

MPCS FAMILY HANDBOOK GRADES 1 - 8



Mountain Phoenix
community school

08/04/2026

Education through Imagination

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	2
INTRODUCTION.....	6
Four Highlights of Our Program.....	6
About This Handbook.....	6
MPCS GUIDING PRINCIPLES.....	7
School Vision.....	7
School Mission.....	7
Core Principles of Public Waldorf Education.....	7
Commitment to Equity, Accessibility, Inclusivity and Diversity.....	7
Waldorf Pedagogy Anti-Discrimination Statement.....	8
Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination.....	8
MPCS ORGANIZATION.....	9
Governing Council.....	9
Governing Council Members.....	9
School Leadership.....	10
School Employees.....	10
Family Council.....	10
MPCS Foundation.....	10
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM.....	11
Waldorf Pedagogy, Academic Standards,.....	12
and Grade Level Learning Goals.....	12
Main Lesson Blocks (Thematic Units).....	12
Main Lesson Books and Textbooks.....	12
Homework.....	12
Special Subjects Classes.....	12
Music/Orchestra/Band.....	12
Handwork.....	13
World Language.....	13
Movement Arts/Physical Education/Games.....	13
Visual Arts.....	13
Technology Integration.....	13
Media Guidelines.....	14
Character Education / Social Emotional Learning.....	14
The Class Play.....	14
Lockers.....	14
Extracurricular Activity Rights.....	14
Student Assessment.....	14
Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Assessment.....	15

State Mandated Assessments.....	15
Parent/Teacher Conferences & Student Progress Reports.....	15
Class / Teacher Looping.....	16
Student Retention and Acceleration.....	17
STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES.....	17
Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS).....	17
MTSS/Three Streams Foundation.....	17
Underlying Premises of Supporting Students.....	18
Educational / Academic Support.....	19
Individual Education Plans - IEPs.....	20
Section 504 Plans.....	20
READ Plans.....	20
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education.....	20
Gifted and Talented Education and Advanced Learning Plans - ALPs.....	20
Social and Emotional Care.....	21
Monthly Virtues.....	21
Identifying Bullying Behavior.....	21
Safe2Tell.....	22
STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE.....	22
MPCS Code of Conduct.....	22
Students Will.....	22
Personal Communication / Technology Device Use:.....	23
Students Will Not.....	23
Online Behavior (when using school technology or accessing school platforms):.....	24
Student Discipline at MPCS.....	24
Restorative Practices.....	25
Compliance with MPCS and.....	25
Jeffco Student Behavior Expectations.....	25
Disciplinary Equity and Accountability.....	25
DRESS CODE FOR STUDENTS.....	26
Purpose.....	26
Guidance.....	26
Allowed.....	26
Not Allowed.....	27
Discouraged.....	27
Upper School Privileges.....	27
Special Events.....	27
Enforcement.....	27
Dressing for Inclement Weather.....	28
Lost and Found.....	28
FIELD TRIPS.....	28
Overnight Field Trip Paperwork and Payments.....	29
Overnight Field Trip Chaperones.....	29

STUDENT HEALTH AND ILLNESS.....	29
Student Illness.....	29
Sending Students to the Office or Health Clinic.....	30
Medication Policy for Students.....	30
Lunch and Nutrition Guidelines.....	30
Hot Lunch Program.....	31
Health Plans.....	31
Special Dietary Issues.....	31
Pets, Service and Therapy Animals.....	31
SCHOOL HOURS.....	31
Classroom Hours.....	31
Office Hours.....	32
Before & After Care.....	32
DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES.....	32
Drop-off and Pick-up Times.....	32
Early Pick-Up.....	33
Inclement Weather and Special Circumstances.....	33
Parking.....	33
Drop-off and Pick-up Traffic Etiquette on the Frontage Road Lane.....	33
Drop-Off / Pick-Up Maps.....	35
SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS.....	37
School Communication Tools.....	37
School-Related Emails, Text Messages, and Phone Calls.....	37
MPCS Website.....	37
ParentSquare.....	38
Weekly Reporter – School Newsletter.....	38
MPCS School Social Media Pages.....	38
Media Communications.....	39
Personal Communications.....	39
Individual Postings on Campus.....	39
MPCS Community Facebook Pages.....	39
Special Communications -.....	39
Inclement Weather, Snow Days, Late Starts.....	39
School Closure.....	39
2-Hour Delayed Start.....	40
Teacher/Caregiver Communication.....	40
Classroom Updates.....	40
Phone Calls/Messages.....	40
Electronic Messages.....	40
Timely Responses.....	40
STUDENT ENROLLMENT.....	40
Enrollment and Registration Process (Grades Pre-K through Eight).....	41
Withdrawal Process (Grades Pre-k through Eight).....	41

Student Fees and Fines.....	41
Student Materials Fee.....	41
Fines.....	41
STUDENT ATTENDANCE.....	41
Absences.....	42
Reporting an Absence.....	42
Prearranged Absences.....	42
Make-Up Work for Absences.....	43
PARENT/CAREGIVER INVOLVEMENT.....	43
Volunteerism.....	43
Yearly Volunteer Contribution.....	43
Volunteer Procedures.....	44
Volunteer Sign-In.....	44
Logging Volunteer Hours.....	44
On-Campus or Online Volunteers.....	44
Passive School Fundraisers.....	44
CONFLICT RESOLUTION:.....	44
COMMUNITY MEMBERS.....	44
MPCS Community Communication Guidelines.....	45
Healthy Communication Builds Better Human Relationships.....	45
Adults are Models for the Children.....	46
Respectful Interactions Support Children and Adults.....	46
Healthy Conflict is Necessary for Growth.....	46
Restorative Practices Repair Harm.....	46
Confidentiality is a Sign of Respect.....	46
It is Our Responsibility to Provide Equal Access.....	46
Specific Communication Considerations.....	47
Communication Between Caregivers and Teachers/Staff.....	47
Digital Communications.....	47
Conflict Resolution Process.....	47
Overview of Steps.....	47
Step 1: Direct Resolution.....	47
Steps 2 and 3: Community and Caregiver Grievance Policy.....	47
Strategies for Successful Direct Resolution.....	47
Necessities for a successful restorative conversation.....	48
Informal (Unfacilitated) Restorative Conversation Questions.....	48
Extra Considerations.....	48
SCHOOL RECORDS.....	49
FERPA Notification of Rights.....	49
SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES.....	49
Emergency Preparedness.....	49
Standard Response Protocol.....	49
The Standard Response Protocols are:.....	50

MPCS FACILITIES USE POLICY.....	50
SCHOOL & FAMILY.....	50
PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT.....	50
Mountain Phoenix Community School Will:.....	51
Parents and Caregivers Will:.....	51
Parents and Caregivers Will Not:.....	52
Students Will:.....	53
Students Will Not:.....	53

This edition replaces all previously issued editions.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Mountain Phoenix! Mountain Phoenix Community School (MPCS) is a Jefferson County public charter school proudly offering a curriculum guided by Public Waldorf education. We are dedicated to cultivating a holistic learning environment that engages the whole child—head, heart, and hands.

Four Highlights of Our Program

- **The Core Principles of Public Waldorf Education** Our school's values and decisions are guided by the Seven Core Principles of Public Waldorf Education, an approach that honors the natural stages of childhood development. We integrate artistic, practical, and academic learning to nurture independent thinking, creative problem-solving, and social responsibility in every student. This shared framework shapes a vibrant, inclusive community where children are deeply seen and supported as they prepare to engage with the world with resilience and empathy.
- **An Integrated Artistic Approach to Education** Well-developed programs in music and orchestra, environmental stewardship, drama, world languages, movement arts, and handwork enrich our academic curriculum. These specialty subjects enliven daily lessons and build a strong foundation for lifelong academic success.
- **A Developmentally Appropriate Learning Environment** We recognize the distinct stages of child development and foster academic growth in a supportive environment that values each child's unique learning style. MPCS is dedicated to student success by honoring each child's personal rhythm and supporting the natural unfolding of their emotional, social, and academic capacities.
- **The Power of a Community School** We believe that children thrive when educators, administrators, and families work in unison toward the shared goal of supporting their growth. True collaboration comes alive when the values of Public Waldorf Education—and practices like restorative communication—are embraced both at school and at home. By partnering with us through active volunteerism, you model a deep commitment that inspires your child to be more motivated, connected, and engaged.

About This Handbook

This Family Handbook is your guide to the policies and procedures that support the healthy, daily functioning of our school. To ensure easy access and reduce environmental waste, this handbook is presented online. Please note that as our school community grows, the need may arise to interpret or update these guidelines; consequently, MPCS reserves the right to make changes as necessary, and this edition replaces all previous versions.

Thank you for choosing to partner with us; we are truly honored to welcome your family into our school community. We take your child's education, well-being, and the sacred preservation of childhood seriously, and we are dedicated to surrounding them with an atmosphere of warmth and support. If you have any questions as you read through these pages, please reach out to our School Leadership (referenced in the MPCS Organization Chart below); we are always here to connect with you.

MPCS GUIDING PRINCIPLES

School Vision

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

School Mission

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

Core Principles of Public Waldorf Education

MPCS is committed to the [Core Principles of Public Waldorf Education](#) adopted by The Alliance for Public Waldorf Education:

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

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

Commitment to Equity, Accessibility, Inclusivity and Diversity

Mountain Phoenix Community School strives for an equitable and accessible educational experience and environment for all. Our community embraces diversity in all its forms, including, but

not limited to, differences in ethnicity, cultural and religious heritage, sexual orientation, gender expansiveness, socioeconomic background, geographic origin, and family structure. We provide our students with a rich, inclusive curriculum that reflects the world in which we live and fosters a safe atmosphere where every member of the community is respected and multiple viewpoints can be peacefully expressed.

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

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

Waldorf Pedagogy Anti-Discrimination Statement

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.

