

# Parent Handbook

## 2023-2024

2904 West Kiowa Street  
Colorado Springs, CO 80904  
(719) 203-6364  
mountainsongschool.org



*Receive the children in reverence, educate them in love, and send them forth in freedom.*

~ Rudolf Steiner, founder of Waldorf Schools

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>WELCOME</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>SCHOOL PERSONNEL</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>A WALDORF-INSPIRED PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>SCHOOL GOVERNANCE</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>MOUNTAIN SONG ORGANIZATIONAL CHART</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>SCHOOL CALENDARS AND SCHEDULES</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>WALDORF EDUCATION</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>ENROLLMENT</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>STUDENT FEES</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>ATTENDANCE</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>STUDENT DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>AFTER-SCHOOL CARE</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>LATE PICK-UP POLICY</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>SCHOOL CLOSURE - INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>FOOD AND NUTRITION</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>MEDIA POLICY</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PERSONAL PROPERTY</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>DRESS CODE</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>COMMUNICATIONS</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICIES</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>SCHOOL SAFETY</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>STUDENT ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>STATE ASSESSMENT POLICIES</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>ACADEMIC PROMOTION AND RETENTION</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>PARENTS' RIGHT TO KNOW</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>MOUNTAIN SONG DISCIPLINE POLICY</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>ANTI-BULLYING POLICY</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>THE SCHOOL AS A COMMUNITY</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND VOLUNTEERING</b>	<b>44</b>

<b>HOW PARENTS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>COMMUNICATING AMONG ADULTS</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>GRIEVANCE POLICY</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>FIREARM AND WEAPONS POLICY</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>INTERNET ACCEPTABLE-USE POLICY FOR STUDENTS</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>GUEST WI-FI INTERNET TERMS OF USE</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>COLORADO OPEN RECORDS ACT (CORA)</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>FERPA NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>TEN NEEDS FOR A HEALTHY CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE AT MOUNTAIN SONG COMMUNITY SCHOOL</b>	<b>55</b>

*I am struck by the fact that the more slowly trees grow at first, the sounder they are at the core, and I think that the same is true of human beings. We do not wish to see children precocious, making great strides in their early years like sprouts, producing a soft and perishable timber, but better if they expand slowly at first, as if contending with difficulties, and so are solidified and perfected. Such trees continue to expand with nearly equal rapidity to extreme old age.*

~ Henry David Thoreau

# WELCOME

Welcome to Mountain Song Community School! We welcome all new and returning families to MSCS for the 2023-24 school year. We look forward to working with you as partners in creating an inviting and effective learning community. The school operates under the following founding ideas.

## Vision

Mountain Song Community School is committed to the healthy growth and development of the whole child, including the physical, social-emotional, and intellectual realms. *Through a curriculum inspired by Waldorf methods, our teachers build a firm foundation in the early years for abstract thinking in the later years, while gradually and appropriately challenging the intellect throughout the grades.* This philosophy places equal emphasis on a solid academic program, artistic expression, social-emotional development, and attention to the inner life and natural rhythms of the child.

*Our School is committed to creating a healthy community that reflects and supports our common values.* We believe that children develop social responsibility and feel a greater sense of significance in a small, supportive environment that promotes close long-term relationships with classmates and teachers. In an atmosphere of respectful, clear communication, cooperation, and parent participation, we believe children flourish and grow to be healthy, capable, contributing human beings.

*We believe that teaching children to care for and respect the earth encourages global responsibility and promotes environmentally-conscious living.* The celebration of seasonal festivals is an integral part of this as children joyously experience the earth's natural cycles. By reducing or eliminating exposure to electronic media and encouraging a cooperative social milieu, a child's inherent creative and intellectual abilities unfold naturally with the support of parents, teachers, and peers. At the heart of this approach is the recognition that teaching must be presented to children in a way which fills both teacher and student with wonder, imagination, and enthusiasm.

As such, Mountain Song Community School is committed to our overall vision: ***to cultivate healthy, confident, independent-thinking children who are passionately engaged with their education and empowered to contribute positively to their community.***

## Mission

Mountain Song Community School, as a member of the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, is a public charter school that utilizes developmentally appropriate holistic education to nurture the body, mind, and heart of each student.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Mountain Song Community School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, gender expression, gender identity, age, national origin, disability, marital status, pregnancy status, financial status, sexual orientation or military status in any of its activities, operations, or employment. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all students, staff, families, partners, volunteers, subcontractors and vendors. The full policy is on the school's Governance page, and is [linked here](#).

# SCHOOL PERSONNEL

## **Administrative and Operational Staff:**

Teresa Woods, Ph.D., Executive Director  
Sarah Kreger, Director of School Performance  
Karl Johnson, Pedagogical Director  
Daniel Gagliano, Business and Building Manager  
Mary Ann Major, Registrar  
Kirsten Meehleis, Office Manager at the Front Desk  
\_\_\_\_\_, Administrative Assistant at the Front Desk  
Emily Huntsman, Administrative Assistant for Supplies and Library  
Lauren Ferrara, Marketing and Communications Director  
Tyler Dearing, School Advancement Officer  
Jesse Kreger, Custodian

## **General Education Teachers:**

Arielle Castle, Kindergarten, Bluebell  
Hannah Lewis, Kindergarten, Dandelion  
Gina Nicoletta-Budler, Kindergarten, Marigold  
Miranda Barnes, First Grade, Acacia Class  
Amy Tezak, First Grade, Blue Spruce Class  
Ellie Arzate, Second Grade, Rowan Class  
Alisia McCabe, Second Grade, Huckleberry Class  
Elizabeth (Liz) Tomal-Keiser, Third Grade, Willow Class  
Lori Kemmler, Third Grade, Ebony Class  
Courtney Oliver, Fourth Grade, Catalpa Class  
Nancy Carson, Fifth Grade, Lodgepole Pine Class  
Amy Siebert, Fifth Grade, Hawthorne Class  
leeda Banach, Sixth Grade, Violetwood Class  
Kyle McCabe, Sixth Grade, Violetwood Class  
Katie Blum, Seventh Grade, Evergreen Class  
Jessie Stege, Eighth Grade, Mountain Maple Class

## **Subject Teachers:**

Adam Wright, Agricultural Arts Teacher and Coordinator  
Matt Thomas, Agricultural Arts Teacher  
Jacob Baucom, Games and Movement Teacher  
Tracy Gonzalez, Handwork Teacher  
Allyson Bartling, Handwork Teacher Substitute  
Maria Webb, Spanish Teacher  
XXXX, Mathematics Teacher (5-8)  
Kristine Joyce Lijauco, Music Teacher  
Kyle McCabe, Permanent Substitute

## **Homeschool Teachers:**

Shannon Lang, Frontier Homeschool Teacher  
Shannon Leifer, Village Homeschool Teacher  
Claudia Martin, Village Homeschool Teacher  
Debbie Ellington, Village Homeschool Teacher

**Student Support Professionals:**

Cori Karasiuk, Dean of Students  
Kim Butler, School Counselor, Title IX Coordinator  
Winie Scott, School Social Worker  
Jennifer Barnes, Reading Interventionist (K-4)  
Denise Neal, Reading and Math Interventionist (3-8)  
Osman Yuksel, Math Interventionist (6-8)  
Lauren Artino, Special Education Teacher and Coordinator  
Michael Katzenberg, Special Education Teacher  
Makenzie Castillo, Special Education Teacher  
Claudia Martin, Gifted and Talented, and Library  
Annie Dunaye, English Language Learners, Reading Interventions  
Amy Deibert, Occupational Therapist  
Angie Laird, Speech and Language Therapist  
Nicole Mattson, School Social Worker Consultant  
Trish Reitingger, School Psychologist  
Kacie Ripperger, School Nurse  
Angela (Angie) Strickler, Special Education Support

**Student Support Assistants and Paraprofessionals:**

Janelle Pelletiere, Kindergarten Assistant and Mentor  
Linsdey Gordon, Kindergarten Assistant  
Quinn Wikelius, Kindergarten Assistant  
Steffany Wagner, Kindergarten Assistant Float  
Kathy Eans, First Grade Assistant  
Shawn Oberholtzer, First Grade Assistant  
Julie Farrell, Paraprofessional  
Courtney Gonzales, Paraprofessional  
Beth Pelkey, Paraprofessional  
Rebekah Shaffer, Paraprofessional  
Samson Brandes, Paraprofessional  
Brianna Boynton, Paraprofessional  
Anthony Gonzales, Paraprofessional  
Jessyka Quisquino, Paraprofessional

**Board of Directors:**

Brooke Sassi, President  
Ashley Pfalz, Co-Vice-President  
Katie Hopkins, Secretary  
Drew Bartlett, Treasurer  
Becky Mikita, Member at Large  
Jacob Castle, Member at Large  
Chugrad McAndrews, Member at Large  
Adam Wright, *ex officio* Member, TLC Representative  
Teresa Woods, *ex officio* Member

## A WALDORF-INSPIRED PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

Mountain Song is a public charter school primarily funded through taxpayer dollars and authorized by the [Colorado Charter School Institute](#) (CSI). We renew our charter contract every few years after cyclical evaluation by CSI. We most recently were reauthorized in July 2021 with a 3-year contract. Mountain Song will be evaluated again in the 2023-24 school year for reauthorization.



Mountain Song is a Waldorf-inspired school, and we are members of the [Alliance for Public Waldorf Education](#). The Alliance notes that public Waldorf education is ever-evolving and continuously renewed through practice, research, observation and active reflection.

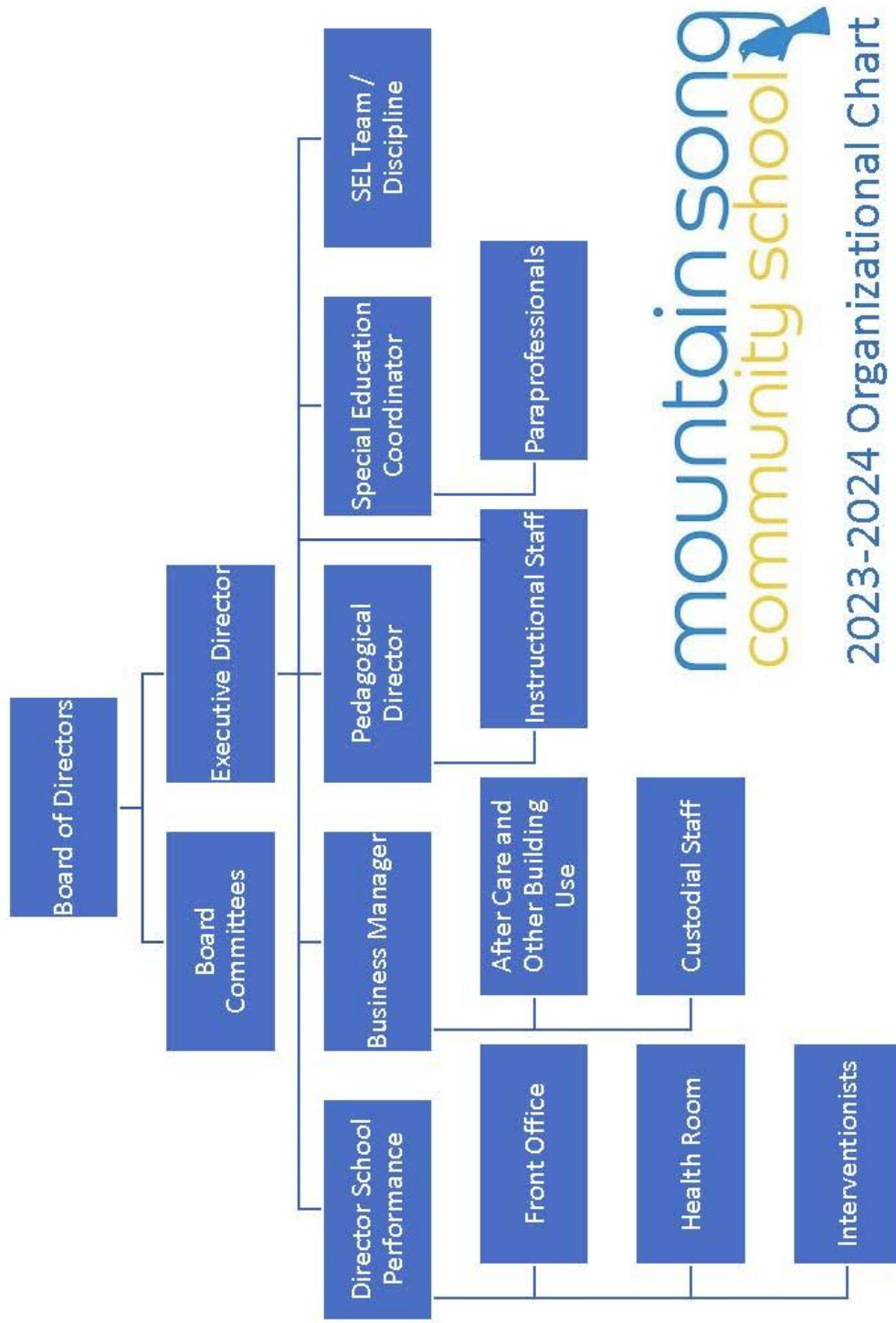


The Waldorf approach to education offers an academically rigorous curriculum presented in a developmentally appropriate, arts-integrated context. By synergizing a Waldorf curriculum with the Colorado Academic Standards, students are able to excel academically and transition gracefully into any public high school setting. Student achievement is measured and evaluated using a variety of methods, balancing quantitative and qualitative assessments. Portfolio (main lesson book) assessments, parent-teacher conferences, and written evaluations by teachers are all part of our student evaluation procedures. In addition, MSCS utilizes state-required standardized assessments and analyzes the resulting data for school improvement.

## SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

The Mountain Song Board of Directors carries the responsibility for the mission and vision of the school. The Charter Contract is held between the CSI Board of Directors and the MSCS Board of Directors. The Board hires the Executive Director (ED), the Board's only employee, and provides oversight and evaluation for the ED. The Board also establishes school policies, which can be found on the [Governance webpage](#) on the school's website. Regular public Board meetings are held, details of which can also be found on the [Governance webpage](#) on the school's website. The public is warmly invited to attend. Board Committees are vital to the school, and joining them are a valuable way of contributing to the school and ensuring its well-being and future direction. Board Committees report directly to the Board of Directors.

# MOUNTAIN SONG ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



2023-2024 Organizational Chart



# SCHOOL CALENDARS AND SCHEDULES



## 2023-2024 School Event Calendar

July 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

July	
4	Independence Day
1-31	Summer Break - NO SCHOOL

January 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

January	
4-5	PD / Teacher Work Day
8	First Day for Grades 1-8
8-12	First Grade Readiness Assessments - No School for Kindergarten
12	K-3 Assessment Day - No School for K-3 - Normal School for 4-8
15	Martin Luther King Jr. Day - NO SCHOOL
16	First Day for Kindergarten

August 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

August	
7	New Teacher Orientation
8	Teacher Work Day
10	Back to School Night
9-11	Teacher In-Service Training
14-15	Teacher Work Days
16	First Day for Grades 1-8
17	First Day for Kindergarten

February 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

February	
19	President's Day - NO SCHOOL
20	In-Service Day - NO SCHOOL

September 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

September	
4	Labor Day - NO SCHOOL
5	K-3 Assessment Day - No School for K-3 - Normal School for 4-8

March 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

March	
22	Half Day for Kindergarten
25-29	Spring Break - NO SCHOOL

October 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

October	
2	October Count
20-23	Professional Development Days - NO SCHOOL

April 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

April	
10-12	CMAS Assessment Days- No School for K-5 - Normal School for 6-8
17-19	CMAS Assessment Days- No School for 6-8 - Normal School for K-5

November 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

November	
1-2	Parent Teacher Conferences - NO SCHOOL
3	Teacher Work Day - NO SCHOOL
17	Half-Day for Kindergarten
20-24	THANKSGIVING BREAK - NO SCHOOL

May 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

May	
23	Last Day of School for Kindergarten - Half Day
24	Last Day of School
27	Memorial Day - SCHOOL CLOSED
28-30	Teacher Work Days

December 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

December	
15	Half-Day for Kindergarten
18-29	WINTER BREAK - Dec. 18 - Jan. 5 - NO SCHOOL

June 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

June	
3-28	Summer Break- NO SCHOOL

Student days: 166  
 Staff days: 184  
 Half-Day Kindergarten - 8:15 am - 12:00 pm  
 Full-Day Kindergarten - 8:15 am - 3:00 pm  
 Elementary Day 8:15 am - 3:00 pm  
 Middle School Day 8:15 am - 3:15 pm

## MSCS Village (In-Person) Home School Calendar 2023-2024

### School Year Calendar



**August 23**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

**September 23**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

**October 23**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

**November 23**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

**December 23**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

**January 24**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

**February 24**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

**March 24**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

**April 24**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

**May 24**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

**June 24**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

**July 24**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

**August 24**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**September 24**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

School Closed/No homeschool classes

First Day of Class 8/27  
Last Day of Class 5/23

---

Kindergarten and First Grade

---

Second and Third Grade

---

Fourth and Fifth Grade

---

6th, 7th, and 8th Grades

End of Semester for T W Th classes  
End of Semester for M class

## MSCS Frontier (Online) Home School Calendar 2023-2024

### School Year Calendar



**August 23**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

**September 23**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

**October 23**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

**November 23**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

**December 23**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

**January 24**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

**February 24**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

**March 24**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

**April 24**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

**May 24**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

**June 24**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

**July 24**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

**August 24**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**September 24**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

School Closed/No homeschool classes

First Week of Class 8/28 - 9/1  
Last Week of Class 5/20-5/24

---

K-2 Class meets online Tu/W 8:45-9:30am

---

3-4 Class meets online Tu/W 10:00-10:45am

---

5-7(8th) meets online Thur. 9:15-10:45am

End of Semester 1  
End of Semester 2

### School Start and Dismissal Schedules

1st - 5th Grade	6th - 8th Grade	Half-day Kindergarten	Full-day Kindergarten	Homeschool
8:15am - 3:00pm	8:15am - 3:15pm	8:15am - 12:00pm	8:15am - 3:00pm	8:30 am - 3:00pm

### Kindergarten Daily Schedule

8:00 - 8:15 a.m.	Drop-Off
8:15 a.m.	Start of School Day
12:00 Noon	Half-Day Kindergarten Pick-Up
3:00 p.m.	Full-Day Kindergarten Pick-Up

### Grades 1-8 Schedules

<b>MSCS 2023-2024 Daily Schedule Grades 1-8</b>				
<b>Start at 8:15 - Tardy after 8:15</b>				
	<b>Grades</b>			
8:00 - doors open	1-4	5	6-8	8:00 - doors open
8:15 - 10:10	Main Lesson	Morning Movement	Opening	8:15 - 8:35
		Extra	Extra	8:35 - 9:20
		Extra	Extra	9:25 - 10:10
10:10 - 10:25	Snack	Snack	Snack	10:10 - 10:25
10:25 - 10:45	Recess	Main Lesson	Main Lesson	10:25 - 12:20
10:50 - 11:35	Extra			
11:40 - 12:25	Extra			
12:25 - 12:45	Lunch	Lunch	Recess	12:25 - 12:45
12:45 - 1:10	Recess	Recess	Lunch	12:50 - 1:10
1:15 - 2:00	Extra	Extra	Extra	1:15 - 2:00
2:05 - 2:50	Extra	Extra	Extra	2:05 - 2:50
2:50 - 3:00	Close	Close	Close	2:50 - 3:15

## WALDORF EDUCATION

Mountain Song Community School uses a Waldorf-inspired curriculum, which is most successful when parents understand its underpinnings. We encourage parents to read, study, ask questions, and gain a deeper understanding of the Waldorf pedagogy. Below are recommended readings:

*You Are Your Child's First Teacher*, by Rahima Baldwin.

*Waldorf Education, a Family Guide*, by Pamela J. Fenner and Mary Beth Rapisardo.

*Understanding Waldorf Education: Teaching from the Inside Out*, by Jack Petrash.

*Waldorf Schools: Volume I and II* edited by Ruth Pusch.

*School as a Journey: The Eight-Year Odyssey of a Waldorf Teacher and His Class*, by Torin Finser.

## ENROLLMENT

### Kindergarten Enrollment Age

Colorado state law mandates that children must be 5 years old before or by October 1<sup>st</sup> to be eligible to enter Kindergarten. Although Waldorf philosophy recommends that children turn 5 by June 1<sup>st</sup> before they enter Kindergarten, we accept all children who are 5 years old by October 1<sup>st</sup>.

### Homeschool Enrichment Program

Mountain Song Community School offers two homeschool enrichment programs that are tuition-free and funded through the State of Colorado.

- Village Homeschool Enrichment for grades K - 8. Students attend class one day per week for main lesson, music, art, gardening, and creative movement enrichment.
- Frontier (online) Homeschool Enrichment for grades K through 8 using a combination of online and project based learning at home.

### Open Enrollment

MSCS is a Public Charter School, and our charter allows us to enroll students from Kindergarten through Grade 8. Enrollment is open to any child who resides within the state of Colorado. Parents must turn in an enrollment request form to the office for their child to be considered for enrollment. If the number of students requesting enrollment exceeds the number of slots available, a lottery process will be put into effect. Students will be offered a slot in the order drawn in the lottery until the class is filled. A waitlist will be established for the remaining students according to the order drawn in the lottery. Siblings receive priority status in order to facilitate family involvement in the school. Please note: once a child has been enrolled as a student at MSCS, the school will be considered the child's neighborhood school, and parents may reserve the right to continue at MSCS until they have completed Grade 8. Re-enrollment forms are requested for each student in January of each year. The complete [Enrollment Policy](#) can be found [at this link](#) and on the [Governance page](#) of the MSCS website.

MSCS's educational program is non-religious, non-sectarian, and consistent with applicable law.

## STUDENT FEES

As a Waldorf-inspired school, Mountain Song purchases high quality school supplies that support students in rigor and creativity. To defray these costs, parents are asked to contribute \$150 in supply fees each year, which can be paid [here](#). In addition, variable field trip fees are charged when classes schedule such events. All fees are waived for those who qualify for free or reduced lunch. The complete Student Fees Policy is posted on our Governance web page and [linked here](#).

## ATTENDANCE

In order for students to succeed in school, it is of utmost importance that they regularly attend. Frequent absences may lead to poor integration into the school's efforts at providing a whole-child centered educational program, including physical, social-emotional, and academic progress. Students benefit the most when they can participate in the daily, weekly, and seasonal rhythms of the year.

Colorado's Compulsory Attendance Law, *C.R.S. 22-33-104(1)*, establishes the expectation that all children between the ages of *age 6 (on or before August 1 of each year) through 17* be registered and attending school. Excused absences are those due to illness, both temporary and extended, those that occur when the student is in the custody of the court of law or its agencies, and those approved by the Administration at MSCS. As a public school, MSCS is accountable for overall student performance. A low attendance rate generally has a negative effect on student performance and can therefore affect the school as a whole. Please complete the [Attendance Log Form](#) or call the office by 9:30 if your child will be absent or tardy.

### **Punctuality**

Consistent punctuality is important for students to participate in the daily rhythms of each day. By arriving on time, children learn reliability and respect for others while also being able to orient themselves to each new day's activities.

We ask parents to partner with the school in ensuring consistent and punctual attendance by doing the following:

- Ensure your child arrives and is picked up on time each day.
- Schedule routine medical and dental appointments after school hours when possible.
- Schedule family vacations during the school's vacation days.

If it is unavoidable to schedule appointments outside of the school day, please notify the front office and have the child attend classes both before and after the scheduled appointments.

### **Tardiness**

Attendance is taken by the teachers and entered into the student database at the start of each day. Students who arrive after the start of school will be marked tardy by their teachers.

**Students who arrive tardy must check in at the front desk and receive a tardy pass in order to be admitted to school. The tardy pass will be given to the teacher to be allowed into their class.**

## Excused and Unexcused Tardies

A tardy must be noted as either excused or unexcused. Tardiness may be excused for good reason and not habitual (such as technology difficulties, car trouble, traffic congestion, or inclement weather). Excused tardies are those that are verified by parent/guardian and approved by the Administration by completing the [Daily Attendance Log Form](#), in writing, or by phone call by 9:30 a.m. . Because of the disruptive nature of tardiness and the detrimental effect upon learning, excessive tardiness will be addressed by the Administration with the parent(s) or guardian(s).

## Leaving School Early

A parent or guardian MUST sign out students before leaving the school campus early. If the student is going to leave with someone other than a parent or guardian, the parent must grant permission. Students will be called out of class once the parent has signed the student out for the day.

## Absences and Reporting to School

Students are required to be in school except in cases of emergency, illness, or religious observance. It is the family's responsibility to notify the office of a student's absence before 9:30 a.m. on the day of the absence by completing the [Daily Attendance Log Form](#) or by calling (719) 203-6364. Absences that are not verified, or for which no reason is provided, will be marked as unexcused. Unexcused absences resulting from failure to notify the office will not be changed after two (2) days.

## Excused Absences

Excused absences are normally those resulting from the following:

- Illnesses;
- Injuries;
- Family emergencies;
- Absence due to a physical, emotional, or mental disability;
- Funerals;
- Religious observances when requested by parent or guardian;
- Suspension, expulsion, or denial of admission in accordance with C.R.S. 22-33-105 and 106;
- Court responsibilities.

Family vacations or other recreational absences are strongly discouraged while school is in session and must be approved by the Administration at least three (3) days in advance to be counted as excused absences. No more than five (5) days total per school year will be excused for vacations or other recreational absences.

Unless otherwise exempted by the Administration, students must be present at least 90% of school days. No more than nine (9) total absences are permitted during a semester, and no more than eighteen (18) total absences are permitted during a school year, **including excused absences**.

A physician's statement will be requested after the 3rd consecutive day of a student's medical absence or when a student's total days of medical related absence reach eight (8). After eight (8) total medical absences, a doctor's statement will be required to excuse any further medical absences for the remainder of the year.

