful discrimination or harassment against individuals on the basis of age 40 and over, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, color, religion, national origin, disability, military status, genetic information, or any other status protected by applicable state or local law. Any individual who has been the subject of discrimination or harassment may bring questions, concerns, and/or complaints to either the School Director or the Mountain Phoenix Governing Council.

## MPCS ORGANIZATION

### Governing Council

The Governing Council (legally known as Board of Directors) is authorized through Jefferson County School District and plays a vital role integral to upholding the mission, vision, and policies of the school.

The Governing Council generates and adopts Bylaws and school policies necessary to comply with the terms of the charter and the law, as well as any other policies necessary to operate Mountain Phoenix Community School. The Governing Council is responsible for assuring that all aspects of the financial and programmatic accountability systems fulfill Mountain Phoenix's contract with Jefferson County School District, as well as any legal obligations to state and federal agencies.

### Governing Council Members

The Governing Council consists of caregivers and community members who serve 3-year terms. Election and/or appointment of new Council members occurs annually. School Directors and Faculty Representatives give input to the Governing Council but are not voting members.

For a list of current GC members and to view the meeting schedule, please visit <https://www.mountainphoenix.org/governing-council/>

To reach all of the governing council members at once, email [board@mountainphoenix.org](mailto:board@mountainphoenix.org).

### GC Standing Committees:

- Mountain Phoenix Accountability Committee
- Finance
- Master Planning

- Governance Committee
- Personnel

## School Leadership

**Director of Education: Michael Heffernan**

**Director of Enrichment and Student Support: Maggie Payne**

The Governing Council believes that ensuring the school has strong leadership is their primary responsibility; therefore, they have established a collaborative leadership model led by two co-Directors, a Director of Education and a Director of Enrichment and Student Support. The duties of the School Directors include tasks and responsibilities delegated by the Mountain Phoenix Governing Council. These tasks relate to ensuring organizational focus, developing people, and developing the organization.

Together the School Directors are responsible for leading the school in all aspects of its day-to-day operations in close collaboration with stakeholders. The School Directors act according to the policies and procedures as approved by the Governing Council.

## School Employees

MPCS employees endeavor to be a collaborative, working body of the school that holds the impulse of Public Waldorf Education, the children in our care, and the whole school community. Employees assume a wide range of roles beyond the classroom in order to support school and student success.

## Family Council

The role of the Family Council is to support the mission of Mountain Phoenix Community School, programs, students, teachers, and staff.

Ideally each class at the school is represented in the Family Council. These representatives attend Family Council meetings and conduct the business of the Family Council. All caregivers are encouraged to attend and have their voice heard at these meetings. Learn more about the community building events and festivals hosted by the [Family Council!](#)

## MPCS Foundation

The [MPCS Foundation](#) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit entity that helps to financially support the vision and mission of Mountain Phoenix Community School. It is the fiscal agent for all school-related fundraising activities and charitable donations on behalf of the school.

The MPCS Foundation, which is composed of MPCS community volunteers, plans and coordinates all major fundraising events that support the entire school (e.g., Fun Run, Annual Give and Auction). Find out more about the inner workings, accomplishments and historical data of the [Foundation](#) as well as how to get involved!

# EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

## Curriculum

Mountain Phoenix Community School is a member of the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education and is guided by the Core Principles of Public Waldorf Education. Our approach to education is developed to meet the children of our school and community, while aligning to these principles. MPCS teachers provide a curriculum rich in the arts, storytelling, and academics. Teachers plan for engaging and active student learning, rich in content, through hands-on experiences and artistic expression. We are dedicated to a play-based preschool and kindergarten which are the foundation to prepare students for an educational journey that develops their full range of human capacities: intellectual, physical, emotions, social, and aesthetic.

Highlights of a Public Waldorf educational program in grades 1-8 include:

- Students learn through rich thematic units called Main Lesson Blocks in which they are taught developmentally-appropriate history, social studies, science, geography, reading, writing and math.
- Students make their own books, called Main Lesson Books, using original writings and artistic, visual representations of their learning.
- All students learn to paint, draw, and do form drawing and handwork.
- All students learn music through singing, recorder, and/or strings class.
- Students participate in Movements classes weekly including Eurythmy (movement to speech or music) in Grades 1-5.
- Experiential projects and activities are an important part of the learning experience.
- History and literature are presented through a rich storytelling tradition that inspires imagination and the creation of mental pictures, supporting healthy neurological development and the basis of creative thinking.
- Theatrical arts are an integral part of each student's yearly experience. Plays are produced and performed for parents each year.
- The MPCS curriculum covers all of the K-Grade 8 Common Core State Standards for Math and English Language Arts by the end of 8th grade.
- Seasonal festivals and events are celebrated by the community as a "golden thread" that winds its way throughout the year.

## Homework

Homework, or classwork assigned outside of the regular school day, will have a purpose and meaning. The developmental age of the child and time needed to complete homework are taken into consideration by teachers in assigning homework.

## Inclement Weather

Please send students dressed appropriately for the weather. Students will go outside on cold days so please send your child prepared for these conditions. Students remain outside unless the temperature goes below 20 degrees F, there is excessive precipitation, or extreme heat.

## Student Fees and Fines

### Student Materials Fee

Parents and caregivers are asked to pay an annual materials fee for each child enrolled at MPCS. These fees help cover the cost of consumable materials or items that your child will be

bringing home. In addition, these fees help supplement the limited state funding for schools and allow us to provide our students the beautiful, artistic learning materials that are an integral part of a Waldorf education. Care and stewardship of these materials is taught in class. Replacement fees will be assessed for lost or damaged materials.

## Fines

Full replacement cost will be assessed during the school year for damaged or lost learning items that belong to the school. This includes books, chromebooks, student lockers, desks, etc. The yearbook may be withheld until fines are paid.

## Lockers

Lockers are assigned to students in grades 6-8 and are the property of MPCS. Lockers are subject to inspection at any time. Students are not to abuse or deface Lockers in any way. MPCS assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen items out of student lockers. Large amounts of money, expensive jewelry, electronics, and other valuable possessions should not be brought to school.

## Extracurricular Activity Rights

MPCS students may participate in non-academic activities at other schools in the school district provided that the prerequisites for participation are met and there is space available in the desired activity or program. Where such participation requires payment of a fee, the parent/caregiver of that student shall be responsible for payment of the fee.

## Lost and Found

Parents are expected to clearly mark all students' belongings including (but not limited to) coats, hats, gloves, boots, sweaters, lunch boxes, backpacks, and water bottles with the student's name. The Lost and Found areas are in the rear entry of the Main Office building and outside the Middle School Office. Campus personnel will drop ALL found items in one of these designated areas for the convenience of those who are looking for them. Attempts may be made to contact the parents of children who have items in Lost and Found; however, this is a volunteer activity and cannot be guaranteed. Best practice is for parents to check Lost and Found regularly to retrieve items that may be lost. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity on the first of every month.

## Student Assessment

### Underlying Concepts and Intent

At MPCS, our assessment approach is based on the following concepts:

- Assessments provide an accurate, reliable, and authentic picture of the child's growth
- The assessment process is multi-dimensional, reflecting written and artistic work, performance tasks, oral participation, homework, quizzes, tests, group and individual projects and presentations, and behavior in social and learning situations with tangible results. In other words, the assessment focuses on the things that students say, do, and create as measures of student progress.
- Assessments provide timely information to school leaders, parents, and other stakeholders (district and state authorities) to support continuous improvement in curriculum and instruction and to address the learning needs of all students.

- Assessment processes and products should inspire further learning for students and support improvement and excellence for teachers.
- By eighth grade, most MPCS students should excel in standardized assessments aligned with Common Core standards.

Teachers use both summative and formative assessments to provide evidence of student learning in regard to meeting MPCS learning standards and expectations.

### **Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Assessment**

Beginning in 3rd grade, MPCS uses a formal interim assessment called MAP Growth to monitor student progress three times per year. This is an online adaptive assessment that measures student mastery of skills along a continuum of learning and helps teachers understand how to support student achievement of MPCS adopted learning standards.

### **State Mandated Assessments**

Beginning in 3rd grade, Colorado requires students in publicly-funded schools to take the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) assessment. This standardized assessment is administered annually, each spring. It assesses academic achievement of the Common Core State Standards in Reading, Writing, and Math for all students in 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Additionally, Science is assessed for all 5th and 8th grade students annually, and Social Studies for 4th and 7th grade students once every three years.

Compliance with the Colorado READ Act requires all public schools to assess and monitor developing literacy skills for students in Kindergarten through 3rd grade. In Jeffco, DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy Skills) is the adopted assessment for this purpose. READ Plans are developed for students reading below MPCS established grade level expectations and maintained until grade level reading proficiency is achieved.

### **MPCS Early Literacy Assessments**

MPCS uses an additional early literacy assessment that is aligned to the curriculum and learning expectations of our first and second grades. This assessment has been developed by CR Success Learning, a state approved literacy intervention program.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences & Student Progress Reports**

Student progress is reported through parent/teacher conferences offered twice per year. At least one Parent/Teacher Conference is mandatory in the fall; however, an additional, yet optional, opportunity for a formal conference occurs in the winter. Parents and teachers are welcome to make additional appointments to discuss student progress, as needed. Teachers will contact parents if concerns arise regarding a student's progress in school. It is also essential that teachers be made aware of any changes in your child's life that might affect their performance in school.

Teachers share progress in all areas with examples of work from a student portfolio during Parent Conferences. Written progress reports for students in grades 1-5 are sent out twice per year. Middle school students and parents can continuously monitor progress throughout the year using Infinite Campus and will receive written progress twice per year.

End-of-Year narrative reports are sent to parents at the end of the school year and will include a written narrative/summary of the child's progress during the year, including highlights of the year, as well as main lesson blocks. The portfolio of student work that is collected over the year as evidence of student learning is also sent home at the end of the year.

Parents and teachers are welcome to make additional appointments to discuss student progress, as needed. Teachers will contact parents if concerns arise regarding a student's progress in school. It is also essential that teachers be made aware of any changes in your child's life that might affect their performance in school.

## Class / Teacher Looping

Mountain Phoenix's follows looping practices for teachers and students for preschool through eighth grade. Looping means that a teacher stays with the class from year to year, as well as students staying in the same classroom cohort for the duration of the looping period.. As our school is inspired by Waldorf Education, we believe in the importance of class teachers remaining with students for multiple years. This practice fosters an environment for children to learn more deeply, a faculty that is enlivened through a changing curriculum, and stronger community relationships between students, teachers, and parents.

At Mountain Phoenix, students will ideally have one teacher for PreKindergarten, one teacher for Kindergarten, one teacher for 1st through 5th grade, and one teacher from 6th through 8th grade.

## Student Retention and Acceleration

Mountain Phoenix staff and school administration will work collaboratively with parents in all cases where grade level retention or acceleration is to be considered for a student. The final determination will be made by the Director of Education. Promotion and retention are to be considered and determined on three levels: academic performance, emotional readiness, and social readiness.

