

MPCS EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK



Mountain Phoenix
community school

2026-2027

Education through Imagination

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JEFFCO HANDBOOK

GREETINGS FROM MPCS LEADERSHIP

Welcome to Mountain Phoenix Community School. As an employee here, you are a valued member of the wonderful Mountain Phoenix village. Join us as we create a Public Waldorf School community to provide an atmosphere of warmth and compassion which surrounds and supports the students in our care.

As you read this handbook, please keep in mind that many of us perform multiple roles at our school. Our staff is a diverse and highly qualified group of professionals. In many instances, we are not only teachers or non-teaching staff members, administrators, members of support staff or volunteers, but also parents and caregivers of Mountain Phoenix students. These multiple roles may require us to inform our fellow community members at times in which role we are acting. Further, we must endeavor to display good character and follow the guidelines and processes in this handbook such as our MPCS coworker communication guidelines.

We believe that each employee contributes directly to the achievement of the MPCS vision and mission, and we know you will take pride in being a member of this community.

We sincerely hope that your experience here is rewarding and enjoyable.

Best Regards,
MPCS Leadership

IMPORTANT MESSAGE

The purpose of this handbook is to provide Mountain Phoenix Community School (MPCS) employees with the policies and procedures that support the daily healthy functioning of the school. MPCS must remain in compliance with specified District and State policies as articulated in the MPCS charter approved by Jefferson County Public School District (Jeffco) while aligning with the principles and practices of the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education. In support of this endeavor, the handbook provides policies, procedures, and guidance to all MPCS employees. It is expected that all MPCS employees read and review this handbook at the beginning of the school year, and to comply with the policies, procedures, and expectations stated herein.

The handbook is not all-inclusive, but is designed to provide employees with a summary of Mountain Phoenix guidelines. No employee handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question. After reading the handbook, if you have any questions about the contents of this handbook, please contact your direct supervisor.

In addition, the need may arise to change the guidelines described in the handbook. Except for the at-will nature of employment, Mountain Phoenix Community School therefore reserves the right to interpret these guidelines or to change these guidelines without prior notice.

Once you have completed reading this handbook, please fill out the [Handbook Acknowledgement and Receipt Form digitally](#) or a paper version at the end of this document. Hard copies are available in the office if needed.

This edition replaces all previously issued editions.

Section 1 - MPCS GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1.1 MPCS 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.

1.2 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.

1.3 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.*

Each human being is a unique individual who brings specific gifts, creative potential, and intentions to this life. Public Waldorf education addresses multiple aspects of the developing child including the physical, emotional, intellectual, social, cultural, moral, and spiritual. Through this, each child is helped to integrate into a maturing whole, able to determine a unique path through life.

Rudolf Steiner's educational insights are seen as a primary, but not exclusive, source of guidance for an understanding of the image of the human being.

2. **Child Development:** *An understanding of child development that guides all aspects of the educational program, to the greatest extent possible within established legal mandates.*

Human development proceeds in approximate 7-year phases. Each phase has characteristic physical, emotional, and cognitive dimensions and a primary learning orientation.

The Public Waldorf educational program, including the curriculum, teaching methodologies, and assessment methods, work with this understanding of human development to address the needs of the individual and the class in order to support comprehensive learning and healthy, balanced development.

Our developmental perspective informs how state and federal mandates, including curriculum sequence, standardized testing, and college and career readiness, are met.

3. Social Change Through Education: *Public Waldorf education exists to serve both the individual and society.*

At the individual level, Public Waldorf education seeks to offer the most supportive conditions possible for the development of each student's unique capacities to engender positive social change. Such capacities include:

- A harmonious relationship between thinking, feeling, and willing;
- Self-awareness and social competence;
- The initiative and confidence necessary to transform intentions into realities; and
- An interest in the world, with active respect and a feeling of responsibility for oneself, one's community, and the environment.

Such individuals will be able to participate meaningfully in society.

At the school level, schools work actively to model social engagement and responsible civic values. The school demonstrates and values community engagement and provides developmentally appropriate opportunities for service within and beyond the school.

Through a developmentally appropriate approach, the school cultivates a sense of belonging and care for the global community and environment.

4. Human Relationships: *Public Waldorf Schools foster a culture of healthy relationships.*

Enduring relationships — and the time needed to develop them — are central to Public Waldorf education. The teacher works with each student and class as a whole to support relationship-based learning.

Healthy working relationships with parents, colleagues, and all stakeholders are essential to the well being of the student, class, and school community. Everyone benefits from a community life that includes festivals, events, adult education, study, and volunteer activities.

Public Waldorf education encourages collaboration in schools, within the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, among all schools working out of a developmental approach, in conjunction with the broader field of education.

5. Access and Diversity: *Public Waldorf Schools work to increase diversity and access to all sectors of society.*

Public Waldorf schools respond to unique demands and cultures in a wide range of locations in order to provide maximum access to a diverse range of students. Schools work towards ensuring that students do not experience discrimination in admission, retention, or participation.

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.

The Public Waldorf program and curriculum is developed by the school to reflect its student population.

6. Collaborative Leadership: *School leadership is conducted through shared responsibilities within established legal structures.*

Faculty, staff, administration and boards of a Public Waldorf school collaborate to guide and lead the school with input from stakeholder groups. To the greatest extent possible, decisions related to the educational program are the responsibility of those faculty and staff with knowledge and experience of Rudolf Steiner's educational insights.

Governance and internal administration are implemented in a manner that cultivates active collaboration, supportive relationships, effective leadership, consequential action, and accountability. A Public Waldorf school is committed to studying and deepening its understanding of best practices of governance appropriate to its stage of organizational development.

7. Schools as Learning Communities: *Public Waldorf schools cultivate a love of lifelong learning and self-knowledge.*

Public Waldorf education emphasizes continuous engagement in learning and self-reflective practices that support ongoing improvement. At the individual and classroom level, teachers reflect regularly on their observations of the students and of the educational process. Essential aspects of school-wide work and professional development include self-reflection, peer review, faculty and individual study, artistic activity, and research.

Rudolf Steiner is a primary, but not exclusive, source of guidance for developing an active inner, meditative life and an understanding of the dynamics within society.

Public Waldorf schools encourage all community members to engage in active and ongoing ways to enhance their capacities as human beings through self reflection and conscious social engagement.

1.4 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 where possible. 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.

1.5 Waldorf Pedagogy Anti-Discrimination Statement

At Mountain Phoenix Community School, we believe that a healthy community requires both deep integrity and the maturity to hold human complexity. Guided by the Core Principles of Public Waldorf Education, we openly acknowledge that Rudolf Steiner—writing and speaking in a deeply fractured, early 20th-century world—expressed some views that do not reflect the standards of equity, diversity, and access we stand for today. As a public institution, we firmly reject any discriminatory statements or beliefs found within the historical archive of his work.

True to the principle of ongoing educational renewal, our practice is anchored in the highest truths Steiner articulated across his lifetime: that the concept of race must be actively transcended, that true progress lies in individual freedom rather than group identity, and that our ultimate task is to build a "fraternal community that encompasses the whole of humanity without distinction."

We recognize the humanity and universal dignity of every human being. We stand ardently committed to fostering an inclusive educational home that honors, respects, and protects the voices of all students and families across every race, gender identity, sexual orientation, class, ethnicity, culture, and religious belief.

1.6 Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination

As a public entity and an employer, Mountain Phoenix Community School is bound by a set of 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 employee 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.

Section 2 - MPCS ORGANIZATION

2.1 Governing Council

The Governing Council (legally known as Board of Directors) was established by filing of the Articles of Incorporation with the Colorado Secretary of State and exists to operate a charter school in accordance with the Colorado Charter Schools Act. The Governing Council is authorized through the Jefferson County School District and plays an important role in 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 ensuring 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. Additionally, the Governing Council is responsible for hiring and evaluating the school's Directors. If you are interested in learning about the composition, regulations and limitations that govern the Council, please visit the MPCS website.

Governing Council Members, Committees and Groups

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 the [Governing Council](#) page on the MPCS website.

To reach all of the governing council members at once, email governingcouncil@mountainphoenix.org.

The Governing Council leads several committees which are integral to the operation of Mountain Phoenix and employees are invited to participate. If you are interested in any of the following committees or advisory groups, please join the group on ParentSquare to get information about work being done and meeting times.

GC Standing Committees

- Mountain Phoenix Accountability Committee (MPAC)
- Finance Committee
- Master Planning Committee
- Governance Committee

GC Advisory Group

- Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity (JEDI)

2.2 School Organizational Structure



2.3 School Committees

MPCS holds shared leadership as one of our core values, and one of the ways we work toward this is through our various committees. If you are interested in the following committees, please join on Parent Square.

Employee Committees:

- Steering Committee (formed by section leads)
- Festivals Committee (formed by section, per festival)
- Hiring Committee (formed as needed per position)
- Curriculum Committee (formed as needed per work assigned)
- Steering Committee
- Facilities Committee
- Safety Response Team (SRT)
- Proactive Behavior Support Team (PBST)

2.4 Family Council

The [Family Council](#) is a group of parents and caregivers formed with the explicit role to support the mission of Mountain Phoenix Community School, programs, students, teachers, and staff. Family Council fulfills this role by fundraising, creating opportunities for volunteerism, and providing parent/caregiver enrichment while supporting the culture of MPCS through festival and event committees.