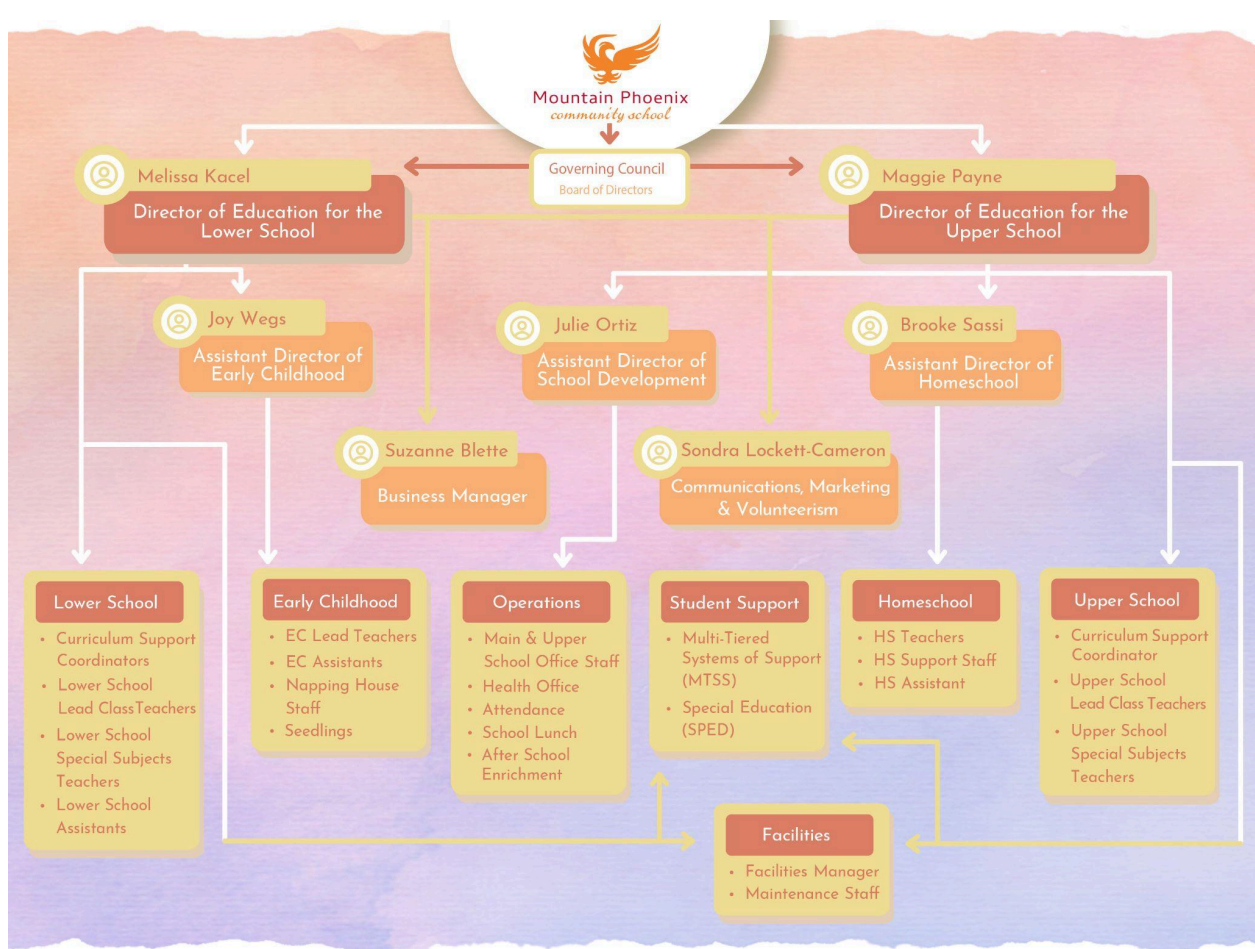
True to the principle of ongoing educational renewal, our practice is anchored in the highest truths Steiner articulated across his lifetime: that the concept of race must be actively transcended, that true progress lies in individual freedom rather than group identity, and that our ultimate task is 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.

Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination

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

MPCS ORGANIZATION



Governing Council

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

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

Governing Council Members

The Governing Council consists of caregivers and community members who serve 3-year terms.

Election and/or appointment of new Council members occurs annually. School Directors and Faculty Representatives give input to the Governing Council but are not voting members.

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

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

School Leadership

Director of Education - Lower School: Melissa Kacel

Director of Education - Upper School: Maggie Payne

The Governing Council believes that ensuring the school has strong leadership is their primary responsibility; therefore, they have established a collaborative leadership model led by two co-Directors, a Director of Education - Lower School and a Director of Education - Upper School. The duties of the School Directors include tasks and responsibilities delegated by the Mountain Phoenix Governing Council. These tasks relate to fostering student success, developing people and maintaining a healthy organization and community.

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

School Employees

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

Family Council

Every parent and caregiver at Mountain Phoenix is automatically a member of our [Family Council](#), our version of a PTA/PTO, completely free of charge! The Family Council's vibrant mission is to support our students, staff, and school programs by bringing us together for community-building festivals and events. To keep our community closely connected, we aim to have at least one representative from each classroom attend our regular meetings to share ideas and conduct Family Council business. We encourage all caregivers to join these meetings, bring your unique voice to the table, and help us plan the beautiful events that make our school so special.

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.

Driven by dedicated community volunteers, the MPCS Foundation plans and coordinates our school's major fundraising events, including our annual Fun Run, Annual Give, and Winter Auction. These vital efforts directly support our physical campus, teacher & staff professional development, and bridging funding gaps to enrich our students' daily learning environment. We invite you to discover the Foundation's incredible historical accomplishments, learn more about its integral role at our school, and find out how you can get involved to help our community thrive!

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

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

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

- Students learn through rich thematic units called Main Lesson Blocks in which they are taught developmentally-appropriate History, Social Studies, Science, Geography, Reading, Writing and Math.
- Students make their own books, called Main Lesson Books, using original writings and artistic, visual representations of their learning.
- All students learn to paint, draw, and do form drawing and handwork.
- All students learn music through singing and playing pentatonic flute/recorder as well as string/band instrument.
- Students participate in Movement and Games classes weekly.
- Experiential projects and activities are an important part of the learning experience.
- History and Literature are presented through a rich storytelling tradition that inspires imagination and the creation of mental pictures, supporting healthy neurological development and the basis of creative thinking.
- Theatrical Arts are an integral part of each student's yearly experience. Class Plays are produced and performed for parents/caregivers each year.
- The MPCS curriculum covers all of the K-Grade 8 Common Core State Standards for Math and English Language Arts by the end of 8th grade.
- Seasonal festivals and events are celebrated by the community as a "golden thread" that winds its way throughout the year.

Waldorf Pedagogy, Academic Standards, and Grade Level Learning Goals

Mountain Phoenix is committed to developmentally appropriate, high academic standards developed through the rigorous effort to align Colorado Academic Standards (CAS), Common Core Standards (which include 21st century skills) within the framework of Public Waldorf Education. While the placement of each standard may be slightly different based on the development stage of each grade, the MPCS curriculum delivers all of the K-8 Common Core Standards by the end of Grade 8.

The school implements a Public Waldorf curriculum and pedagogy based on the core principles of Public Waldorf Education and shall use the MPCS Curriculum Summary and Curriculum Framework documents as the base curriculum for Social Studies, Math, Science, and English/Language Arts. The school shall cover 100% of the kindergarten through grade 8 Common Core State Standards by the end of the 8th grade.

Main Lesson Blocks (Thematic Units)

Students have a 90-120 minute main lesson block with their class teacher each day. During this time the class focuses on a core academic subject and the associated skills for 3-4 weeks. This approach allows teachers to cover the curriculum intensively and economically and provides students the fullest possible immersion in a subject so each academic subject receives special focus during the course of the year.

Main Lesson Books and Textbooks

Students at Mountain Phoenix write and illustrate self-created textbooks (Main Lesson book) representing the material learned in that thematic unit. The daily Main Lesson includes work in the Main Lesson book. The student writes and illustrates one of these in the course of each block, gaining much practice in handwriting, grammar, art and composition along the way. Creating one's own book, rather than simply reading a textbook, anchors knowledge solidly. The enthusiastic pride children take in creating their books demonstrates a true joy in learning. Teachers and students refer to a variety of books and other resources to research and present the curriculum in an age-appropriate manner.

Homework

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

Special Subjects Classes

Music/Orchestra/Band

The school implements a music curriculum following the standards from the Association of Waldorf Music Education. The pentatonic flute is introduced in Grade 1, Orchestra is introduced in Grade 3 or 4, and students have the option between Orchestra or Band in Grades 5-8, and between

Orchestra, Band, and World Drumming in Grades 7-8. Additional music classes are usually offered 2-3 times a week in Grades 3-8.

Handwork

Handwork supports the child's natural sense of beauty, color, and form and lays the groundwork for other artistic work throughout the grades in the Public Waldorf curriculum. It includes knitting, crocheting, weaving, sewing, and cross stitch. This work significantly aids the child's development of fine motor skills, sequencing and spatial awareness. Handwork is typically offered twice a week in Grades 1-8.

World Language

Learning other languages is an important part of the Public Waldorf approach to education as a gateway to understanding and communicating with people from different cultures who have their own individuality and experiences of daily life. Through learning another language, the child's thinking becomes more flexible, and his whole horizon is widened to a view of global citizenship. Spanish is typically offered 1-2 times per week in Grades 1-8.

Movement Arts/Physical Education/Games

Research shows a close connection between bodily movement, spatial integration, and brain development. Games and movement classes focus on imaginative games that are developmentally appropriate for each grade level, encouraging teamwork, cooperation, problem solving, and individual successes. When it is developmentally appropriate, opportunities are provided to improve coordination and balance through obstacle courses and gymnastic activities, exploring strength and strategy, team building, and trust building.

Movement and Games classes are typically offered 2-3 times per week in Grades 1-8. MPCS periodically invites Eurythmy (movement to speech or music) and Universal Dance for Peace in Grades 1-5.

Visual Arts

At MPCS art permeates the whole curriculum throughout the grades. In addition to this immersion in drawing, painting, form drawing, and modeling of beeswax and clay, a specialty art teacher works with the children in deepening their experience of art, while making rich connections between what they are creating and what they are learning in Main Lesson. Typically extra art classes are 1-2 times per week.

Technology Integration

Guided by our developmental approach, MPCS prioritizes hands-on, concrete learning for younger children, generally postponing screen and media integration until the upper grades. However, to support schoolwide assessment and build essential keyboarding skills, students are introduced to Chromebooks beginning in 3rd grade. In grades 6 through 8, digital tools are increasingly integrated for research and presentations. Throughout this progression, we emphasize digital citizenship, computer etiquette, media awareness, safety, and data privacy, ensuring technology remains as an educational tool that enhances learning.

Media Guidelines

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

Character Education / Social Emotional Learning

Character development is an important part of Public Waldorf Education. MPCS cultivates a compassionate campus and strives for restorative practices for further development of social wellness and self discipline, including the prevention of bullying. The approach uses the power of the classroom community, student-to-student interactions, and mentoring relationships to build life skills that cultivate empathy and resolve conflicts.