Students who show decided and documented deficiencies in these areas may be considered for retention. Retention decisions will be based upon developmental and achievement assessments, teacher-documented anecdotal observations, and parent anecdotal information. In the event a teacher is considering retention, parents and administration will be informed as soon as possible. This recommendation should come no later than the first part of the second semester, when winter conferences are scheduled.

In the rare situation when a child is being considered for acceleration, the parents will be invited to a meeting with a team which includes the child's class teacher and Director of Education to discuss the student's progress and possible acceleration. Decisions to permit a student to skip to the next grade level are very unusual and shall be made by the Director of Education, after completing an evaluation process taking into consideration academic performance, talents, social and emotional behavior patterns.

## STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES – THE THREE STREAMS APPROACH to MTSS

The Three Streams of Student Support is the model MPCS follows to implement a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) in a compassionate and cohesive manner that aligns with our educational philosophy.

MPCS is committed to fostering a safe, secure, and caring environment in which all children will be able to actively engage in learning, participate respectfully in all activities, and build

healthy social relationships within the school community. We expect that students honor all safety guidelines and school rules and remain respectful and considerate, in actions and words, of others, the environment, and school property. We recognize that, at times, students need additional guidance to accomplish this.

## Three Streams/MTSS Foundation

Most of the time our children are doing well at school. They are “in the flow.” Sometimes, though, they experience challenges. For one reason or another they feel out of kilter with their teacher and/or classmates. Their challenges may have to do with the social realm (“They’re being mean to me.”). Some students experience learning challenges (“Everyone knows how to read except me.”). Occasionally students act out, misbehave, or exhibit non-compliant behavior (“I don’t have to if I don’t want to; you can’t make me.”).

Social and emotional well-being is a prerequisite for academic success. Mountain Phoenix Community School is committed to providing support for those students who are experiencing challenges. This commitment is the foundation of the curriculum and the heart of our work at MPCS. Our Three Streams of Student Support process is intended to provide as much support as needed for students who are experiencing social, behavioral, or learning challenges. It is based on the work of [Kim John Payne](#), who is respected worldwide for helping children, caregivers, and teachers navigate challenges as well as conflict. The Three Streams are rooted in Restorative Practices which guide and nurture healthy relationships between all members of our community.



### Underlying Premises of Three Streams Work

- **Healthy relationships are central to building community.** Our success is built upon partnerships between and among ALL members of our community (students, teachers, staff, caregivers, community members).
- **The diversity of our community is one of our greatest assets.** Public Waldorf schools and teachers have the responsibility to creatively address the developmental needs of the students with the most inclusive possible approaches for all learners.
- **Accountability shifts behavior.** Blame and shame have no place in this work. When things are going wrong we must set them right, and each person involved, even adults, can take some responsibility.
- **Empathy is key to success in life.** Our interventions seek to build empathy in the children so that they can learn to stand in one another’s shoes.
- **A child who misbehaves is a disoriented child.** If we realize that a child who is pushing the behavioral boundaries is disoriented, we approach the child differently—less punitive—than we do when we see their behaviors as intentionally disrespectful or disruptive.

- **Conflict is an important part of being human and is necessary for growth.** If we expect that we can remove all conflict from our children’s lives we set ourselves up for frustration. Conflict is a given, and most of us have learned our greatest lessons from the conflicts we’ve experienced. Our task is to let children know that we are there, guiding them through their conflicts so that they may learn constructive lessons from them.
- **Our task is to remove hindrances to learning.** Children who experience learning challenges present us with a riddle: What is the key that unlocks their capacities? As educators and caregivers our work is to seek these keys and support the child to find areas of success.
- **We begin with implicit approaches before moving to explicit approaches.** Implicit means “not directly expressed.” In other words, it’s a process that is there, but the children are not necessarily aware of it. The Waldorf curriculum is rich in implicit approaches to social and emotional challenges. In fact, much of the Three Streams work is not apparent to the parent body or the students because it is implicit—embedded in the stories, pictures, artwork, speech, music, theater, and rhythms of the lessons. On the other hand, an explicit approach directly addresses a situation in the class or with an individual child.

When we support a child we begin with the lightest holding possible. If that doesn’t work, we move on to more explicit, heavier-holding approaches.

- **Waldorf Educators are life-long learners who strive to observe and understand the children they teach.** An understanding of learning styles, temperaments, and the family contribute to the teacher’s deeper understanding of the child. The inner reflective work of the teacher is also a valuable tool in better understanding the needs and behavior of a child.
- **Children look to adults as models.** Adults in our community strive at all times to be models for children.
- **Adults’ self-reflection and personal development are necessary to remain equitable.** Continual, thorough examination of our actions, beliefs, and biases, ongoing training on cultural responsiveness, and systematic auditing of our data and practices, help ensure that our school’s Three Streams support system is fairly accessible to all.

## MPCS Code of Conduct

The values that are embedded in our curriculum and our work with each other can be distilled into three statements—our Code of Conduct.

### OUR CODE OF CONDUCT

***We are kind and respectful***

***We are safe***

***We are responsible***

The Code of Conduct is simple enough to be understood by a young child, yet it contains all the issues with which an eighth grader might wrestle. It informs our guidelines for working with the children and their interactions with each other. Teachers and administrators use the Code of Conduct throughout the grades to build the students’ awareness of appropriate conduct.

### Monthly Virtues

Each month MPCS students and community members discuss, study, and practice virtues that build character and reflect our school’s values.

August: Community  
September: Kindness  
October: Courage  
November: Gratitude  
December: Generosity  
January: Inclusion  
February: Respect  
March: Perseverance  
April: Responsibility  
May: Growth

## **Educational / Academic Support Stream**

As part of the public education system, MPCS supports universal access to classrooms and each student's achievement of grade level expectations. Daily lessons are balanced in their content of academic skill, artistic expression, and kinesthetic engagement, and the teacher recognizes cognitive differentiation and personal individuation when delivering instruction. Differentiated instructional practices are part of every teacher's skill set and form the basis for accommodating individual student needs within the classroom and developing additional instructional and/or behavioral plans when necessary to fully support student success and the achievement of MPCS grade level learning goals. Importantly, differentiation practices are not used to define student ability groups on a permanent basis and the class teacher balances these practices by continuously fostering a sense of community and social harmony based upon an integrated, mixed-ability educational environment that provides equity of opportunity.

Students who are performing below grade level are provided additional learning support. Teachers implement appropriate interventions and/or accommodations to support the student's learning and monitor progress. A Child Study team may be convened to gain more insight into a child's needs and to prepare a learning plan for them. Follow-up meetings are held to determine success of the intervention and accommodations, and the need for additional support systems. If current strategies are not working, the plan is altered until success is achieved. Caregivers are included as collaborative partners in developing the appropriate educational plan to support their child.

Students needing additional support beyond the level of classroom accommodations receive support through MPCS's Educational Support Services department that includes highly qualified learning specialists, para-Educators, interventionists, school nurse, and additional service providers for speech language therapy, occupational therapy, mental health, and English language proficiency.

Our Student Support Services team works in collaboration with the classroom teacher and caregivers to close learning gaps for all students.

## **Behavioral Care Stream**

The teachers at MPCS strive to cultivate each student's capacity for creative thinking, effective communication, and interest in others that inspires thoughtful, responsible action in the world. Meeting these goals is the responsibility of everyone connected with the school.

## General Student Behavior Expectations:

*For all students, we are kind and respectful, safe, and responsible in the following ways:*

### We are Kind and Respectful

- Everyone's personal safety and well-being comes foremost.
- Conduct yourself during the lessons in such a way that the teacher can teach the whole class with minimal interruptions.
- Treat all teachers, staff, parents/caregivers, students and visitors with the same courtesy and respect you would wish to receive yourself.
- Do not use words or actions that are crude, vulgar, profane or sexually suggestive, which contain drug, alcohol or tobacco references, advertising, promotions and likenesses, or which advocate racial, ethnic, political or religious prejudice.

### We are Safe

- Remain within school boundaries while at school and never to leave the school campus without permission.
- Do not break the law by bringing drugs or weapons of any kind to school, including facsimiles of weapons.
- Improper use of the internet or texting will have consequences in accordance with [Jeffco Policy JS](#), including involvement by law enforcement if the student is 10 years old or older.
- Buying/selling/trading of personal property is not allowed.
- Follow the [Jeffco Student Code of Conduct](#).

### We are Responsible

- Help keep the classroom and the school grounds clean and tidy.
- Keep your school materials in good order and good condition.
- Treat all property, not only your own, with care. You will be required to repair or replace anything (apart from your own property) that has been damaged.
- Be at school and in the classroom on time for every lesson.
- Participate in class and do your class work to the best of your ability.
- Hand in all required assignments on time.
- Refrain from public displays of affection that are romantic, exclusive, and/or sexually suggestive.
- Follow instructions for personal property at school.
- Follow the [Mountain Phoenix Dress Code](#).

## Personal Property at School

The following items are not allowed at school:

- Toys and games (stuffed animals, trinkets etc.) unless with explicit, individual permission
- Candy and gum should not be packed into lunches or consumed at school, unless included in a student support plan or with explicit, individual permission
- Electronic devices (smart watches, laptops, tablets, etc.) unless explicitly included in an individual health plan or student support plan
- Cell phones (phones must remain at home, or must be silenced and stored by the teacher or put away until the end of the day)

- Unsafe items – drugs, weapons, knives (including pocket knives of all sizes), or toy weapons of any kind are against the JEFFCO Code of Conduct and possession of these items may have serious consequences. Any violation of this rule must be immediately reported to a Director.

## Student Discipline at MPCS

Discipline is an integral part of the Waldorf curriculum, evolving over the years to meet the developmental needs of the child. The Waldorf Educator sees the child as consisting of body, soul and spirit and this evokes, within adults, a reverence, respect, and sensitivity for that child's being. It is the responsibility of the caregivers, teachers, and staff to guide the child during the early years of life. The adults in the school must be models of respectful behavior and communication at all times.

Additionally, each child contributes to the classroom and school environment, they must learn to be responsible for themselves and also be a member of the class and community – in essence, learn to become self-disciplined. Respectful and safe behavior on campus and at school events off-campus is of highest priority. Teachers and staff, in collaboration with caregivers, will work to support the change of inappropriate, disruptive and/or disrespectful behavior that interferes with the learning environment to restore the child to being an integral part of the learning process, as we believe children are capable of changing and growing.

Waldorf Educators are life-long learners who strive to observe and understand the children they teach. An understanding of learning styles, temperaments, and the family contribute to the teacher's deeper understanding of the child. The inner reflective work of the teacher is also a valuable tool in better understanding the needs and behavior of a child.

## Restorative Practices

MPCS is guided by the Core Principles of Public Waldorf Education, and we use Restorative Practices to foster Principle Five, Healthy Human Relationships.

Restorative Practices are a mindset, not a curriculum or program, which focuses on building positive relationships and providing opportunities for community members to take responsibility for their behavior and their lives. At the heart of restorative practices is the belief that we are all in this together, that we are all connected.