### **When to Keep a Student Home**

According to the Colorado State Department of Education, a child exhibiting any of the following symptoms should be kept at home to recover and prevent the spread of any illness (see [How Sick is Too Sick](#)). For more details, see the Health and Wellness Section below.

### **Unexcused Absences and Habitual Truancy**

An *unexcused absence* is defined as one not defined as an excused absence (see above), including but not limited to the following:

- Unscheduled “long weekends” and vacations
- Moving days (change of residence)
- Transportation problems
- Appointments for non-essential activities such as haircuts

Colorado State statute defines *habitual truancy* as four (4) or more unexcused absences in a month or ten (10) or more unexcused absences in a school year. Truancy is reported to the state. MSCS will involve its authorizer, the Charter School Institute, in truancy matters including truancy court.

### **Management of Attendance Issues**

If a pattern of tardiness, truancy, or general absenteeism develops, the Administration will schedule a parent conference that may also include the student’s teacher. Parents/guardians will be expected to identify steps for resolving the problem and sign an attendance contract. **Depending on the severity of the attendance issue, student retention in their current grade and/or additional actions may be considered.** The school reserves the right to initiate legal action for violation of the compulsory school attendance laws. Note: Different procedures may apply to students with extenuating circumstances and/or those students receiving special education services.

## **STUDENT DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP**

The playgrounds are NOT supervised before school. Parents and guardians are responsible for the safety and supervision of their own children during these times.

### **Morning drop-off**

#### **Kindergarten and Grade 1**

Parents are required to walk their children to their designated arrival location no later than 8:15 a.m. Kindergarten and Grade 1 students may arrive no earlier than 8:00 a.m. Parents of Kindergarten and Grade 1 students may park along Bijou Street in the back of the school or in any available street parking space. There will be NO PARKING around the perimeter of the school along 29<sup>th</sup> Street and Kiowa Street, as these streets are reserved for Grade 2-8 drop-off during the day. Students enter the building through the main entrance that faces Kiowa Street.

#### **Grades 2 through 8**

Students in grades 2 through 5 may be accompanied or walk independently to the main school entrance and proceed to their classroom no earlier than 8:00 a.m. and no later than 8:15 a.m. Drop-off is along Kiowa or 29<sup>th</sup> Streets.

## Regarding All Students

If you are walking your student to the school entrance, you may park in any available proper street parking space other than directly around the perimeter of the school. Please do not park in the No Parking Zones.

If you prefer to drop off students, the designated Drop-Off (and No Parking) Zones are on the south side of the building on Kiowa Street westbound or 29<sup>th</sup> Street southbound on the east side of the school property (see map). Please do not drop off on Bijou Street. This is reserved for Kindergarten and Grade 1 parking. If there are no available pull-off areas on Kiowa or 29<sup>th</sup> Streets, parents may park at any proper parking space in the surrounding neighborhood and walk students to the school, or they can circle back around.

If you are using the designated Drop-Off Zones, **pull your vehicle as far forward as possible** to allow for more space behind you. This will allow the efficient flow of drop-offs. **Allow students to disembark from cars only along the curb at 29<sup>th</sup> and Kiowa.** Keep students in your car until you reach that spot. Students must be ready to leave your car immediately when you reach the drop-off spot. After dropping students off, please pull promptly and safely pull away from the curb and continue to leave the premises in an orderly way. **Please be mindful of the safety of pedestrians, including children who may be below your line of vision.**

## Late Arrival

Students must check into the front office if they arrive late before reporting to class.

## Safety and Consideration

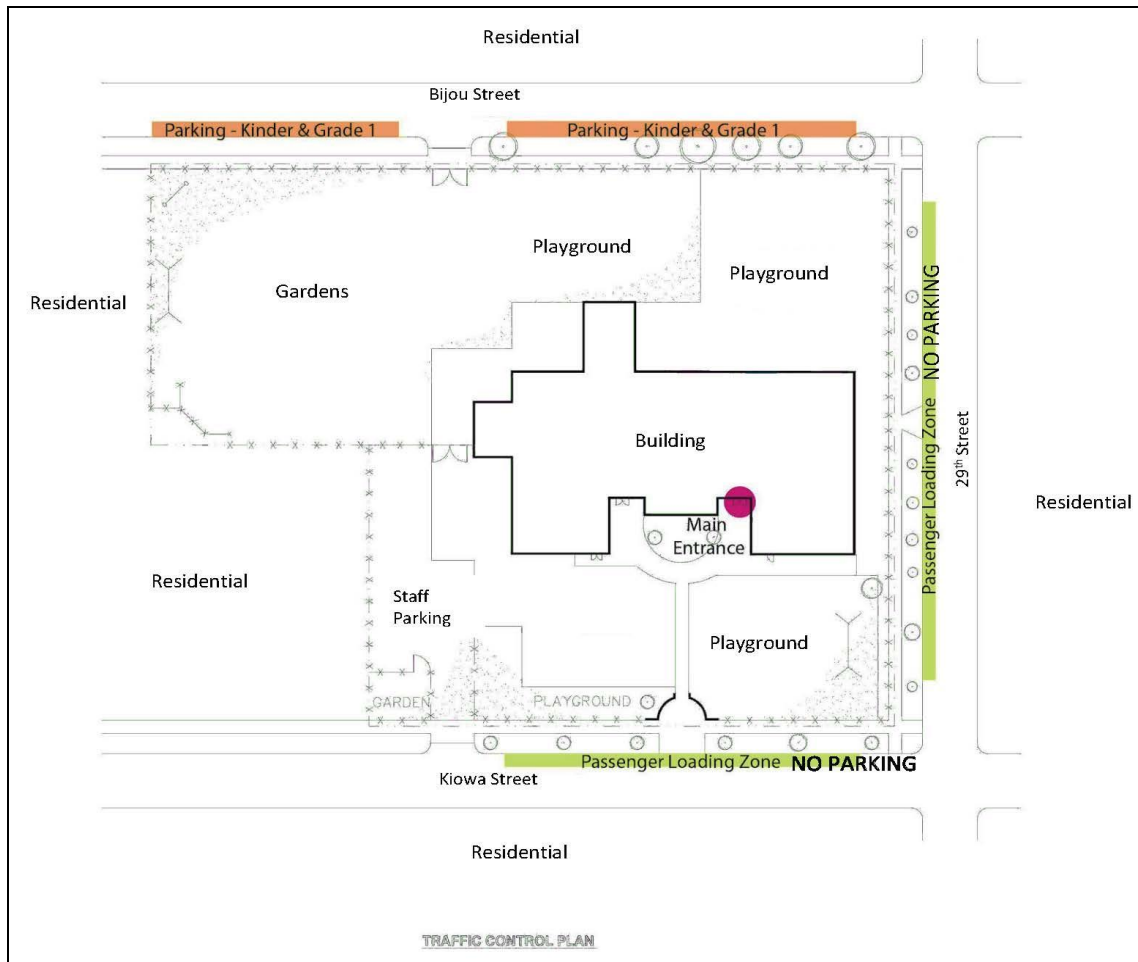
**We strongly encourage carpooling** to reduce the amount of traffic in the neighborhood. The **school parking lot is for staff only.** Visitors may park on the street. For handicap parking, the designated space on the school parking lot may be used.

Please be considerate of our neighbors when parking in front of their houses and follow all traffic and parking laws, including but not limited to the following:

- Do not block driveways or alleys.
- Do not park closer than 5 feet to any driveway.
- Do not park within 30 feet of a stop sign to allow proper visibility for pedestrians crossing the street.
- For you and your child's safety, cross streets only at intersections or designated crosswalks.

Please review the drop off diagram below. This plan has been established to provide the greatest safety for our students during drop-off times. The circular drop-off plan allows students to be dropped off safely and for there to be a convenient traffic flow for parents entering and leaving the premises during those times.





## Afternoon Pick-Up

Classes dismiss at 12:00 noon (half-day K), 3:00 p.m. (full-day K through Grade 5) and 3:15 p.m. (grades 6-8). If you cannot be here to pick up your student within 15 minutes of dismissal, please make other arrangements for your child with a family member or daycare provider.

Mountain Song Community School cannot provide supervision to siblings of students participating in any after-school activities. It is the family's responsibility to ensure students not involved in after-school activities are picked up within 15 minutes of school dismissal.

Once children are released to parent/guardian, it is the parent or guardian's responsibility to directly supervise their child(ren), including if they play on the playground after dismissal. Please note that the playground will be cleared to prioritize school programs.

**Half-day pick-up for Kindergarten** – please park your car (street parking) and pick up your child at the classroom pick up area at 12:00 noon.

**Full-day Kindergarten** students must be picked up at their designated locations.

**Grade 1-5 students** will be taken to a designated area on the back (north) playground for parent/guardian to meet them, unless other arrangements are on file in the front office.

**Grade 6-8 students** will be released to meet their ride outside, or they may walk home if the parent/guardian has filed a student release form with the front office outlining the student's plan for after-school release (i.e. 'student is to walk home' or 'parent will be picking student up outside').

### **Mid-day Pick-up**

If your child has an appointment and must be picked up early, please call ahead to notify the office. Park your car and come to the office to pick up and sign your child out. To keep disruptions to a minimum, we ask that you not interrupt classes to take your child out of school mid-day.

### **Children's Release from School**

A child will not be released from the school to persons other than the parent/guardian unless the enrolling parent has given written permission in advance. In the case of an emergency, parents may give verbal authorization for persons listed as emergency contacts on the student's enrollment form. Photo identification will be required by anyone with whom the staff is not familiar. If someone comes to pick up a student without prior proper authorization, the administrative staff will contact the parent. If an unauthorized person tries to pick up a student without permission and/or contact with an authorizing adult, that person will be detained and the police will be called. If possible, the student will be removed from the immediate vicinity.

## **AFTER-SCHOOL CARE**

Mountain Song partners with [Innovation Learning](#) to provide after-school care at the school itself. Students enrolled in Innovation Learning can be released after school to the Innovation Learning staff. You may sign up with [Innovation Learning at this link](#).

## **LATE PICK-UP POLICY**

Mountain Song students are expected to be picked up at the end of the school day within 15 minutes of dismissal time. When students are still at school after that, they are brought to the front office to await their ride, and parents will be called at that point. If you know that you will be late picking up your children, please notify the front office immediately.

Mountain Song will charge parents or guardians for repeated late pick-ups, as this requires our staff to stay later than planned and impacts our budget. The rates charged for each student not picked up within the 15-minute grace period are:

- Picked up 15-30 minutes from dismissal time: \$5.00 per day
- Picked up 30-45 minutes from dismissal time: \$10.00 per day
- Picked up 45-60 minutes from dismissal time: \$20.00 per day
- Picked up 60+ minutes from dismissal time: \$40.00 per day

# SCHOOL CLOSURE - INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

In the event of inclement weather, the MSCS Administration will communicate to families any disruption to the normal schedule via our student information system (Infinite Campus) announcements, as well as on our school home page, social media, and local news outlets.

## Possible Schedule Disruptions

- **Delayed Start:** School will start 2 hours later than normal, at 10:15 a.m., with doors opening at 10:00. There will be no half-day kindergarten.
- **School Closure:** School will be closed for the day.
  - **Grades K-5 will be canceled.**
  - **Grades 6-8 may be canceled, or**
  - **Grades 6-8 may have a Remote Learning Day.** In the case that the maximum number of snow days have already been called, a Remote Learning Day may be called in order for middle school students to meet their minimum required learning time for the school year. Remote Learning Google Classrooms will be prepared in advance. A specific decision for this contingency will be announced.
- **Early Dismissal:** School will be dismissed early due to worsening weather conditions.
- **After School and Evening Cancellations:**
  - School-related events and activities will be communicated in the announcements.
  - Innovation Learning, our partner in after-school care, will communicate directly with families.

## Factors Considered in Weather-related Decisions

- Varied weather and road conditions in the area, knowing we have families that live throughout the region.
- Our school staffing capacities;
- Decisions that neighboring districts have made.

**Families ultimately should make decisions based on their own family's safety. Absences due to weather events will be excused - please notify the front office.**

# FOOD AND NUTRITION

## Snack and Lunch

Mountain Song does not offer a school food program at this time; however, we are planning for one in the near future. For the time being, all families are asked to pack nutritious and well-balanced snacks and lunches for their children to eat during the day. (Half-day Kindergarten students do not need a packed lunch.)

## Philosophy

Our food philosophy is holistic in nature and considers the nutritional content of the food, how the food is produced, and its impact on our environment and economy. We also acknowledge scientific research demonstrating that students are able to focus, perform, and feel better physically, emotionally, and mentally when they eat nutritious whole foods.

Parents are asked to follow the MSCS Food Guidelines below to the best of their abilities when packing snacks and lunches. Healthy, well-balanced meals provide essential nutrition for your children's minds and bodies to perform optimally.

## MSCS Food Guidelines

- Foods brought to school should be nutrient-dense, whole foods.
- Foods brought to school should not include candy or conventional sweets.\* Students should refrain from bringing candy or conventional sweets in snacks, lunches or for birthday celebrations. There are many healthy treats and traditional alternatives that we will use to honor students on birthdays and for holiday celebrations.

