



# Family Handbook

**Mountain West Montessori Academy**

4125 West Foxview Drive

South Jordan, UT 84009

**Phone:** (801) 566-6962

**[www.mwmacademy.org](http://www.mwmacademy.org)**

*NOTE: This document is subject to change without notice. Refer to hard copy in office and/or website for most current version.*

## MISSION

*“Founded upon Montessori philosophy, the mission of Mountain West Montessori Academy is to facilitate student-centered learning and intellectual curiosity through an individualized and interdisciplinary curriculum, hands-on experience, and community involvement.”*

## CHARTER SCHOOLS (What are they?)

Charter schools are publicly funded and are not private schools. They are open to all students, are committed to improving public education, demonstrate a record of student achievement, and have specific educational missions and focuses. Charter schools are public schools created by a group of parents, teachers, or community leaders who see an educational need in their community and want to meet that need. To operate, charter founders must submit an application for approval by the State Charter School Board or the board of a school district. The MWMA Charter Application can be viewed on the MWMA website.

*Disclaimer: Please note that policies are always in the process of being reviewed and voted upon. Parents and students should check the website ([mwmacademy.org](http://mwmacademy.org)) for the most accurate list of procedures and policies. The policies and procedures described in this handbook are not exhaustive.*

## KEY POINTS OF THE MONTESSORI METHOD OF EDUCATION

- Montessori schools promote respect for children as unique individuals.
- The child’s social and emotional development along with academic development is of great concern.
- Montessori schools are supportive schools where children don’t get lost in the crowd.
- Peace education is paramount to the Montessori philosophy. Dr. Maria Montessori was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize three times in her lifetime.
- Classrooms are bright and aesthetically pleasing environments for learning.
- The classrooms are multi-age classes which span three grade levels-children develop close and long-term relationships with teachers and classmates.
- The multi-grade classroom encourages a strong sense of community and teachers come to know each child’s learning style.
- Classrooms are not teacher centered but child centered. This allows students to develop their leadership skills and independence.
- The Montessori method assumes that children are born intelligent, they simply learn in different ways and progress at their own pace. Multiple intelligences are recognized and encouraged.
- Students move ahead as quickly as they are ready.
- Texts and workbooks are rarely used because many of the skills and concepts are abstract and a text simply doesn’t bring them to life.
- Montessori relies on hands-on, concrete materials to introduce new concepts. Investigation and research are experiences that actively engage the student.
- Learning is not based on rote drill and memorization.

- Montessori schools set high expectations and challenges all students not just those considered “gifted.”
- The students develop self-discipline and an integral sense of purpose and motivation.
- Montessori schools normally promote diversity in their student body, creating an atmosphere of mutual respect and global perspective.
- Students develop a love of the natural world-outdoor education is a very important part of the Montessori curriculum.
- Students learn to care and contribute to others through their community service.
- Montessori teachers facilitate learning, coach students and come to know them as friends and mentors.
- Students learn that mistakes are natural steps in the learning process.
- Montessori students learn to collaborate and work together on major projects. They strive for their personal best in this non-graded environment rather than competing for the highest grade in the class. Families are important in these caring environments.

## SCHOOL HOURS

*Front Office:* The Front Office will be open Monday – Thursday 8:30 a.m. – 3:45 p.m. and Friday 8:30 a.m. – 1:45 p.m. The school office can be reached at (801) 566-6962.

### Daily School Schedule

<b>AM Kinder</b>	Monday – Thursday: 8:40 am - 11:25 am Friday: 8:40 am – 10:45 am
<b>PM Kinder</b>	Monday – Thursday: 12:30 pm - 3:15 pm Friday: 11:35 am - 1:35 pm
<b>Grades 1-9</b>	Monday – Thursday: 8:40 am - 3:15 pm Friday: 8:40 am – 1:35 pm

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## **The following Information is in Alphabetical Order**

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Honesty is expected in all academic endeavors. The honest academic work of a student reflects his/her unique, independent thoughts while also crediting other people who helped shape the development and expression of his/her ideas.