The Class Play

Grades 1-8 are encouraged to perform a class play during the course of the year. The theme of the play is tied to the curriculum of the grade level, and all students participate in some fashion, including set design, backstage support, props, acting, singing, and costumes. The play is a whole class experience which promotes teamwork, shared goals, and collective effort. Grades teachers may combine two classes in their efforts for one play.

Lockers

Lockers are assigned to students in grades 6-8 and are the property of MPCS. Lockers are subject to inspection at any time. Students are not to abuse or deface lockers in any way. We strongly discourage the use of locks on the lockers, however, if a family chooses to use a lock, it must be a combination lock (not a key lock) and the combination must be shared with the student's class teacher and administration. MPCS assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen items out of student lockers. Large amounts of money, expensive jewelry, electronics, and other valuable possessions should not be brought to school.

Extracurricular Activity Rights

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

Student Assessment

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

- Assessments provide an accurate, reliable, and authentic picture of the child's growth
- The assessment process is multi-dimensional, reflecting written and artistic work, performance tasks, oral participation, homework, quizzes, tests, group and individual projects and presentations, and behavior in social and learning situations with tangible

results. In other words, the assessment focuses on the things that students say, do, and create as measures of student progress.

- Assessments provide timely information to school leaders, parents, and other stakeholders (district and state authorities) to support continuous improvement in curriculum and instruction and to address the learning needs of all students.
- Assessment processes and products should inspire further learning for students and support improvement and excellence for teachers.
- By eighth grade, most MPCS students should excel in standardized assessments aligned with Common Core standards.

Teachers use formative and summative assessments to measure student progress against MPCS learning standards.

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Assessment

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

State Mandated Assessments

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

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

Parent/Teacher Conferences & Student Progress Reports

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

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

End-of-Year narrative reports are sent to parents at the end of the school year and will include a written narrative reflection/summary of the child's progress during the year, including highlights of the year, as well as main lesson blocks. Students' MAP Test results (3rd-8th Grade) are also sent home at this time. Students' MAP Test results (3rd-8th Grade) are also sent home at this time. The portfolio of student work that is collected over the year as evidence of student learning is also sent home at the end of the year.

Parents and teachers are welcome to make additional appointments to discuss student progress, as needed. Teachers will contact parents if concerns arise regarding a student's progress in school.

Class / Teacher Looping

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

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

While looping is a practice we highly value, it cannot be guaranteed. Given the natural shifts within our community of teachers, we work through staffing changes flexibly and thoughtfully, centering resilience and the well-being of the class and the community as a whole.

To build deep social connections, students typically stay with the same peer group through the lower school years (**Grades 1-5**) and middle school years (**Grades 6-8**). New class rosters are naturally created as student groups transition into the 6th grade.

While rare, circumstances may sometimes arise where a change of placement from one classroom to a parallel classroom is considered. A request can be made by either the family or the school, but because we believe deeply in working through challenges together, a classroom change is always viewed as a final resort. We only move to that step after significant time and effort have been dedicated to addressing specific concerns within the current classroom, and only if those interventions have not yielded results.

To ensure everyone has a fair chance to settle in, placement change requests are generally only considered after a student has spent **at least 6 weeks of active engagement** in their current classroom. If you feel an adjustment is necessary after working closely with your child's teacher, please contact your assigned Director of Education in writing to explain your concerns. The Director will connect with parents/caregivers to discuss the situation and will make the final determination after consulting with the involved educational staff.

Student Retention and Acceleration

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

Students who show decided and documented deficiencies in these areas may be considered for retention. Retention decisions will be based upon developmental and achievement assessments, teacher-documented anecdotal observations, and parent anecdotal information. Additionally, poor attendance can cause a student to be a candidate for retention and will be communicated to parents/caregivers through MPC's formal attendance letter. In the event a teacher is considering retention, parents/caregivers and administration will be informed as soon as possible. Ideally, this recommendation should come no later than the first part of the second semester, when winter conferences are scheduled.

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

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

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

MPC's is committed to fostering a safe, secure, and caring environment in which all children will be able to actively engage in learning, participate respectfully in all activities, and build healthy social relationships within the school community. We expect that students honor all safety guidelines and school rules and remain respectful and considerate, in actions and words, of others, the environment, and school property. We recognize that, at times, students need additional guidance to accomplish this.

MTSS/Three Streams Foundation

Social and emotional well-being is a prerequisite for academic success. Mountain Phoenix Community School is committed to providing support for those students who are experiencing challenges. This commitment is the foundation of the curriculum and the heart of our work at MPC's. Our MTSS / Three Streams of Student Support process is intended to provide as much support as needed for students who are experiencing social, behavioral, or learning challenges. It is based on

the work of [Kim John Payne](#), who is respected worldwide for helping children, caregivers, and teachers navigate challenges as well as conflict. The Three Streams are rooted in Restorative Practices which guide and nurture healthy relationships between all members of our community.

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



Underlying Premises of Supporting Students

- **Healthy relationships are central to building community.** Our success is built upon partnerships between and among ALL members of our community (students, teachers, staff, parents/caregivers, community members).
- **The diversity of our community is one of our greatest assets.** Public Waldorf schools and teachers have the responsibility to creatively address the developmental needs of the students with the most inclusive possible approaches for all learners.
- **Accountability shifts behavior.** Blame and shame have no place in this work. When things are going wrong we must set them right, and each person involved, even adults, can take some responsibility.
- **Empathy is key to success in life.** Our interventions seek to build empathy in the children so that they can learn to stand in one another’s shoes.
- **A child who misbehaves is a disoriented or dysregulated child.** If we realize that a child who is pushing the behavioral boundaries is disoriented or dysregulated, we approach the child differently, less punitively, than we do when we see their behaviors as intentionally disrespectful or disruptive.
- **Conflict is an important part of being human and is necessary for growth.** If we expect that we can remove all conflict from our children’s lives we set ourselves up for frustration. Conflict is a given, and most of us have learned our greatest lessons from the conflicts we’ve experienced. Our task is to let children know that we are there, guiding them through their conflicts so that they may learn constructive lessons from them.

- **Our task is to remove hindrances to learning.** Children who experience learning challenges present us with a riddle: What is the key that unlocks their capacities? As educators and caregivers our work is to seek these keys and support the child to find areas of success.
- **We begin with implicit approaches before moving to explicit approaches.** Implicit means “not directly expressed.” In other words, it’s a process that is there, but the children are not necessarily aware of it. The Waldorf curriculum is rich in implicit approaches to social and emotional challenges. In fact, much of our work is not apparent to the parent body or the students because it is implicit—embedded in the stories, pictures, artwork, speech, music, theater, and rhythms of the lessons. On the other hand, an explicit approach directly addresses a situation in the class or with an individual child.

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

- **Waldorf Educators are life-long learners who strive to observe and understand the children they teach.** An understanding of learning styles, child development, temperaments, and the individual families we serve contribute to the teacher’s deeper understanding of the child.

The inner reflective work of all adults is also a valuable tool in better understanding the needs of a child.

- **Children look to adults as models.** All adults in our community strive at all times to be models for children.
- **Adults’ self-reflection and personal development are necessary to remain equitable.** Continual, thorough examination of our actions, beliefs, and biases, ongoing training on cultural responsiveness, and systematic auditing of our data and practices, help ensure that our school’s support system is fairly accessible to all.

Educational / Academic Support

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

Students who are performing below grade level are provided additional learning support. Teachers implement appropriate interventions and/or accommodations to support the student’s learning and monitor progress. Students needing additional support beyond the level of classroom support and accommodations receive support through the MPCs Student Support Department that includes highly qualified learning specialists, para-Educators, interventionists, school nurse, and additional

service providers for speech language therapy, occupational therapy, mental health, and English language proficiency.

Our Student Support 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.

Individual Education Plans - IEPs

Kindergarten through 8th grade students identified as having a qualifying disability according to the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are provided special education and related services according to an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that ensures each student's unique needs are met and prepares them for further education and success.

In all cases, Mountain Phoenix meets the legal standards of IDEA by providing a Free, Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment possible to ensure equitable access for all students and families choosing to enroll in its educational program.

Section 504 Plans

Students having a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities but are not eligible for special education and related services under IDEA may be eligible for services, accommodations, or modifications to standard practices to experience educational benefit from the general curriculum services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Please reach out to MPCS 504 Coordinator for more information or to help answer any questions.

READ Plans

In compliance with the Colorado READ Act, MPCS supports students reading below grade level through a READ Plan with clear goals and interventions to help the student achieve reading proficiency.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education

MPCS works with Jeffco District Multi-Language Learning personnel to ensure the needs of students acquiring English proficiency English Language Learners are met such that a student's English proficiency level does not impose a barrier to their achievement of essential learning skills and Mountain Phoenix's grade level curriculum expectations. Based on a student's current level of English language proficiency, class teachers and MLL staff work together to set and monitor language proficiency goals annually in each of the four fluency domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Gifted and Talented Education and Advanced Learning Plans - ALPs

MPCS is committed to providing comprehensive programming for the identification and education of the gifted and talented student, and as a charter school within Jeffco, will do so in a manner wherein the student's education is enhanced by the whole-child, developmental approach provided by our educational program.

MPCS participates in the district wide assessment program to identify gifted and talented students

in second grade. MPCS collaborates with the district to monitor student progress and eligibility for gifted and talented designation and implementation of an Advanced Learning Plan based on a body of evidence. MPCS believes our educational program has the capacity to meet the broad range of educational needs of students identified as gifted and talented without modifying our educational program to provide substantial acceleration of content beyond the established grade level sequence. MPCS will support families/students seeking such acceleration to have their educational needs met through the district's established comprehensive programming options.

Social and Emotional Care

MPCS works to develop social health and wellness by establishing an environment of mutual respect, safety and inclusion within the school community that addresses social difficulties using an understanding of child development and Waldorf pedagogical insights. Each class builds a solid, age-appropriate classroom community through daily rhythms, class agreements, and other tools. These are at the heart of nurturing healthy behavior. Grades 1-8 use the Caring School Curriculum to help support Social and Emotional Learning in the classroom environment.

Monthly Virtues

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

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

Identifying Bullying Behavior

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

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

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

- **An Imbalance of Power:** People who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people. This power imbalance may be real or perceived

- **Repetition or the Potential to be Repeated:** Bullying behaviors often happen more than once and are a part of a larger pattern of interactions between students.