Restorative Practices are ways of proactively developing relationships and community, as well as repairing community when harm is done. After conflict or harm, Restorative Practices provide a way of thinking about, talking about, and responding to issues and problems by involving all participants to discuss their feelings and opinions, identify what happened, describe how it affected everyone, and find solutions to make things better.

## Compliance with Jeffco Policies

As a charter school authorized by Jeffco School District, we are required to be in compliance with the Jeffco Discipline Code regarding such things as bringing controlled substances, weapons and habitual behaviors that are detrimental to the children and to the school environment. These behaviors must be reported to Jeffco.

Major and minor student offenses are tracked by the school in Infinite Campus. MPCS follows Jeffco policies and regulations regarding suspension, expulsion and compulsory

attendance in accordance with Federal and State law. There is a direct link to the Jeffco Code of Conduct and Discipline Policies on the school's website. Parents are expected to review these expectations with their child(ren) and acknowledge their understanding of these expectations by logging into their Jeffco Parent Portal.

## Disciplinary Equity and Accountability

All MPCS employees have the responsibility to ensure all students are cared for in an equitable way. Members of the Behavioral Care Stream are committed to identifying and addressing gaps of disproportionality and inequity in our disciplinary practice through:

1. Ongoing professional development to aid teachers, administration, and staff in cultural competency, examining biases, courageous conversations, and current best practices.
2. Continued partnership with stakeholders, including caregivers and community members to maintain healthy relationships and dialogue.
3. Regular and systematic examination of our disciplinary data (including but not limited to: Restorative Conversation Logs, Major Behavior Referrals, and Suspensions).
4. Eliciting feedback from all stakeholders.
5. Creating plans to address disproportionality and inequity where they exist.

## Social and Emotional Care Stream

MPCS works to develop social health and wellness by establishing an environment of mutual respect, safety and inclusion within the school community that addresses social difficulties using an understanding of child development and Waldorf pedagogical insights. Each class builds a solid, age-appropriate classroom community through daily rhythms, class agreements, and other tools. These are at the heart of nurturing healthy behavior.

Students (individuals and groups) are brought to the Social and Emotional Care Stream when they are having difficulties in the social realm. These difficulties may be noticed by teachers or family members at recess or in the classroom and may include (but are not limited to) non-inclusion, excluding/being excluded, and bullying/being bullied, teasing/being teased.

## Identifying Bullying Behavior

In considering the social health of the school environment, it is important to identify behaviors and situations that are no longer healthy.

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- **An Imbalance of Power:** People who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- **Repetition:** Bullying behaviors happen more than once and are a part of a larger pattern of interactions between students.

MPCS fully complies with [Jeffco Policy JBC: Prevention of Bullying](#).

## Safe2Tell

Jeffco Schools use an anonymous tip line for students, employees, parents/caregivers, and community members to report anything that concerns or threatens you, your friends, your family or your community.

Safe2Tell is open 24/7, 365 to take reports at 1-877-542-7233 or [www.safe2tell.org](http://www.safe2tell.org).

## DRESS CODE FOR STUDENTS

### Purpose

The scope of education at MPCS extends to consideration of the environment which surrounds children when they attend school or school sponsored events and activities. Because of this, we ask that children dress in ways that support the curriculum and allow full participation in the activities that occur. This policy intends to encourage in students an awareness of decorum that will support them both as learners in a safe, inclusive preschool through 8th grade learning community and, later, as adult members of various communities in the world.

MPCS believes that all students have an intrinsic worth based upon who they are and not what they wear. Additionally, we recognize that students' clothing may influence their own and other's performance at school, and healthy participation in the social environment. Standards regarding student attire are intended to help students concentrate on schoolwork, reduce discipline problems and improve school order and safety. Students also shall not wear clothing or effect an appearance that compromises a safe environment. Although dress is a matter of self-expression and is influenced by weather and fashion, we encourage attire that is functional and contributes to a healthy environment. These guidelines may not cover all situations and faculty/administration may be required at times to address particular attire. Please contact your child's class teacher or any administrator if you have any questions about specific items in this code.

### Guidance

To ensure the best educational experience for our children in a safe environment that is focused on learning and provides a healthy social atmosphere, we encourage the following dress code standards:

#### Recommended/Allowed:

1. Clothing that is functional and allows for active, large motor skill movement and games, special subjects (eurythmy, art, gardening, etc.)
2. Shirts/tops must have a strap over each shoulder and the bottoms of shirts/tops must meet or be longer than the top of the pants so undergarments are not visible.
3. Shorts should have an inseam of at least three inches.
4. Come dressed appropriately for all weather conditions.
5. Comfortable, practical, flat-soled shoes that are firmly attached to the feet.
6. Wearing school-related apparel.

#### Not Allowed:

1. Clothing that is overly revealing or sexually suggestive should not be worn at school.
2. The midriff, back, chest, or buttocks should not be exposed.

3. Writing, images or other insignia that are crude, vulgar, profane or sexually suggestive, or which bear drug, alcohol or tobacco advertising, promotions and likenesses, or which display or advocate derogatory racial, ethnic, political or religious messages/prejudice.
4. Clothing with purposeful very large rips, holes, or tears which may display undergarments.
5. Wearing sunglasses, hoods, or hats in buildings.
6. Apparel or shoes with spikes, lights or wheels.
7. Bare feet.
8. Dangling jewelry.
9. Hair dye (see middle school privileges below).
10. Makeup (see middle school privileges below).

Discouraged:

Clothing, hats, backpacks, lunchboxes, shoes and other personal items which display wording/images depicting media/commercialized characters, advertisements, cartoon images, slogans and commercial logos with the primary purpose of marketing a product (large images).

### Upper School Privileges

Students in grades 6-8 will have the following variations in recognition of their stage of development and maturity:

- Modest makeup applied at home.
- Dyed or highlighted hair.

### Special Events

Special events give students an opportunity to share what they are learning with the whole school community. Their clothing should exhibit the exciting, respectful mood of these events. With this in mind, we ask that students be dressed to reflect these special experiences while keeping within the dress code. Teachers will notify parents and students of the type of clothing needed prior to specific events. Efforts will be made to suggest attire which is inclusive to many dimensions of diversity.

### Enforcement

In order to maintain academic focus and promote safety in our school, MPCS requests student adherence to and parental/caregiver support of the above dress code. If a student is in violation of the above rules, they will be asked to abide by any decision made by staff members and/or the administration about questionable items.

To ensure effective and equitable enforcement of this dress code, school staff shall enforce the dress code consistently and in a manner that does not reinforce and/or increase marginalization or shame a child or family. At all times, faculty/staff will strive to employ care and consideration when speaking with children and/or caregivers regarding appropriate attire.

If clothing is determined to be unsafe, inappropriate, or distracting from learning or play experiences, teachers or administration will communicate directly with the caregiver of children in ECE and grades 1-4. Faculty and administration will use discretion and courtesy when addressing appropriate attire with students in grades 5-8, and will communicate with a caregiver if necessary. Caregivers may be called to bring alternative clothing. The school may also lend the student appropriate attire to wear for the day.

# FIELD TRIPS

Field trips provide learning opportunities in authentic contexts, and are an integral part of the curriculum at Mountain Phoenix. In addition to several day trips throughout the year, students in grades 3-8 typically have one overnight class trip during the year.

Parents are expected to sign permission forms and complete all necessary paperwork in order for their student to attend a scheduled field trip. MPCS may, at times, rent bus to transport students for a field trip. All students will share the cost of the rental of the bus as a portion of the field trip fee. Field trip fees are paid by each family unless otherwise covered for the whole class through a donation or use of Foundation funds.

Parents helping with the transportation for any school-sponsored activity must have a valid driver license and a vehicle with seat belts for each passenger. Students must wear their seat belts for the duration of the time they are in the vehicle. Parents are responsible for providing proof of liability insurance when agreeing to transport students and must complete the school form verifying active coverage prior to any trip. Further requirements for parent chaperones may be found in the school Field Trip Policy on the website.

Students are expected to display respect for others, self-restraint, and good manners on all field trips just as they are in a Mountain Phoenix classroom. Behavior that violates MPCS rules or jeopardizes the safety of others on a field trip is unacceptable and may result in exclusion from future activities in addition to disciplinary action at school. In extreme cases, parents will be contacted and asked to arrange for their child to be picked up immediately. Furthermore, a student may be excluded from a scheduled field trip due to repetitive and habitually disruptive or unsafe behavior displayed throughout the school year. Staff will communicate such a case with the parents at least two days prior to any trip.

## Overnight Field Trip Paperwork and Payments

Parents of an eligible student planning to attend an overnight field trip must attend a mandatory parent meeting and complete an Overnight Field Trip Packet and all other required paperwork no later than the deadline communicated by the trip leader. If paperwork is not completed by the communicated deadline, the student may be excluded from the trip. Due to the school having to pay in advance, fees may not be refundable.

## Overnight Field Trip Chaperones

Requests for parent overnight field trip drivers/chaperones will be made by class teachers or the trip leader. The responsibility of chaperoning an overnight field trip includes the requirement that all chaperones must follow Mountain Phoenix's guidelines and fill out all necessary paperwork. Guidelines may be found in the MPCS Field Trip Policy on the school website.

# STUDENT HEALTH / ILLNESS

## Student Illness

The best place for a student to be when they are ill is at home. If a student exhibits any of the following symptoms, they should stay at home to recover and prevent the spread of any illness:

• Vomiting and/or diarrhea	• Head lice
• Fever of 100.4 or higher	• Rash
• Severe cough	• Pink Eye
• Infectious runny nose	• Communicable disease

Any student having a temperature of 100.4 degrees or above during the school day must be picked up from school within 30 minutes of the school contacting the parent or designated emergency contact. Parents/caregivers are encouraged to arrange for back-up care for their child ahead of time in case of sudden onset of illness.

If a student is diagnosed as having a communicable illness, MPCS recommends having a doctor's note granting permission for the student to return to school on file in the office upon the student's return to school. Failure to comply with this policy may result in the student being asked to leave school until such a note is produced if administration suspects that the student is still contagious.

## Sending Students to the Office or Health Clinic

Teachers and staff will attempt to take care of minor issues (such as needing a Band-Aid) themselves. The Health Clinic is for more serious issues; to provide first aid and screen students complaining of illness. Teachers are not permitted to apply ointment of any kind or dispense anything orally; this must be done in the Health Clinic and only if the child has a health care plan in place. If a student is sent to the Health Clinic, he or she will be escorted by another student or adult, if needed.

## Medication Policy for Students

District policy prohibits school personnel from administering prescription, nonprescription, and herbal medications to students unless appropriate administration cannot be reasonably accomplished outside of school hours and the parent or legal guardian is not available to administer the medication at school. Medication will be administered only by the designated Clinic Aide pursuant to the Nurse Practice Act. MPCS Administrative Assistants are trained as Clinic Aides in the absence of the School Nurse.