Cheating is academic dishonesty and includes copying other's work on tests or homework. Plagiarism is a form of cheating and includes taking another person's work or ideas and using them as your own. Students must fully understand the concepts of cheating and plagiarism. When in doubt, ASK.

Some examples of plagiarism:

- Paraphrasing text from a book or web site without citing
- Cutting and pasting or copying text without quoting
- Copying and using an image without saying what it is and where it was found
- Using an online translator instead of completing your own required translation
- Submitting a paper written by a parent or tutor without acknowledgement
- Copying the answers to an assignment

Students involved in cheating, as determined by their classroom teacher, will automatically receive a "0" grade for the assignment. The Administration will be notified with a referral from the teacher. Additional disciplinary action may occur at the discretion of the classroom teacher or administration. Such consequences may include but are not limited to: missing class parties, field trips, or extra-curricular activities. Repeated offenses may result in suspension.

### **ADDRESS CHANGES & PARENT CONTACT INFORMATION**

In order to ensure the safety of all students Mountain West Montessori Academy needs all parents' correct home and work addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses. You may update your personal information on MWMA's website. Go to the Aspire log in link and log into your Aspire account. It is the parent's responsibility to keep emergency information current. If there is a change to emergency information, please contact the office.

### **ADMISSION & SUSPENSION/EXPULSION PROCEDURES**

#### ***Admission Procedure***

Admission to Mountain West Montessori Academy will be in accordance with the admission procedures approved by the Utah State Board of Education. Accordingly, admission at MWMA is not limited based upon ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, income level, disabling condition, proficiency in the English language or athletic ability. There is no tuition or fees charged for attending MWMA except those allowed by law. MWMA will admit all eligible pupils who submit a timely application. Enrollment preference at MWMA shall be given to children of founding members, pupils returning to the charter school in the second or any subsequent year of its operation, to siblings of pupils already enrolled in the charter school, and children of MWMA teachers. If, by the application deadline, the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a class, grade level, or building, all applications for that class, grade level or building, students will be selected for the available slots through a lottery, except that preference allowed by law and outlined above shall be given. Selection of students to attend MWMA will be conducted through an audit

or certified computer program. After the application deadline, pupils for any remaining slots will be accepted in order of their lottery position. If an opening in the school occurs mid-year and no students remain from the original lottery, a notice for applications will be announced and applicants will be enrolled on the same basis as outlined above.

### *Suspension / Expulsion Policy*

In as much as Mountain West Montessori Academy emphasizes the Montessori values of grace, courtesy, and respect, these principles will guide administrators and faculty in the application of the school's disciplinary policies and procedures. This begins with teachers addressing disciplinary issues in a respectful and compassionate manner. In most cases, teachers will address and remedy discipline issues in the classroom. If the teacher is unable to remedy the problem generated by the student in the classroom, teachers will work closely with school administrators and parents to coordinate their efforts in the resolution of discipline matters. In the event that suspension/dismissal is required, MWMA staff will act pursuant to the Student Suspension and Expulsion Policy and in accordance with IDEA and all other applicable state and federal laws. This policy is defined and is available on the schools website, under "Safe School Policy."

### **ARRIVAL DISMISSAL**

*Arrival:* Students will not be permitted in the school buildings prior to 8:30 a.m. Elementary students will wait in designated areas. Students are to be dropped off in the drop-off zone.