\*Sweets are defined as any product in which conventional sugar is one of the first 4 ingredients.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding these guidelines, please speak to your child's teacher and/or an Administrator.

## Special Dietary Needs

If a child has special dietary issues, parents are asked to make these known to the office and class teacher. **If these are based on medical issues, please inform the School Nurse to establish a Care Plan.**

## Food in the Kindergarten and Agricultural Arts Programs

Food preparation is incorporated into the Ag Arts and Kindergarten curricula in which children help grow, harvest, and prepare foods. Through such participation, children experience plant growth, weather, and soil conditions, and observe seasonal patterns. The teachers may help children prepare foods to make small meals that they share together, thus becoming more aware of the sources and processing of foods they eat on a daily basis. (These meals supplement their own packed lunches.) Every food item eaten or tasted by our students is of their own volition. Through our Kindergarten and Agricultural Arts Programs, children become connected to nature and to their food sources.

## MEDIA POLICY

We ask that MSCS students are not exposed to digital media or screen-time on school nights -- Sunday through Thursday evenings -- and that a family effort to reduce children's general exposure to media away from school be sustained. For our purposes, screen-time includes movies, television, electronic/video games, cell phones, tablets, and computers.

The MSCS media policy is based on the strong body of evidence showing that screen time for children disrupts normal and healthy brain development, as well as negatively impacting social, emotional, and motor skill development. Research findings also demonstrate that parents' screen time in the presence of their children negatively impacts children's development. For more information, talk with your child's teacher, attend parent nights, and read the latest research on the effects of television and other technologies on brain function and imagination.

The following sources provide additional information about our media policy:

- *Endangered Minds: Why Our Children Don't Think*, by Jane Healy
- [ScreenTime: Diane Sawyer Reporting](#)
- [This is Your Child's Brain on Video Games](#), by Victoria L. Dunckley, M.D. in *Psychology Today*
- [ScreenTime is Making Kids Moody, Crazy, and Lazy, by Victoria L. Dunckley, M.D. in Psychology Today](#)
- [How Bad is Screen Time, Really?](#) by Alex Apatoff in *People Magazine*
- "[Gaming Disorder](#)" added to the World Health Organization's list of diseases
- [Media and Children](#), by Dimitri Christakis

## PERSONAL PROPERTY

Toys, games, electronic devices, etc. are to remain at home unless approved by the teacher in advance. If such items are brought to school, they must be left with the teacher until the end of the school day. Inappropriate items will be held in the office and may be picked up at the end of the day, except in cases of habitual abuse of this policy. Such cases may warrant extended confiscation time, as determined by staff. Dangerous items may be confiscated and disposed of and will require more serious consequences.

### **Pets**

No dogs or pets are permitted on the school campus during school days or events for safety, health, and liability reasons, unless it is a service animal as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Special arrangements may be made to bring pets to school with approval from the Administration and Class Teacher.

### **Lost and Found**

All lost and found items will be stored in bins in the lost and found closet near the front office. At any time you can ask the front office staff for permission to look through these items for your child's missing item(s). The last Friday of every month the bins will be sorted and leftover items will be donated.

## DRESS CODE

MSCS recognizes that all students are valued individually for who they are and not what they wear. Clothing, however, can be distracting to students and teachers and can undermine the school environment. Therefore, the following dress code has been adopted to help create a positive environment for all, where the focus is on learning:

- Clothing must cover areas from one armpit across to the other armpit, down to approximately 3 to 4 inches in length on the upper thighs (see image) at all times. Tops must have shoulder straps.
- All clothes must be neat and clean, and cannot be torn or tattered within the area required to be covered described above.
- Hair should be clean, neat, and out of the face.
- Shoes must be worn at all times. Shoes should be safe for the school environment and allow students to move freely and safely. *Shoes with flashing lights or wheels are not allowed.*
- Headgear (hats, hoodies, caps, etc.) are not allowed indoors unless permitted for religious or medical reasons or otherwise approved by Admin. Head scarves and headbands are allowed.
- Specialized classes or events may require specialized attire (sports, safety, or theater costumes).
- Suitable clothing is required for seasonal safety. In winter, warm jackets, gloves, and hats are required. In the warmth of the sun, hats are encouraged to protect students from harmful rays. Our students can be outside for up to 3 hours on some days, so protective clothing is very important.
- Clothes and personal items such as purses, bags, backpacks, lunch boxes, and shoes should be free of media characters, including sports teams/memorabilia.
- Clothes and personal items may not feature logos, symbols, or pictures such as those referring to gangs, drugs, alcohol, or tobacco.
- Clothing and personal items may not display or imply vulgar, discriminatory, or obscene language or images.
- Clothing may not state, imply, or depict hate speech/imagery targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or other protected classification.
- Clothing and accessories that endanger student or staff safety may not be worn.

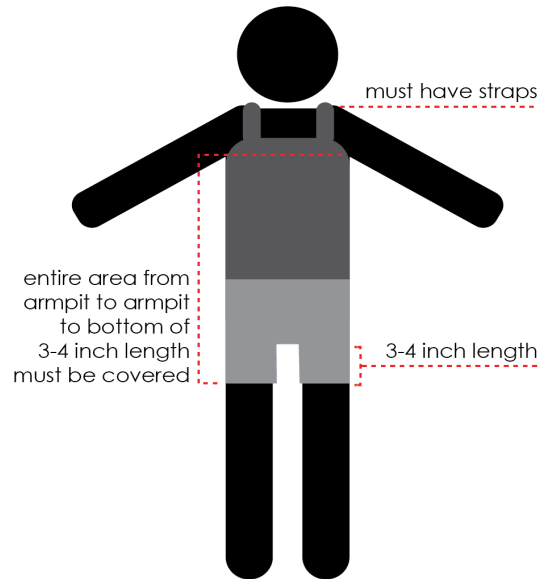


Image used with kind permission from the Roanoke County School District in Virginia.

The Administration reserves the right to determine what constitutes appropriate dress.

# COMMUNICATIONS

MSCS is dedicated to good communication between the school and parents. In order to keep parents informed of happenings at the school, we communicate through a variety of channels: parent letters from teachers, school-wide emails, weekly Songbird newsletter, hard copies of important information, parent/teacher conferences, our website, the community bulletin board, etc. When communicating with Mountain Song Faculty and Staff, please use appropriate channels of accountable communications provided by the school for our employees: Mountain Song Email Addresses, School Phone Lines, and in-person Appointments. See the full Communications Policy posted on the [Governance webpage](#) on the school's website.

## **Teacher Communications to Parents**

Kindergarten and Class Teachers communicate regularly with families, usually via email, sharing classroom activities, information, and opportunities to meet or volunteer.

## **Songbird Newsletter from the School**

The regular school Songbird Newsletter is distributed throughout the school year by email, generally on a weekly basis on Friday mornings. Current and past issues are also available in PDF format on the [Songbird webpage](#). Please contact your teacher if you would like the school to print the Songbird for you. All families' email addresses are forwarded to our newsletter distributor shortly after the start of school. If you wish to receive the Songbird before that time, please subscribe here: <https://mountainsongschool.org/about/songbird-newsletter/>

## **Parent Meetings by Class**

Kindergarten and Class Teachers will hold at least three parent meetings for their classes a year. Parents are asked to attend these important meetings to help support their child and the class community.

## **Progress Reports and Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher Conferences are held in the fall and optional ones in the spring to communicate student progress to parents. Parents and teachers are welcome to make additional appointments as needed. Mid-Year and End-of-Year Reports will be sent to parents in January and June and will include a summary of the child's progress during the year. Teachers will contact parents if concerns arise regarding a student's progress in school. It is essential to inform teachers of any changes in your child's life that might affect their performance in school.

## **MSCS Website**     [www.mountainsongschool.org](http://www.mountainsongschool.org)

The MSCS website contains important information and updates about the school, board of directors' meeting agendas and minutes, information about Waldorf education, and much more. Volunteer opportunities will also be listed as well as news on festivals and school events. Please visit it often.

# HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICIES

## When to Keep a Student Home

According to the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), a child exhibiting any of the following symptoms should be kept at home to recover and prevent the spread of any illness (See [How Sick is Too Sick](#)):

- Coughing new and unrelated to an existing chronic condition
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Fever of 100.4°F or higher
- Loss of taste or smell
- Head lice
- Communicable illnesses such as Chicken Pox, Hepatitis A, Impetigo, Ringworm, Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), Strep Throat, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Pertussis, COVID-19.

If a student or staff member has any of the above symptoms, they should call the front office to determine if the combination of symptoms requires staying home. As the COVID-19 public health situation evolves, please consult [El Paso County Public Health](#) and [Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment](#) for the latest updates.

## Medications

School personnel cannot administer prescription, nonprescription (over the counter), or herbal medications\* to students unless 1) appropriate administration cannot be reasonably accomplished outside of school hours; and 2) the parent or legal guardian is not available to administer the medication at school. 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 must be brought to school in the original container, listing proper dosage information and the child's full name. The parent(s) and a physician must fill out a medication administration form before our staff can administer medication. All medication brought to school must be given to the Director of School Performance, School Nurse, or Administrative Assistant at the Front Office. Medication of any kind should never be kept in a child's backpack, cubby, or lunch box. Medication must remain locked in the office until it is returned to the authorized adult.

*\*"Medication" is considered to be any substance given to the student or applied directly to the student that addresses a condition that does not usually exist. Example: cough drops, chapstick for cracked lips, cold sore cream, etc. These medications need a Medication Administration form signed by a parent/guardian AND a physician because it is treating a condition (sore throat, compromised skin, cold sore, etc.) before they are administered to the student during school hours.*

## Accidents/First Aid

All class teachers and at least one of the office staff are first-aid trained. Basic first aid is administered for common injuries. Should a child sustain an injury that warrants treatment at school or needs further attention, the parent will be notified by phone and/or in writing, based on the severity and nature of the injury as determined by MSCS staff. If Emergency Medical Response is required, 911 will be called first and then the parent/guardian.



## **Health Care Plans**

Health Care Plans are required for the following conditions if emergency medications are held in the Health Office: Allergy/Anaphylaxis, Seizure, Diabetes, and Asthma. These Health Care Plans are available on the website to be filled out by parent/guardian and physician.

Even if you do not choose to keep emergency medications in the Health Office, it is a good idea to have a Health Care Plan on file for the safety of your child if an emergency occurs.

If you prefer your child to self-administer emergency medication (ex. Inhaler for asthma), please download and sign the Self-Carry form also found on the school website. The student, parent, and school nurse will need to sign this form, verifying knowledge, maturity, and awareness by the student self-administering the medication listed. Even if your child carries emergency medication, we recommend that the Health Office also have the medication in case of an emergency.

## **Immunizations**

A Certificate of Immunization is required for all students upon enrollment. Incomplete immunization records may result in your child being excluded from the school per Colorado state law unless the student is in process of fulfilling the [State requirements](#). Please submit updated immunization information to the school at the beginning of the school year. If immunizations are given during the school year, please submit an immunization schedule with details about when your child will be receiving the required vaccines to the front desk. If you choose to exempt your child from receiving immunizations, you **MUST** submit the Immunization Exemption form to the school annually (non-medical). All non-medical immunization exemptions expire every June 30th. Per State Law, non-medical exemptions **MUST** be filled out annually by a physician or through the [Colorado CDPHE website](#).

MSCS participates in the Colorado Immunization Information System (CIIS), a confidential web-based system, maintained by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment to help gather immunization information. If you would like to remove your child's information from CIIS and/or choose to not have your child's immunization information entered into this system, the opt out procedures can be found at <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/ciis-opt-out-procedures>.

## **Hearing and Vision Screenings**

Screenings are done yearly for all students in grades K,1,2,3,5, and 7 as well as all new students to MSCS. Parents are notified if students display difficulty with screening tests. Parents may request vision and hearing screening for any student by contacting the school nurse or health aide. Parents may also choose to opt their child out of vision and hearing screening by notifying the school nurse in writing at the beginning of the school year.

## **Field Trips/Extended Activities**

If your child has a health condition or health concern and would like to participate in a field trip or extended activity, the Field Trip/Extended Activity form needs to be completed and turned into the front office prior to the field trip or extended activity. This form can also be found on the website.

# SCHOOL SAFETY

Per the Colorado Safe Schools Act, our school must engage in emergency training, planning, and drills every year with our staff and students to prepare for any emergency situation. Mountain Song uses the Standard Response Protocols to provide a uniform classroom response to any incident. Weather events, fires, accidents, intruders and other threats to student safety are scenarios that are planned and trained for by school and staff. Our Emergency Operation Plan, available in the front office, contains detailed information on our approved emergency plans.

## Standard Response Protocols

Like many public schools across the nation, MSCS follows the Standard Response Protocols developed by the “I Love U Guys” Foundation, which provide uniform and clear responses for emergency situations.