In order to administer any medication to a child, a copy of the original prescription or doctor's permission letter must be on file at the school. All medication should be brought to school in the original container listing proper dosage information and the child's full name. A medication administration form must be filled out by the parent(s) before any medication can be administered by our staff. All medication brought to school MUST be given to the designated Clinic Aide or Nurses' Delegate at the beginning of the day. Medication of any kind should never be kept in a child's backpack, cubby or lunch box. Medication will be kept in the office in a locked container until it is given back to the authorized adult at pick-up.

Medication that must be refrigerated will be kept in a locked container in the Health Office refrigerator. In cases where a prescription must be in the classroom (i.e., EPIPEN), approval must be received from the designated Clinic Aide. Approved guidelines must be followed.

## Lunch and Nutrition Guidelines

Teachers will provide an environment of gratitude before snack and lunch by allowing time for students to recite a verse, sing a song or have a moment of quiet. Each grades student is asked to bring a snack to school each day. Lunch may be brought from home or purchased through the hot lunch program (see below). The school does not have the facilities to prepare, warm, or refrigerate school lunches brought from home. Parents are asked to pack lunches with attention given to the health and growing needs of children. Healthy, well balanced meals provide essential nutrition for their brains and bodies to perform optimally.

Candy, soda pop, and other foods high in sugar or caffeine are not acceptable in school lunches at MPCs. Teachers will not allow students to eat these at school. They will put them away for the ride home, and parents will be notified. If a child does not have anything to eat, the teacher may ask students if they would like to share a small part of their lunch if parents have not requested otherwise. Teachers will communicate with parents at the beginning of the year concerning lunch expectations. They will also teach students to properly use recycling and trash bins at school.

## Hot Lunch Program

The MPCs hot lunch program is provided through My Kid's Lunch and is a part of the federal lunch program. As such, MPCs has limited control over the menu offerings each day.

Students may bring their own lunch or they may participate in the school's hot lunch program. qualifying students may receive free or reduced lunches. A link to lunch menus can be found on our website.

## Special Dietary Issues

If a child has special dietary issues, parents are asked to make these known to the health office and the class teacher. Food allergies must be reported to the health office to ensure a health plan is in place.

## Media Guidelines

MPCS believes that the consumerism, violence, and passive entertainment promoted by mass-media culture do not support the well-being of children. We strongly recommend limiting media viewing for children. Such articles are posted on the website and other Waldorf sites such as AWSNA and the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education.

## SCHOOL HOURS

### Classroom Hours

The School Day begins promptly each day. Friday is an early release day each week to accommodate the weekly All-Faculty Meeting at 2pm. The daily hours of attendance are as follows:

- Half-day PreK, Monday - Friday: 8:15a -12:15p
- Full day PreK: Monday - Thursday: 8:15a- 3:15p; Friday: 8:15a - 1:15p
- Full day KG: Monday - Friday: 8:00a - 1:30p
- Grades 1-5: Monday-Thursday: 8:15a - 3:30p; Friday: 8:15a -1:30 p
- Grades 5-8: Monday-Thursday: 8:00a - 3:30p; Friday: 8:00a -1:30 p

### Office Hours

#### **Main Office:**

7:30 – 4:00 Monday -Thursday

7:30 - 2:00 Friday

#### **Middle School Office:**

7:30 - 3:45 Monday - Thursday

7:30 - 2:00 Friday

### Before & AfterCare

MPCS offers before and after care for students in preschool through eighth grade. Licensed, high quality, and affordable child care is offered in the hours before and after school according to the hours below. Please visit the school website for current aftercare fees.

**BeforeCare:** Monday - Friday 7:30a – 8:15a. Staff make sure the children get to class at the assigned time.

**Kindergarten Napping House After Care:** Monday - Thursday: 1:30p - 3:15p

**AfterCare:** Monday – Thursday: 3:15p – 5:00p; Friday: 1:15 – 5:00 p.m.

# Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures

## Drop-off and Pick-up Times

School supervision is provided between the hours of 7:45am and 3:30pm for students in grades 1-8. Students in grades 1-8 may be dropped off starting at 7:50 each morning and will remain outdoors until their buildings open. Kindergarten and Preschool students are signed into their classrooms each morning.

Pick-up for grades 1-8 begins at 3:30 through the pick-up queue described below. Parents or Caregivers must provide approval prior to students walking or biking home. Permission will be kept on file in the front office. After school supervision is not provided by the school unless students are joining Aftercare.

Students not picked up after school will be signed into aftercare at the parent's expense.

## Drop-off and Pick-up Traffic Etiquette

The following rules apply to both drop-off and pick-up, and all drivers are required to abide by these rules:

- **Do not exceed 10 mph on school property at any time for any reason.**
- **Do not block the crosswalk.**
- **Prepare your child for drop-off before you arrive at school.** Coats should be on or in hand, backpacks and lunchboxes should be packed, on laps or easy-to-reach, and when possible, children's seating order in the vehicle should match the order in which they will exit the vehicle. Make sure your child's backpack can be carried or maneuvered by that child.
- **Drop off and pick up student(s) where the vehicle stops in the drop-off or pick-up zone.** Guardians may not drive forward to release or pick up students closer to a specific entrance.
- **Respect the attendants and follow their direction at all times.** Staff and volunteers do their best every day to uphold the rules of the school and to make drop-off and pick-up run as smoothly and safely as possible.
- **Do not exit your vehicle at any time, once you have entered the drop-off or pick-up line.** If your student requires assistance exiting or entering the car, you must wait for an attendant or staff member to assist them.
- **Turn off cell phones when drop-off or pick-up is in progress.** Do not text, dial or talk on a cell phone during drop-off or pick-up. For everyone's safety, drivers must give driving their undivided attention. **IT'S THE LAW.**
- **Do not allow your student to enter or exit your vehicle on the left side at any time.**
- **Do not hold up the line by chatting with a staff member or attendant.** Drop-off and pick-up are not the time or place for impromptu parent/teacher discussions.
- **Do not attempt to pass the vehicle(s) in front of you at any time during drop-off and pick-up.** Follow the vehicle in front of you at all times.
- **"Zipper" merge, or consolidate drop-off and pick-up lines into single lanes at drop-off and pick-up points by merging in an alternate fashion.**

- **Do not hold up the drop-off or pick-up line if your child is not in the loading area.** Move forward to the recall area and pull as close to the curb either in front of or behind waiting vehicles so the line can continue around you.
- **Do not park and leave your vehicle in the drop-off or pick-up line or in the fire lanes.** The school reserves the right to have any unattended vehicle immediately towed at the owner's expense if the vehicle is impeding drop-off or pick-up or blocking an emergency vehicle.
- **Once drop-off or pick-up have begun, all traffic must remain in the lines in and out of the school.**
- **Please be patient and courteous with all other drivers, volunteers, students and staff members.** Respectful behavior is expected at all times of our students, our staff AND our parents!

## Parking

There is no overnight parking permitted in the Mountain Phoenix Community School parking lot without permission. Do not park and leave your vehicle in the drop-off or pick-up line or in the fire lanes. The school reserves the right to have any unattended vehicle immediately towed if that vehicle is illegally parked or could impede the progress of drop-off or pick-up.

## Early Pick-Up

In order to avoid disrupting end-of-the-day classroom instruction and daily closure routines, **please do not check students out early unless it is absolutely necessary.** If you need to pick your child up from school early for a doctor's appointment or another pre-arranged reason, you must park in the parking lot and come to the front office to sign your child out. No Exceptions.

Whenever someone else will be picking up your child from school during school hours, please call or send a note to the office giving the following information:

1. Name of person authorized to pick-up
2. Reason
3. Time of pick up and whether the student will be returning to school.

## Severe Weather and Special Circumstances

In the event of lightning or other extreme circumstance during afternoon pick-up, pick-up will be suspended and all staff members brought inside until it is safe to resume. Guardians will wait in line in their vehicles for drop-off or pick-up to resume. Walkers will also be held until it is safe to release them.

## Drop-Off / Pick-Up Maps

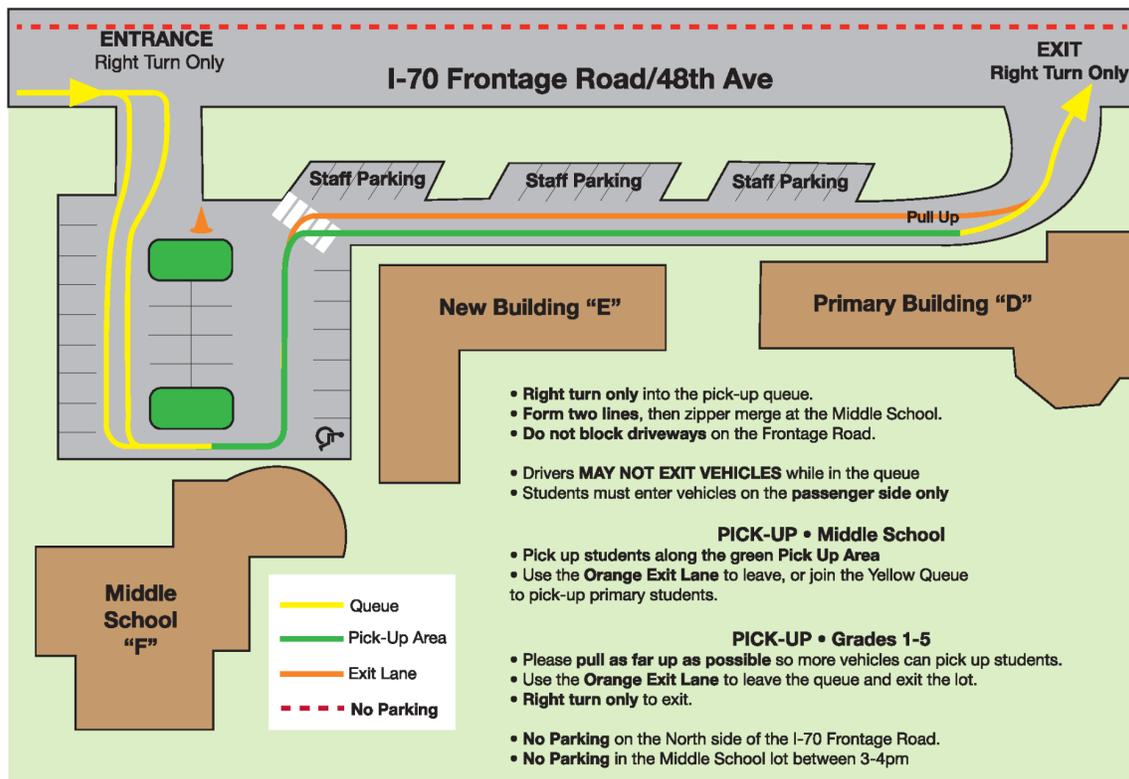
The following maps illustrate the designated drop-off and pick-up locations and protocols. These protocols are in place to protect the safety of all MPCS students; thank you for adhering to them and doing your part to keep our students and community safe.