- *Dismissal:* At the end of the school day, parents need to meet students at the front of the school in the pick-up zone. All students must be picked up by 3:30 p.m. (or 1:45 p.m. on Fridays), except students who participate in school sanctioned after-school activities.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Mountain West Montessori Academy (the "School") is committed to providing a quality education for every student. Much of this learning is done in a "hands-on" manner and requires in class participation to maximize effectiveness. The School firmly believes that consistent attendance teaches students responsibility. Students learn the value of being punctual and prepared. Frequent absences result in a loss of continuity of instruction. Also, frequent absences and tardiness prove disruptive for students, teachers, and staff. In accordance with Utah state law excessive unexcused absences may lead to a student's permanent dismissal from the School. Parents are expected to take a proactive role in ensuring their children attend school. We recommend families plan their vacation schedule around the existing School calendar. When possible, medical and dental appointments should take place outside of school hours and parents should notify the School in advance of any absence. Parents and students are responsible for obtaining homework or assignments for the time period which the student is absent.

The School intends for this policy to be consistent with the provisions of Utah's compulsory attendance laws, Utah Code Ann. §§ 53A-11-101 through 53A-11-105, and shall review the policy annually. The School will seek to accurately monitor and record attendance information, annually review attendance data, and consider revisions to the policy to encourage student attendance.



## **Definitions**

**"Absence"** means a student's nonattendance at school for one school day or part of one school day.

**"Valid excuse" or "excused absence"** means an absence resulting from:

- a) an illness;
- b) a death of a family member or close friend;
- c) a documented medical appointment;
- d) a family emergency;
- e) an approved school activity;
- f) a preapproved extended absence for a family activity or travel, consistent with school policy; or
- g) an absence permitted by an individualized education program or accommodation plan,
- h) developed pursuant to relevant law.

The Director has the discretion to consider other absences as "valid excuses."

**"Habitual truant"** means a school-age minor who: (1) is at least 12 years old; (2) is subject to the requirements of Section 53A-11-101.5; and (3)(a) is truant at least ten times during one school year; and (b) fails to cooperate with efforts on the part of school authorities to resolve the minor's attendance problem as required under Section 53A-11-103.

**"Truant"** means absent from school without a valid excuse.

**Excused Absences:** An oral or written communication documenting a valid excuse must be received from the student's parents/guardian within one (1) business day of the absence in order for the absence to be excused. In the event of multiple consecutive absences, written communication must be received within one (1) business day of the student's return to school. All written communication must be submitted to the school office, not the classroom teacher. In the event of an unforeseeable illness or emergency, the School should be notified as soon as reasonably possible.

**Preapproved Extended Absence:** A parent/guardian may request approval from the Director prior to a student's extended absence of up to ten (10) days per school year. The Director will approve the absence if the Director determines that the extended absence will not adversely impact the student's education.

**Make-up Work:** The teacher will provide the student or the parent/guardian with any make-up work upon request. Make-up work must be completed within a reasonable time-frame as determined by the teacher.

**Tardiness:** A student is tardy if he or she is not in the assigned classroom by 8:45 a.m. **If your child arrives after 9:00 a.m. the parent/guardian will need to sign the student in through the main office.** In general, tardiness will be handled on an individual basis with the teacher. Middle School students who are tardy may be assigned community improvement. If a student is chronically tardy, then the student may be referred to the administration. The first 15 minutes of

each day is when the classroom community meetings are held. Information and instruction is given that is crucial to the success of the daily schedule.

**Notification of Absences and Tardies:** Parents will be notified when their student reaches excessive tardies. If the maximum limit for unexcused absences or tardiness is reached, the Director will attempt to schedule a meeting with the parents to review the situation and will outline the appropriate corrective action.

## **BEHAVIOR**

*Mountain West Montessori Academy works hard to create a calm and peaceful learning environment for all students. This environment is created to help all students learn and embrace the Montessori values of grace, courtesy, and respect. Creating this environment is the job of all employees, students, and volunteers at MWMA.*

**Assembly Behavior:** Assemblies are planned for student learning and enjoyment. Students are expected to be orderly while entering the gym and sit with their classes. Students who disrupt assemblies will be given a warning, and if behavior continues, students will be removed and may not be permitted to attend future assemblies. Further disruptions in future assemblies may result in students forfeiting their opportunity to attend assemblies for the remainder of the school year.