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 Family Council Meetings are open to the public, staff and anyone interested is encouraged and welcome to attend.

2.5 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 made of MPCS community volunteers, plans and coordinates all major fundraising events that support the entire school (e.g., Fun Run, Annual Give and Auction). . For more information on MPCS fundraisers and the process for submitting a fundraiser idea, see [MPCS Fundraising Policy](#).

The Foundation is also responsible for managing and distributing funds to prioritized projects and activities for the school year. Historically, the Foundation has used fundraising dollars to provide teacher assistance for professional development, field trip and instrument scholarships, classroom enrichment, and important facilities improvements. The Foundation meets monthly and all parents/caregivers are encouraged to attend and participate. The MPCS Foundation may be contacted at foundation@mountainphoenix.org.

Section 3 - SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

The faculty and staff at MPCS are dedicated to fostering strong communication links between the school, home, and the community. 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, caregiver information should be up-to-date and complete in [Infinite Campus](#) and ParentSquare. All questions related to school communications should be directed to the MPCS Communications, Marketing and Volunteerism Manager.

3.1 Communication Tools and Apps

ParentSquare

Mountain Phoenix Community School uses ParentSquare, a teacher/parent communication software, as our primary communication vehicle.

ParentSquare is used for:

- Classroom Communications - see “Classroom Updates below”
- Messages to individual caregivers - see “Direct Messages below”
- Committee or Staff Group Communications Special Communication Posts - timely, informative all school posts regarding specific safety and weather related communications
- *The Weekly Reporter* - weekly school-wide newsletter highlighting reminders, news, and information on upcoming events
- Logging Volunteer Hours

Please note: ALL community-wide posts or posts across multiple grades or groups sent to parents/caregivers must go through our Communications, Marketing & Volunteerism Manager.

Employees must check ParentSquare daily.

Email

All employees have two email accounts (Outlook: <firstname.lastname>@jeffco.k12.co.us & Gmail:<firstname.lastname>@jeffcoschools.us) provided through Jeffco School District.

It is required that you check your email daily. Choose your preferred email application (Outlook or Gmail) as your primary and **have the other forwarded** so that you do not need to check two email accounts/day.

MPCS Website

[MPCS website](#) contains important information and updates about the school.

Employees have access to a password protected [Staff Resources](#) section that contains useful links. Retrieve webpage password from Front Office or Direct Supervisor.

MPCS Facebook & Instagram Pages

[Our Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) offers a window into everyday life at MPCS and gives us a wonderful vehicle for sharing Waldorf news and resources. We also provide information on upcoming events, announce snow days and highlight volunteers and staff as part of our social media calendar.

Posting of Physical Materials and Flyers

Faculty, staff, students, and parents/caregivers wishing to post materials on the school's bulletin boards or

fences must first receive stamped permission from the Communications, Marketing and Volunteerism Manager. As a public school, certain parameters exist for such postings. NO flyers may be posted on building windows, doors or walls. Sandwich boards are available upon request.

3.2 Media Communications

Teachers and staff will not communicate directly with the media in any situation that could affect the school in any way, without the permission of the Directors and/or Governing Council President. Such guidance may be required to avoid unforeseen litigation. This pertains especially to school emergency situations.

For more information regarding employee's use of social media, please refer to the [Employee Social Media Policy](#).

3.3 Parent/Caregiver Communication

All Staff are expected to check both of their Jeffco emails and Parent Square on a daily basis. **MPCS has a 2 business day response time for messages.** All emails and direct messages from employees or parents/caregivers need to be responded to within 2 business days to support good communication throughout the school. Employees are expected to use professional courtesy and friendliness in all communications.

Classroom Updates

In order to facilitate communication with parents/caregivers, class teachers are expected to provide regular updates/newsletters to parents/caregivers through ParentSquare **at least every other week.**

Special subjects teachers and members of the **student support department should send updates monthly,** and SPED teachers are required to update progress on IEP goals at report card time.

Updates should include, but are not limited to:

- Curriculum information about the current block
- Class schedule and daily rhythm
- Field Trips and upcoming events
- Updates from special subject classes
- Classroom volunteer opportunities
- Ways to support their child at home
- Social and emotional updates and ways to support at home
- Reminders of school wide events; can be linked to the Weekly Reporter or ParentSquare post for more information.

When to Send Direct Messages vs. Email vs. ParentSquare Post

The following guidelines are put in place to support clarity around messaging as we use both ParentSquare and email:

Jeffco Email	ParentSquare Direct Message	ParentSquare Post
Messages to individual or a small group of coworkers / employees	- Individual messages to parent(s)/caregiver(s) - Individual messages to parent(s)/caregiver(s) + employees <i>Please Note: Do NOT use PS Messages for individual messages that do not include parents/caregivers. Use EMAIL to message employees.</i>	- Communication to an entire class or section MPCS PS Staff Group is for Urgent All Staff Posts All other All Staff Communication can be sent to leadership to be added to the WOOT

Phone Messages

Each classroom is equipped with a phone line and voicemail. Teachers are expected to monitor their phone and voice mail messages in a timely, responsive manner. Parent/Caregiver calls to the office are often forwarded to an individual teacher's voice mail.

As with email and ParentSquare, MPCS has a 2 business day response time for phone messages.

Please make every effort to support positive communication flow by responding within 2 business days.

Conferences and Reports for Families

At MPCS, teachers and parents/caregivers are partners in the child's educational experience. Teachers will make every effort to keep families up-to-date about students' progress, and are expected to contact parents/caregivers in a timely manner if concerns arise. Additionally, it is our hope that through active partnership, parents and caregivers will inform teachers of any changes in a child's life that might affect their performance in school.

Student progress is reported through parent/teacher conferences offered twice per year where the second set , as well as through written reports sent out twice per school year (grades 1-8).

Detailed information about these is located in the [Reporting Student Progress](#) and [Parent and Caregiver/Teacher Conferences](#) section of this handbook.

3.4 Confidential Information

All employees of Mountain Phoenix Community School understand that they will likely have access to confidential student material and information, and confidential information related to the business and operations of the school, in connection with authorized duties. Such confidential information includes all records,

files, documents, and other materials that contain personally identifiable information on any student, as well as the personally identifiable information itself (including student grades); all student education records that employees may generate or to which employees may have been given access as an employee; any conversations that may be overheard regarding any student attending any school in Jeffco Public Schools, including the Mountain Phoenix; as well as any school business matters. Employees are authorized access to such private information as a condition of employment to the extent necessary to perform their duties. As an employee of MPCS and by its charter with Jeffco Public Schools, you are required to protect against unauthorized access to such information, ensure the security and privacy of such information, and disclose any anticipated threats or hazards to such information. You shall not release this information to the public or to other individuals, including but not limited to MPCS and/or Jeffco Public Schools employees who have not been authorized or do not have a legitimate institutional or business need to know. Any questions regarding release of such information to another person should be directed to your supervisor or their designee. Failure to maintain confidentiality could result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment with MPCS and Jeffco Public Schools.

MPCS complies with [Jeffco Policy JRA-JRC: Student Records/Release of Information on Students](#).

Section 4 - EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

4.1 Waldorf Curriculum

Mountain Phoenix Community School is a member of the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education (APWE) and is guided by these [Core Principles](#). Our strategic platform includes the goal of being a leader in this movement. Our approach to education is meant to meet the children of our school and community, while aligning to these principles. The curriculum incorporates the Common Core standards within its developmental approach. The school provides 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 approach in early childhood, preparing students for 1st grade through a strong foundation in active movement and exploration.

A thorough outline of our curriculum is found in the [MPCS Curriculum Summary](#).

For more information about our educational programs, please refer to Grades 1-8 [Educational Program Policy](#) for grades 1-8 and the Early Childhood Program Policy for PK and Kindergarten.

4.2 Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

Mountain Phoenix Community School uses a Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) approach to meet the needs of children at their developmental levels. Individual tools used will vary based on the age and needs of the student.

Tier 1: Support through Core Curriculum and Classroom Community *Helpful for All*

Tier 2: Intervention through Individual or Small Group Support within the classroom or another setting *Needed for Some*

Tier 3: Intensive Individualized Intervention *Necessary for a Few*

MTSS = Academic Support + Behavior and Discipline Support + Social and Emotional Support

Academic Support

MPCS and its employees are dedicated to meeting the needs of all of our students, and we have a robust Student Support Department which includes Special Education providers and Interventionists to support students and assist teachers.

As part of the public education system, Mountain Phoenix 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 uses 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 will be provided additional learning support. Teachers will implement appropriate interventions and/or accommodations to support the student's learning and monitor progress

Our Student Support Department works in collaboration with the classroom teacher and caregivers to close learning gaps for all students using a variety of holistic and academic research-based intervention strategies to provide the most effective educational intervention for each child.

Using testing data and classroom observations, teachers and the Student Support Department collaboratively identify and respond to students who need Tier 2 and 3 intervention support. Data discussions take place on a regular basis to monitor student progress.

Advanced Learning Plans

Some MPCS students qualify for Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs). Teachers will find an ALP flag for qualifying students in Infinite Campus (see [School Records](#) below) and will be notified by the ALP Coordinator of any incoming students with ALPs.

In the fall, lead Class Teachers are expected to meet with parents and caregivers regarding ALPs to set goals and finalize the student's plan. The MPCS ALP Coordinator will assist classroom teachers with this process.