Please note:

- Either location may be used for morning drop-off, according to the protocols contained in the maps below.
- The frontage road is the **only** designated after school pick up location for **all grades 1-8** and must be accessed according to the protocols contained in the Afternoon Pick-Up Queue map below. Please also see the Alternative Routes map below to help plan your route.
- Miller Street is the designated parking and pick-up location for ECE.

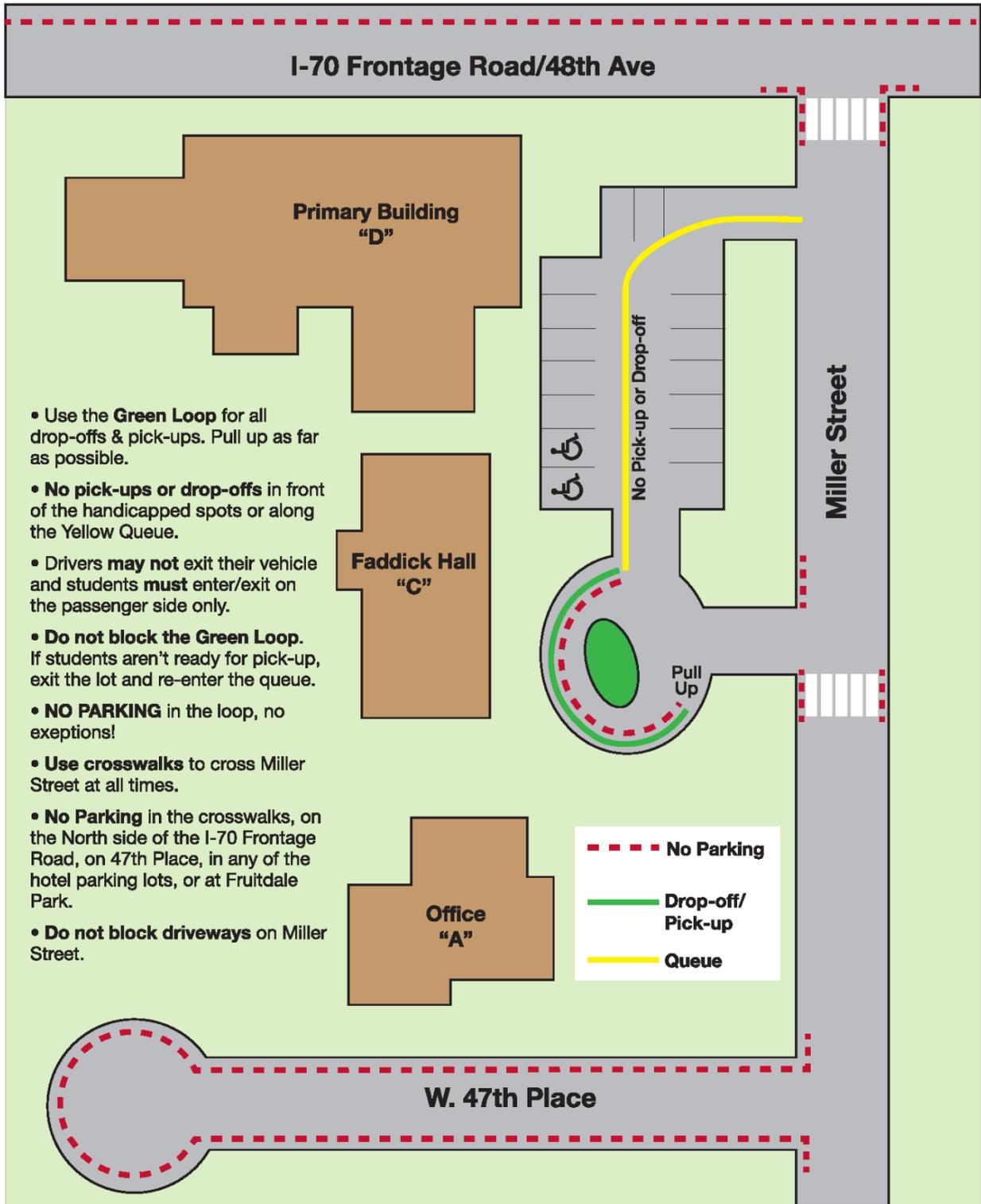
## FRONTAGE ROAD PICK-UP

Grades 1-8



# MILLER STREET

## Pick-up & Drop-Off



- Use the **Green Loop** for all drop-offs & pick-ups. Pull up as far as possible.

- **No pick-ups or drop-offs** in front of the handicapped spots or along the Yellow Queue.

- Drivers **may not** exit their vehicle and students **must** enter/exit on the passenger side only.

- **Do not block the Green Loop.** If students aren't ready for pick-up, exit the lot and re-enter the queue.

- **NO PARKING** in the loop, no exceptions!

- **Use crosswalks** to cross Miller Street at all times.

- **No Parking** in the crosswalks, on the North side of the I-70 Frontage Road, on 47th Place, in any of the hotel parking lots, or at Fruitdale Park.

- **Do not block driveways** on Miller Street.

--- No Parking

— Drop-off/  
Pick-up

— Queue

# SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

## School Communication Tools

MPCS is dedicated to fostering a strong communication link between the school and parents.

### School-Related Emails, Text Messages, and Phone Calls

We do our best to limit mass emails, phone calls, and text messages. Sometimes, they are necessary to highlight important information or to send out time-sensitive messages to the community. To ensure that you receive all school communications, please confirm your information is complete and correct in Jeffco Connect.

### MPCS Website: [www.mountainphoenix.org](http://www.mountainphoenix.org)

MPCS has a website that contains important information and updates about the school. Parents are expected to visit the school website to be informed of upcoming school events, festivals, Open Houses, and to be aware of other happenings throughout the school. As members of a large school community, each community member must make efforts to remain connected to the whole.

### ParentSquare

Mountain Phoenix Community School uses ParentSquare, a staff/teacher/caregiver communication platform, as our primary communication vehicle.

ParentSquare is used for:

- Conference signup, classroom wish-lists, volunteer signups
- Volunteer hour logging
- Message privately to teachers.
- Ability to post to the classroom page
- All communications from the school, all classrooms in which you have a student, and any committees or groups, are in one place.

For questions regarding ParentSquare, contact the Communications and Marketing Manager at Mountain Phoenix.

### Weekly Reporter – School Newsletter

*The Weekly Reporter* is a weekly communication available to all MPCS faculty, staff, and families that includes all the up-to-date schoolwide news including important dates, office/health clinic/leadership memos, events, volunteer & giving opportunities, enrichment offerings and more! The Weekly Reporter will be posted in ParentSquare every week. A link to the current year archives will be available in each Weekly Reporter.

### MPCS Facebook Page

Our MPCS Facebook page offers a window into the classroom and everyday life at MPCS and gives us a wonderful vehicle for sharing Waldorf news and resources. We also provide updates on upcoming events and school requests. Like our [Facebook](#) page today!!

## Instagram

We use Instagram to highlight the unique and beautiful activities and images that are a part of a Waldorf-inspired education. We do not post important school information to Instagram; rather we share light-hearted and simple pictures. Follow the school [@mountainphoenixcommunityschool](#)

## Phoenix Families Facebook Page

Phoenix Families is a private, volunteer-led group only available to caregivers of students currently enrolled at Mountain Phoenix Community School. The purpose of this group is to interact more with the MPCS community for things such as coordinating playdates, posting local events, asking for parenting resources, etc. This group is not moderated by school staff. All opinions and views shared here are solely those of the individual expressing them. To join the Phoenix Families group, please visit the Communications page of the [MPCS website](#).

## Buy/Sell/Trade Facebook Page

MPCS Buy/Sell/Trade is a private Facebook group only available to caregivers of students currently enrolled at Mountain Phoenix Community School. The purpose of this group is to interact more with the MPCS community for things such as buying/selling/trading personal items (toys, clothes, rental homes, etc). As a volunteer, parent-led group, it is not moderated by school staff and all opinions and views shared here are solely those of the individual expressing them. To join the Buy/Sell/Trade group, please visit the [MPCS website](#).

## Media Communications

Parents are requested not to communicate directly with the media in situations that could affect the school, without the permission of the Directors and/or Governing Council President. Such guidance may be required to avoid unforeseen litigation.

## Personal Postings on Campus and Communication Pathway Policy

Faculty, staff, students, and parents wishing to post about personal or off-campus class led events, please follow these guidelines:

- You may post one-time in your child's class as a parent with teacher permission
- Post approved flyers on community bulletin board with permissions from Communications & Marketing Manager
- Pass out approved flyers on campus before or after school without littering or invasive contact
- Post on Phoenix Families
- Post in the Enrichment Opportunities Outside of MPCS ParentSquare Group

As a public school, certain parameters exist for such postings.

## Special Communications

### School Closure

*UNLESS* you are otherwise notified through the Parentsquare messaging system, MPCCS follows the same inclement weather determinations as JEFFCO.

In cases when MPCCS differs from JEFFCO's weather related decision regarding closure or delayed start, or there is a non-weather related cause for an emergency school closure, parents and staff will receive a call from the school via the ParentSquare Messenger System by 6:15 a.m. School Closures will also be posted on the homepage of the MPCCS website.

### 2-Hour Delayed Start

In the event a delayed start is determined necessary, all published school start times will be delayed by 2 hours. Student drop off begins at 9:45 on these days. Families participating in our Before Care program will be notified via ParentSquare the start time for that program based on the safety of the facilities and staff availability.

## Teacher/Caregiver Communication

### Classroom Updates

In order to facilitate communication with parents, teachers provide regular updates to parents at least twice per month. Updates should include, but are not limited to:

- Class schedule
- Block rotation for the grade and yearly overview for ECE
- Curriculum information about the current block
- Field Trips and upcoming events
- Updates from special subject classes
- Classroom volunteer opportunities

### Phone Messages

Teachers monitor their phone and voice mail messages in a timely, responsive manner. Parent calls to the office are often forwarded to an individual teacher's voice mail.

Because teachers' primary focus is on their students and instruction, they will not check messages immediately.

**Call the office directly for ALL urgent messages, and the office will relay the information to the teacher.**

### Parent Teacher Conferences and Reporting Student Progress

Student progress is reported through caregiver/teacher conferences held at least once a year, as well as through written reports. Teachers share progress in all areas with examples of work from a student portfolio during Parent Conferences. Written progress reports for students in

grades 1-5 are sent out three times per year. Middle school students and parents can monitor progress throughout the year using Infinite Campus and will receive written progress twice per year.

End-of-the-Year narrative reports are sent to parents at the end of the school year and will include a written narrative/summary of the child's progress during the year, including highlights of the year, as well as main lesson blocks. The portfolio of student work that is collected over the year as evidence of student learning is also sent home at the end of the year.

## STUDENT ENROLLMENT

### Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination

Mountain Phoenix Community School complies with state and Federal laws regarding equal educational opportunities and non-discrimination. The school is dedicated to fostering a diverse, equitable and inclusive educational environment and the prevention of harassment in all of its forms. We prohibit unlawful discrimination or harassment against individuals on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, skin color, hair style, religion, national origin, disability, military status, genetic information, or any other status protected by applicable federal, state or local law.