- **HOLD:**
  - Response to need for clear access in hallways.
  - Students and staff stay in their room or area and hallways are cleared.
  - Example: paramedics need to attend to someone in school and need clear pathways.
- **SECURE:**
  - Response to a threat or hazard outside.
  - Students and staff are secured inside the building, the building perimeter is secured, and all doors to the outside are locked.
  - Examples: criminal activity nearby, bear in the vicinity.
- **LOCKDOWN:**
  - Response to a threat or hazard inside the school building.
  - Students and staff are locked inside classrooms, offices, and other securable areas, out of lines of sight. Lights off, silence.
  - Examples: parental custody dispute, intruder, assailant.
- **EVACUATE:**
  - Response to a need to evacuate the building for safety reasons.
  - Students and staff move from inside to outside in a quick and orderly fashion.
  - Examples: building fire, natural gas odor.
- **SHELTER:**
  - Response to events requiring personal protection based on threat or hazard.
  - Students and staff move to shelter or safety area – instructions will be given as to location. (e.g., “Go to tornado shelter.” “Get to high ground.”)
  - Examples: tornado, flood, earthquake.

Should the school need to initiate Lock or secure procedures, all persons on the property will be escorted to a safe location inside the building, and all entries and exits will be locked. NO ONE is allowed to enter or leave the designated lock-down area until it has been deemed safe and announced as such by the administrative team or emergency personnel in charge of the situation. Lock-down, secure, and shelter drills are held once a year. During these drills, no one will be allowed to enter or leave the building until the drill is completed.

### **Fire Safety**

Fire drills are conducted monthly, in compliance with Colorado state statutes. Fire extinguishers are located in all buildings and exits and are maintained annually.

### **Emergency Evacuation**

Should the school have to be permanently evacuated due to an emergency situation, everyone will proceed to the Pleasant Valley Baptist Church at 30<sup>th</sup> and Bijou. Parents will be contacted via phone, text, and email to inform them of the situation as soon as possible. It is therefore essential to keep all contact information up to date in the office.

# MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS

Mountain Song Community School provides a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) for all of our students. Our Waldorf methods are interdisciplinary and thematic in nature, an approach that serves all students, including those with special needs. Some students may need support services beyond the general classroom in order to fully access their educational program.

## **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)**

At times during their education, many children struggle cognitively, physically or emotionally. This is completely normal, and we view it as a healthy part of learning and growing. Some children may need extra assistance to keep within the range of what we expect to see in the class. Often, these extra supports are of short duration (6-8 weeks), and sometimes they will last longer.

Our academic, behavioral, and social-emotional supports and interventions framework is based on the state's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) that is a team-driven, data-based, problem-solving approach for improving the outcomes and supporting the development of every student. The approach uses a layered continuum of evidence-based practices, including Waldorf approaches, applied at the classroom and school level.

### **Tier 1**

Classroom teachers and generalized support from assistants, administrators, and the school social worker provide academic, behavioral, and social-emotional support to all students. The activities that take place with all students are considered "Tier 1" supports and interventions.

### **Tier 2**

Students are identified as needing additional support through the use of screeners (short, task-based assessments and observations) and/or referrals from teachers, staff, or parents. Appropriate supports (often referred to as "interventions") are then implemented with close monitoring, usually in small group settings. This may take the form of academic support by our Tier 2 interventionists. It may also take the form of behavioral or social-emotional support by paraprofessionals, administrators, and the school social worker, usually in small group settings but occasionally as individuals. The Dean of Students convenes small support groups of students around themes, such as those with parents who are or have been deployed in the military, or those who have suffered loss. The school social worker may meet with students to provide short-term social-emotional assistance. If the initial supports, whether in-class or out-of-class, do not provide the expected results, a variety of other evidence-based supports are implemented until the student's needs are addressed. Parents will be informed whenever your child needs Tier 2 supports or interventions.

### **Tier 3**

Meeting a student's needs might involve individual support, which is considered Tier 3 support. Depending on the nature of the support needed, this could possibly include developing an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) in our Special Education Program, which is done through meeting with parents, teachers, administrators, and specialists to agree on the individualized plan for the student. Parents will always be involved in this process.

## **Students with Disabilities**

Mountain Song Community School is dedicated to providing a free and public education (FAPE) to all our students. We believe that all students have the ability to learn, grow, and engage in a learning community, and we are dedicated to supporting students to achieve their full potential in the most inclusive and least restrictive environments.

The Mountain Song Special Education Department provides special education and related services to all eligible students enrolled in our school. This specialized instruction is provided in accordance with both the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA). Students who receive support services from the special education department are those who qualify for an Individualized Education Plan (see above), and those who qualify with a disability as specified in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that guarantees specific rights in federally funded programs and activities to people who qualify as disabled.

## **Gifted Education**

Mountain Song Community School believes that all children are gifted, and Waldorf approaches allow children to progress at an advanced pace in their areas of advanced skill, while continuing to encourage and engage children in areas that are more challenging for them. For the purposes of public education, gifted students are defined as those whose aptitude or competence in abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment in one or more domains is so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs. Children under five-years-old who are gifted may also be provided with early childhood special educational services. Gifted students include gifted students with disabilities (i.e. twice-exceptional) and students with exceptional abilities or potential from all socio-economic, ethnic, and cultural populations. Gifted students are capable of high performance, exceptional production, or exceptional learning behavior by virtue of any or a combination of these **areas of giftedness**:

- General or specific intellectual ability
- Specific academic aptitude
- Creative or productive thinking
- Leadership abilities
- Visual arts, performing arts, musical or psychomotor abilities

Students will be screened and identified as gifted in the fall, and a plan will be created for those who qualify to support their areas of giftedness. Parents will be notified when students are identified as gifted. The School complies with all state and federal special education requirements and works to accomplish this in a manner that respects the integrity of a Waldorf curriculum.

## **English Language Learners**

Mountain Song supports culturally and linguistically diverse learners who are learning English as a second language. Our English Language Learner (ELL) teacher(s) supports these students in learning English and sharing their first language so that they can participate inclusively in our classrooms in meaningful ways.

# STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Mountain Song Community School is committed to developing well-rounded children and nurturing their fullest capacities in multiple intelligences: cognitive, social-emotional, and physical. This whole-child approach prepares students to become lifelong learners and contributors. Teachers weave together a rich, authentic, and relevant curriculum that aligns to the Colorado Academic Standards. Each student's academic success is documented through comprehensive assessments using effective and mission-focused tools (portfolio or main lesson book reviews, teacher journals, and state-required assessments). The students' daily academic work includes creating beautiful documentation of their learning in portfolios or main lesson books.

## **School-based Written Reports**

Mountain Song Community School issues written progress reports twice a year, once in January and once in June. These reports provide you with assessments of learning expectations from the child's primary teacher as well as special subject teachers. In addition, narrative reports and a curriculum review is provided at the end of the school year. These reports document your child's growth during the year, areas of strength, and areas that need support.

Questions about the mid- and year-end reports should be directed to the teacher who wrote them. Report cards and student records are kept on file at the school as long as the student is enrolled. When a student graduates or moves away, the parent must fill out and sign a Request for Records form at the new school. When our school receives that form, we send the child's complete academic file directly to the new school. Please note that MSCS does not issue letter grade report cards.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher conferences occur in the fall and optional ones (requested by either teacher or parent/guardian) in the spring. These are times for the parent and teacher to discuss the progress of your child, as well as to share any social or academic concerns.

## **State-based Assessment**

The State of Colorado requires students in publicly-funded schools like Mountain Song to be assessed with standardized instruments. Thank you for your support of state-required testing in our school.

### School-Readiness Assessment

All students in publicly-funded kindergartens must be assessed using a state-approved school readiness assessment, which documents the status and ongoing progress a child makes within the domains of: physical well-being and motor development; social and emotional development; language and comprehension development; and cognition and general knowledge.

The purpose of the School-Readiness Assessment is to provide the school and teachers necessary information to provide a responsive learning environment for each child. Information gathered from school-readiness assessments is used for supportive and instructional purposes and cannot be used to deny a student admission or progression to kindergarten or first grade.

### Other Assessments: DIBELS, MAP, and CMAS

Interim assessments administered three times a year to determine within-year academic progress include READ Act DIBELS Assessment for K-3 in reading, and NWEA MAP assessments for grades 3-8 in literacy and mathematics. Annual state testing in the spring assesses annual progress through the mandated Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) assessment for grades 3-8. In addition, assessments (i.e., ACCESS) will be given for English Language Learners. Please see the school annual assessment calendar for times these assessments are administered.

## STATE ASSESSMENT POLICIES

In accordance with state mandate, the School administers the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) standardized assessments once a year in the spring in grades 3-8 in English language arts, mathematics, and science. Below are the School's policies and procedures developed in consultation with staff and parents, and they are also [posted on our website](#).

### **1. Paper and Pencil Format Policy**

The CMAS state assessments will be administered in paper-pencil format for the following reasons:

- technology is not a central part of the Waldorf curriculum used; and
- students benefit by taking assessments in the educational environment they are most comfortable and familiar with, i.e. the classroom.

For students with disabilities, the use of pencil and paper or a computer to complete a state assessment shall be determined by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team or Section 504 team, in accordance with applicable law.

### **2. Parent Opt-Out Policy**

A parent/guardian may elect to opt their student out of the CMAS assessment.

Neither students nor parents/guardians will be penalized or subject to any negative consequences for electing to opt out of state assessments, including (but not limited to): prohibition from any in-school or extracurricular activities, and/or requiring opt out students to remain at home during testing.

This policy's exemption process shall apply only to CMAS state assessments and shall not apply to School or classroom assessments, including READ Act, School Readiness and NWEA MAP assessments.

Please consider that even though you as a parent have the right to opt your child out of the state assessments, Mountain Song's survival requires a high level of participation in the assessments. The school must achieve at least a 95% participation rating in the assessments in order to maintain its standing with the state.

### **Opt Out Request Procedure**

To opt a student out of the state assessments, return the following form, completed, to the school office. The form can also be requested from the school office. Opt-out notices will be collected and maintained by the Assessment Coordinator. Here is the link to the [Assessment Opt-Out Form](#).

## ACADEMIC PROMOTION AND RETENTION

MSCS staff and administration will decide promotion and retention of students. Promotion is viewed and determined on two levels: academic performance, and emotional and social readiness. Students who maintain academic work consistent with their talents and age level will be promoted so long as their social and emotional behavior patterns are in norm with others of that grade level. Students who show decided and documented deficiencies in both academic and social areas should be considered for retention. Retention decisions will be based upon:

- Teacher-documented anecdotal information.
- Parent anecdotal information.
- Developmental and achievement test scores.

If the teacher is considering retention of a student, the parents and Administration should be informed as soon as possible. The MSCS reserves the right to determine final placement of any student.

## PARENTS' RIGHT TO KNOW

As a parent of a student at Mountain Song Community School, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teacher who instructs your child. This is a requirement for all districts that receive Title I funds. Federal law allows you to request certain information about your student's classroom teacher. The law also requires the school to give you this information in a timely manner upon request. Listed below is the information about which you have the right to ask for regarding each of your student's classroom teachers.

- Whether the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) has licensed or endorsed your student's teacher for the grades and subjects taught.
- Whether CDE has decided that your student's teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances.
- The teacher's college major; whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and, if so, the subject of the degrees.
- Whether any teachers' aides or similar para-educators provide services to your child and, if they do, their qualifications.

Please contact the Administration at (719) 203-6364 if you would like to receive any of this information.



# MOUNTAIN SONG DISCIPLINE POLICY

Discipline is an integral part of a Waldorf curriculum. Mountain Song's behavior model is grounded in finding strategies to help children successfully meet expectations of safety and respect by providing clear boundaries and building on a child's strengths.

Discipline practices will be administered in an equitable and age-appropriate manner. The discipline process will address the needs of the student who engaged in the misconduct, the needs of those who were affected by the misconduct, and the needs of the overall school community.

As part of the Waldorf pedagogy, the age and developmental stage of each child is taken into account in guiding methods that are intended to help children internalize rules, get along with others, and become increasingly self-directed in their behavior. Giving children limited choices, a sense of safety in the classroom, and promoting cooperation are some of the preventative strategies all staff members strive to use daily to help with behavior. The school values a progressive approach to discipline that includes trauma-informed and restorative justice practices.

## **Mountain Song Student Behavior Expectations**

Be Safe  
Be Kind  
Be Respectful  
Be Responsible

- Student behavior must support a productive learning environment.
- Students must comply with all teachers' directives in a timely manner.
- Students must treat other students and adults, and their belongings, with respect.
- Students must treat school property with respect.
- Students must use respectful language.
- Students must engage in safe, responsible, respectful, and appropriate activities in school, on the playground, and during any school-sponsored activities.
- Students must help take care of each other and the school.

Not allowed or tolerated at MSCS:

- Disruptive behavior.
- Non-compliance or defiance of teacher's directives.
- Disrespect to others and/or their belongings.
- Destruction or defacing of school or others' property.
- Offensive language, derisive language, and name-calling.
- Activities that relate to violence, drugs, harassment, non-school related media, or bullying.
- Play that involves hitting or holding others.