MPCS fully complies with Jeffco Policy JICDE Bullying Prevention and Education

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 at all times, every day of the year to take reports. Reports can be made by phone at 1-877-542-7233 or online at www.safe2tell.org.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

MPCS Code of Conduct

The values that are embedded in our curriculum and our work with each other can be distilled into three statements—our Code of Conduct. Our Code of Conduct helps ensure a safe, respectful, and productive learning environment for everyone. This document outlines our core expectations for student behavior and is designed to foster a positive school culture where all students can thrive. Please remember that this is not an exhaustive list of all rules and expectations, but rather a guide to the fundamental principles we uphold. Additional classroom, playground, and specific activity rules will also apply.

OUR CODE OF CONDUCT

We are kind and respectful

We are safe

We are responsible

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

Students Will

At all times, students will abide by our school code of conduct: **We are Kind and Respectful, We are Safe, We are Responsible.**

- **Contribute to a healthy and safe learning environment for ALL students.**
- **Follow individual classroom, playground, and building rules and expectations as posted.**

- **Show kindness, good manners, and respect for others** (including all teachers, staff, parents/caregivers, students, and visitors), for yourself, and for the planet.
- **Follow directions from adults promptly and respectfully.**
- **Follow the MPCs Dress Code.**
- **When conflicts arise, use calming strategies to regulate instead of hurting someone with words or actions.** Ask for help when needed, and work to repair any harm done, utilizing conflict resolution strategies taught at school.
- **Report** any unsafe situations, bullying, or concerns to an adult.
- **Arrive at school and to classes on time.**
- **Participate fully and complete assigned work in all classes** to the best of your ability and in a timely manner.
- **Treat all property with care** (including your own personal belongings) and help keep the school grounds, classrooms, desks, cubbies/hooks/lockers, and materials clean and tidy.
- **Stay within classroom and school boundaries** and do not leave without permission.
- **Refrain from public displays of affection** that are romantic, suggestive, or distracting to the learning environment.

Personal Communication / Technology Device Use:

Mountain Phoenix Community School (MPCS) is a "low-tech" educational environment. We believe that a school day free from digital distractions is essential for fostering positive community interactions, supporting student mental health, and maintaining an environment focused on social-emotional learning.

- ECE and Lower School: **Keep personal communication devices** (including but not limited to: Cell phones, smartwatches, earbuds, smart glasses, tablets, and gaming devices) **at home**.*
- Upper School: **Turn in all communication devices** (including but not limited to: Cell phones, smartwatches, earbuds, smart glasses, tablets, and gaming devices) at the start of the day or keep them at home.*
 - Unless there is explicit, written permission from the school as a necessary accommodation in a student's 504, IEP, or Health Plan.
- Use only school-provided technology, and use it only for the purposes your teacher has intended and allowed.
- Use school technology responsibly and respectfully, understanding that all online activity on school networks and devices may be monitored.

For more information regarding use of devices, please review [Student Communication Device Policy](#).

Students Will Not

- **Disrupt the learning environment in any way** that prevents teachers from teaching or other students from working and learning.
- **Tease, harass, or bully others** (physical, verbal, emotional, or cyberbullying are not tolerated).
- **Use discriminatory, profane, disrespectful, or threatening language or actions.**

- **Use physical aggression towards another person** (e.g., push, kick, hit, shove, punch, slap, etc.) or play aggressively.
- **Bring weapons of any kind to school** (including toy weapons or facsimiles of weapons) or **play violent games** of any kind.
- **Harm, vandalize, steal, or destroy school property or things that belong to others.**
- **Be in possession of, under the influence of, and/or sell illegal, unprescribed, or illicit substances** including drugs, medications, alcohol, marijuana, nicotine, or related paraphernalia.
- **Buy, sell, trade personal property, or engage in any form of gambling.**
- **Bring toys, games, trinkets, fidgets, candy, gum, and other distracting food or drink items** (except in the case that they are requested by a staff member for educational purposes, or during designated snack/lunch times).
- **Cheat on assignments, tests, or other academic work, or plagiarize content.**

Online Behavior (when using school technology or accessing school platforms):

- **Access, share, or create inappropriate content online** (e.g., violent, sexually explicit, discriminatory, or hate speech).
- **Engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or spreading rumors online** (including through school communication platforms, email, or social media).
- **Share personal information about yourself or others online without explicit permission.**
- **Attempt to bypass school network security or access unauthorized websites.**

Student Discipline at MPCS

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

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

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

Restorative Practices

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

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

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

Compliance with MPCS and Jeffco Student Behavior Expectations

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

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

Parents are expected to review MPCS and Jeffco student conduct expectations with their child(ren) and acknowledge their understanding of these expectations in two ways at the time of registration:

1. Signing the School & Family Partnership Agreement in ParentSquare **and**
2. Acknowledging the Jeffco Student and Family Handbook / Code of Conduct in Campus Parent Portal

Disciplinary Equity and Accountability

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

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

4. Eliciting feedback from all stakeholders.
5. Creating plans to address disproportionality and inequity where they exist.

DRESS CODE FOR STUDENTS

Purpose

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

Standards regarding student attire are intended to help students concentrate on schoolwork, reduce discipline problems and improve school order and safety. Although dress may be a matter of self-expression and is influenced by weather and fashion, while at school or attending school events, we encourage attire that is functional and contributes to a safe and healthy environment.

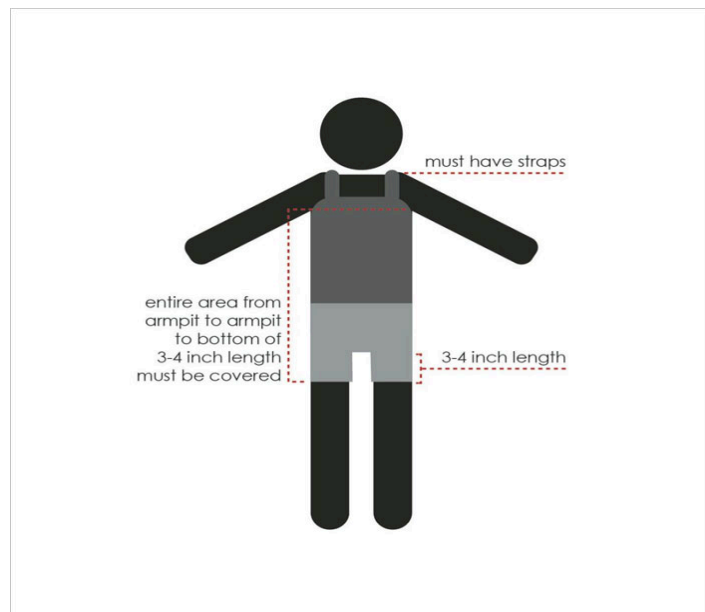
These guidelines may not cover all situations and school staff/administration may be required at times to address particular attire. Please contact your child's class teacher or school administrator if you have any questions about specific items in this code.

Guidance

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

Allowed

- Clothing that is functional and allows for active, large motor skill movement and games, special subjects (eurythmy, art, gardening, etc.).
- Upper garment: shirts/dress tops which have a strap over each shoulder and cover the entire torso, including one's back (see image). Bottom garment: Pants, jeans, leggings, skirts, dresses or shorts which have an inseam of at least three inches (see image).
- Torn/ripped garments must not expose undergarments or areas required to be covered (see image).



- Clothing that is appropriate for the current weather conditions.
- Shoes that are practical and allow full participation in the scheduled activities
- Religious headwear.
- Accessories (headbands, jewelry, etc) allowing full, safe participation in scheduled activities. (Items may need to be temporarily removed in some cases.)
- Wearing school-related apparel.

Not Allowed

- Clothing with writing, images or other insignia that are crude, vulgar, profane, or which bear drug, alcohol, marijuana/cannabis or tobacco advertising, promotions and likenesses, or which display or advocate derogatory racial, ethnic, political or religious messages/prejudice.
- Wearing sunglasses, hoods, or hats in buildings.
- Apparel or shoes with spikes, lights or wheels.
- Bare feet.
- Hair dye (see Upper school privileges below).
- Makeup (see Upper school privileges below).

Discouraged

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

Upper School Privileges

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

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

Special Events

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

Enforcement

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

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

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

Dressing for Inclement Weather

Please send students dressed appropriately for the weather. Students will go outside on cold, wet, and windy days so please send your child prepared for these conditions. Students remain outside unless the temperature goes below 20 degrees F, there is excessive precipitation, extreme heat, or if the air quality is in the “very unhealthy” category or below.

Lost and Found

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

FIELD TRIPS

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

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

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

Students are expected to display respect for others, self-restraint, and good manners on all field trips just as they are in a Mountain Phoenix classroom. Behavior that violates MPCS rules or

jeopardizes the safety of others on a field trip is unacceptable and may result in exclusion from future activities in addition to disciplinary action at school. In extreme cases, parents will be contacted and asked to arrange for their child to be picked up immediately. Furthermore, a student may be excluded from a scheduled field trip due to repetitive and habitually disruptive or unsafe behavior displayed throughout the school year. Staff will communicate such a case with the parents at least two days prior to any trip.

Overnight Field Trip Paperwork and Payments

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

Overnight Field Trip Chaperones

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

STUDENT HEALTH AND ILLNESS

Student Illness

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

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Fever of 100.4 or higher
- Severe cough
- Infectious runny nose
- Head lice
- Rash
- Pink Eye
- Communicable disease

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

If a student is diagnosed as having a communicable illness, MPCS recommends having a doctor's note granting permission for the student to return to school on file in the office upon the student's

return to school. Failure to comply with this policy may result in the student being asked to leave school until such a note is produced if administration suspects that the student is still contagious.

Sending Students to the Office or Health Clinic

Teachers and staff will attempt to take care of minor issues (such as needing a Band-Aid) themselves. The Health Clinic is for more serious issues; to provide first aid and screen students complaining of illness. Teachers are not permitted to apply ointment of any kind or dispense anything orally; this must be done in the Health Clinic and only if the child has a health care plan in place. If a student is sent to the Health Clinic, he or she will be escorted by another student or adult, if needed. Sick students get picked up within 30 minutes of getting a call from the office notifying parent/caregiver.

Medication Policy for Students

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

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

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

Lunch and Nutrition Guidelines

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

Candy, soda pop, and other foods high in sugar or caffeine are not acceptable in school lunches at MPCS. Teachers will not allow students to eat these at school. They will put them away, send them back home, and parents will be notified. If a child does not have anything to eat, they will be sent to the warming kitchen to receive a shelf stable lunch. Teachers will communicate with parents at the

beginning of the year concerning lunch expectations. They will also teach students to properly use recycling and trash bins at school.