The school shall make reasonable accommodations for students with identified physical and mental impairments that constitute disabilities, consistent with the requirements of federal and state laws and regulations.

### Birthdate Guidelines for Pre-K through 8th Grade and Homeschool

The MPCS Public Waldorf Education curriculum is based on the development of the child. The school has adopted a minimum age of enrollment as a component of determination of developmental readiness for each grade level (homeschool as well as full-time) that exceeds the minimum age requirements under the law which state a child must be 5 years old on or before October 1st. Below are the current grade/age guidelines given in the MPCS enrollment policy for student applicants. Determination of whether to place age-eligible students in Kindergarten for one additional year or in First Grade will be based on each child's developmental readiness. A student's developmental readiness for First Grade will be evaluated prior to the student starting the next school year, and by parent-teacher or parent-teacher-director conference.

Students will be enrolled or considered for the lottery in each class according to the chart below. (Parental or caregiver concerns about grade placement must be submitted in writing with the student's application. Exceptions to the age policy may be made by consent of the class teacher and the Director of Education, and will be on a trial basis.

- Early Childhood Education (younger 3's) birthdays from April 1 - October 1. *(These children are more likely to have 4 years in the ECE program (2 years in Pre-K and 2 years in K), especially if they have a June - September birthday.)*
- Early Childhood Education (older 3's) birthdays from October 2 - April 1. *(These children are more likely to have 3 years in the ECE program (2 years in the Pre-K program and 1 year in K)).*

- Early Childhood Education (younger 4's) birthdays from April 2 - October 1. *(These children are more likely to have 3 years in the ECE program (1 year in Pre-K and 2 years in K), especially if they have a June-September birthday.)*
- Early Childhood Education (older 4's) birthdays from October 2 - April 1 *(These children are more likely to have 2 years in the ECE program (1 year in the Pre-K program and 1 year in K)).*
- Kindergarten (younger 5 year-olds) birthdays from April 2 - October 1. *(These children are more likely to have 2 years in the ECE program (2 years in K), especially if they have a June - September birthday.)*
- Kindergarten (older 5's) birthdays from October 2 - April 1. *(These children are more likely to have 1 year of Kindergarten before going to 1st grade.)*
- First Grade 6 years old by May 31
- Second Grade 7 years old by May 31
- Third Grade 8 years old by May 31
- Fourth Grade 9 years old by May 31
- Fifth Grade 10 years old by May 31
- Sixth Grade 11 years old by May 31
- Seventh Grade 12 years old by May 31
- Eighth Grade 13 years old by May 31

## Enrollment Process (Grades Pre-K through Eight)

Families interested in enrolling their student(s) at Mountain Phoenix are asked to complete the following application process:

1. Attend a Mountain Phoenix tour (dates on our website).
2. Submit a Jefferson County First Round Choice Enrollment Application through EnrollJeffco. If space is not available to accommodate all Round 1 applicants MPCs will conduct an enrollment lottery utilizing the combined predetermined prioritization structure outlined in this policy and randomly-assigned lottery numbers. First Round applicants will be entered into the lottery according to their priority grouping and enrollment offers will be made according to the assigned lottery numbers. Second round applicants will be placed in order of date received. Please refer to the Enroll Jeffco website for lottery details.
3. Notifications will be sent out electronically through EnrollJeffco indicating one of the following:
  - An available spot is being offered for your child. You will have three days to accept an offer. Once accepted, the school will contact you with additional paperwork.
  - Your child has been placed on a waitlist. If seats become available, the school will send offers until the official Jeffco Count Day, which is typically in early October. Waitlists do not roll over from year to year.
4. Register your student in August and complete all necessary paperwork including paying PreK tuition and materials fees for all students.

## Priority for Enrollment

Priority for enrollment is given to the following classes of students, prior to the lottery; these classes are listed in order of priority.

1. Currently enrolled students in grades pre K-8 who intend to return the next consecutive school year.
2. Children, legal dependents or grandchildren of Founders of Mountain Phoenix (as defined in the Founder Definition section of this document).

3. Children and legal dependents or grandchildren of current Governing Council representatives of Mountain Phoenix who have served on the Governing Council for at least one year.
4. Children, legal dependents and grandchildren of current employees of Mountain Phoenix.
5. Siblings of currently enrolled pre K-8 students at Mountain Phoenix.
6. Children who left the school and are returning with an accepted priority petition that has been approved by the Governing Council as described below.
7. Students and siblings currently enrolled in Mountain Phoenix Homeschool program.
8. Students included in the lottery who reside within the Jefferson County School District.
9. Students included in the lottery who reside outside the Jefferson County School District.

## Vacancies

When a vacancy is created after October 1st, the vacancy may or may not be filled, at the discretion of the school's Education Director and after a discussion with the class teacher. Additions after October 1st will be encouraged to apply for the following year, except in unusual circumstances. If the school chooses to fill the vacancy, priority will be given as specified in the Priority of Enrollment section of this document. An Invitation to Enroll will be extended to a child in the manner described in the Invitation to Enroll section of this document. A student who fills a vacancy shall be deemed a currently enrolled student, and that student's enrollment shall continue beyond the current academic year, in accordance with the school's policies and procedures.

## Withdrawal Procedures

Should a Mountain Phoenix family choose to leave the school for any reason, the family of the student dis-enrolling must submit notification to the office and complete the appropriate student withdrawal paperwork. Upon terminating enrollment, the student will be withdrawn from school activities including main lesson curriculum, subject classes, and school sponsored events. Students that have been withdrawn must apply through the EnrollJeffco process in the event they would like to re-enroll.

# STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Attendance is the responsibility of the student, the parents, and the school. The importance of regular, daily attendance as a basis for learning cannot be overemphasized. Absences have a negative effect upon instructional continuity, regardless of attempts to make up the work. The school believes duplication of the classroom experience can never be accomplished with out-of-school assignments. Teachers cannot teach students who are not present. Additionally, the teaching approach guided by the principles of Public Waldorf Education is particularly challenging to duplicate in make-up work given the interactive and artistic nature of the lessons. Regular contact of students with one another in the classroom and their active engagement in lessons under the tutelage of a competent teacher are vital to this purpose.

MPCS encourages parents and guardians to schedule appointments and vacations outside the school day whenever possible in order to maximize their child's learning experience.

## Absences

An absence consists of failure to appear and remain at school throughout the entire school day unless dismissed by the proper authority. MPCS requires communication from a parent or caregiver within 24 hours to verify the reason for a student's absence. The school may require suitable proof for the absence, including written statements from medical sources.

Parents or caregivers are required to notify the attendance office each day their student is absent, even if the absence is on consecutive days. They are also asked to inform their student's classroom teacher of any circumstances at home that might affect the child's attendance or performance in school.

## Reporting an Absence

To report an absence in Preschool, Kindergarten, or Grades 1-5, call: 303-728-9100 Ext 333

To report an absence in Grades 6-8, call: 303-728-9100 Ext 343

Please provide the following information:

1. Date of absence
2. Student's full name
3. Student's Grade / Teacher
4. Reason for the absence
5. Name/relationship of person reporting the absence

## Excused Absences

The following shall be considered justifications for excused absences:

1. Temporary illness (physical or mental), injury, or medical procedure.
  - *Temporary illness or injury lasting more than 4 consecutive school days requires a written statement from medical sources to continue being excused on or after the 5th day.*
2. Absence prearranged and pre-approved by the school administration, for appointments or circumstances of a serious nature which cannot be taken care of outside of school hours.
3. Absence for an extended period due to physical, mental, or emotional disability.
  - *In the case of an extended absence due to a serious medical condition, a doctor's verification of such a condition is necessary, and the designated school nurse will develop a Health Plan for the student.*
4. High school visits, attendance of funerals, legal obligations, religious observations, and extenuating circumstances approved by the Director of Education following discussion with the class teacher.
5. Attendance at a school-sponsored activity or participation in Jeffco educational services/activities.
6. Visitation of a parent or guardian who is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty, is on leave from duty, or has recently returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting.

All other absences will be considered "unexcused."

## Prearranged Absences

Any absence not specifically covered by another section, such as family vacations, college visits, or other extended absence, must complete a pre-arranged absence form in order to be considered for an excused absence. MPCs gives ample opportunity for vacations throughout the year and **requests that families schedule their trips and vacations during scheduled school breaks.**

The prearranged absence form must be submitted at least 3 days prior to the scheduled absence. In order for the absence to be excused, the student must meet one or more of the following conditions: 1) is in good academic standing; 2) has no unexcused absences; or, 3) has four or fewer excused absences in a semester or seven or fewer in a school year.

The Director of Education will evaluate the request based on the above criteria, and the school will notify the parent or guardian if the absence will be considered unexcused pursuant to MPCs policy.

## Excessive Absences and Truancy

Students who have 4 or more unexcused absences in a one-month period, or 10 or more unexcused absences in a school year, are considered to be “habitually truant” under state law.

If a student’s absences exceed this threshold, the school will notify parents and caregivers of the attendance concern. Parents and guardians are expected to work with the school’s administration to make an attendance improvement plan to increase the student’s attendance to stay within state requirements. Communications and action plans will be documented in Infinite Campus, the school’s information system. Failure by parents and caregivers to follow through with the attendance plan could result in formal proceedings to enforce compulsory attendance requirements..

Students with 13 or more absences, either excused or unexcused, may be considered for grade-level retention, in accordance with MPCs Retention Policy.

## Tardiness to School

Tardiness is defined as the appearance of a student after the scheduled time that a class begins.

MPCS strongly encourages all students to be on time every day. Arriving late to school is disruptive to the classroom and has detrimental effects upon the rights of non-tardy students to uninterrupted learning

All tardies are recorded daily and shall be considered unexcused if they do not fall within one of the reasons for an excused absence as specified in this policy. Excessive tardies, 4 tardies in a month or 10 tardies in a semester, may warrant communication from the student’s teacher(s) or school administration.

## Make-Up Work for Absences

Classroom instruction and interaction with teachers are essential to a student's education. Because of the importance of classroom instruction and learning, students are responsible for making up work covered or assigned during any absence, as assigned by their teacher(s). Assignments that are not made up will negatively affect the student's performance. All make-up work will be assigned, per teacher direction, after the student returns from the absence. Teachers may provide alternative assignments for class work that cannot reasonably be made up outside of class (for example, an in-class assignment requiring the student to be present for a lecture, discussion, or assessment, etc). The student is responsible for obtaining and completing the missed assignment(s) after the absence but within the make-up period determined by the teacher in order to receive credit for the work. This applies to tests, quizzes, classroom assignments, and homework. The Grading Policy applies for all late work.

## Suspensions

As directed by the teacher, students will make up work missed while serving in-school or out-of-school suspension.

For attendance purposes, any absence from school resulting from out of school suspension will be considered an "excused" absence. Such absences due to suspension shall not be counted in the total of unexcused absences when determining if a student is "habitually truant."