## Playground Rules

Be safe

Be kind

Be respectful

Be responsible

- Play with a concern for the safety of self and others.
- Everyone needs to be in control of their own bodies at all times. The following are not allowed: tackling, restraining, hitting, throwing hard objects at others, or other rough play.
- Follow all instructions given by staff members.
- Show respect. Stop means stop. No means no.
- Use playground equipment properly:
  - Swings may not be twisted.
  - Chalk is used only on the sidewalks.
  - Avoid hitting balls at windows.
  - Do not intentionally put equipment out of reach (roof, fire escape stairs, street, etc.).
- Remain within playground areas only. The staff parking lot is off limits.
- Climb only on playground equipment. Stay off bannisters, light poles, etc.
- Tires must remain away from the school building, doors, and fire escapes.
- Shoes must be worn at all times.
- Return all recess equipment to the recess cart attendants.
- Resolve conflicts peacefully. Negotiate and compromise. Seek a staff member when you cannot resolve it on your own.
- After school - ALL students (K-8) must be supervised by staff members. After 3:30 p.m., students may not be on the playground, except those in after school programs.

## Creating a Community Culture

Mountain Song teachers and staff explicitly state, and often remind, students about appropriate behavior at school and school events, and practice routines based on the expectations as part of the daily rhythm. School-wide, teachers and staff set expectations around our four tenets for behavior:

Be Safe

Be Kind

Be Respectful

Be Responsible

Teachers operationalize these expectations in developmentally appropriate ways in their classes, and make these expectations explicit to students. The school and playground rules also provide specific school-wide expectations.

## Staff Training

Staff training will be provided to ensure that the disciplinary program is effective and that relevant policies and procedures are equitably applied.

## **Distractions**

A student's attention should be on activities within the classroom and school grounds, and not on external distractions. In this light, electronic games, music players, personal electronic devices or computers, and the like are not permitted in school.

**Cell Phones** are allowed on school grounds, but they must be turned off and in a student's backpack during school hours. Students may not use personal cell phones to call home for illness, homework, lunches etc. They must go to the office to make these calls.

## **Restorative Processes**

Mountain Song values a restorative justice discipline model that focuses on repairing harm through an inclusive process. When restorative justice is implemented, the focus of discipline is changed from punishment to learning, and from the individual to the community.

## **Accountability Without Blame Meetings**

When children have conflict, due to social or behavioral needs, this may be handled through an in-class conflict resolution meeting facilitated by the teacher, or a formal Accountability Without Blame meeting led by the Dean of Students, member of the Student Support Team, and/or the Administration. These meetings include perspective sharing, taking personal responsibility, repairing any harm, mending relationships, and reintegrating all parties back into their class community.

Teachers will meet with the Student Support Teams to implement in-class strategies to aid with discipline issues as provided by evidence-based approaches. Classroom teachers implement behavioral supports and interventions for students with 504's and IEP's in consultation with the Special Education teachers. Regular classroom visits and teacher evaluations by administrators and support staff assist them in maintaining successful in-class discipline.

Teachers will encourage children to care and respect others, solve their own problems whenever possible, participate in class activities, value safety for themselves and others, and share the classroom and playground space.

## **Non-Discrimination**

School staff responsible for implementing this policy shall do so without discrimination based on race, color, creed, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, sexual identity, religion, ancestry, disability, or need for special education services, or any other legally-protected class.

## **Students With Disabilities**

Discipline for students with disabilities shall be in accordance with the student's individualized education plan (IEP), any behavior intervention plan, 504 plan, and applicable laws affording procedural safeguards to students with disabilities.

## **Seclusion and Restraint**

In the rare event that seclusion or restraint is used, the School will follow its Restraint and Seclusion Policy [linked here](#) and the Protection of Persons from Restraint Act.

## **Student Conduct Subject to Disciplinary Action**

Student conduct during either curricular or extracurricular activities in classrooms, in school buildings, on and off school grounds, or in vehicles for a school event may be subject to disciplinary action, if such conduct is detrimental to the school environment and to the welfare or safety of other students or school personnel. A student is subject to school discipline for conduct that occurs online if this conduct causes, or is reasonably likely to cause, a disruption to the educational environment.

## **Minor Disciplinary Incidents**

When a student acts in a way contrary to the school's expectations, and reminders are not effective, teachers will handle minor infractions using consequences (ex.: changing seating order) and/or restorative practices (ex.: offering apologies and/or restorative actions to repair the harm done).

The teacher or staff member records behavior incidents on yellow slips and/or writes an email and reports behavior incidents to parents, the Dean of Students, and the Executive Director.

## **Major or Repeated Incidents**

When major or repeated incidents by students occur, the administration will issue a formal referral that is recorded into a student's school records. Administration and student support staff (e.g., school social worker or counselor) will facilitate restorative measures and other supportive interventions.

Such supports may include "Check-In and Go" or "Check-In and Stay" protocols at recess times, specific arrival or dismissal procedures, safety plans, or restorative actions such as helping the custodian repair property damage. In addition, Support Circles may be called in which parents/guardians, teachers, administrator(s), student support staff, and the student, if developmentally appropriate, come together and follow a strengths-based approach to help understand and provide support for the student.

## **Other Disciplinary Interventions**

In lieu of suspension or expulsion and in accordance with applicable law, the Executive Director or designee may consider the use of available interventions to address the student's misconduct. The use of such interventions will vary depending upon the facts and circumstances of an individual case. Such interventions shall be at the Executive Director or designee's sole discretion and include but are not limited to: in-school suspension, counseling, participation in the school's restorative justice practices or positive behavior intervention and supports (PBIS) practices, completion of a functional behavior assessment and development of a behavior intervention plan, peer mediation, referral to a juvenile assessment center for counseling or other services, or other approaches to address the student's misbehavior that do not involve out-of-school suspension or expulsion. When necessary, however, out-of-school suspension or expulsion may be used in accordance with state law.

## **Procedure for Removal of Disruptive Students from Classroom**

A teacher may remove a disruptive student from her or his classroom to ensure the safety of other students and to ensure a productive educational environment.

A behavior plan may be developed after the first removal from class and shall be developed after the second removal from class. The plan will include a procedure for due process and if subsequent removals occur, the teacher, the Executive Director or designee will contact the parent or legal guardian as soon as possible. A meeting between the student, parent, teacher, Dean of Students, and/or Executive Director will occur to discuss the behavior and best steps moving forward.

## **Habitually Disruptive Students**

A student may be deemed “habitually disruptive,” if the student has caused a disruption on school grounds, in a school vehicle, or at a school activity or sanctioned event three or more times during the school year.

The student and the parent or legal guardian shall be notified in writing of each disruption counted toward declaring the student as “habitually disruptive,” and the student and parent or legal guardian shall be notified in writing and by telephone or other means at the home or place of employment of the parent or legal guardian of the definition of “habitually disruptive student.”

## **Factors When Considering Disciplinary Consequences**

The following factors may be considered in determining appropriate disciplinary consequences for a student; including suspension and expulsion:

- a. The student’s age;
- b. The student’s disciplinary history;
- c. Similar disciplinary incidents;
- d. The student’s eligibility as a student with a disability;
- e. The seriousness of the violation committed by the student;
- f. The threat posed to any student or staff; and
- g. The likelihood that a lesser intervention would properly address the violation.

## **Suspension and Expulsion**

A student may be suspended or expelled for serious misbehavior, including:

1. Continued willful disobedience or open and persistent defiance of proper authority
2. Willful destruction or defacing of school property
3. Behavior on or off school property that is detrimental to the welfare or safety of other pupils or of school personnel, including behavior that creates a threat of physical harm to the child or to other children
4. Possession of a dangerous weapon without the authorization of the school. Dangerous weapons include firearms and knives.
5. The use, possession, or sale of an illegal drug or controlled substance
6. The commission of an act that, if committed by an adult, would be robbery or assault

7. Repeated interference with a school's ability to provide educational opportunities to other students
8. Carrying, using, actively displaying, or threatening with the use of a firearm facsimile that could reasonably be mistaken for an actual firearm
9. Making a false accusation of criminal activity against a MSCS employee to law enforcement authorities or school officials or personnel

Any decision to suspend or expel a student will be made in accordance with local, state, and federal law.

## **Suspension and Expulsion of Students in Grades K-2**

State law requires special considerations prior to suspending or expelling students in grades K-2.

### **Expulsion from MSCS**

Extremely serious violations of school rules may result in expulsion, for example:

- a. Carrying, bringing, using or possessing a dangerous weapon at school may result in expulsion. Any knife brought to school will be considered a dangerous weapon if the blade is three or more inches in length.
- b. A student who brings or possesses a firearm at school shall be expelled for a period of not less than one year, except in extraordinary circumstances when this requirement may be modified in writing.
- c. The sale, possession, or use of an illegal drug or controlled substance may result in expulsion.

### **Readmittance After an Out-Of-School Suspension**

In general, no student will be readmitted to school until a meeting with the parent/guardian has taken place. The meeting shall address, among other things, whether there is a need to develop a remedial discipline plan for the student in an effort to prevent further disciplinary action.

### **Make Up Work During an Out-Of-School Suspension**

Suspended students shall be provided an opportunity to make up schoolwork during the period of suspension so that they are able to reintegrate into the school following the suspension. Students will receive full or partial academic credit, as determined by the school, for makeup work which is completed satisfactorily. In determining whether to provide full or partial credit, the school will consider numerous factors, including the goal of seeking to reintegrate the student back into the classroom and help prevent the student from dropping out.

### **Denial of Admission to MSCS**

A student may be denied admission for the following reasons:

1. Any behavior recorded by another school during the preceding twelve months that would have been a consideration for expulsion from MSCS.
2. Any student that has a record of being expelled from another school during the preceding twelve months.
3. Any behavior in another school district during the preceding twelve months that is detrimental to the welfare or safety of other pupils or of school personnel.

## **Denial of Admission for Students with a Disability**

According to the U.S. Department of Education, any student “under a regulatory provision implementing Title II of the ADA, public entities are required to make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the public entity can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity.”

## **Grievances**

Issues/concerns with student discipline shall be addressed via Mountain Song’s Grievance Policy available at [this link to the Governance page](#) of the school’s website.

## **Distribution of This Policy**

This policy will be posted on the school website, and a printed copy will be available in the front office of the school. Copies of this policy and school rules will be made available, upon request, to each student and parent/guardian, and upon request, translated in a language that the parent/guardian can understand.

Mountain Song will make students aware of the contents of this policy and other school rules related to conduct. This policy will be distributed at the beginning of the school year, and will be posted on the school’s website and in the Parent Handbook.

# **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

Mountain Song Community School prohibits acts of harassment or bullying. The MSCS has determined that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student’s ability to learn and a school’s ability to educate its students in a safe environment. Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior.

## **Definitions**

"Bullying" means any written or verbal expression, or physical or electronic act or gesture, or a pattern thereof, that is intended to coerce, intimidate, or cause any physical, mental, or emotional harm to any student. Colorado anti-bullying laws prohibit bullying against any student for any reason, including but not limited to any such behavior that is directed toward a student on the basis of his or her academic performance, or on the basis of his or her disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services. C.R.S. 22-32-109.1 (2017).

Bullying is distinct from peer conflict. “Peer conflict” is when two kids with no perceived power imbalance fight, have an argument, or disagree. Conflict resolution or peer mediation may be appropriate for these situations.

“Harassment” is conduct that meets all of the following criteria:

- is directed at one or more pupils;
- substantially interferes with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of pupils;
- adversely affects the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from MSCS’s educational programs or activities because the conduct, as reasonably perceived by the pupil, is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive as to have this effect; and, is based on a pupil’s actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic (see above), or is based on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have any of these characteristics.

## **Expectations and Consequences Related to Harassment and Bullying**

MSCS expects students to conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, school staff, volunteers, and contractors. In regard to self and others, as well as for the school and community property, students are expected to behave safely, kindly, respectfully, and responsibly.

MSCS believes that the best discipline is self-discipline, and that it is the responsibility of staff to help students learn to assume responsibility and the consequences of their behavior. Staff members who interact with students shall apply best practices designed to prevent discipline problems and encourage students’ abilities to develop self-discipline.

Since bystander support of harassment or bullying can support these behaviors, MSCS prohibits both active and passive support for acts of harassment or bullying. The staff should encourage students to support students who walk away from these acts when they see them, constructively attempt to stop them, or report them to the designated authority.

The following factors shall be given full consideration by the Executive Director in the development of the procedures for determining appropriate consequences and remedial measures for each act of harassment or bullying.

## **Factors When Considering Disciplinary Consequences**

- Age, development, and maturity levels of the parties involved
- Degree of harm
- Surrounding circumstances
- Nature and severity of the behavior(s)
- Incidences of past or continuing pattern(s) of behavior
- Relationship between the parties involved
- Context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred

## **Appropriate Consequences**

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a student or staff member who commits one or more acts of harassment or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion of a student.



Consequences for a student who commits an act of harassment or bullying shall be unique to the individual incident and will vary in method and severity according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, and the student's history of problem behaviors and performance.

Remedial measures shall be designed to: correct the problem behavior; prevent another occurrence of the behavior; and protect the victim of the act. Effective discipline should employ a school-wide approach. The consequences and remedial measures may include, but are not limited to, the examples listed below:

#### Examples of Consequences

- Temporary removal from classroom
- Loss of privileges
- Detention
- Referral
- Suspension
- Legal action
- Expulsion or termination

### **Reporting Bullying or Harassment**

MSCS requires the Executive Director or the Dean of Students to be responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations of this policy. A Bullying Report form can be requested from the Front Office or Dean of Students.