**Bus Behavior:** MWMA provides students with many field trip opportunities that involve transportation on a bus. The bus is an extension of the classroom, therefore all school policies concerning student behavior will apply on the bus. Student safety and respect for others are our main concern while riding on a bus. The following are bus rules and regulations: remain seated and quiet while the bus is in motion, only use appropriate physical contact, be respectful, keep arms, legs, and other objects inside the bus. Students who do not obey these rules may forfeit their opportunity to participate in school fieldtrips.

**Cafeteria Behavior:** Students must maintain an orderly behavior for the cafeteria. Students are responsible for cleaning the area where they eat. Throwing food, dripping items on the floor, and making messes are not appropriate behaviors in the cafeteria, and may result in administrative consequences. Students must sit at tables to eat and drink. Food is to be eaten in the cafeteria. No food or drink may be eaten in school hallways or on the playgrounds. Upon finishing lunch, each student will pick up his/her area, properly dispose of all refuse, and exit the cafeteria doors. Students are not allowed in the school halls during lunch.

**Classroom Time:** Students are to be in class on time each day. Students must be prepared for class with necessary supplies and completed assignments. Students will be active participants in class. Students will respect the learning environment and activities of the classroom. A student will be removed from class for being uncooperative, disrespectful, or disruptive, and will receive an office referral. The consequence for removal from class can result in disciplinary action by administrators.

**Field Trip Behavior:** Field trips are an opportunity to help students make connections between the classroom and the wider community. Since field trips take place during the school day, it is the expectation that students follow all school policies concerning student behavior, while on a

field trip. In addition, student safety and respect for our community are the utmost concern, therefore, students who violate the outlined rules may have their field trip privileges suspended and may face further consequences. The following are general field trip expectations and guidelines, although each individual field trip has unique hazards and will therefore constitute varying expectations. Students must stay with their assigned group throughout the field trip. Students shall respect personal and public property. Students who do not exhibit respectful and appropriate behavior may be denied participation on a field trip if past behavior has given reason to expect that the student may not behave appropriately during the trip or if the student has not participated in class or is missing excessive assignments in any class.

**Hallway Behavior:** Hallway behavior includes the time: before school, between classes, during class, and after school. Behavior that is appropriate for the hallways includes but is not limited to: walking, quiet and calm voices, appropriate physical behavior, and demonstrating respect for yourself, others, and school property. All school rules are to be followed whenever students are in hallways.

**Recess:** During recess and lunch, students must remain within the fenced playground. Mountain West Montessori Academy is a closed campus, and therefore, students are not allowed to leave campus during school hours. Students are to listen to all individuals on the playground. Students may not leave the assigned playground or indoor recess area without permission from the supervisor that is on duty at the time. Students are responsible for any sports equipment taken outside. Such equipment is to be returned when recess time is over. If a ball or equipment goes onto a roof or off the playground, the teacher or adult on duty will inform the office to arrange for retrieval.

We are not properly prepared for tackle football, "keep away", or similarly aggressive games that involve physical contact and as such they are not allowed on school grounds. No snowballs are to be made or thrown on or near school property. Safety rules for the playground and playground equipment are based on the following, which are prohibited: fence climbing, walking on the slide, throwing rocks/stones/mulch/wood chips, and shoving or pushing at any time. CONSEQUENCES: For minor infractions, students will receive a warning and verbal correction and can return to play; physical aggression will result in the loss of recess for a designated period of time and possible suspension. Recess with other students is a privilege. Students who frequently choose to ignore playground/recess expectations or commit more serious infractions may lose the privilege of having recess with other students.