READ Plans

MPCS complies with the Colorado READ Act to support students reading below grade level. Teachers will find a READ Plan flag for qualifying students in Infinite Campus (see [School Records](#) below), and MPCS READ Plan coordinators work with class teachers to create goals and identify interventions for those students.

4.3 Students with Special Needs

All Teachers (including Special Subject teachers) are required to understand and provide for accommodations listed in IEPs, 504 Plans, Health Plans and ALPs. Health Clinic Aides, SPED Learning Specialists, the ALP Coordinator, and 504 Case Manager will provide a list of students and their accommodations to Class Teachers and Special Subject Teachers at the beginning of the school year and update this list as needed.

Please seek support from your Director of Education to better understand the needs in your specific class.

4.4 Behavioral Support - Student Conduct and Discipline

Discipline is an integral part of the public Waldorf curriculum, evolving over the years to meet the developmental needs of the child. MPCS educators see 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.

Mountain Phoenix Community School 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 MPCS Code of Conduct and to be respectful and

considerate in actions and words of others, the environment, and school property.

The Proactive Behavior Support Team (PBST) works to support Student Discipline at MPCS by reviewing discipline data and providing additional support to students and teachers as needed.

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: **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 behavior at school.

School-Wide and Classroom-Based Rules, Expectations, Procedures/Routines, and Responses

As a foundation to positive student behavior and overall school and class culture, each student at MPCS will have explicit instruction related to rules, expectations, procedures and routines as outlined in our

 Behavior Responses, Definitions, and Levels for MPCS document.

Responding to Behavior Incidents

Using the  Behavior Responses, Definitions, and Levels for MPCS document, employees will determine the type of behavior, severity level, and appropriate response(s).

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 School District Policies

As a charter school authorized by Jeffco School District, we are required to be in compliance with the Jeffco Code of Conduct outlined in the Jeffco Student and Family Handbook. Students must follow the law and Jeffco Code of Conduct regarding drugs, weapons, facsimiles of weapons, harming or threatening to harm, habitually disruptive behavior, and other related issues. Faculty and staff are responsible for ensuring students are informed of these expectations and staying in compliance with these policies and procedures, and the Jeffco

Code of Conduct is available on Jeffco's website.

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, Minor Behaviors documented, Major Behavior Referrals, and Suspensions).
4. Eliciting feedback from all stakeholders.
5. Creating plans to address disproportionality and inequity where they exist.

4.4 Social and Emotional Learning and Support

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

Much of the Social and Emotional Learning students receive at Mountain Phoenix is done naturally and implicitly through the Waldorf curriculum. However, over the past decade, we have recognized the need for more explicit SEL tools and lessons. This provides our staff and students with common language.

Both the Lower and Upper Schools have adopted the Caring Classroom SEL curriculum. Please reach out to our Restorative Practices Liaison, our School Social Worker, or our School Counselor for more information.

Sources of Strength

We participate in the Sources of Strength suicide prevention program, and our Upper School student ambassadors support the work of the program throughout the school.

Monthly Virtues

Each month MPCS students and community members discuss, study, and practice virtues that build character and reflect our school's values. For more information, please visit [The Virtues Project](#).

Monthly Virtues List

August: Community

September: Kindness

October: Courage

November: Gratitude

December: Generosity

January: Inclusion

February: Respect

March: Perseverance
April: Responsibility
May: Growth

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.

Although bullying itself is a disciplinary offense, the prevention of bullying falls into the social and emotional realm.

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. This power imbalance may be real or perceived.
- **Repetition or the Potential to be Repeated:** Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

MPCS fully complies with [JICDE: Bullying Prevention and Education](#).

Should staff suspect bullying, please notify a member of the Proactive Behavior Support Team, which includes School Directors and our School Counselor, among others.

4.5 School Records

Cumulative Folders

Teachers are able to review students' cumulative (CUM) folders when needed. As cumulative folders reside in Jeffco's Laserfiche Application, please reach out to the appropriate Director or Assistant Director to access them. If available, the records can be pulled within 48 hours and a link will be provided on Jeffco's Google Drive for your review.

The contents of the file will contain, but are not limited to:

- Student's past school records from previous schools including standardized test scores
- Copy of student's MPCS records including progress and end-of-year reports
- Other Assessment Reports that may not be found in Jeffco's Soars Application such as MAPS Tests.
- Parenting Plans that have been flagged in Infinite Campus

Infinite Campus

Teachers are expected to be aware of preexisting student needs and plans. To identify these needs, go into Infinite Campus, pull up each student and look for red flags. Some students have previous behavior incidents, ALPs, IEPs, 504 plans etc.

Notification of FERPA 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 and caregiver/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](#).

4.6 Homework

Homework should have a purpose and meaning. The developmental age of the child and time needed to complete homework should be taken into consideration before it is assigned. Kindergarten students do not receive homework. In Elementary school, students may start to have short homework assignments to provide additional skills practice. The amount of homework increases in the Upper School. Children may complete assigned work outside of class time, during perhaps a "study hall" or After School Help (ASH). Homework does not necessarily need to happen in the home.

4.7 Field Trips

Field trips provide learning opportunities in authentic contexts, and are an integral part of the curriculum at Mountain Phoenix. In addition to day trips, overnight field trips occur in grades 3-8, and the timeline of these events are also shared at Back To School Night so families can plan accordingly. In preparation for Overnights, please read the [Staff Chaperone Guidelines](#) as you will want a staff member(s) based on the type of overnight trip.

The [Field Trip Policy](#) provides guidelines for the safety of students, teachers and chaperones on field trips, thereby allowing teachers to maximize the learning opportunity. This policy also provides guidelines for acceptable behavior for students and chaperones, to address problems that have already occurred, and prevent new ones from occurring.

Specific information and ideas about one-day and multi-day curriculum-related field trips by grade, are found in MPCS Expeditionary Education/Field Trips Protocols.

For guidance in organizing field trips, please consult with the School Secretary.

4.9 Student Assessment - Monitoring Student Progress

It is important that all teachers refer to Student Assessments in the *Family Handbook*.

Teachers use both summative and formative assessments to provide evidence of student learning in regards to meeting MPCS learning standards and expectations. Portfolio and project-based assessments are another way students demonstrate their learning.

Teachers will keep track of student progress and communicate it with parents and caregivers and other members of the child's support team.

Each teacher will demonstrate to the Director of Education an organized and appropriate tracking system whereby such progress will be charted.

Evidence of student progress will be provided to parents/caregivers and administration upon request.

The current year's assessment calendar can be found in the [Staff Resource Section](#) of the website.

4.10 Reporting Student Progress

Student progress is reported through caregiver/teacher conferences held at least once a year, as well as through written reports sent out twice per school year. Teachers should share progress in all areas with examples of work from Main Lesson books and/or a student portfolio during Parent Conferences. Written Progress Reports are sent home twice a year for Lower School. Upper school families can view their student's grades in Infinite Campus after the end of each semester. For all grades students, the End-of-Year Report includes:

- Progress Report for grades 1-5 or Report Card for grades 6-8
- End of Year Narrative Report, Reflection Report or letter to 8th grade student

Each section - EC, Grades 1- 5, and Grades 6-8 - will provide student progress data as well as summative information to parents. Some consistency is expected at each grade level and collaboration amongst teams is expected in this regard. There are guides and presentations that will be presented during section to teachers to guide them in this process. Leadership, section leads, coaches will be available to help new teachers through this process. Teachers are expected to learn and understand the format and method for completing reports prior to the due dates and then honor and meet the deadlines communicated.

Any concerns shared in a written form of the progress report or end-of-year report should have already been communicated to parents/caregivers prior to the report. There should be no surprises in writing. Teachers must communicate to parents/caregivers at the earliest opportunity that it is essential for parents to inform teachers of any changes in a child's life that might affect their performance in school.

Parent and Caregiver/Teacher Conferences

Teachers are required to follow the calendar regarding parent and caregiver conferences, except if another arrangement has been made with their Director Supervisor. Parent and Caregiver/Teacher Conferences are

held twice a year - one that is mandatory in the fall and an additional opportunity for a formal conference in the spring—to communicate student progress. While spring conferences are optional based on student need, all teachers are expected to offer a conference opportunity to parents. Sharing of samples of work in a portfolio of main lesson books, practice pages, and other work and a child's individual progress in class in all areas is expected at parent and caregiver conferences. Include test results, where applicable, and any accommodations or modifications provided to the student. Come prepared for each conference. Parents/caregivers and teachers are welcome to make longer or additional appointments as needed.

Conference Guidelines

- When speaking about the student, try to use behavioral language. Objectively describe what the child does.
- Begin with the child's strengths and move on to weaknesses and concerns.
- Avoid labels. Don't diagnose or prescribe specialized professional services. It may however be appropriate to suggest a Child Study be scheduled or the Three Streams/MTSS process begun if there are special concerns that may require a team approach to create a plan or special accommodations to support the student.
- Teachers need to share about the student during conferences, but also have time to listen to the parent/caregiver(s) to create a partnership between home and school.
- Remember the value and application of "I" messages. Remember that "You" messages can feel accusatory and contribute to defensive communication.
- Keep your own biases, sympathies, and antipathies in check.
- Treat cultural differences as assets, not roadblocks.
- Remember to respect issues of confidentiality.
- A good format for your meeting might be:
 - Strengths
 - New/known information - share current quality of work/assessment results
 - Concerns
 - Interventions/accommodations tried or proposed
 - Decide how to measure the progress and set a time for further conversation
 - Determine what parents can do at home to support the child's success in school
 - Review any questions or concerns that the parent has
 - Remember to breathe. Parent conferences should be a way of building community and a positive relationship with the parents.