# PARENT INVOLVEMENT

## Volunteerism

Caregivers are an essential part of a community school such as MPCs. We encourage all caregivers to find ways to get involved in the school. Visit our [website](#) to view all the ways you can be an integral part of our school! However, parents know best where their talents lie, and so we welcome and encourage your creativity in determining how you can best show up for Mountain Phoenix.

All volunteer ideas that impact the campus must go through an approval process with the Master Planning Team. Fundraising ideas must be submitted to the Fundraising Committees at least 3 months prior to the proposed event. Submit your ideas [here](#)!

## Yearly Volunteer Contribution

Our community school depends on additional support from our families in the way of volunteer hours. We ask that each family contribute a minimum of 4 hours per month to the school, or a total of 40 hours per year. If you have a part-time student, then your family requirement is 20 hours per family per year. Separate households or single parent households will be responsible for 20 hours per parent/guardian.

We also welcome grandparents and other extended family and friends who have talent and time to contribute! Such volunteer hours are a great help to the school when applying for grants or demonstrating parent support.

## Volunteer Expectations

### **Volunteer Sign-In**

During school hours, ALL VOLUNTEERS are REQUIRED to sign-in and out at either the Main or Middle School Office to obtain a **volunteer or visitor badge** to identify themselves while on campus. This protocol helps ensure the safety and protection of the campus and all students throughout the school day.

### **Logging Volunteer Hours**

Caregivers are asked to keep track of their volunteer hours in their ParentSquare profile by clicking on Volunteer Hours in the left sidebar. If you need assistance, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

### **On-Campus or Online Volunteers**

Expectations for volunteering on campus, with students (on/off campus), or online exceed those for other volunteer commitments. These volunteers may be privy to private information that would be unethical to share with other community members. ALL volunteers must sign a Confidentiality Agreement prior to volunteering. This agreement is signed during the school registration process via the Permissions and Waivers link in ParentSquare.

## Volunteer Opportunities

### **Committees and Sponsored Events/Initiatives**

In pursuit of our mission, the school's leadership groups host a variety of standing committees which support campus initiatives and events. Committee membership is voluntary and greatly encouraged – MPCS thrives on parental participation.

All volunteer hours, whether for a committee or for the classroom, count towards the yearly volunteer requirement. Visit the [MPCS website](#) to see the many events and opportunities that take place throughout the year in which we will need community volunteers!

## Classroom Representatives

### **Class Representatives Committee Chair**

Each class has one (or two) Class Representatives who offer support to the teacher, the class families, and to the school community. The representative is a liaison between the caregivers and the teacher, and between the caregivers and the wider school community. The Class Rep Chair is guided by the teacher and the Volunteer Coordinator and can find extra guidance through the Class Rep ParentSquare Group. In addition, Class Reps chair, delegate, or help to organize volunteers for the Family Council events, festivals and teacher appreciation efforts. Please reach out the Volunteer Coordinator for a full-list of current Class Rep expectations.

## Teacher/Faculty Appreciation

The Teacher/Faculty Appreciation Committee provides an opportunity for parents to express their appreciation for the faculty and teachers at MPCS. The committee coordinates with the Class Rep Committee ensuring that the entire staff enjoys a week of treats, small gifts, lovely food and sincere sentiments during MPCS Appreciation Week. We will be organizing donations from families and local merchants of food, gift cards, flowers, massages etc. In addition, this committee will coordinate with Class Reps to provide food at the weekly staff meetings.

Volunteers on this committee will work to obtain donations, coordinate volunteers and help disseminate items.

## Passive School Fundraisers

Support the school all year long!

### Amazon Smile

Do you love Amazon? Did you know that Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchases to MPCS? Simply link your account to MPCS via [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com).

### Kings Soopers Rewards Card

Similar to the Amazon Smile program, sync your King Soopers rewards with Mountain Phoenix and you raise money for our school EVERYTIME you shop for groceries! Click [here](#) for simple instructions!

### Box Tops for Education

Earn Cash for MPCS by clipping Box Tops from selected General Mills products. Look for the 10¢ Box Tops coupon on brands such as Cheerios®, Betty Crocker®, Pillsbury®, Ziploc®, Kleenex®, Hefty® and more! Please visit [www.boxtops4education.com](http://www.boxtops4education.com) for more information and to find a complete listing of products. Collect and drop them off in the Main Office.

### Milk Caps for Moola

Do you order your fresh milk from Longmont Dairy? If so, read [here](#) how your milk caps can raise money for the school!

### Giving Bean Coffee

Have your coffee and tea delivered to your front door while supporting our school! Natural and organic options available! [Read more!](#)

### Minted.com

Have access to beautiful greeting cards and invitations all year round! [Check out](#) Minted.com, save 20% off your order while raising 15% of your sales for the school!

## CREATING POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE

Mountain Phoenix Community School (MPCS) is committed to nurturing a school culture and community that is safe, authentic, respectful and includes all students, caregivers, faculty, staff, and neighbors. The following communication guidelines are provided as the basis for creating a positive school culture that is built upon each community interaction. These guidelines are especially helpful to situations that become difficult or when there is conflict.

### MPCS Community Communication Guidelines

At MPCS it is our desire to foster a healthy, effective communication process that supports each person at our school. Though each of us is a unique person with individual gifts and challenges,

it is through our collaborative work together that our school and the students and families we serve will thrive. (Note: These guidelines are referenced in the COMMUNITY AND CAREGIVER CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS, and GRIEVANCES POLICY.)

### **Healthy Communication Builds Better Human Relationships**

Healthy, effective, two-way communication is necessary in any strong community. As MPCS is guided by the Core Principles of Public Waldorf Education, healthy communication is of particular interest in that it supports and reflects the cultural aims of the school and the values MPCS strives to foster. Success toward those aims requires all community members to exemplify healthy communication in order to build better human relationships.

### **Adults are Models for the Children**

Children look to adults for guidance on how to behave. The adults in the school must be models of respectful and appropriate behavior and communication at all times. If we are to foster respect in our children, we must first model respect in our interactions with each other.

### **Respectful Interactions Support Children and Adults**

All Mountain Phoenix community members are expected to be civil and respectful in their communications with each other (other caregivers, teachers, staff, the Governing Council, fellow community members, and school neighbors). As a school, our top priority is serving the best interests of our students. Every respectful interaction, whether large or small, verbal or non-verbal, in person or online, contributes to a healthy and positive learning environment for our children.

### **Healthy Conflict is Necessary for Growth**

MPCS recognizes that conflict, when dealt with in a healthy and productive way, is necessary for the growth of the individuals involved and the organization as a whole. Healthy conflict has the potential to foster creativity, strengthen relationships, and signal points of stress, disorder, underrepresentation or discrimination that need to be addressed.

As we model responding to and working through conflict in ways that are respectful, we continue to model healthy relationship building for our children.

### **Restorative Practices Repair Harm**

Restorative Practices are a mindset, not a curriculum or program, which focuses on building positive relationships and providing opportunities for community members to take responsibility for their behavior and their lives. At the heart of restorative practices is the belief that we are all in this together, that we are all connected. Restorative Practices are ways of proactively developing relationships and community, as well as repairing community when harm is done. After conflict or harm, Restorative Practices provide a way of thinking about, talking about, and responding to issues and problems by involving all participants to discuss their feelings and opinions, identify what happened, describe how it affected everyone, and find solutions to make things better. Our communication guidelines and grievance policy are deeply rooted in this restorative mindset.

### **Confidentiality is a Sign of Respect**

One of the many ways we respect each other in our community is by honoring confidentiality, limiting gossip, and speaking directly to others when we have conflict. In discussion groups or committees, confidentiality is maintained unless a designated person is reporting on conversations/work and/or the group agrees to discuss the contents of the meeting outside that space. All requests for confidentiality, written or otherwise shall be honored, unless there is a threat in which law enforcement needs to be notified.

### **It is Our Responsibility to Provide Equal Access**

MPCS is committed to meeting the needs of all community members by providing access to our communication in various forms or translations, as needed. Please contact the MPCS Communications Coordinator for assistance.

## **Specific Communication Considerations**

### **Communication Between Caregivers and Teachers/Staff**

MPCS teachers will communicate with class caregivers at the beginning of each school year to establish expectations regarding the rhythm, content, and mode of their regular communications with class caregivers.

When sending individual messages, caregivers should be mindful of the volume of communication that teachers and staff receive on a daily basis. Due to the faculty's focus on teaching and their commitment to being present with students during the school day, caregivers can expect a response to their message within 3 business days.

### **Digital Communications**

Courtesy and respect are especially important in digital and social media communications as it is difficult to interpret tone and inflection through these mediums.

If the content of your message would not be acceptable for face-to face conversation, over the telephone, or in another medium, it will not be acceptable for digital communication or on a social networking site. If a situation is tense or emotionally charged, consider arranging a one-on-one conversation with the other individual(s) using the conflict resolution process below.

Please refer to our Communication Tools list to understand the purpose of our various communication tools.

## **Conflict Resolution Process**

The objective of this process is to perpetuate a climate of collegiality, mutual trust, and respect by resolving differences in a timely, objective and equitable manner.

Each level of resolution is to be followed in the order listed below. A school Director may elect to be present during any level of the resolution process as appropriate and/or requested. If the conflict is with one of the Directors and remains unresolved after the Direct Resolution process, a request for Formal Resolution may be filed with the Governing Council in writing (Step 3 of the Community and Caregiver Grievance Policy).

## Overview of Steps

### Step 1: Direct Resolution

The Direct Resolution process consists of an individual meeting or meetings between the parties. This step encompasses these Communication Guidelines. Unless there is a safety, discrimination, or bias-related concern, an attempt at direct resolution is to be made prior to requesting Administrative Resolution.

### Steps 2 and 3: Community and Caregiver Grievance Policy

If Step 1 is unsuccessful in bringing resolution, please consult the Community and Caregiver Grievance Policy.

## Strategies for Successful Direct Resolution

If you have a question or concern, FIRST bring your question or concern **directly to the party(ies) involved** in a timely way. Let the other person know that you would like to have an **informal (unfacilitated) restorative conversation**, and together plan a time to meet. Set up the time and space for a thoughtful dialogue; avoid discussing sensitive topics in public, in front of students/caregivers/community members, or by email.

### Necessities for a successful restorative conversation:

- Practice empathetic and active listening by listening for understanding and connection.
- Use “I” statements.
- Take accountability for your own actions/words/attitude.
- Be willing to work to make things right.

### Informal (Unfacilitated) Restorative Conversation Questions:

When you meet together, use the following questions to guide your restorative conversation. *Alternate speaking time and allow for wait time. Ensure that all parties have time to fully answer each question before moving on.*

1. What happened?
2. Who has been affected? In what way?
3. What part can I take responsibility for?
4. What needs to happen next? What needs to be done to make things as right as possible for everyone involved?
  - a. If necessary/appropriate, together create a written list of action items and/or agreements. Ensure that the list is shared with all parties.
  - b. Plan a time for a quick check-in no more than one week in the future to see how things are going. It is preferable for this check-in to be done face-to-face, but over phone or email may be used if needed for scheduling ease.