All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this Anti-Bullying Policy to the Executive Director or Dean of Students. All other members of the school community, including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors, are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy to the Executive Director or Dean of Students. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The MSCS Board of Directors requires the Executive Director and/or Dean of Students to be responsible for determining whether an alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy. In so doing, the Executive Director and/or Dean of Students shall conduct a prompt, thorough, and complete investigation of each alleged incident. The investigation is to be completed within (3) three school days after a report or complaint is made.

MSCS prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of harassment or bullying. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the Executive Director after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act.

MSCS understands the harm that harassment or bullying can cause to a victim, and extends its full range of resources to mitigate those effects. Such efforts may include the reciprocal benefits of a bully's restitution and restoration, counseling, therapy, parent conferences, and other measures deemed in the student's best interest.

MSCS prohibits any person from falsely accusing another as a means of harassment or bullying. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment or bullying shall be disciplined in accordance with school policies, procedures, and agreements.

MSCS requires the Executive Director to annually disseminate the policy to all school staff, students, and parents, along with a statement explaining that it applies to all applicable acts of harassment and bullying that occur on school property and at school-sponsored functions. The Executive Director shall develop an annual process for discussing the school policy on harassment and bullying with students and staff.

MSCS shall incorporate information regarding the policy against harassment or bullying into each school employee-training program and handbook.

## TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Mountain Song Community School (MSCS) aims to provide a safe learning and working environment that is free from sex-based discrimination and sexual harassment for students, employees, and community members. MSCS prohibits sexual harassment under Colorado and federal law, including violations of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”), Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act. MSCS’s prohibition extends to all forms of illegal sexual harassment, including conduct based on sexual stereotypes, sexual orientation, and transgender status.

[Mountain Song Community School’s Title IX Policy](#) is found on the Board of Directors Governance webpage, and linked [directly here](#).

The School cannot respond to sexual harassment unless it knows about it. Thus, MSCS encourages all students, staff, and community members to report any allegation or information about sexual harassment to any MSCS employee, including its Title IX Coordinator, Kim Butler.

MSCS’s Title IX Coordinator may be contacted at:  
Kim Butler, School Counselor  
Mountain Song Community School  
2904 West Kiowa St., Colorado Springs, CO 80904  
719-203-6364  
kbutler@mountainsongschool.org

# THE SCHOOL AS A COMMUNITY

## Assemblies

Weekly school assemblies (usually on Fridays) are opportunities for gathering as a school to share class work and celebrate seasonal festivals. Picture taking is discouraged and cell phones should be turned off, which allow the audience to experience the work of the children directly and without distraction.

## Festivals and Events

Mountain Song Community School celebrates festivals throughout the year to mark the changing seasons and to build awareness and respect for people of all cultures. Seasonal festivals are observed in the classroom and, at times, extended to include the parent community. The curriculum itself provides many opportunities to share cultural traditions—cultural stories, mythologies and histories, decorating classrooms, baking special treats, learning seasonal songs, etc.

The living rhythms of the year help provide a common foundation for the children, and we believe that the celebrations associated with them help reveal the deeper significance in many everyday occurrences. Following are some festivals in the life of our school that we plan to celebrate:

- Festival of Courage in late September / early October
- Stone Soup Harvest Festival in early October
- Dia de los Muertos at the end of October
- Lantern Walk in the fall around Thanksgiving (younger grades)
- Hanukkah - November or December
- St. Nicholas, Winter Spiral & Winter Faire in early December
- Holi (Festival of Colors) in March
- Earth Day in April
- May Faire at the beginning of May

We would like to acknowledge and share other religious and seasonal customs and celebrations enjoyed by our families. If you want to celebrate special holidays with your child's classroom, please give suggestions to your child's teacher. Parent participation helps to make these festivals meaningful and special. Also, parents are welcome to keep their children home in observance of their own religious holidays.

## MSCS School Library

The Mountain Song library is a small library made almost entirely of donated books, or books purchased through fundraisers like book fairs. We are fortunate to have many quality books, both nonfiction and fiction. All students grades 1 - 8 have the opportunity to visit the library either weekly or twice a month to check out books. Your children's teachers will notify you of which day of the week they visit the library. Like all public libraries, we have policies regarding library usage:

- Books may not leave the library unless checked out by a librarian.
- Students may check out two books at a time, subject to librarian discretion. Older students may check out three books if it is for Battle of the Books.

- Checked out books may be taken home, but should be returned to the return box in the library within two weeks of check-out so the next student can enjoy them.
- Students may not check out new books until they return previously checked out books.
- The replacement fee for severely damaged or lost books is \$5 per book, or a direct replacement of the book paid for by the parent.
- Children must be attended by an adult while in the library.
- Guests must use a quiet voice and calm body while in the library. The library is situated in the center of several classrooms and offices, where students are learning, testing, and reading. This important work is disrupted by loud conversation and horseplay. Students who do not follow this rule will be sent back to their class without a book.
- Students must treat books with respect while in the library and reshelve books they don't want in the correct spot, facing the correct direction, or place them in the return box.

If you are looking for a rewarding way to fulfill your volunteer hours, consider volunteering in our library. Tasks may involve reshelving, repairing, covering, stamping, and inputting books into the computer, and more, depending on your skill set and interests. If interested, please contact Emily Huntsman ([ehuntsman@mountainsongschool.com](mailto:ehuntsman@mountainsongschool.com)) or Claudia Martin ([cmartin@mountainsongschool.com](mailto:cmartin@mountainsongschool.com)) in person or via email.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND VOLUNTEERING

As a community charter school, MSCS depends on parent support. If you are able to, we ask that parents contribute a minimum of 4 volunteer hours each month to the school—a total of 40 hours a year. Parents can help with festivals, fundraising, committee work, class plays, work parties, and more. If you have a suggestion for better utilizing your talents, please share it with the Executive Leadership Team, teacher, or committee chair.

Any time you volunteer, please sign in and out on the Visitor Log at the front office. A written record of volunteer hours is helpful when the school applies for grants, as it indicates strong parent commitment.

### **Parent Circle**

The Parent Circle is a service-driven organization for parents, guardians, and other family members of MSCS students. It encourages community building and helps support the school in its mission through parent volunteerism. The Parent Circle is a committee of the MSCS Board of Directors.

The mission of the Parent Circle (formerly Parent Council) is to support and preserve the vision of Mountain Song Community School by creating a culture of service, encouraging community building, and promoting parent involvement. Parent Circle fulfills this role by creating opportunities for volunteerism, assisting with parent enrichment and education, and hosting various community care events (e.g., welcome new families, teacher appreciation, giving trees, etc.).

Why Join Parent Circle? Parent Circle is about meeting your community, making new friends, and getting involved. At Mountain Song, we define a parent who is a primary caregiver and/or guardian of a child, whether through biological and/or legal relation. Everyone is welcome, always. If you are looking to get

involved and want to know what is going on, this is a great place to start! For more information about Parent Circle, contact [PCChair@mountainsongschool.org](mailto:PCChair@mountainsongschool.org).

## **MSCS Board Committees**

The Mountain Song Board of Directors establishes standing committees as well as other ad hoc committees to assist in the governance and operations of MSCS. Such committees have specific mandates specifically prescribed and granted by the Board of Directors. Committees make recommendations to the Board of Directors, but the Board makes final decisions.

To the extent practical, each committee consists of one or more Board members, parents, grandparents, and primary caregivers of enrolled students, school staff, and community members. The Board invites parents and other community members to serve on [Board Committees](#).

## **Parent Observations of Classes**

Mountain Song Community School welcomes parents, caregivers, and board members to observe classes, activities, and functions under normal school operations and under the following conditions.

1. Any and all observations need to be pre-scheduled with the Class Teacher and Executive Director with at least 24 hours' notice.
2. When observing in the classroom, the expectation is that you will only observe and not interact with students or paras. Background conversations in the classroom are disruptive.
3. Any discussion about student behavior is never to take place within earshot of other students.
4. Please respect the classroom environment and defer to the teacher as the authority in the classroom.
5. Classroom observations are limited to 2 per month by the same adult, unless approved by the Executive Director or unless otherwise invited as a volunteer by the teacher.

We welcome observers in the classrooms, and we must balance this with our obligation to keep disruptions to a minimum. All visitors must check in at the Front Office.

# HOW PARENTS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE

- Model mutual respect to all adults and children in the school community.
- Work collaboratively with others in the community.
- Support the school and its mission.
- Get involved in supporting the school.
- Don't get involved in disciplining other people's children—turn difficult situations over to a teacher or administrator.
- Care about all children, not just your own.
- Bring concerns directly to the adult person concerned in a respectful way. Listen to other points of view as presented by staff. Be patient as the school endeavors to be thoughtful in determining how to respond to your concerns. If you are not satisfied by the response, you may then contact the Executive Director to assist in the communication.
- Do your part to contribute to positive relationships with staff and other parents.
- Speak kindly about other people in the community around your children. Model compassion.

## COMMUNICATING AMONG ADULTS

In accordance with the vision above, Mountain Song Community School has a full [Communications Policy](#) that can be found on the Board of Directors Governance webpage. It is summarized here.

Mountain Song seeks to create a respectful and civil school environment in which every member of the community is treated with dignity and respect. Members of the Mountain Song Community are expected to:

- Be responsible, respectful, and inclusive;
- Be supportive of the school, colleagues, students, and families;
- Be respectful of perspectives that differ from one's own.

If you have concerns about communication within the Mountain Song Community, please refer to the [Grievance Policy](#), which outlines the steps to take to resolve communication issues. The School reserves the right to terminate any communication that violates the [MSCS Communications Policy](#), particularly those that become hostile, inflammatory, or threatening.

# GRIEVANCE POLICY

Mountain Song Community School encourages open and solution-oriented communication for settling differences and conflicts among students, parents, teachers, staff members, administrators, and Board members. We recognize that issues not dealt with directly can become destructive to the school community and interfere with the learning process of our students. As adults, we are responsible to model civil discourse and respectful communication for our students and fellow community members. As such, the school encourages members of the Mountain Song Community to express concerns directly with the individual involved so that the school's focus remains on student learning.

The procedures outlined below are how faculty, staff, parents, and students are expected to express grievances about other members of the school community. They are designed to resolve conflicts and settle differences promptly, equitably, and at the lowest possible faculty or administrative level. The administration and Board expect that conflict will be addressed and proactively dealt with following the fewest steps of the procedures below. However, if the conflict is not resolved at the lowest faculty or administrative level, these guidelines provide a process for resolution.

The following steps represent the basic procedures of the Grievance Policy. [Click here](#) to see the full and complete [Grievance Policy](#), which can also be found linked on the [School's Governance webpage](#).

1. Address the issue with the person or person(s) directly involved.
2. Address the issue with the appropriate supervising school director and/or the Executive Director.
3. Submit a written grievance to the MSCS Board of Directors. [This Google Form](#) can be used at this stage.
4. Submit a written grievance to the Colorado Charter School Institute Executive Director. The Institute can be contacted at (303) 866-3299 or [legalandpolicy\\_csi@csi.state.co.us](mailto:legalandpolicy_csi@csi.state.co.us) or Colorado Charter School Institute, 1600 Broadway, Suite 1250, Denver, Colorado 80202.

In general, if a previous step has not been completed, you will be redirected back to the lower level. The school encourages members of the community to express concerns directly with the individual(s) involved so that the school's focus remains on student learning.

NOTE: A grievant is not required to address the issue with the person directly involved if the grievant is alleging harassment or discrimination. In allegations of sex-based discrimination in Mountain Song's educational programming, please contact the school's Title IX Coordinator, Kim Butler, [kbutler@mountainsongschool.org](mailto:kbutler@mountainsongschool.org).

## **Criminal Matters**

Behaviors, situations, or circumstances that involve legal or criminal matters are not addressed by this policy and should be referred to civil authorities.

## **Retaliation Prohibited**

Mountain Song Community School prohibits retaliation against a grievant for filing a grievance under this policy or for assisting in a grievance investigation. If you perceive retaliation for making a grievance or for your participation in the investigation, please follow the grievance procedure outlined above. The situation will be investigated.

# FIREARM AND WEAPONS POLICY

## Purpose

It is the intent of Mountain Song Community School (MSCS) to provide a safe and secure environment for students, employees, and visitors by establishing preventative measures, holding perpetrators accountable, and providing assistance and support to victims. This policy specifically addresses the school's position on firearms and weapons to provide a safe working and learning environment for students, employees, and visitors at all school-owned or -controlled properties.

## Firearms and Weapons Policy

MSCS maintains a strict policy prohibiting firearms and weapons in the school community, including legal and authorized weapons. Use of any firearm, explosive, weapon, dangerous chemical, or biological agent on school property or at any school function is prohibited. Other prohibited items include, but are not limited to, swords, razors, hatchets, pellet or BB guns, knives, paintball guns (collectively weapons). Furthermore, all firearms as defined in the Gun-Free Schools Act, Section 921(a) of title 18, United States Code, shall also be considered firearms for purposes of this policy.