4.11 Class Teacher Rotation

Looping means that a teacher stays with the class from year to year, as well as students staying in the same classroom make-up, with the same students for many years. 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 children will ideally have one teacher for Pre-Kindergarten, one teacher for Kindergarten,

one teacher from Grades 1 to 5, and one teacher from Grades 6 to 8.

For more information, refer to the [Class Teacher Rotation Policy](#).

4.12 Student Retention and Acceleration

Although rare, there are times when a student is retained or accelerated. MPCS uses a support team process that includes the class teacher, interventionists, learning specialists, mental health professionals, administration, and the parent(s) and caregiver(s). Please contact your supervising Director or the Assistant Director of Student Support for assistance with this process. *Jeffco IKE: Promotion, Retention and Acceleration of Students for more details.*

Section 5 - Professional Behaviors & Culture

All MPCS employees are expected to behave in a professional manner, in accordance with the best interests of students and the school. Adherence to the mission, vision, and core values is expected, as these are the core tenets created by and for the school. Expected professional behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Respect for self and others, in both words and actions (i.e. refrain from gossip)
- Courtesy toward others; model for children and community members
- Confidentiality of student, employee, and school information on and off campus
- Promote a positive image of the school on and off campus
- Refrain from negative comments about co-workers and community members; follow the communication protocols
- Create positive and friendly relationships with co-workers, parents/caregivers, and students in the school
- Exhibit respect for all cultures and people
- Impeccable professional boundaries with students at all times

The MPCS Employee Code of Conduct Policy provides complete guidance regarding professional conduct and expectations.

5.1 Dress Code for Employees

- **Mountain Phoenix Community School would like to embrace a positive, educational, and professional/business casual attire for all employees when working with students.** We realize that this will vary from Early Childhood, to Lower Grades, to Upper School, as is developmentally appropriate for the children in each age group.
- At MPCS, we expect our employees to maintain a professional/business casual appearance and dress in a manner consistent with work responsibilities.
- Clothing should also be neat and clean and shoes must be worn at all times. Additionally, ECE staff must wear closed-toe shoes to meet childcare licensing requirements.

- Employees are expected to maintain these dress requirements at any time that they are working or representing Mountain Phoenix on or off campus, including such events as concerts, festivals, field trips and parent and caregiver/teacher conferences.
- Reasonable accommodations will be applied with consistency and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the CROWN Act of 2020, and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which allows for religious garb and grooming in the workplace.

5.2 Employees with Children Enrolled at MPCCS

Employees who are also parents and caregivers of students in the school should demonstrate respect for their child's teacher(s) by requesting appointments to talk about their child in regards to performance, concerns or problems in school, rather than discussing them at-will.

Additionally, teachers should discuss with their parent-colleagues how and when they would prefer to receive information about their child.

At all times, an employee must refrain from talking negatively to another person, including other parents and caregivers, about any colleagues. Grievances may not be brought or aired by employees in public spaces or school meetings. Please follow the [MPCS Co-Worker Communication Guidelines](#) and subsequent conflict resolution and grievance process, if needed.

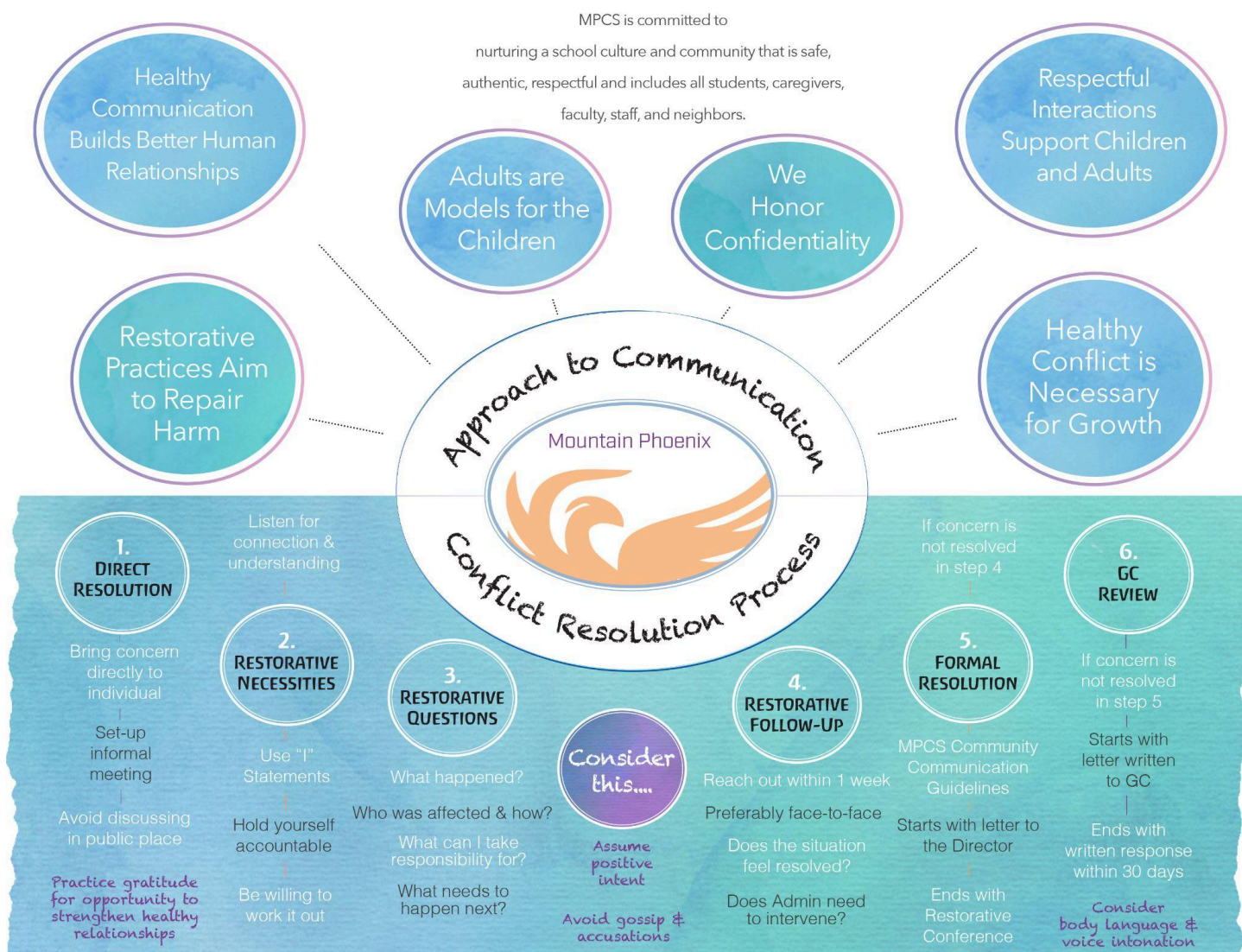
If your child has a conflict or altercation with another student, you may not address that student directly except in an emergency situation. Employees are expected to seek help from another teacher or administrator who can address the situation more objectively.

5.3 MPCCS Co-Worker Communication Guidelines

(Note: These guidelines are referenced in the [Employee Complaints Concerns Grievances Policy](#): Guidelines for Conflict Resolution as Step 1: Direct Resolution.)

At MPCCS, it is our desire to foster a healthy, effective communication process that supports each person working 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.

Restorative conversations rely on four core components of restorative mindsets and language: **empathetic listening**, **"I" statements**, **accountability**, and **making things right**.



Step 1: Direct Resolution Process

If you have a question or concern with a coworker, **FIRST** bring your question or concern **directly to your co-worker** in a timely way. Let your co-worker 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 with your coworker, 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 the Step 1: Direct Resolution process is followed with intention 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 Employee Concern/Complaints/Grievances process by following the steps of the [Employee Complaints Concerns Grievances Policy](#), which begins in the next section.

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.

5.4 Employee Complaints, Concerns, and Grievances

The school is committed to establishing procedures designed to prevent and resolve employee concerns, complaints, and grievances at the lowest possible administrative level. Employees are responsible to notify their supervising director of any work related concerns, complaints, or grievances. This includes both personal concerns and any harassment or discrimination employees witness in accordance with Jeffco policy GBA, Equal Employment Opportunity, as assigned to MPCCS through contract.

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 the employee's supervising 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 to 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, MPCCS will take necessary steps to ensure confidentiality as appropriate.

For guidelines and directions for the resolution of concerns, complaints, or grievances, please refer to the [Employee Complaints Concerns Grievances Policy](#).

Section 6 - EMPLOYEE ATTENDANCE AND DUTY EXPECTATIONS

6.1 Bell Schedule

Preschool

- Full Day: 8:15-3:15 Fridays early release 1:15
- Half Day: 8:15-12:15

Kindergarten

- Fully Day: 8:00-1:30
- Napping House 1:30-3:15 Fridays excluded

Grades

- Lower School 8:15-3:30 Fridays early release 1:30
- Upper School 8:00-3:30 Fridays early release 1:30

6.2 Salaried Employee Attendance Expectations

Full-time, salaried employees are generally expected to be on campus from 7:45-3:45 Monday through Thursday and 7:45-4:00 on Friday. Although rare, employees are expected to be available for after-school meetings until 5:00pm.