Hot Lunch Program

The MPCS hot lunch program is provided through My Kid's Lunch and is a part of the federal lunch program. My Kid's Lunch develops its menu offerings according to federal guidelines.

Students may bring their own lunch or they may participate in the school's hot lunch program. A link to lunch menus can be found on our [website](#) along with details on how to order meals for your student.

Health Plans

Health Plans are developed under the guidance of the School Nurse in collaboration with parents, the class teacher, administration, and educational support staff as needed. They are implemented to support students and their families with ongoing health conditions that may need to be or must be monitored and addressed during school hours

Special Dietary Issues

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

Pets, Service and Therapy Animals

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

SCHOOL HOURS

Classroom Hours

Each Friday is an early release day to accommodate weekly Staff and Faculty Meetings beginning at 2 pm.

The daily hours of attendance are as follows:

- Half-Day PreK, Monday - Friday: 8:15 am - 12:15 pm
- Full Day PreK: Monday - Thursday: 8:15 am - 3:15pm; Friday: 8:15 am - 1:15pm
- Full Day KG: Monday - Friday: 8:00 am - 1:30 pm
- Grades 1-5: Monday - Thursday: 8:15 am - 3:30 pm; Friday: 8:15 am - 1:30 pm
- Grades 6-8: Monday - Thursday: 8:00 am - 3:30 pm; Friday: 8:00 am - 1:30 pm

Office Hours

Main Office:

Monday - Thursday: 7:30 am - 4:00 pm

Friday: 7:30 am - 2:00 pm

Upper School Office:

Monday - Thursday: 7:30 am - 3:45 pm

Friday: 7:30 am - 2:00 pm

Before & After Care

MPCS staff offer Before Care for students in preschool through eighth grade in the Eurythmy Room, Monday through Friday from 7:30 am - 8:15 am. Staff make sure the children get to class at the assigned time. Please visit the [school website](#) for current Before Care fees.

YMCA provides licensed, high quality, and affordable After Care according to the following hours:

Monday - Thursday, 3:15 pm - 6:00 pm and Friday, 1:15 pm - 6:00 pm. Please visit the [school website](#) for more information.

MPCS Early Childhood Department offers Napping House After Care for Kindergarten students Monday - Thursday: 1:30 pm - 3:15 pm. Please reach out to Joy Wegs, Early Childhood Program Director for more information.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Drop-off and Pick-up Times

School supervision is provided between the hours of 7:45 am and 3:30 pm for students in grades 1-8. Students in grades 1-8 may be dropped off starting at 7:45 each morning and will remain outdoors until their buildings open. Kindergarten and Preschool students are signed into their classrooms each morning by a parent/caregiver at their class's designated area which will be communicated by the class teacher.

Pick-up for grades 1-8 begins at 3:30 pm through the pick-up queue described below.

Parents/caregivers must provide approval through the school's Permissions and Waivers document via ParentSquare prior to students walking or biking home. Permission will be kept on file in the front office. After school supervision is not provided by the school or YMCA unless students are joining After Care or an after school enrichment activity.

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

Early Pick-Up

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

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

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

Inclement Weather and Special Circumstances

During afternoons of inclement weather such as frigid temperatures or heavy rains, we will send a message to the community via ParentSquare notifying parents/caregivers that we are changing to an indoor pick-up. The PS message will outline this process and provide instructions on how to proceed to pick-up your child(ren).

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

Parking

All families are welcome to park and walk their child(ren) into school in the morning or pick them up in the afternoon. EC parents/caregivers must park and physically sign in/out their children each day.

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

Drop-off and Pick-up Traffic Etiquette on the Frontage Road Lane

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

- **Do not exceed 10 mph on school property at any time for any reason.**
- **Do not block the crosswalk, fire lanes or neighbors' driveways..**
- **Prepare your child for drop-off before you arrive at school.** Coats should be on or in hand, backpacks and lunchboxes should be packed, on laps or easy-to-reach, and when possible, children's seating should be arranged so everyone can exit the vehicle through the door adjacent to the sidewalk.

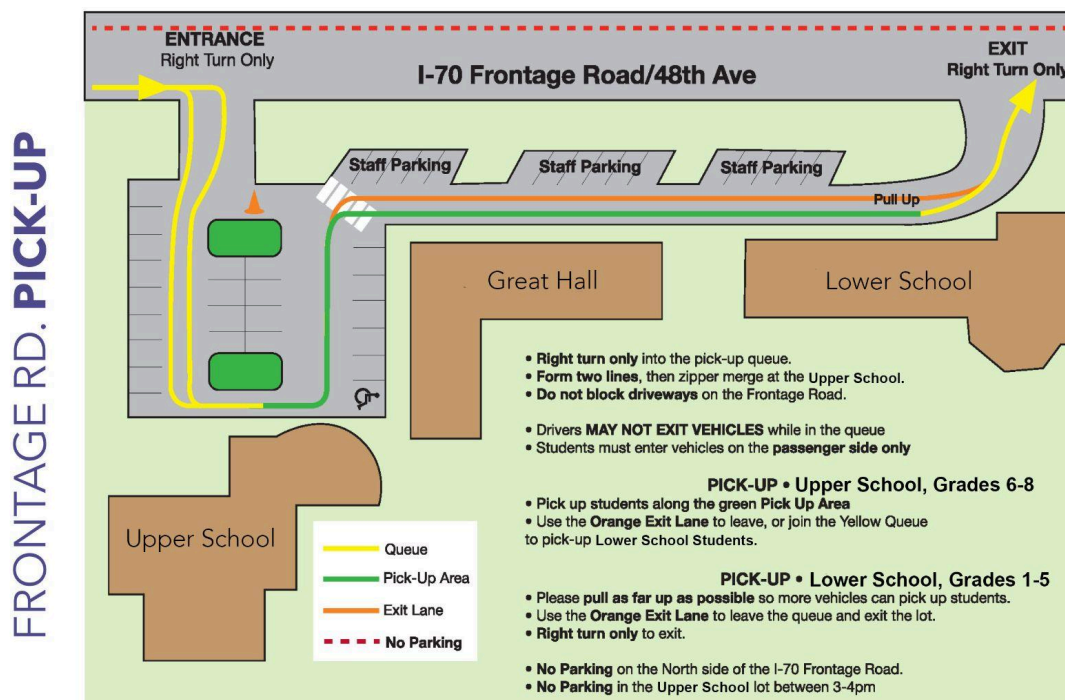
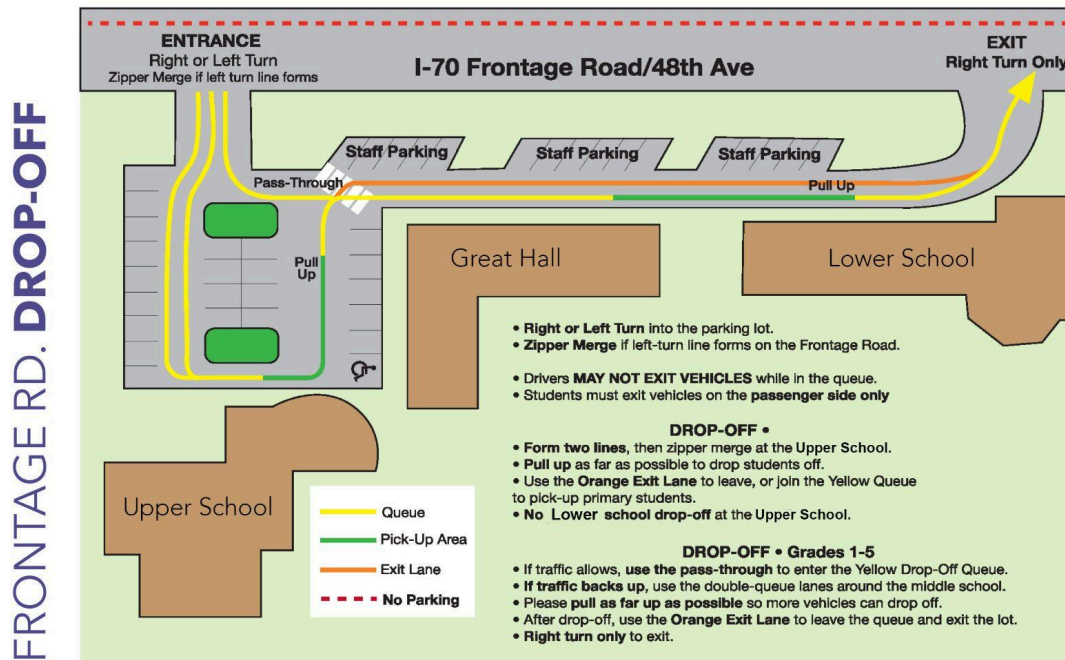
- **Drop-off and pick-up student(s) where the vehicle stops in the drop-off or pick-up zone.** Guardians may not drive forward to release or pick up students closer to a specific entrance.
- **Respect the attendants and follow their direction at all times.** Staff do their best every day to uphold the rules of the school and to make drop-off and pick-up run as smoothly and safely as possible.
- **Do not exit your vehicle at any time, once you have entered the drop-off or pick-up line.** If your student requires assistance exiting or entering the car, you must wait for an attendant or staff member to assist them.
- **Turn off cell phones when drop-off or pick-up is in progress.** Do not text, dial or talk on a cell phone during drop-off or pick-up. For everyone's safety, drivers must give driving their undivided attention. **IT'S THE LAW.**
- **Do not allow your student to enter or exit your vehicle on the left side at any time.**
- **Do not hold up the line by chatting with a staff member or attendant.** Drop-off and pick-up are not the time or place for impromptu parent/teacher discussions.
- **Do not attempt to pass the vehicle(s) in front of you at any time during drop-off and pick-up.** Follow the vehicle in front of you at all times.
- **"Zipper" merge, or consolidate drop-off and pick-up lines into single lanes at drop-off and pick-up points by merging in an alternate fashion.**
- **Do not hold up the drop-off or pick-up line if your child is not in the loading area.** Move forward to the recall area and pull as close to the curb either in front of or behind waiting vehicles so the line can continue around you.
- **Do not park and leave your vehicle in the drop-off or pick-up line or in the fire lanes.** The school reserves the right to have any unattended vehicle immediately towed at the owner's expense if the vehicle is impeding drop-off or pick-up or blocking an emergency vehicle.
- **Once drop-off or pick-up have begun, all traffic must remain in the lines in and out of the school.**
- **Please be patient and courteous with all other drivers, volunteers, students and staff members.** Respectful behavior is expected at all times of our students, our staff AND our parents.