### Extra Considerations:

- “Say what you mean, but don’t be mean.”
- Bring your concern as a question rather than an accusation or judgment.
- Assume positive intent.
- Make time for all involved to speak.
- Avoid gossip. When encountering gossip, encourage participants to pursue positive

and direct communication for resolution of the concern.

- Bring sensitive questions or issues in a face-to-face conversation. Body language and voice intonation are very important for the accurate understanding of another.
- If a face-to-face meeting is not possible, a phone call would be the next choice for a conversation. However, if a phone conversation is attempted and is not progressing positively, one participant should request that the conversation be postponed until a face-to-face meeting can be scheduled in a timely manner.
- In most cases, email should be used only for the dispersal or clarifying of information or to set-up a time to talk.
- Practice gratitude for the opportunity to strengthen healthy relationships through working together.

In most cases, if Step 1: Direct Resolution process is followed with intention and fidelity, it will result in resolution of most misunderstandings or concerns. In the situation where you feel that Step 1 has not addressed your concern or conflict, you may initiate the MPCS Community and Caregiver Grievances process by sending a formal, written request to a school Director to alert the appropriate Director that administrative support is needed.

By working together we can create a healthy communication process that promotes understanding, trust, and successful problem solving. If you have any questions about this communication protocol, please speak to a Director.

## **CONCERNS / COMPLAINTS / GRIEVANCES POLICY**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and directions for the resolution of concerns, complaints, or grievances if the communication and conflict resolution guidelines in the MPCS Family Handbook do not resolve a conflict. The school is committed to establishing procedures designed to resolve grievances at the lowest possible administrative level. This includes both personal concerns and any harassment or discrimination witnessed in accordance with Jeffco policies: AC Unlawful Discrimination/Equal Opportunity; JBB Harrassment of Students; JII Student Concerns, Complaints and Grievances; and KE Public/Parent Concerns and Complaints.

MPCS does not tolerate bias-related acts toward any individual based on a person's race, color, ethnicity/ancestry, national origin, sex, gender identity/expression, religion/creed, physical/mental disability, age, citizenship status or genetic information.

All claims of discrimination and experiences of bias-related acts, whether experienced directly or witnessed, are to be reported to a school Director or the Title IX Coordinator to conduct a prompt and thorough inquiry into the concern.

Once a Director or Title IX Coordinator is notified of a claim of discrimination or bias-related act, they will first reach out the affected person(s) to hear their experience and decide on an appropriate course of action that best supports the affected person(s).

In every investigation, all parties are protected against retaliation. To mitigate the possibility for reprisals, MPCS will take necessary steps to ensure confidentiality as appropriate.

## Steps for Resolution

The intent of this resolution process is to instill a climate of mutual trust, and respect by resolving differences in a timely, objective and equitable manner.

*NOTE: If the concern, complaint, grievance, claim of discrimination or bias-related act directly involves a school Director and remains unresolved after Step 1: Direct Resolution process, a community member may proceed directly to Step 3 to seek a request for Governing Council Review. In this case, the Governing Council President, or designee, shall conduct Step 2.*

### **Step 1: Direct Resolution**

The Direct Resolution process consists of a meeting or meetings between the parties involved with or without a facilitator. This step encompasses the MPCS Community Communication Guidelines outlined in the Family Handbook. Unless there is a perceived safety, discrimination, or bias-related concern, an attempt at direct resolution is to be made prior to requesting Administrative Resolution.

### **Step 2: Formal Administrative Resolution**

The Formal Administrative Resolution process consists of a Director-facilitated inquiry plan where the Director:

1. Receives a written, formal request for support via email, ParentSquare message, or letter.
2. Meets with the requesting individual to review the steps taken for Direct Resolution (Step 1) and determine if Administrative Resolution is needed.
3. Develops an inquiry plan and timeline.
4. Interviews all parties involved and their named witnesses as indicated by the inquiry plan.
5. Gather data and documentation that directly links the issues to school policies, procedures, and processes.
6. Presents findings and develops an action plan for resolving the conflict and establishing working agreements. This plan may include a recommendation for a resolution process through a formal (facilitated) restorative conference to be conducted by a school Director or Jeffco Restorative Practices Staff. In all cases where a restorative conference is recommended, participation is voluntary (even though this avenue strongly aligns with MPCS principles). If a restorative conference is declined then the Director shall pursue a remedy that establishes functional working agreements according to school policies.

### **Step 3: Governing Council Review Process**

If the community member feels that Step 2 did not bring appropriate resolution, they may seek Governing Council review of the matter. The Governing Council Review process consists of a written request to the Governing Council President that includes the nature issue in sufficient detail, a description of prior attempts to resolve the matter and such results,

the Administrative Resolution recommended in Step 2, and the reasons for the community member's dissatisfaction with the previous decision. The Governing Council President, or designee, will review the written submission, confer with other other Governing Council Representatives, consult with administration, and may request interviews with any or all of the parties and conduct further investigation at their discretion. Should a conflict of interest arise, the appropriate Governing Council member(s) shall follow the guidelines set in the Governing Council Conflict of Interest Policy.

Based on this information, the Governing Council President or designee, on behalf of the full Governing Council, shall submit a final written decision within 30 days of receipt of the request. This decision shall address the concerns, complaints, and or grievances in light of conformance with school policies, procedures and principles. The decision of the Governing Council Review process is final.

## SCHOOL RECORDS

Parents may view their child's permanent record at any time. Please give the school two days notice so the record may be retrieved. The record may be reviewed in the presence of the classroom teacher, an administrator, or school secretary. The record is at no time to be removed from school property.

**Please note:** It is the parents' responsibility to keep the school informed of any changes in their information by updating all information in JEFFCO Connect immediately. JEFFCO Connect provides the school with essential emergency information. All student and family information will be kept confidential. All student records are kept in a locked file or in a password protected file on the school server.

## FERPA Notification of Rights

MPCS honors the parent Notification of Rights Policy under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Therein lie the school's policies surrounding parent/student rights with regards to a student's education records. You may check this policy on the U.S. Department of Education: Family Policy Compliance Office website (<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/index.html>).

## SAFETY AND EMERGENCY POLICIES

### Emergency Preparedness

Fire and emergency drills will be conducted throughout the year to prepare students in case of an emergency. Parents will be notified when the school conducts a standard response drill.

## Standard Response Protocol

MPCS follows the Standard Response Protocol for emergencies. Emergency Protocols are reviewed with faculty and staff at the beginning of each school year followed by scheduled practice drills throughout the year that are required by law.

The Standard Response Protocols are:

**HOLD!** Remain in your location/are and conduct business as usual. Teachers/staff are to bring students inside the building, conduct business as usual, and take attendance. Doors are locked.

**SECURE! Get inside. Lock outside doors.** Teachers/staff are to bring students inside the building, conduct business as usual, increase situational awareness, and take attendance. Doors are locked.

**LOCKDOWN! Locks, Lights, Out of Sight.** All students and staff immediately proceed to a secure location, move away from sight, maintain silence. Lights are out, doors are locked.

**EVACUATE! (Directions to Follow).** Students should leave their belongings behind, form a line and follow the teachers Direction. Teachers will lead students to the indicated evacuation location, take attendance, notify administration of any missing, extra, or injured students.

In the event of a school-wide crisis that requires evacuation, all students will be evacuated to Fruitdale Park across the street and bussed to a Jeffco determined reunification site. Caregivers will be informed of the situation and detailed pick-up location and procedures. Students will NOT be picked up by parents/caregivers at the evacuation site (Fruitdale Park).

**SHELTER! Hazard and safety strategy.** Students follow the directions to shelter or use a safety strategy given by the teacher. Teacher should take attendance and notify administration of any missing, extra, or injured students.

## Pets

No dogs or other pets are permitted on the school campus during school days and events for safety, health, and liability reasons, this includes field trips. Special arrangements may be made to bring pets to school with approval from the Director of Education and Class Teacher ahead of time.

## MPCS FACILITIES USE POLICY

Use of MPCS facilities is determined according to the MPCS Facility Use Policy.

MPCS encourages and supports the fair and equitable use of MPCS facilities by MPCS community members for non-school activities outside of school hours. The goal of this policy is to provide a space for MPCS community members *doing* community building!

While non-school sponsored activities that take place on the MPCS campus are not expected to directly support the MPCS values and mission, they should not be in direct opposition to them. Please refer to the MPCS Facilities Use Policy for available spaces and fees.

# SCHOOL & FAMILY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

## Mountain Phoenix Community School

The MPCs faculty, staff and administration envision the highest level of success for every student. To accomplish this, parents/guardians, teachers and students need to work together. Please take a moment to review and complete all of the sections below. Please return the original signed compact to the main office. A photocopy will be made and sent home. Thank you.

### School Responsibilities

The Mountain Phoenix Community School will:

- Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating children to meet the State's student academic achievement standards as they align with the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education standards.
- Hold parent-teacher conferences each October/November during which this compact may be discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement.
- Provide parents with frequent reports on their children's progress through regular progress reports and individual parent/teacher conferences on an as needed basis.
- Provide parents reasonable access to staff. Specifically, staff will be available for consultation with parents during school hours, unless otherwise arranged with teachers.
- Provide parents opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class during instructional and non-instructional time and class field trips and provide parents opportunities to observe classroom activities.

**Director's Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

### Teacher Responsibilities

As the class teacher, I will:

- Believe that each student can learn.
- Show respect for each child and his/her family.
- Come to class prepared to teach.
- Provide an environment conducive to learning.
- Help each child grow to his/her fullest potential.
- Provide meaningful and appropriate homework activities.
- Enforce school and classroom rules fairly and consistently.
- Maintain open lines of communication with the student and his/her parents.
- Seek ways to involve parents in the school program.
- Demonstrate professional behavior and a positive attitude.

**Teacher's Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

### Parents/Guardians Responsibilities

I understand that my participation in my child's education will help his/her academic achievement and attitude towards school. Therefore, I will:

- See that my child attends school regularly and on time.
- Provide a home environment that encourages my child to learn.
- Insist that all homework assignments are completed.
- Communicate regularly with my child's teacher.
- Support the school in developing positive behaviors.
- Talk with my child about his/her school activities every day.
- Encourage my child to read at home and monitor his/her TV viewing, video/computer game playing and other multimedia activities.
- Show respect and support for my child, the teacher, and the school.

**Parent/Caregiver's Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Student Responsibilities**

I understand that my school, teachers and parents/guardians will communicate with one another regarding my academic progress. They will also provide academic assistance so that I may continue to progress in meeting the academic goals. Lastly, I understand that I must put forth my best efforts to accomplish my academic goals. Therefore, I will:

- Attend school on time every day.
- Come to school prepared with completed homework and supplies. Ask for help when I need it.
- Be responsible for the completion of classroom projects and assignments.
- Give to my parents all notices and information received by me from my school.
- Be responsible for my own behavior and treat my teachers, classmates and myself with respect.

**Student's Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_