In addition to fulfilling the instructional expectations contained in their Employment Agreement, class teachers are expected to be in attendance for in-class festivals and performances where their students are involved. For example: concerts, assemblies, festivals. Full-time subject teachers are also recommended to attend in support of their students. During performances, teachers are expected to sit with and supervise their own students. Teachers are required to attend and uphold behavior expectations as well as safety and security during all school events.

All full-time salaried employees (instructional and non-instructional) are expected to attend all professional development, in-services, and work days unless excused by their supervising Director due to extenuating circumstances. These days are considered part of the employee agreement and identified in the school calendar.

Full-time, salaried employees must follow the school calendar for vacations and holidays. Please refer to their individual Offer of Employment for more detail. Class teachers are also expected to perform enough independent work over the summer to be adequately prepared for the next year.

6.3 Hourly Employee Attendance Expectations and Process

Hourly employees are paid on an hourly basis and are expected to work the hours indicated in their individual Offer of Employment, associated days worked calendar and/or the weekly schedule determined by their supervisor.

Hourly employees must fill out an online timesheet each month for hours worked and completed by end of day on the 10th day of each month. The Business Manager sends each employee a yearly timesheet to each hourly staff member..

Hourly employees are entitled to a 30-minute lunch break for all employees working 4 hours or more. A 10 minute break in the morning and afternoon is encouraged and paid for those working 8-hour days.

Any optional or mandatory professional development attended will be paid. Non-exempt hourly employees may be asked to work on weekends or evenings throughout the year to provide support for assemblies, festivals, and

fundraisers or special events. If attendance at such events causes the employee to exceed 40 hours in a week, compensation for the hours in excess of 40 shall be given through Overtime Pay (at a rate of one and half times the hourly rate). For the purposes of calculating overtime payments, only hours actually worked are counted. In all cases, overtime must be preapproved by the supervising Director. The pre-approval requirement does not apply to health, safety, or security issues.

6.4 Leaving Campus During the Work Day

If you are going to leave campus *for any reason* during the work day, please alert the Main or Upper School Office when you leave and when you return. This helps to ensure campus safety and is very important in case of emergency.

You are expected to be working on site for your entire work day (brief errands off campus during non-supervisory times excepted).

If you are taking a group of students off campus, please follow the procedures listed in the [Leaving Campus with Students](#) section below.

6.5 Employee Health

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

- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Fever of 100.4 or higher
- Severe cough
- Infectious runny nose (non-allergy related)
- Head lice
- Rash
- Pink Eye
- Communicable disease

Employee Assistance Program

Mountain Phoenix Employees are eligible for mental health support through Jeffco's Employee Assistance Program. They provide Free, Confidential, Short-Term Solution-Focused Counseling Service for employees, retirees, and family members (aged 15 and older). To use, please call 303-982-0377.

6.6 MPCS Employee Absence Reporting

When unable to report to work for any reason, employees are asked to take the following steps as soon as possible:

When Sick:

- Request a substitute (if applicable) at your earliest convenience through InstaSub
- Communicate with your Direct Supervisor and Office Staff about your illness

When Requesting Personal Time or Professional Development Day off:

- [Refer to and follow Employee Professional Behaviors](#)
- Send an email to your Direct Supervisor at least two weeks in advance to request the days off
- Once approved, request a substitute in InstaSub. If PD, please enter a note indicating PD.
- You are responsible for getting your classes covered
- If your class is not covered by one week out of your requested time off, please send reminders in InstaSub and utilize Jeffco Subs

6.8 Substitute Folder

In addition to regular lesson plans for the guest teacher, all instructional staff must provide a substitute folder(or binder) for guest teachers to use. This folder is to be left in an easy-to-spot place on or near the teacher's desk and must include:

- Seating chart(s)
- Class roster(s)
- Classroom rules and expectations
- Daily schedule including playground supervision times
- General rhythms and routines (transitions, lining up, recess, restroom use, supplies, etc.)
- Procedures for attendance, hot lunch, dismissal, etc.
- Attention signals you use
- Verses and songs
- Extra games or activities that are known by the class for the guest teacher to use as time fillers
- Map of the school (please mark the location of special subject classes, and locations of adult bathrooms and staff room)
- Emergency phone numbers (include office & co-teacher's phone extensions to ask for help)
- Emergency procedures (include location of go-bag)
- Names of a couple students they can rely upon to be helpful
- Locations of supplies and materials to be used
- Suggestions to aid in understanding needs of individual students as necessary (academic, behavior, social-emotional)
- Significant Health Care Student List with instructions (if applicable)
- In addition, emergency substitute lesson plans for one full day should be included in case the teacher's absence was an emergency and regular substitute lesson plans could not be created.

Please Note: Instructional staff are to create a substitute folder and emergency lesson plans within the first 3 weeks of the school year. When complete, please let the School Secretary know, and they will record the location of these materials in your classroom or office.

6.9 Leave of Absence

MPCS recognizes that there are times when employees may need to request a leave of absence. Those include, but are not limited to, bereavement leave, jury duty, military leave, and family medical leave of absence (FMLA). Because these are less common, please discuss your request with your supervising Director before going through the [MPCS Employee Absence Reporting](#) steps above.

See the [Employee Paid Time Off \(PTO\) Benefits](#) and [Other Employee Leave Benefits](#) sections of this handbook for more information.

For more information, please see the [Employee Benefits and Leave Policy](#).

6.10 School Closure - Inclement Weather Policy

UNLESS you are otherwise notified by MPCS directly, MPCS follows the same inclement weather decisions and practices as Jeffco. In cases when MPCS differs from Jeffco, employees and families will receive a call from the school via the ParentSquare Messenger System by 6:15 am. School Closures will also be posted on ParentSquare and the homepage of the MPCS website.

6.11 Student Supervisory Duties

It is the duty of all employees to ensure the safety of all students. Therefore, a qualified employee shall be on duty at all times to supervise student activities, both inside and outside. The student supervision duty schedule is created each school year to include supervision of before school, recess, and after school times. If the appointed employee is unable to fulfill their duty, it is their responsibility to find coverage by another employee.

6.12 Grades End of Day Pick-up

Class teachers must accompany their classes to the Pick-up Area; arriving promptly by 3:25 ready to manage their classes and facilitate student pick-up procedures. Arriving later than 3:25 causes problems for the entire traffic and pick-up system. Teachers must also leave class in time to properly drop-off students attending After Care.

6.13 Faculty, Staff, Section/Department Meetings

MPCS holds human relationships as one of our core values, and we strengthen the bonds between employees in many ways, including our weekly meetings which blend a mix of artistic work, new learning, and business.

All salaried employees are expected to attend faculty, staff, and or section/department meetings as indicated in their job description or by their supervising Director.

Faculty and staff meetings are held on Fridays with a schedule given out at the beginning of the school year. Additionally, each section/department also meets on a set schedule.

If you are unable to attend a meeting, please inform your supervising Director prior to the meeting (unless there is an emergency) so you can make arrangements to receive any missed information.

6.14 Non-Student Contact Days

There are a number of employee inservice, professional development, and work days throughout the year where students are not on campus. Please refer to the school calendar for the dates.

6.15 End of Year Teacher Responsibilities

Teachers work together to coordinate the transition from one year to the next. **These specific tasks are determined by the Director of Education, however they generally include:**

1. Move your classroom supplies to your next classroom, as needed.
2. Leave your previous classroom clean and ready for the next teacher
3. Tidy shared spaces in hallways, meeting rooms, playground, school grounds.
4. Return curriculum resources, book sets, and other items checked out.
5. All plants must be removed from the classrooms for the summer.

Section 7 - GENERAL EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS

7.1 Employee Social Media Policy

Employee Use Guidelines

The following guidelines for social media should be followed by all employees:

- Employees may not “friend” any child that is a current student at Mountain Phoenix and should take appropriate steps to confirm that any friend requests they receive are not from a student before accepting. Friending students can appear to create an inappropriate student-teacher relationship and can put the teacher at risk.
- Employees should keep in mind that everything they post can be seen as a reflection on the school. Do not circulate rumors or unsubstantiated information.
- Employees shall not refer to or post specific information about students. Any information that can be traced back to a specific student is a violation of FERPA.
- Employees shall not reference assignments or assessments given to Mountain Phoenix students.
- Employees shall not use their personal social media account as a form of communication for school-related issues. School-related communications with students, caregivers, and colleagues

should only come from school communication systems (i.e. ParentSquare, Jeffco email). Staff members should never communicate with students using non-school social media or email.

- All employees must use Jeffco email accounts for school-related communications.
- Employees shall not post photos or videos of colleagues without their permission. Employees shall not post photos or videos taken at school, or photos or videos that contain students without written, current administrative and caregiver parent consent.
- Employees must seek approval prior to publishing artistic work, images that were created on school property with school resources.
- Employees must also comply with [Jeffco Policy GBEE: Staff Use of Internet and Electronic Communications](#) for additional rules that may apply to social media.

For more information about social media use, including violations to the Employee Use Guidelines above, please refer to the [Employee Social Media Policy](#).

7.2 Cell Phones

Excessive personal phone calls can significantly disrupt classroom learning and school operations. Employees should do their best to use their break or lunch period for personal phone calls and text messages and to keep phones out of sight and hearing of students unless in an emergency.