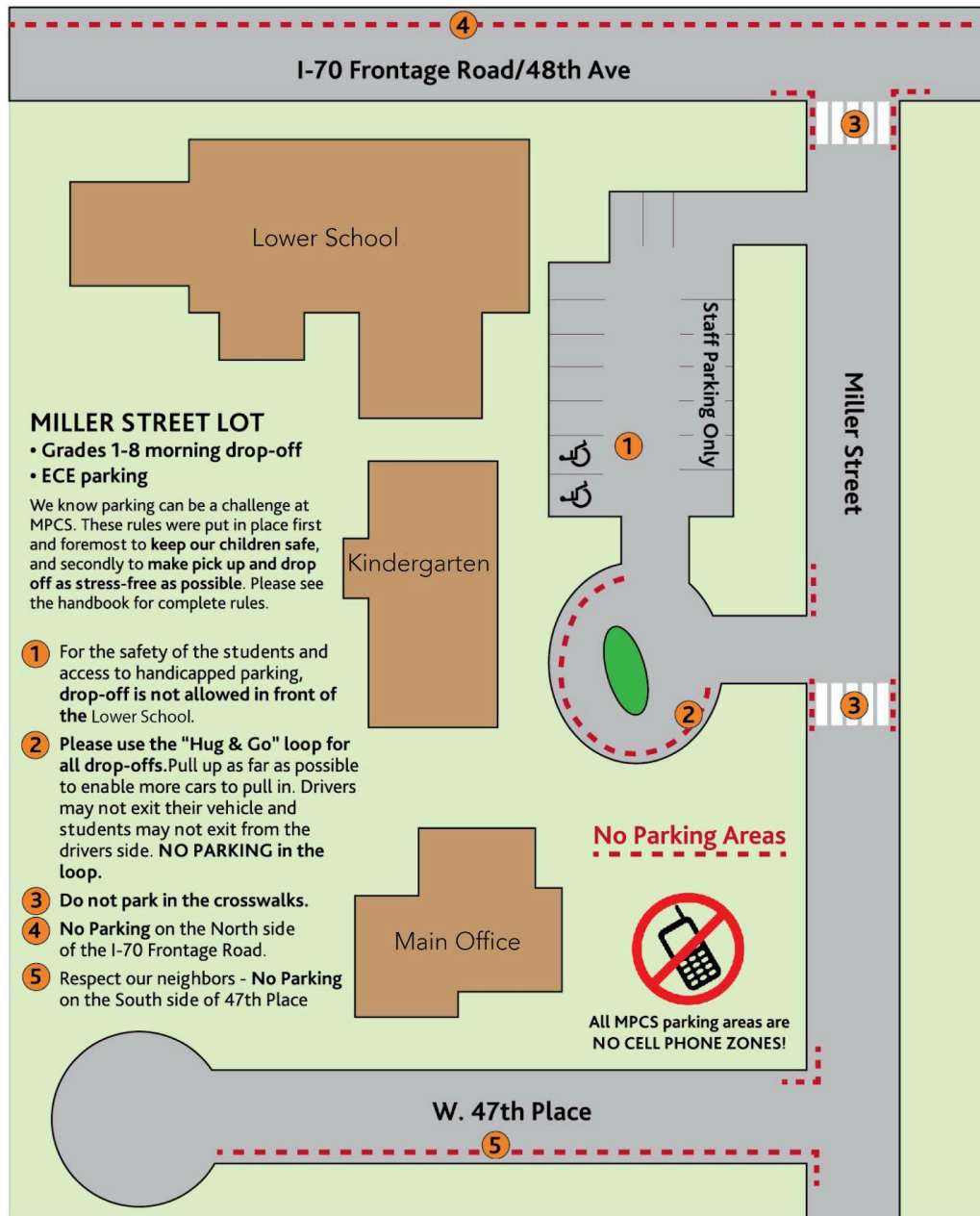
Please note:

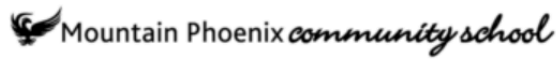
- Either location may be used for morning drop-off, according to the protocols contained in the maps below. **Please note that the Miller Street Circle is not supervised.**
- The frontage road is the **only** designated after school pick up location for **all grades 1-8** and must be accessed according to the protocols contained in the Afternoon Pick-Up Queue map below. Please also see the Alternative Routes map below to help plan your route.
- Miller Street is the designated parking and pick-up location for ECE.

Drop-Off / Pick-Up Maps

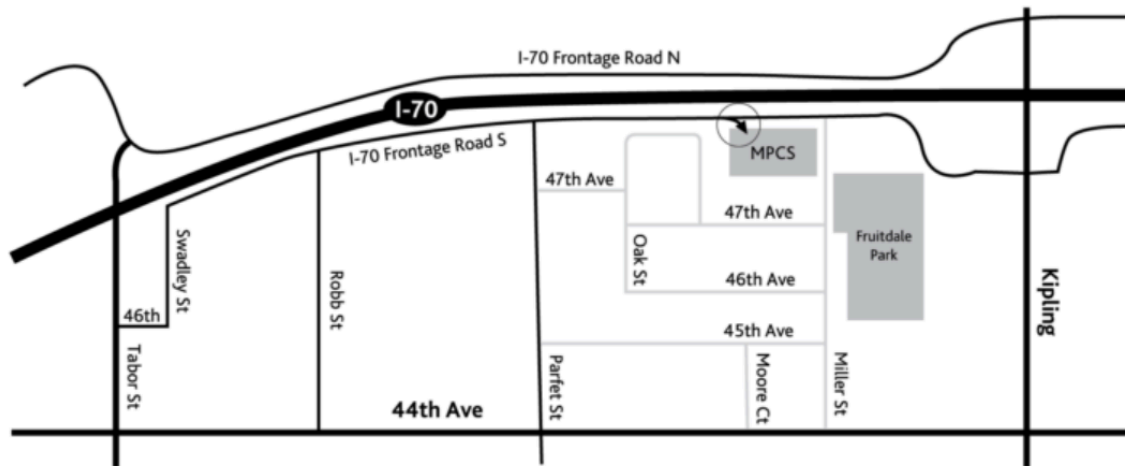
The following maps illustrate the designated drop-off and pick-up locations and protocols. These protocols are in place to protect the safety of all MPCS students; thank you for adhering to them and doing your part to keep our students and community safe.







Routes to the Frontage Road for Pick-Up (Grades 1-8)



Make it Right!

In order for the Grades 1-8 pick-up queue system to work properly, we ask that all vehicles turn into the queue using a **right turn only**. This will prevent back-ups on the westbound I-70 Frontage Road.

- Any vehicles attempting to make a left into the queue will be asked to drive around the block and enter using a right turn.
- The queue is the preferred method of pick-up and drop-off for all students Grades 1-8.
- Avoid street parking if possible!



Use these routes to get to the Frontage Road:

From the NE/Olde Town Arvada Area

Take the I-70 Frontage Road N from Kipling, cross I-70 at Tabor and then 46th/Swadley to Frontage Road S

From the NW/Golden Area

Take Ward to the I-70 Frontage Road N to Tabor, then 46th/Swadley to Frontage Road S

From the South & East

Take 44th to Parfet St to the Frontage Road

SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

School Communication Tools

MPCS is dedicated to fostering a strong communication link between the school and parents/caregivers. As members of a large school community, each community member must make efforts to remain connected to the whole.

School-Related Emails, Text Messages, and Phone Calls

We do our best to limit mass emails, phone calls, and text messages. Sometimes, they are necessary to highlight important information or to send out time-sensitive messages to the community. To ensure that you receive all school communications, please confirm your information is complete and correct in ParentSquare and Infinite Campus. In ParentSquare, you may adjust your notifications for email, text and the app to suit your preferences.

MPCS Website

www.mountainphoenix.org

The MPCS website offers integral information about our school, community, curriculum, Waldorf pedagogy and family resources. Parent/caregivers have access via the **My MPCS** tab at the top of

the home page which holds many resources and answers to common needs and questions to include, but not limited to:

- School Hours & Calendars
- Links to ParentSquare & Infinite Campus
- Family Handbook and Policies
- Hot Lunch Ordering Information
- Before and After Care
- Health Office Forms
- & more!

ParentSquare

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

ParentSquare is used for:

- School wide posts regarding Fundraisers, Events & Special Communications
- Conference signup, classroom wish-lists, volunteer signups
- Join committee groups and receive committee communications
- Logging volunteer hours
- Message privately to teachers
- Post to your student's classroom group page about class happenings or class culture building events such as birthday parties and class get-togethers. Posts that include personal sales, political or religious viewpoints or content that may lead to community division or negative communication about the school will be deleted. If you have a school concern, please follow the protocols by reaching out to your teacher, school directors or Governing Council.
- All communications from the school, all classrooms in which you have a student, and any committees or groups, are in one place.

For questions regarding ParentSquare, contact the Communications, Marketing & Volunteerism Manager at Mountain Phoenix. You can also submit a help ticket directly to ParentSquare by emailing your concern to support@parentsquare.com.

Weekly Reporter – School Newsletter

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

MPCS School Social Media Pages

Our official MPCS Facebook and Instagram pages offer a window into the everyday life at MPCS and give us a wonderful vehicle for sharing Waldorf news and resources. We also share celebrations, provide event updates and post school news. Like our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages today!

Media Communications

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

Personal Communications

Individual Postings on Campus

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

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

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

MPCS Community Facebook Pages

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

Special Communications - Inclement Weather, Snow Days, Late Starts

School Closure

UNLESS you are otherwise notified through ParentSquare, MPCS typically follows the same inclement weather determinations as JEFFCO.

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

2-Hour Delayed Start

In the event a delayed start is determined necessary, all published school start times will be delayed by 2 hours. Student drop off begins at 9:45 on these days. There is no breakfast club, before care, or before-school recess on late start days.

Teacher/Caregiver Communication

Classroom Updates

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

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

Phone Calls/Messages

Teachers monitor their phone and voicemail messages in a timely, responsive manner. Parent/caregiver calls to the office are often forwarded to an individual teacher's voicemail. Because the teachers' primary focus is on their students and instruction, they will not check messages immediately.

Although some teachers may give out their private cell phone numbers for calling/texting with families, this is not standard practice, nor should it be expected.

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

Electronic Messages

Please use messages on ParentSquare to message teachers.

