



Mountain Song Community School Communications Policy

1. Purpose

MSCS seeks to create a respectful and civil school environment in which every member of the community is treated with dignity and respect. We promote an environment of trust in which members of the Mountain Song (MS) Community may interact openly and safely. This policy establishes the principles and procedures that members of the MSCS Board of Directors (“Board”), Executive Director, staff, parents, students, and other community stakeholders (collectively referred to as the “MS Community”) shall follow in their interactions with one another. The result of following these principles and procedures will be a positive, appreciative, and constructive school environment that supports effective, holistic education for our students.

For the purpose of this policy, “communications” refers to any form of sharing information between members of the community, including, but not limited to: conversations in person or by phone, text, email, social media, or in writing; and gestures or other non-verbal physical communication.

2. Guidelines for Communication Between Members of the MS Community

- a. Members of the MS Community are expected to adhere to the Mountain Song [Values](#) of *Integrity, Respect, and Honoring the Invisible Essence in Each Person* when communicating with one another.
- b. Members of the MS Community are expected to:
 - i. Be responsible, respectful, and inclusive
 - ii. Be supportive of the school, colleagues, students, and families.
 - iii. Be respectful of perspectives that differ from one’s own.
- c. Members of the MS Community shall be responsible for standing behind their words. Unattributed or anonymous communications, or communications attributed to a group (rather than individual names) is discouraged.
- d. Positions, opinions, and feedback may be shared (within the guidelines of this policy) by members of the MS Community without fear of adverse effects (e.g., retribution, retaliation, revenge). Communications should be received openly, constructively, and in good faith. Retaliatory or vengeful responses (which include verbal or written communication, or physical action) to a communication are prohibited.
- e. Coarse, vulgar, or inappropriate language is unacceptable. Harassing, discriminatory, provoking, or threatening language directed towards any community member is prohibited.

- f. Mountain Song is obligated by law to protect the privacy and confidentiality of certain kinds of information. Unauthorized access to, and/or the communication of any information owned by or under the control of the school, may constitute a breach of confidentiality and/or the right of protection from the unauthorized disclosure of private personal information. Any member of the community aware of such abuse is strongly encouraged to report it to the Executive Director. Appropriate action may be taken against any members of the community in breach of their duty of confidentiality or privacy of personal information.
- g. Mountain Song's [Social Media Policy](#) should also be consulted for a better understanding of how individuals should conduct themselves in the course of online communication.

3. Guidelines for Interactions between Specific Parties

3.1 Parents and Executive Director/Staff

- a. Although the response time may vary according to the nature of the communication made, the Executive Director/staff shall at least acknowledge receipt of the communication within 48-72 business hours (two-three business days) of receipt.
- b. Classroom teachers should establish regular communication channels and communication frequencies with parents of their students.

3.2 Board and School Community

- a. The Board shall communicate to the community at least once per month during the school year. These communications may cover the topics of finances, governance, and academics. The communication may be incorporated into part of the weekly school newsletter or as a separate communication from the Board.
- b. School-issued Board Member email addresses shall be posted publicly on the school website. Any community member may email any or all Board Members with questions or comments. If an email is sent to one or more Board Members, and the email is about Board or School business, it shall be treated as if it were sent to the entire Board; the Board recipient(s) shall forward the communication to any Board member that did not receive it. The Board President (or designee of the Board President) shall be the point of contact and will respond to the sender within 48 business hours.
- c. Each Board Member is free to provide a personal point of view and interact as an individual, but discussions, opinions, views, statements, and explanations of any kind, whether verbal or written, expressed by any individual Board Member should be considered to be the personal opinion of the Board Member, may not be representative of the Board, and are not binding on the Board or MSCS. It is important that the Board maintains "one voice" regarding Board decisions and positions when speaking with the public.
- d. Speaking with one or more Board Members does not constitute bringing an issue to the Board. Bringing an issue to the Board must be done formally in writing addressed to the Board President, or the entire Board.
- e. All communication from individual Board Members and the Board shall consider individual rights of privacy and comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy

Act (FERPA)¹ and all other applicable laws and statutes, and be in accord with the Board Member Agreement.

4. Addressing Concerns

- a. 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. Any member of the MS Community who fails to follow the guidance provided by this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, such as removal from a committee, expulsion, or other actions suggested by the Charter School Institute (CSI) or Colorado Department of Education (CDE).
- b. The School reserves the right to terminate any communication that overtly violates this policy, particularly those that become hostile, inflammatory, or threatening.

¹ <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>