If employees give out their personal phone number to parents and caregivers, please instruct them not to call or text during the school day. Any immediate messages that need to be given to the teacher or student may go through the Main Office phone line.

Confidential information should not be discussed on a cell phone or via any mobile device. Phones and mobile devices with cameras should not be used in a way that violates other MPCS guidelines such as, but not limited to, EEO/Sexual Harassment and Confidential Information. Any pictures/videos should be used for educational purposes. These images should not be used on personal social media sites or for any personal business usage.

7.3 Drug Free Workplace

MPCS fully complies with [Jeffco Policy GBEC: Drug Free Workplace](#), and observance of this policy shall be a condition of employment.

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of alcohol, illicit and illegal drugs as deemed by federal and/or state law, are prohibited on the premises or as part of any school activity of Mountain Phoenix Community School and/or the Jefferson County School District R-1. Illicit drug use is the use of illegal drugs, the abuse of alcohol and includes prescription drugs and anabolic steroids. This policy shall apply to all district employees.

Although this policy is directed toward the use of illegal drugs and the abuse of alcohol and other drugs, employees function as role models for students. In order to promote a healthy environment for students, the use of alcohol is prohibited on district premises or as part of any activity involving students.

An employee knowingly in the possession of, or under the influence of, alcohol or any illegal drug shall be suspended immediately by their supervising Director if such use or possession is:

- On any district property at any time;

- At any school sponsored or sanctioned activity or event off district property, such as athletic events, or en route thereto; and
- On the way to work.

The above restrictions on legal use of alcohol do not apply to adult staff members attending school or district related social activities off of school or district property.

7.4 Employee Performance Evaluations

MPCS conducts its faculty and staff evaluation program in accordance with the Employee Evaluation Policy and with the purpose of supporting professional and personal development.

We wish to recognize strengths and encourage the striving of each employee to develop and grow. This process is intended to blend self-evaluation/reflection, team/peer reflections and feedback from a supervisor or outside evaluator.

Full description of the process can be found in the [Employee Evaluation Policy](#).

7.5 Conflicts of Interest

Public employment is a public trust. Upon accepting MPCS employment, employees accept the responsibility to act honestly and objectively for the benefit of the public, and to hold themselves to the highest ethical standards. Because maintaining public confidence is essential to the school's mission, employees must avoid any action that might create a conflict of interest.

More information can be found in the [Jeffco Policy GBEA: Staff Conflicts of Interest](#).

Section 8 - EMPLOYMENT / OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

8.1 Notice of At-Will Status

Employment with Mountain Phoenix Community School is at-will. Employees have the right to end their work relationship with MPCS, with or without advance notice for any reason. MPCS has the same right. The language used in this handbook and any verbal statements made by administration or the board of directors are not intended to constitute a contract of employment either express or implied, nor are they a guarantee of employment for a specific duration. No representative of MPCS, other than the administration or board of directors, has the authority to enter into an agreement of employment for any specified period and such agreement must be in writing, signed by the board of directors and the employee.

8.2 Employee Status & Compensation

MPCS compensates employees according to the annual Compensation Schedule developed by the Finance

Committee and posted to the school's website. Following are descriptions of the different employee statuses in place at MPCS, and their implications for compensation and benefits.

Full-Time Employee: an employee normally scheduled to work 30 - 40 hours per week. Employees working 30 hours or more are eligible for medical benefits offered through the school and optional benefits through the district.

Part-Time Employee: an employee normally scheduled to work up to 29 hours in a workweek. Part-time employees are not eligible for medical benefits.

Exempt Employee: an employee who is paid on a salaried basis and is not eligible for overtime pay.

Non-Exempt Employee: non-exempt employees are paid on an hourly basis and are eligible for paid overtime at one and one-half times their regular rate of pay for all hours worked in excess of 40 hours per workweek.

Salaried Employee: an employee whose compensation is paid monthly on an annualized basis over the term of the employment agreement. An equal portion of their annual salary is paid each month, calculated by dividing the total compensation amount by the number of months reflected in their employment agreement.

Hourly Employee: an employee whose compensation is paid monthly based on hours submitted to the Business Manager each pay cycle via an electronic timesheet. Hourly pay cycles are based on mid-month (16th of the prior month) to mid-month (15th of the current month) and are paid out on the pay date for the current month.

8.3 Pay Dates

All employees are paid monthly on the last (non-holiday) working day of the month.

8.4 Prorated Compensation

In the event that employment either begins after the start of the school year or is terminated before the term of employment stated in the Employment Offer, compensation shall be prorated based on the actual days worked by the employee at a daily rate determined by the annual compensation divided by the number of work days contained in annual school/days worked calendar.

8.5 Employee Benefits & Leave

The MPCS Employee Benefits and Leave Policy contains detailed information on the benefits and leave offered to MPCS employees as part of their total compensation package.

Detailed and the most up to date information regarding employee benefits can be found in the [Charter Employees Benefit Guide on the Jeffco Intranet](#). MPCS employees are encouraged to work directly with the MPCS Business Manager in determining their benefit enrollments.

Employee Health and Medical Benefits

- Group Health Insurance
- Health Savings Accounts - not available
- Basic Life Insurance
- Voluntary Life Insurance
- Voluntary Short Term Disability Insurance
- PERA Disability Benefits
- Worker's Compensation
- Retirement Benefits Plan
- Voluntary Retirement Savings Plans

Other Benefits Available to Employees Based on Employment Status

- Priority Enrollment at MPCS
- Tuition Discounts (may vary from year to year)
- Before and Aftercare Benefits (may vary from year to year)
- Professional Development Funds (may vary from year to year)

Employee Paid Time Off (PTO) Benefits.

In compliance with the Healthy Families and Workplaces Act (HFWA), MPCS allocates Paid Time Off (PTO) to all employees to use for illness or personal needs.

- Accrual of PTO: Full-time salaried employees (employees working 30+ hours per week) are allotted sixty-four (64) PTO hours (8 PTO days) per school year. Hourly employees are allotted PTO at a rate of one (1) hour per thirty (30) hours worked, up to a maximum of forty-eight (48) hours per employment year. PTO hours are made available “up front” for all employees based on their calculated annual accrual. If employment is terminated before the employment agreement has been fulfilled, a payroll adjustment will be made for PTO compensation already provided on a prorated basis based on the days scheduled versus the days worked.
 - PTO related to illness must be requested as soon as possible (ideally the evening before) and no later than 6am of the school day, except in an emergency.
 - Requests for PTO unrelated to illness must be submitted to the supervising Director, at least one week in advance, and must be approved. Your Direct Supervisor reserves the right to deny a PTO request for a specific date if it appears it will negatively affect the children or the school on that date.
 - PTO may not be used during the first or last week of school, except in extenuating circumstances or an emergency situation. MPCS asks all employees not to take additional PTO prior to or after a long scheduled calendar break or holiday. Requests in the first or last week of the school year must be discussed with the appropriate Director.
- Unused PTO
 - For Hourly Employees: Unused PTO leave for hourly employees does not roll over from year to year. At the end of each employment term, unused PTO is converted to a cash payment according to the employee's hourly rate and paid out at the final pay period of the school year.
 - For Salaried Employees

- Unused PTO leave for salaried employees is rolled over year to year. Employees with accrued PTO may use a maximum of eighty (80) accrued hours during any given year, after the allocation for the current year has been used. PTO leave requests that exceed the combined maximum of one hundred forty four (144) hours require additional approval from the supervising director and in no case shall PTO leave be granted that extends beyond the accrued entitlement.
- When PTO leave is exhausted, the time off shall be unpaid; a payroll deduction for an approved absence for a salaried employee will be based on the employee's current daily rate according to the Employment Agreement. Upon separation of employment for any reason, previously accrued PTO will be paid out according to the current daily rate and shall only include a prorated accrual of the current year PTO based on actual earned PTO to date.

Other Employee Leave Benefits

- Bereavement Leave
- Professional Leave
- Religious Holidays
- Family and Medical Leave
- Jury Duty
- Military Leave

For more information, please see the [Employee Benefits and Leave Policy](#).

8.6 MPCS Employee ADA Request Process

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that employers like MPCS provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities that would enable them to perform the essential functions of their job.

To be protected by the ADA, one must have a disability or have a relationship or association with an individual with a disability. An individual with a disability is defined by the ADA as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or a record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment.

At MPCS, requests for accommodation are to be delivered to the Business Manager. After a completed request form is received, an interactive dialogue between the employee and administration is coordinated. To submit a request, please complete the two forms linked below and return them to the Business Manager.

- [ADA Employee Accommodation Request Form](#)
- [ADA Medical Certification Form](#)

8.7 Purchasing

There are several types of purchases that may need to be made throughout the year. The following are descriptions of those items and supplies:

Consumable - Student Supplies and Materials

These are student supplies and materials used for day-to-day instruction and are considered consumable by the student. They are funded by student fees that families pay at the beginning of each school year and are available to the teachers during in-service the week before school starts. These items are purchased each spring/summer by the School Secretary.

Discretionary Supplemental Supplies and Materials

These are similar to the student supplies listed above but are not part of the standard supply list. These items are intended to be used for special projects that support the class curriculum such as craft projects, student magazine subscriptions, cooking supplies etc. The teacher must put in a purchase request with the School Secretary or their Direct Supervisor before purchasing these supplies.