Timely Responses

School staff do their best to respond to communications within 48 business hours.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Once a student has accepted enrollment at Mountain Phoenix Community School, students remain continuously enrolled until the student matriculates or withdraws from MPCS. Each year we ask that you confirm enrollment for the next year, complete registration, and pay any and all fees including PreK Tuition.

Enrollment and Registration Process (Grades Pre-K through Eight)

To allow for a smooth enrollment and registration period, please complete the following steps each year:

1. Confirm each student's enrollment by December 23rd using [EnrollJeffco.org](https://enrolljeffco.org).
2. Complete Online Registration each year for both Jeffco's Annual Update found Infinite Campus and [MPCS's Registration Checklist](#).
3. Complete, sign and submit Early Childhood Contracts
4. Pay material fees for each student or Preschool Tuition if applicable. Note if you qualify for Free & Reduced, you must also send your approval letter from Charter Choice Cooperative to mealsbenefit@mountainphoenix.org in order for material fees to be waived or reduced.
5. Complete all ParentSquare Forms
6. Turn in all Medical Forms to Health Office

Withdrawal Process (Grades Pre-k through Eight)

Should a Mountain Phoenix family choose to leave the school for any reason, the family of the student dis-enrolling must submit notification through [EnrollJeffco](https://enrolljeffco.org). Upon terminating enrollment, the student will be withdrawn from school activities including main lesson curriculum, subject classes, and school sponsored events. Students that have been withdrawn must apply through the EnrollJeffco process in the event they would like to re-enroll.

Student Fees and Fines

Student Materials Fee

Parents and caregivers are asked to pay an annual materials fee for each child enrolled at MPCS. These fees help cover the cost of consumable materials or items that your child will be bringing home. In addition, these fees help supplement the limited state funding for schools and allow us to provide our students the beautiful, artistic learning materials that are an integral part of a Waldorf education. Care and stewardship of these materials is taught in class. Replacement fees will be assessed for lost or damaged materials.

Fines

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

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Students thrive when they attend school each day and arrive on time. Arriving late to school is disruptive to the classroom and has detrimental effects upon the rights of non-tardy students to uninterrupted learning.

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

Absences

An absence consists of failure to appear and remain at school throughout the entire school day unless dismissed by the proper authority. MPCS requires communication from a parent or caregiver within 24 hours to verify the reason for a student's absence. The school requires suitable proof for the absence, including written statements from medical sources to excuse an absence after 3 days. For more details refer to the Student Attendance Policy on the website.

Reporting an Absence

When reporting an absence or tardy, please enter this information in [Campus Parent](#). For more information, here is a [Campus Help Aid](#).

If you need to speak with the office directly or need assistance please call 303-728-9100:

- Ext 333 for Preschool, Kindergarten, or Grades 1-5
- Ext 343 for Grades 6-8

Please provide the following information:

- Date of absence
- Student's full name
- Student's Grade / Teacher
- Reason for the absence
- Name/relationship of person reporting the absence

Prearranged Absences

MPCS gives ample opportunity for vacations throughout the year and **requests that families schedule their trips and vacations during scheduled school breaks.**

Any absence not specifically covered by another section, such as family vacations, college visits, or other extended absence, must complete a pre-arranged absence form in order to be considered for an excused absence. If you are not able to enter these absences in Campus Parent, please use the following forms:

[Pre-Arranged Absence Form - Lower School](#)

[Pre-Arranged Absence Form - Upper School](#)

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

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

Make-Up Work for Absences

Classroom instruction and interaction with teachers are essential to a student's education. Because of the importance of classroom instruction and learning, students are responsible for making up work covered or assigned during any absence, as assigned by their teacher(s). Assignments that are not made up will negatively affect the student's performance. All make-up work will be assigned, per teacher direction, after the student returns from the absence.

Teachers may provide alternative assignments for class work that cannot reasonably be made up outside of class (for example, an in-class assignment requiring the student to be present for a lecture, discussion, or assessment, etc). The student is responsible for obtaining and completing the missed assignment(s) after the absence but within the make-up period determined by the teacher in order to receive credit for the work. This applies to tests, quizzes, classroom assignments, and homework.

PARENT/CAREGIVER INVOLVEMENT

Volunteerism

Caregivers are an essential part of a community school such as MPCS. We encourage all caregivers to find ways to get involved in the school. Visit the [Community Life webpage](#) to see the many events and opportunities that take place throughout the year in which we will need community volunteers! However, parents/caregivers know best where their talents lie, and so we welcome and encourage your creativity in determining how you can best show up for Mountain Phoenix.

All volunteer ideas that impact the campus must go through an approval process with the Master Planning Team. Fundraising ideas must be submitted to the Fundraising Committee at least 2 months prior to the proposed event. Submit your fundraising ideas [here](#)!

Yearly Volunteer Contribution

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

We also welcome grandparents and other extended family and friends who have talent and time to contribute! Such volunteer hours are a great help to the school when applying for grants or demonstrating parent support. All non-caregiver volunteers must sign the [Volunteer Confidentiality Form](#).

Volunteer Procedures

Volunteer Sign-In

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

Logging Volunteer Hours

Caregivers are asked to keep track of their volunteer hours by logging them in their ParentSquare profile.. If you need assistance, please view the [Volunteer Hours webpage](#) or contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

On-Campus or Online Volunteers

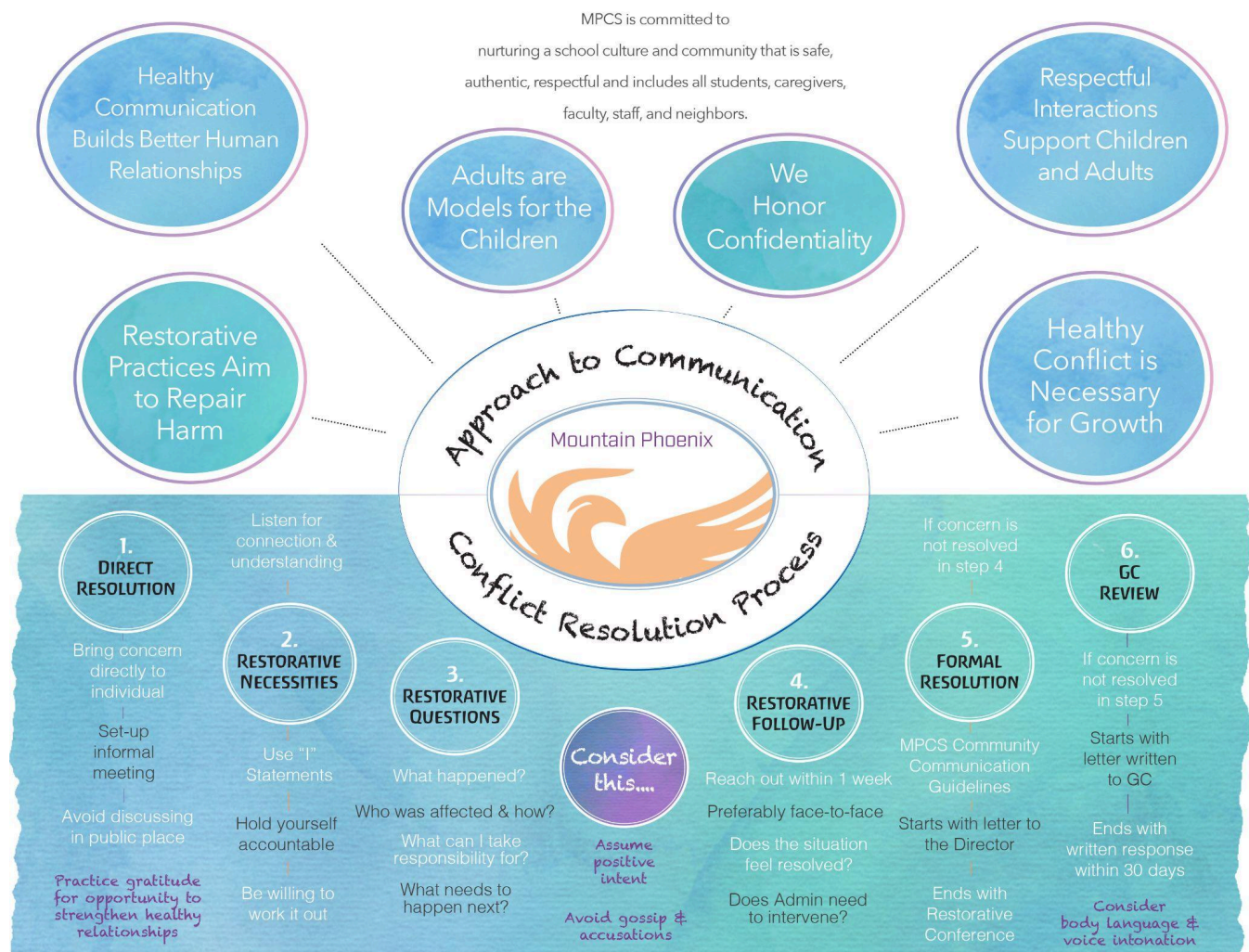
Expectations for volunteering on campus, with students (on/off campus), or online exceed those for other volunteer commitments. These volunteers may be privy to private information that would be unethical to share with other community members. ALL volunteers must sign a Confidentiality Agreement prior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

Passive School Fundraisers

Support the school all year long! We have secured many avenues for our family and community to give back to the school without extra effort or even leaving your home. Passive fundraisers are simple ways of giving such as adding MPCS to your King Soopers Rewards Card, collecting Box Tops, ordering coffee, and more! Classes also have dedicated fundraisers that help raise money for their class account. Check our [Fundraising](#) webpage for the most up to date information.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION: COMMUNITY MEMBERS

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



MPCS Community Communication Guidelines

At MPCS it is our desire to foster a healthy, effective communication process that supports each person at our school. Though each of us is a unique person with individual gifts and challenges, it is through our collaborative work together that our school and the students and families we serve will thrive. (Note: These guidelines are referenced in the [COMMUNITY AND CAREGIVER CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS, and GRIEVANCES POLICY](#).)

Healthy Communication Builds Better Human Relationships

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

Adults are Models for the Children

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

Respectful Interactions Support Children and Adults

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

Healthy Conflict is Necessary for Growth

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

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

Restorative Practices Repair Harm

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

Confidentiality is a Sign of Respect

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

It is Our Responsibility to Provide Equal Access

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

Specific Communication Considerations

Communication Between Caregivers and Teachers/Staff

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

When sending individual messages, caregivers should be mindful of the volume of communication that teachers and staff receive on a daily basis. Due to the faculty's focus on teaching and their commitment to being present with students during the school day, caregivers can expect a response to their message within 2 business days.