Students, faculty, and staff are not allowed to carry and/or possess firearms or weapons at any time while in the school buildings or property, whether or not licensed to do so. School "property" includes, but is not limited to:

- Buildings
- Sidewalks or walkways
- Lawn areas
- Playgrounds
- Open or undeveloped lands

Students, volunteers, faculty, and staff are also prohibited from carrying and/or possessing weapons at any time while working or attending school or school-related events, whether or not on school property, including, but not limited to:

- Driving school vehicles at any time; and
- Driving privately owned vehicles used in the course of conducting school business or activities.
- MSCS also prohibits school visitors from carrying and/or possessing weapons on school property or attending school events (field trips, sporting events, entertainment). Non-employees include, but are not limited to, vendors, visitors, customers, and potential customers of the school.

## Procedure

All individuals are encouraged to be alert to the possibility of violence on the part of employees, former employees, students, visitors, and strangers. Employees and students shall place safety as their highest concern and report all acts of violence, threats of violence and possible dangers. It is the responsibility of every administrator, student, and staff member to take any threat or violent act seriously and report acts of violence and threats to the appropriate authorities as set forth in this policy. Reports of any suspected violation of this policy should be made immediately to any one or more of the following:

- Office (719-203-6364)
- Executive Director



- Administrators
- Teacher
- Staff member
- School Official
- Local Law Enforcement (911)

Any such individual who is reported or discovered to be in possession of a firearm or weapon will be asked to remove it or turn it over immediately. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary actions and/or arrest as described in the “Consequences” section, below.

## **Authorized Exceptions**

The following are authorized exceptions to this policy. The Executive Director must approve all other exceptions.

- Visitors who are required to carry a weapon in the scope of their employment would be exceptions to this policy. For example, law enforcement officers are exempt from this policy.
- Employees, students, staff, and volunteers may use appropriate tools, such as saws, knives, and other such implements necessary for the performance of their job duties or schoolwork.
- Contractors or workers hired by the school to perform a job that requires the use of saws, knives, or equipment that may be seen as a weapon or used as such to cause harm to another individual.

## **Support**

Mountain Song Community School shall make every effort to provide a campus and workplace that is free of violence, and to protect and support victims and those threatened or exposed to acts or threats by offering security measures and appropriate resources for providing support and assistance.

## **Consequences**

Extremely serious violations of school rules may result in expulsion, for example:

- a. Carrying, bringing, using or possessing a dangerous weapon at school may result in expulsion. Any knife brought to school will be considered a dangerous weapon if the blade is three or more inches in length.
- b. A student who brings or possesses a firearm at school shall be expelled for a period of not less than one year, except in extraordinary circumstances when this requirement may be modified in writing.

Any student who brings a firearm or weapon to school will be referred to the appropriate criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system. A record will be kept of all firearm expulsions, including a description of circumstances that, at a minimum, includes: the number of students expelled, the type of firearms concerned, how many expulsions were modified, how many were IDEA students, and how many were referred to “alternative placements.”

Violation of this policy by non-students shall be grounds for disciplinary actions to include but not be limited to termination and prosecution under the law. The school will not tolerate retaliation against any student, employee, or visitor who reports a suspected violation of this policy.

# INTERNET ACCEPTABLE-USE POLICY FOR STUDENTS

## Overview

Use of computers is limited at MSCS. The main use will be for computer-based state assessments. Middle school students may also use the internet for assignments on campus. As such, the following policy will be followed.

## Privileges

Any student accessing the Internet will be trained on the proper uses of the internet. Use of the Internet is a privilege and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges.

We encourage your help in guiding your child to use online services responsibly. We further recommend continual discussion and monitoring of your child's interaction, learning, and exploration activities throughout the year for both encouragement of good practices and prevention of possible problems.

## Specific Guidelines

1. Students shall not use the Internet unsupervised and only with parental approval.
2. No student is to be identified over the Internet by full name, photograph, etc., without specific written permission from the parent or legal guardian. If the parent or legal guardian has signed a form provided by the classroom teacher or technology instructor, personal information may be posted in certain circumstances.
3. Use of the Internet to defame or demean any person is prohibited.
4. Network etiquette: Be polite; Use appropriate language; Do not swear, use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language; Do not reveal personal address or phone number or the personal addresses or phone numbers of others. Remember that illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
5. Users may not download or use any documents or data that could knowingly cause damage to the school's computer system (ie: viruses).
6. Students will not engage in any activity that requires an exchange of money, credit card numbers or where they enter into an area of service for which the school will be charged an additional fee. Purchases or sales of any kind are prohibited.
7. Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, and other antisocial behavior are prohibited.
8. The illegal installation of copyrighted software for use on MSCS computers is prohibited.
9. Use of the network to access or process pornographic material, inappropriate text files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the network is prohibited.
10. Users shall not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data or passwords belonging to other users, or misrepresent other users on the network.
11. MSCS shall be the final authority on the use of the network.
12. Appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken against any student who willingly and knowingly violates the Internet Acceptable Use Policy.

## GUEST WI-FI INTERNET TERMS OF USE

By accessing or using the Mountain Song Community School wired or Wi-Fi Internet access service (service) you represent and agree that you are currently a guest of Mountain Song Community School. You also acknowledge and agree that you have read all of the information, disclaimers, and provisions stated or referred to in this document below (terms), understand them, and agree to be legally bound by them. If you are not a current guest of MSCS and/or you do not agree to the terms, you may not access the service.

Consent to monitoring. MSCS reserves the right to, and you acknowledge and consent that MSCS may (but is not required to), monitor, or authorize a third party to monitor, your communications and activities via the service (including the content) in connection with your use of the service, and may disclose any such information for purposes of ensuring your compliance within terms, applicable law, cooperation with legal authorities, and otherwise protecting MSCS's rights, property and interests.

Disclaimer of warranty. You acknowledge and agree that the service is provided solely as a convenience to you, "as is," with any and all faults or defects. You further acknowledge and agree that MSCS disclaims all warranties and representations of any kind, whether express, implied or statutory, including without limitation any warranties: (I) of merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose, non-infringement, workmanlike effort, quality, accuracy, timeliness, completeness, title, quiet enjoyment, no encumbrances, no liens, or system integration; or (II) that access to or use of the service or any part thereof will be uninterrupted, error or defect free, free of viruses or other harmful elements or features, or secure, or that problems will be corrected, even if MSCS is on notice of such problems. No advice or information given by MSCS or its employees shall create any warranty. If applicable law does not allow the exclusion of some or all of the above implied warranties, you agree that the above exclusions will apply to you to the extent allowed by applicable law.

The Internet contains a variety of materials and information that may be offensive to you. You agree that you assume full responsibility and risk for your use of this service and the Internet, and that you are solely responsible for evaluating the suitability, appropriateness or legality of any informational content or other materials you may encounter online.

Limitation of MSCS 's liability. (A) You acknowledge and agree that the service is provided as a guest privilege solely for your convenience and does not impose liability of any kind or in any amount on MSCS including without limitation, liability for any direct, indirect, special, consequential, incidental, punitive or exemplary damages (including, without limitation, loss profits, loss of business, business interruption, loss of data, or other similar damages) arising out of or related to this agreement or the service; even if MSCS is advised of the possibility of any such damages. (B) You specifically waive any and all claims against MSCS related in any manner to your use of the service. (C) You further agree that if for any reason any of the foregoing limitations of liability or waiver are determined to have failed in their essential purpose or are otherwise deemed to be unenforceable, then the maximum aggregate, cumulative liability of MSCS, arising out of or related to the terms of this agreement and this service, shall not exceed your direct damages, if any, up to fifty dollars (\$50). (D) You agree that the limitations and waivers in this section shall be deemed to apply to all causes of action and all legal theories, without regard to whether the claims of damages arise from: (I) breach of contract, breach of warranty, negligence or other torts, or (II) any other cause of action, however stated.

Termination of service; updates to this agreement. You agree that MSCS may, at any time and for any reason, change, terminate, limit or suspend this service (in whole or in part) or your access to this service. Upon any termination, your rights to use this service will immediately cease. MSCS also reserves the right to update or revise this agreement at any time without prior notice, and you agree that MSCS may do so. Your continued use of this service following an update to this agreement signifies your acceptance of its revised terms.

## COLORADO OPEN RECORDS ACT (CORA)

In accordance with the Colorado Open Records Act (CORA), Mountain Song Community School is happy to assist with requests for inspection of public records.

Records requests must be submitted in writing to the Business Manager. Requests made to any other person or office within MSCS will not be accepted.

Records requests must be mailed or sent via facsimile. Requests sent via email will not be automatically accepted. Due to spam filters and similar computer software, MSCS cannot guarantee that an email request has been received by the Business Manager.

The date the request is received by the Business Manager will be considered the date of receipt.

All requests for records must be specific as to the records sought and the relevant dates. Requests for correspondence must identify the parties to the correspondence. For any request that is vague or broadly stated, MSCS may require the requestor to provide a more specific request before responding.

MSCS is not required by CORA to construct or create a record that does not exist. Additionally, MSCS is not required to manipulate or analyze information in a new way in order to respond to a request.

The normal time for records to be produced for inspection is three working days, beginning on the first business day after the request is received by the Business Manager. Such periods may be extended upon determination by the school that extenuating circumstances exist. Such period of extension shall not normally exceed seven working days.

Requests to inspect records shall not take priority over the regular work activities of school employees.

The normal cost for requested documents is \$0.25 per page or, for documents in non-standard formats, the actual duplication costs. In addition, the requestor may be charged a reasonable research, retrieval and review fee based on the actual cost of responding to the request, provided that the hourly rate for employee time shall not exceed \$30 per hour. There shall be no charge for the first hour of employee time. Other costs related to responding to the request may apply. Payment must be received prior to the requestor receiving copies. If charges are expected to exceed \$25, the Business Manager will provide the requestor with an estimate of the cost of responding prior to responding and may require a deposit. If the requestor wishes to proceed once receiving an estimate, he or she must respond in writing.

The time periods for responding to requests described above shall not apply to (a) requests that do not comply with this policy, (b) requests that are broad or burdensome such that they interfere with regular work duties, or (c) requests if the requestor has failed to pay the appropriate charges.

Please refer to the entire MSCS CORA Policy, which can be found at the link below:

<https://mountainsongschool.com/wp-content/uploads/Colorado-Open-Records-Act-Policy-1.pdf>.

## FERPA NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Mountain Song Community School receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the school administrator a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school administrator will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the Mountain Song Community School to amend their child's or their education record should write to the school administrator, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. The criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest must be set forth in the school's or school district's annual notification for FERPA rights. A school official typically includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school or school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request or the disclosure is initiated by the parent or eligible student.]

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Mountain Song Community School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

### **FERPA Notice and Consent for Directory Information**

FERPA also permits the School to disclose appropriately designated "directory information" unless a parent objects to just disclosure. Examples of this type of "directory information" could include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- An annual yearbook;
- Graduation programs; and
- Names of students in a publication (newsletter, press release).

Directory information is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released and can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that publish yearbooks. In addition, for students who are in seventh or higher grades, the School can be required to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the School that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

Mountain Song Community School has designated the following information as "directory information":

- Student's name
- Photograph
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities
- Honors and awards received

# TEN NEEDS FOR A HEALTHY CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE AT MOUNTAIN SONG COMMUNITY SCHOOL

These “rules of thumb” are recommendations that have circulated within Waldorf school communities, and we share them as worthy principles that we support.

## **1. Proper Nutrition**

A good, hot, nutritious breakfast every day before school. Breakfast, snack, and lunch should contain lots of protein, not sugar or food additives.

## **2. Adequate Sleep**

Be in bed on school nights early enough to get sufficient sleep. Most children and young adolescents still need 8 to 10 hours of sleep each night.

## **3. Minimal Media**

Aim for no media exposure on Sundays through Thursdays, and minimal media on the weekends. Media such as movies or shows emphasizing violence or content that is too adult-oriented should be avoided.

## **4. Quiet Time**

Provide some daily quiet time, without electronic music, screens, or computers on. Give your children the gift of silence.

## **5. Time in Nature**

Spend some time in nature every day. Experience the weather; pay attention to the seasons, moon, stars, and sky.

## **6. Contributions at Home**

Assign some responsibilities for taking care of the home, pets, and yard.

## **7. Appropriate Dress**

Ensure your children are warm and dry while at school, especially their feet. Students need to dress appropriately for the activities that they participate in during the school day, including outdoor activities.

## **8. Cultivate Reverence**

All spiritual traditions offer practices that help develop the reverence for life that supports home, school, and community relationships. If need be, create your own.

## **9. Support Your Child’s Education**

Help develop healthy study habits, participate in school activities, and communicate honestly about your concerns with your child’s teachers.

## **10. Support the Class and School Community**

Get to school on time. Plan vacations during breaks. Support school and class conduct codes. Children need shared values and alignment among their adult role models.



*The healthy social life is found when in the mirror of each human soul the whole community finds its reflection, and when in the community the virtue and strength of each one is living.*

-- Rudolf Steiner