Non-Consumable - Standard Classroom Equipment and Supplies

These are items that stay with the grade/classroom and do not move with the teacher and/or class. This might include jump ropes, curtains, paint racks, clocks, chairs, bulletin boards etc. They are funded by MPCS, not student fees and are considered non-consumable supplies and equipment. The teacher must get pre-approval to purchase by submitting a purchase request to the School Secretary.

Core Instructional Materials and Supplies

These items are considered teacher resources and are intended to support the teacher in delivering the curriculum. They must meet the approved instructional requirements of each grade. This might include math manipulatives and games, literacy resources, a class set of books etc. These items are funded by MPCS and may travel with the classroom teacher if appropriate.

Incidental Supplies

These are consumable items used in the classroom by the students and teachers and are funded by MPCS, not student fees. These might include folders, Kleenex, hand sanitizer, tape, paper clips, staples etc. These items are purchased by a Direct Supervisor (EC) or School Secretary (Grades). They do not require a purchase request or pre-approval.

Purchase Process

When a teacher finds they need to purchase an item from one of these categories, the teacher will need to fill out the [Purchase Request](#) and submit it to the main office and supervising director to verify if funds are available for the purchase. Please include any web links to the item being requested. If funds are not available or the purchase is not approved, the requester will be contacted.

Reimbursement

Please note: MPCS always recommends submitting a Purchase Request for all purchases. Best Practice is to think ahead on purchases so that an individual with a purchasing card can make the purchase for you.

On occasion, a teacher may need to purchase something for their class with their own money. In order to guarantee reimbursement for these purchases, the teacher must confirm with the School Secretary (Grades) or Direct Supervisor (EC) that there are available funds for this purchase. The teacher must fill out the [Request for Reimbursement](#) with receipts and clear explanation as to the purpose of the item. Once received, the business manager will document the expense in the teacher's classroom account and forward the reimbursement request to the director for approval. The Business Manager can then issue a check to the teacher.

Please note: All items purchased with school dollars belong to the school. Items obtained through grants or online fundraising such as Donors Choose must also remain with the school.

If a teacher leaves the school, all school-purchased, fundraised, and grant/online funded items must remain at the school as they were procured for the use of the school and funded by public or donated monies.

Classroom Account Policy

[MPCS Classroom Account Policy](#) is under development.

Fundraising

MPCS conducts many school-wide and classroom level fundraisers each year. All fundraising activities need to be approved by the Fundraising Committee who holds the annual fundraising calendar.

For information about fundraising at MPCS, including class-specific fundraisers, please view the [MPCS Fundraising Policy](#).

For another avenue to fund specific pedagogical projects, please contact the [MPCS Grant Writing Committee](#).

8.8 MPCS Facilities Use

Mountain Phoenix encourages and supports the fair and equitable use of school facilities by school community members for non-school activities outside of school hours. The goal of this policy is to support school community members individually and collectively.

While non-school activities that take place on the Mountain Phoenix campus are not expected to directly support the school's values and mission, they should not be in violation of them.

For more information, please refer to the MPCS Facilities Use Policy.

8.9 Safety and Emergency Procedures

MPCS takes the safety and security of our students, staff, visitors, and campus seriously. We have multiple protocols and procedures in place, and we have a Safety Response Team (SRT) that meets regularly to review, revise, and practice them. Please speak up if you see something that seems out of place, or if you have questions. Contact the Main Office or a Director immediately.

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. Teachers should take attendance and notify administration of any missing, extra, or injured students.

EED. Evacuate. Evade. Defend. While we utilize the [Standard Response Protocol \(SRP\)](#) inside our standard school environments, large gatherings—like a packed gymnasium or an outdoor stadium—naturally look a little different. Because standard lockdowns aren't always practical in open spaces, our district uses a proactive framework called "[Evacuate, Evade, Defend](#)" (EED). This simply ensures our community has clear, flexible options to stay safe in any environment.

As part of our routine seasonal preparation, we ask that all coaches, participants and families take a few moments to [watch this brief safety video](#) that explains this protocol.

The core takeaway of the video is simple: When you can't lockdown — Evacuate, Evade, Defend.

Emergency Drills

Fire drills are conducted monthly, in compliance with State statutes. Fire extinguishers are located in all buildings and are maintained annually. Evacuation routes are posted. One schoolwide Lockdown Drill is completed each year. Shelter and Evacuate Drills are completed every other year.

Leaving Campus with Students

Before you leave campus, please contact the Main or Upper School Office.

Walking. In order to take groups of students off campus by means of walking, teachers must complete an off-campus form in the Main Office before leaving campus. In addition to listing your destination and departure/arrival times, you will need to list which students in your care are leaving campus, staying behind, or are absent. **Always take a Walkie-Talkie with you!**

All other modes of leaving campus are considered a Field Trip and the field trip process must be followed.

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. Service dogs are allowed with proper permission in accordance with policy.

Child Protection: Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

As an employee of Mountain Phoenix Community School, you are a mandatory reporter of suspected child abuse and neglect. It is your legal responsibility to immediately report any suspected child abuse and/or neglect to child protective services or local law enforcement. You only need to suspect that there is a potential safety concern to make a report; you are not responsible for investigating before reporting your concerns. **When in doubt- report it.**

Because there is legal paperwork involved in making the report, you must contact the MPCS direct supervisor before or directly after doing so. Additionally, our School Counselor is here to help you with this process. If you do not feel comfortable making the call or making the call alone, please contact the School Counselor for assistance.

School employees and officials shall not contact the child's family or any other persons to determine the cause of the suspected abuse or neglect.

It is not the responsibility of the school official or employee to prove that the child has been abused or neglected.

MPCS fully complies with [Jeffco District Policy: Reporting Child Abuse JLF](#)

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.

Section 9 - STUDENT AND FAMILY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Most of the information below is also included in the MPCS Family Handbook.

9.1 Dress Code for Students

The scope of education at MPCS extends to consideration of the environment which surrounds children when they attend school. Because of this, we ask that children dress in ways that support the curriculum and allow full participation in the activities that occur. Therefore, we encourage/strive to have attire that is functional and contributes to a healthy environment.

MPCS believes that all students have an intrinsic worth based upon who they are and not what they wear. However, we recognize that students' clothing may influence their own and other's performance at school, healthy participation in the social environment, and children's play. Clothing that is related to media is discouraged but does not inherently violate the dress code policy. In the elementary program, students are redirected from conversations about media at school. . For specific information about what is included in the MPCS Dress Code for Students and its enforcement, please refer to the [Student Dress Code Policy](#). This policy is designed to encourage an awareness of decorum that will support students both as learners and, later, as adult members of various communities in the world.

9.2 Lost and Found

The only Lost and Found areas are in the rear entry of the Main Office building and outside the Upper School Office. Campus personnel should drop ALL items found in one of these Lost and Found areas to ensure all found items are collected only in designated areas for the convenience of those who are looking for them. Families and students should regularly check Lost and Found to retrieve items that may be lost. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity on the first of every month.

9.3 Student Attendance

By state law, boards of education are required to adopt written policies setting forth attendance requirements. Mountain Phoenix complies with all Jeffco and Colorado State policies and procedures regarding attendance. Teachers must take attendance every day (every period in Upper School) using Infinite Campus.

Attendance is the responsibility of the student, the parents/caregivers, 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.

For more information about the MPCS attendance process, please refer to the [Student Attendance Policy](#).

9.4 Student Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Mountain Phoenix drop-off and pick-up Procedures and Rules for K-8 are defined by the school's Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures. Safety is the first priority at all times. Adherence to these drop-off and pick-up procedures, rules, and staff's directions is required of all students and families of Mountain Phoenix Community School. When you are not sure of who is picking up, please check ID's.

By default, all students are to be dropped off and picked up by parents/caregivers or a designee registered with the school. Caregivers must provide approval prior to students walking or biking home. Permission will be kept on file in the front office.

Emergencies

Emergency vehicles may need to reach the school during drop-off and pick-up. If this happens, the main office will put the school on hold to allow emergency access.

9.5 Student Health and Illness

Sending Students to the Office or Health Clinic

In order to keep students in their classroom instructional environment as much as possible, teachers and staff should attempt to take care of minor issues (such as needing a Band-Aid) themselves. Band-Aids are available from the office to keep in your classroom. Ice is available from the freezer in each building. Please reserve the Health Clinic for more serious issues. Teachers are not permitted to apply ointment of any kind or dispense anything orally (see section immediately below). Staff also may not use tweezers to remove splinters. If you are sending a student to the Health Clinic, please have the child escorted by another student or adult, if needed.

Administering Medications to Students

[Jeffco District Policy JLCD: Administering Medication to Students](#) 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 has a full time Clinic Aide on staff and contracts out with Children's Hospital. The School Nurse (from Children's Hospital) is on campus once a week. Office Staff is Med Delegated in the absence of the Clinic Aide.

9.6 Lunch and Snack Guidelines

There are snack and lunch times scheduled during the school day. Students are all expected to bring their own snack and either bring a lunch or have ordered a hot lunch. The food students bring from home should be packed so it is ready to eat and kept at the appropriate temperature (ice packs, thermoses). We don't prepare, warm, or refrigerate lunches. Teachers may store personal food in lounge refrigerators.

If a student arrives at school without lunch or a snack,, please contact the Main Office. Please keep an eye out to ensure that no student goes hungry.