Digital Communications

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

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

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

Conflict Resolution Process

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

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

Overview of Steps

Step 1: Direct Resolution

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

Steps 2 and 3: Community and Caregiver Grievance Policy

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

Strategies for Successful Direct Resolution

If you have a question or concern, FIRST bring your question or concern **directly to the party(ies)**

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

Necessities for a successful restorative conversation

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

Informal (Unfacilitated) Restorative Conversation Questions

When you meet together, use the following questions to guide your restorative conversation.

Alternate speaking time and allow for wait time. Ensure that all parties have time to fully answer each question before moving on.

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

Extra Considerations

- “Say what you mean, but don’t be mean.”
- Bring your concern as a question rather than an accusation or judgment.
- Assume positive intent.
- Make time for all involved to speak.
- Avoid gossip. When encountering gossip, encourage participants to pursue positive and direct communication for resolution of the concern.
- Bring sensitive questions or issues in a face-to-face conversation. Body language and voice intonation are very important for the accurate understanding of another.
- If a face-to-face meeting is not possible, a phone call would be the next choice for a conversation. However, if a phone conversation is attempted and is not progressing positively, one participant should request that the conversation be postponed until a face-to-face meeting can be scheduled in a timely manner.
- In most cases, email should be used only for the dispersal or clarifying of information or to set-up a time to talk.
- Practice gratitude for the opportunity to strengthen healthy relationships through working together.

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

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

SCHOOL RECORDS

For informal requests, parents/caregivers may view their child's permanent record at any time on campus. Please give the school five days' notice so the record may be retrieved. The record may be reviewed in the presence of the classroom teacher, an administrator, or school secretary. The record is at no time to be removed from school property. Please note that formal requests are subject to [FERPA Guidelines](#) and may take longer due to the type of request.

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

FERPA Notification of Rights

MPCS honors the parent Notification of Rights Policy under the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#). Therein lie the school's policies surrounding parent/student rights with regards to a student's education records. You may check this policy on the [U.S. Department of Education: Family Policy Compliance Office website](#).

SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency Preparedness

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

Standard Response Protocol

MPCS follows the [Standard Response Protocol](#) from Jeffco Public Schools 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.

MPCS FACILITIES USE POLICY

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

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

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

SCHOOL & FAMILY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

It takes support from our whole community for Mountain Phoenix to fulfill our promise to provide a rich and dynamic curriculum and school experience based on the Core Principles of Public Waldorf Education. We believe that we rise together when we hold high expectations for each other. This agreement outlines the

shared commitments and expectations for our entire school community—the school itself, our students, and our parents/caregivers. Please remember that this is not an exhaustive list of all rules and expectations, but rather a guide to the fundamental principles we uphold. Additional classroom, playground, and specific activity rules will also apply.

Mountain Phoenix Community School Will:

- **Stay true to the mission, vision, and core principles of our school.** We are committed to upholding the foundational beliefs that guide our educational approach.
- **Collaboratively create a respectful, healthy, and strong school culture and community** where everyone feels valued and supported.
- **Create, monitor, and follow practices, policies, and procedures** as outlined in the Family Handbook and MPCCS policies, ensuring transparency and consistency.
- **Support teachers to deliver dynamic, engaging, artistic lessons** guided by Public Waldorf Pedagogy and aligned with our MPCCS learning goals, promoting deep and meaningful learning.
- **Monitor student progress and provide students with additional support** when needed and available, ensuring every child has the opportunity to succeed.
- **Hold high expectations for all members of the community**, including students, parents/caregivers, and staff, and do our best to work together constructively when conflicts arise.
- **Use best practices to maintain a safe and secure campus environment**, prioritizing the well-being of all students and staff.
- **Maintain healthy and collaborative relationships** with Jefferson County School District, the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, and the Wheat Ridge community, and abide by our Charter Agreement.
- **Regularly examine our practices, policies, and data through a lens of equity and inclusivity**, making necessary changes to ensure a fair and just environment for everyone.
- **Ensure fiscal responsibility through a balanced budget** created and monitored in partnership with the Governing Council and School Leadership, stewarding resources wisely for the benefit of our students.
- **Communicate clearly and regularly** with parents and caregivers regarding school news, important updates, and student progress.
- **Respond to concerns from parents/caregivers** in a timely and respectful manner, following established communication channels.

Parents and Caregivers Will:

- **Actively foster an environment of kindness, respect, and shared responsibility** in all interactions within the school community, upholding our core principles and values.
- **Actively engage in understanding Public Waldorf education**, leveraging parent evenings, school resources, and personal study to deepen your knowledge of this unique pedagogical approach and why it matters to your child's education.
- **Remain interested and curious** about your child's learning journey and the life of the school, engaging in opportunities to learn and grow alongside them.
- **Presume positive intent** in interactions with all members of the school community, and seek clarity and understanding when concerns arise.
- **Communicate respectfully and constructively**, modeling respectful discourse by being mindful of the tone and profound impact of your words (whether spoken, written, or shared online/social

media), and refrain from speaking negatively about the school or any community member in front of children.

- **Bring concerns to the appropriate school-affiliated adult.** Refrain from gossip and encourage others to follow the community communication policy, which begins with holding a direct, respectful conversation with the involved parties.
- **Read, understand, and adhere to all school policies and practices** as outlined in the Family Handbook and those adopted by the MPCS Governing Council.
- **Actively read ParentSquare** to stay up-to-date on all communications from the school and your child(ren)'s teachers.
- **Find ways to get involved and support the school**, as our community thrives on family engagement. This includes participating in volunteer opportunities, family council, the foundation, or school committees. When parents strive to be involved, students flourish.
- **Attend parent/caregiver evenings, parent conferences, community festivals, and other school events** to the best of your ability.
- **Support school staff in their efforts to maintain discipline** and foster a positive learning environment.
- **Provide a safe, quiet, and consistent place** at home for your child(ren) to read and study as suggested or directed by their teacher(s).
- **Establish and maintain a healthy rhythm at home, valuing family time, healthy eating and sufficient sleep** for your child(ren)'s well-being and readiness to learn.
- **Ensure children arrive at school on time** before school starts and are picked up promptly at the end of the school day, adhering to designated drop-off and pick-up procedures.
- **Value regular attendance** by scheduling vacations, non-urgent doctor appointments, and other absences during school breaks and holidays, to the best of your ability.
- **Help your child(ren) follow the MPCS Dress Code** by checking their clothes before they leave for school and providing clothing that aligns with the dress code (including media-free clothing, backpacks, lunchboxes, etc.). *Dress-code approved clothing is available for families in need in the Community Room. If more assistance is needed, please contact Jamie Pittock, MPCS School Counselor.*
- **Limit your child(ren)'s screen time** during the school week. Please note: children's access to violent, sexual, or generally inappropriate shows and video games is **highly discouraged** for all MPCS students at all times.

Parents and Caregivers Will Not:

- **Communicate using words or a tone that are disrespectful, demeaning, or threatening** to staff, students, or other community members (in person, via email/ParentSquare, online, or over the phone).
- **Engage in any form of harassment, intimidation, or bullying** towards students, staff, or other members of the school community.
- **Disrupt school operations** or interfere with the learning environment.
- **Bring weapons of any kind** onto school property.
- **Be under the influence of, or possess, illegal substances** on school property or at school-sponsored events.
- **Attempt to circumvent school policies** or encourage children to do so.

Students Will:

At all times, students will abide by our school code of conduct:

We are Kind and Respectful, We are Safe, We are Responsible.

- **Contribute to a healthy and safe learning environment** for ALL students.
- **Follow individual classroom, playground, and building rules and expectations** as posted.
- **Show kindness, good manners, and respect for others** (including all teachers, staff, parents/caregivers, students, and visitors), for yourself, and for the planet.
- **Follow the MPCS Dress Code.**
- **When conflicts arise, use calming strategies to regulate instead of hurting someone with words or actions.** Ask for help when needed, and work to repair any harm done, utilizing conflict resolution strategies taught at school.
- **Report any unsafe situations, bullying, or concerns** to an adult.
- **Arrive at school and to classes on time.**
- **Participate fully and complete assigned work in all classes** to the best of your ability and in a timely manner.
- **Treat all property with care** (including your own personal belongings) and help keep the school grounds, classrooms, desks, cubbies/hooks/lockers, and materials clean and tidy.
- **Stay within classroom and school boundaries** and do not leave without permission.
- **Refrain from public displays of affection** that are romantic, suggestive, or distracting to the learning environment.
- **Technology Use:**
 - **ECE and Lower School:** Keep personal technology devices (including but not limited to: cell phones, tablets, smartwatches) at home.*
 - **Upper School:** Turn in all technology devices (including, but not limited to: cell phones, tablets, smartwatches) at the start of the day or keep them at home.*
Unless there is explicit, written permission from the school as a necessary accommodation in a student's 504, IEP, or Health Plan.
 - **Use only school-provided technology**, and use it only for the purposes your teacher has intended and allowed.
 - **Use school technology responsibly and respectfully**, understanding that all online activity on school networks and devices may be monitored.

Students Will Not:

- **Disrupt the learning environment in any way** that prevents teachers from teaching or other students from working and learning.
- **Tease, harass, or bully others** (physical, verbal, emotional, or cyberbullying are not tolerated).
- **Use discriminatory, profane, disrespectful, or threatening language or actions.**
- **Use Physical aggression towards another person** (e.g., push, kick, hit, shove, punch, slap, etc.) or play aggressively.
- **Bring weapons of any kind to school** (including toy weapons or facsimiles of weapons) or **play violent games** of any kind.

- **Harm vandalize, steal, or destroy school property or things that belong to others.**
- **Be in possession of, under the influence of, and/or sell illegal, unprescribed, or illicit substances including drugs, medications,**
- **Buy, sell, trade personal property, or engage in any form of gambling.**
- **Bring toys, games, trinkets, fidgets, candy, gum and other distracting food or drink items** (except in the case that they are requested by a staff member for educational purposes, or during designated snack/lunch times).
- **Cheat on assignments, tests, or other academic work, or plagiarize content.**
- **When using school technology or accessing school platforms, students will not:**
 - **Access, share, or create inappropriate content online** (e.g., violent, sexually explicit, discriminatory, or hate speech).
 - **Engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or spreading rumors online** (including through school communication platforms, email, or social media).
 - **Share personal information about yourself or others online without explicit permission.**
 - **Attempt to bypass school network security or access unauthorized websites.**