In the Family Handbook, caregivers are asked to refrain from packing candy, soda, and other foods high in sugar or caffeine. As a teacher, if you see that a student is regularly coming to school without adequate and/or nutritious food, please be sensitive and discreet as you reach out to the student and/or parent/caregiver(s) to find a solution. If you need assistance with this process, please contact your Direct Supervisor. . There are also other district programs that we can help them access.

Snack and Lunch Responsibilities for the Teacher

Teachers supervise their class for lunch, either in the classroom or at a designated location.

Teachers are expected to communicate with parents and caregivers at the beginning of the year concerning snack and lunch rhythms.

Additionally, teachers need to provide an environment of gratitude and reverence before snack and lunch by allowing time for students to recite a verse or sing a song. Teachers are also responsible for teaching students to properly use recycling, trash and compost bins, as available.

Special Dietary Issues

If a child has special dietary issues, parents and caregivers are asked to make these known to the Health Office and the Class Teacher. Food allergies (not preferences) are reported during Online Registration prior to the start of school. Teachers will receive a list of student health needs in August and can access Infinite Campus for health needs applicable to their classes at any time or upon arrival of a new student, if applicable. The designated Health Clinic Aide/Administrative Assistant is responsible for timely circulation of this confidential list. Teachers are responsible for informing assistants, special subject teachers, and/or substitutes, as needed.

MPCS complies with [Jeffco Policy JLCDA: Students with Food Allergies](#).

9.7 Media Guidelines

MPCS believes that the consumerism, violence, and passive entertainment promoted by today's mass-media culture do not support the well-being of children. We strongly recommend limiting media viewing for children. We request that our teachers remain knowledgeable and conversant with the latest research on the effects of

television and other technologies on brain function and imagination. Such articles are posted on the website and other Waldorf sites such as AWSNA and the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education.

9.8 Community Volunteerism

Parents and Caregivers are an essential part of a community school such as MPCS. We encourage them to find ways to get involved in the school by assisting in the classroom, field trips, and by using their strengths to help the school. There are many ways for families to become involved outlined on the [Volunteerism](#) page of the website.

Each class has a parent representative who can provide support for the teacher. Interested parents are asked to contact their child's teacher. Teachers will solicit the help of a Classroom Parent Representative if one does not volunteer. Classroom Parent Representatives attend regular meetings and/or training.

During school hours, ALL VOLUNTEERS are REQUIRED to sign-in at either the Main or Upper School Office to obtain a volunteer or visitor badge to identify themselves while on campus. Volunteers must also sign-out at one of the offices once they have completed their volunteer commitment. This protocol helps ensure the safety and protection of the campus and all students throughout the school day.

Employee Responsibilities and Expectations Overview

Day to Day...

These children. This place. This time. - The children are the heart of what matters.

- Work day is 7:45-3:45 (unless otherwise agreed upon with Direct Supervisor), and you are expected to be working on site for your entire work day (brief errands off campus during non-supervisory times excepted)
- Follow the school calendar (see PTO section for additional days off)
- Be on time and attend all required meetings. Discuss needed absences with your direct supervisor.
- Wear your school ID in a visible location (such as on a lanyard) at all times during work hours
- Check your work email and ParentSquare daily
- Create daily lesson plans based on grade level learning goals and student goals (lead class teachers, special subject teachers, student support staff)
- Follow established building level norms (hallway etiquette, bathroom passes, etc)
- Be on time for scheduled duties
- Practice active monitoring at recess duty times, in hallways during passing periods, and pick-up duty time
- Follow process for documenting Level 3 and referring Level 4+ student behaviors
- Do not use cell phones in the presence of children, unless an emergency
- Do not give keys or door codes to students (this includes children of staff)
- Use staff lounges for storage of personal food (instead of Warming or Main Office kitchens)

- Keep internal classroom doors locked but open (as much as possible). Use strike plate magnets to allow for ease of entry, unless in an emergency
- If you see something, say something

Positive School Culture...

We all contribute to MPCCS' community.

- At Mountain Phoenix, we pride ourselves for creating a safe, respectful, harassment-free working environment. Each employee is responsible to report any harassment they experience or observe.
- At Mountain Phoenix, we pride ourselves on respectful communication. We practice de-escalation strategies and do NOT yell at students, staff or caregivers.
- If you have children at the school, follow guidelines for employee parents in the Employee Handbook
- Follow Communication Guidelines and seek direct resolution when concerns arise with colleagues/parents and caregivers
- Use the Grievance Policy when you need guidance on resolving an issue with staff or community members
- Maintain confidentiality and professionalism. Avoid and actively redirect gossip.
- Follow norms of collaboration

Communication...

Because Clarity is Kindness.

- Use Jeffco email (Outlook or Gmail), NOT personal email, for all school/job related and have the other (Outlook or Gmail) forwarded to the one you use most
- Communication that is exclusively among staff needs to be through email. Use ParentSquare messaging for any communication that involves a parent.
- Respond to all emails and ParentSquare messages within 2 business days
- Communicate with parents/caregivers regularly around student learning and progress, updates/reminders: bi-weekly (lead class teachers), monthly (special subject teachers and student support staff)
- Teachers will make every effort to keep families up-to-date about students' progress, and are expected to contact parents/caregivers in a timely manner if concerns arise
- Contact parents/caregivers for all Level 3+ student behaviors, on the same day of the incident. Best practice is that caregivers find out from an adult, not their child
- Add Weekly Schedule/Daily Rhythm and Block Rotation (Grades 1-8) and Yearly Overview (EC) to your class' ParentSquare files at the beginning of the school year
- Adhere to Employee Social Media Guidelines in the Employee Handbook.

Paid Time Off (PTO)...

Balancing personal and community needs to hold the children at the center.

- PTO must be requested and approved by Direct Supervisor (immediate sickness excepted)

- As a healthy school culture requires our active presence, PTO is strongly discouraged and will generally not be approved during the following times:
 - The first 4 weeks and last 4 weeks of the school year
 - Before or after holiday breaks or long weekends
 - Important events throughout the year (Michaelmas, Respected Elders' Day, Pentathlon, May Faire etc.)
 - Inservice, professional development, and non-student contact days
- Use InstaSub to record scheduled absences and find your sub (if needed) and to attach your lesson plans. Teachers are responsible for their class until a guest teacher is scheduled.
- In the case of absence due to immediate illness, request a sub and/or record your absence in InstaSub and text message your immediate supervisor and main office/upper school office staff.
- Maintain an up-to-date sub binder including all recommendations in Employee Handbook (all teachers)

Additional Requirements...

Because our work matters.

- All employees are Mandated Reporters 844-CO-4-KIDS. Everyone must know and follow the process
- Follow field trip requirements, fundraising and budget guidelines, procedures, and timelines
- Be fluent in most-used technology platforms including (but not limited to): ParentSquare, Google Suite (Docs, Sheets, Forms, Slides, Drive, Calendar), Outlook/Gmail, Jeffco Employee Intranet and ESS
- Complete assigned trainings and professional development in Vector / PDIS (as applies)
- Review school policies annually
- Review Employee Handbook and sign Handbook Acknowledgement
- Review Family Handbook
- Class teachers hold one Parent/Caregiver Evening per semester (not including Back to School night, conferences, and mandatory class trip meetings)
- All teachers (class and special subjects) will offer Parent/Teacher conferences with ALL families twice a year (fall and winter, included in the school calendar). After school conferences must be available. Special subjects teachers need to have time available for all who want to attend.

Additional Employee Benefits...

Celebrate the Small Things.

- One complimentary MPCS Yearbook (classroom copy) for each class. Personal copies need to be purchased; discounted yearbook price is offered for staff.
- Napping House at no cost
- Early Childhood Tuition Discounts available according to employment hours
- Complimentary Staff Care provided for all staff students Fridays from 1:15-4:00 and Mon-Thurs from 3:15-3:45 for EC students (staff must be working onsite during this time)
- Staff Care beyond 3:45pm is your responsibility as our work day ends at 3:45 Monday-Friday.

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RECEIPT

[Digital copy of Handbook Acknowledgement and Receipt - Please sign digitally if you prefer](#)

I have received a copy (digital or print) of the Mountain Phoenix Community School Employee Handbook. The employee handbook describes important information about MPCS, and I understand that I should consult my supervising Director regarding any questions not answered in the handbook. I have entered into my employment relationship with Mountain Phoenix Community School voluntarily and acknowledge that there is no specified length of employment. **Accordingly, either I or MPCS can terminate the relationship at-will, with or without cause, at any time, so long as there is no violation of applicable federal or state law.**

Further, I understand and agree:

- The revised edition of this handbook replaces all previously issued handbooks. By distributing this handbook, MPCS expressly revokes any and all previous policies and procedures which are inconsistent with those contained herein.
- The need may arise to change the guidelines described in the handbook, except for the at-will nature of employment. MPCS therefore reserves the right to interpret the guidelines or to change them with or without prior notice.
- The language used in this handbook and any verbal statements of administration and the Governing Council are not intended to constitute a contract of employment, either expressed or implied, nor are they a guarantee of employment for a specific duration.
- This handbook is not a legal document nor contract of employment.
- Only the MPCS Governing Council or designated representative of the school has any authority to enter into any agreement for employment other than at-will; only the Governing Council has the authority to make any such agreement and then only in writing signed by the Governing Council

I have received the handbook, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it.

Employee Printed Name

Employee Signature

Date

MPCS Representative or Designee