### **Birthday Celebrations/Holidays**

#### **“CELEBRATION OF LIFE”**

Birthdays are important to children. The Montessori class has a ceremony used to observe these special occasions called the “Celebration of Life.” Please understand that this not a “birthday party” but rather a celebration of the child’s life thus far. Parents are asked to provide a brief biography with a few photos of the child. We encourage the parents to attend and to comment about the child’s growth and important events in the child’s life. **Based on the school wellness policy, no treats will be permitted during your child’s “Celebration of Life.” Children are also invited to donate their favorite book to the school library in celebration of their birthday. A special name plate will be added to recognize the child and the donation.**

Children with summer birthdays will have an opportunity to celebrate their birthday as a half year celebration. Please note that this is a special ceremony for each child. Children from other classes will not attend siblings Celebration of Life, since this is disruptive to other classes and lessons. **It is a parents' responsibility to schedule the Celebration of Life with the student's teacher BEFORE September 30th.** Please note that due to scheduling constraints this celebration may not be scheduled on your child's actual birthday. **If your child is inviting classmates to any kind of party outside of school, please mail these invitations from home and DO NOT distribute them at school.** If the whole class is not invited, please talk with your child about not discussing the party or who is invited at the school, as it can hurt others' feelings.

## **BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES**

The responsibility of the board is to act as one governing body in order to determine the mission of the school, articulate and implementing the mission statement; select, support and evaluate the Head of School; ensure effective organizational planning, adequate resources, effective management of resources; enhance the school's public standing; ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability; and recruit and orient new board members and assess Board performance. The Board is not responsible for the daily management of the school.

### *Mountain West Montessori Academy Board Members*

**Steve Barnes** – President

**Corbin White** – Vice President

**Andrew Marx**– Financial Coordinator

**Nelson Altamirano** – Board Secretary

**Dr. Lois Bobo** – Member

## **BULLYING & HAZING**

The purpose of this policy is to prohibit bullying, hazing, harassment and intimidation of students and school personnel. The Board of Directors (the "Board") of Mountain West Montessori Academy (the "School") has determined that a safe, civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards and that conduct constituting bullying, hazing, harassment and intimidation disrupts both a student's ability to learn and the School's ability to educate its students in a safe environment. For detailed description and additional information please refer to the "Safe Schools Policy" on the school website.

### *Prohibitions*

In order to promote a safe, civil learning environment emphasizing the Montessori values of grace, courtesy, and respect the School prohibits all forms of bullying of students and School personnel (a) on School property, (b) at a School-related or sponsored event, or (c) while the student or School personnel is traveling to or from School property or a School-related or sponsored event. The School prohibits all forms of hazing of students and School personnel at any time and any location.

Students and School personnel are prohibited from retaliating against any student, School personnel or individual investigating an allegation of bullying, hazing or retaliation. Students and School personnel are prohibited from making false allegations of bullying, hazing and retaliation against a student or School personnel.

In addition, School personnel, coaches, sponsors and volunteers shall not permit, condone or tolerate any form of hazing or bullying and shall not plan, direct, encourage, assist, engage or participate in any activity that involves hazing or bullying.

### ***Reporting and Investigation***

Students who have been subjected to or witnessed hazing or bullying must promptly report such incidents to any School personnel orally or in writing. School personnel must report to the School's Director (the "Director") incidents of hazing and bullying, including both oral and written reports as well as conduct that they witness themselves. In connection with a report of bullying, hazing or retaliation, students and School personnel may request that their identity be kept anonymous, and reasonable steps shall be taken by the Director and others involved in the reporting and investigation to maintain the anonymity of such individuals, if possible. The Director shall promptly make a reasonably thorough investigation of all complaints of hazing and bullying, including, to the extent possible, anonymous reports, and shall administer appropriate discipline to all individuals who violate this policy. The Principal will report to law enforcement all acts of bullying, hazing or retaliation that constitute criminal activity.

### ***Consequences of Prohibited Behavior***

Students and School personnel participating in or encouraging conduct prohibited by this policy will be disciplined.

For students, such discipline may include, but is not limited to, assigned community improvement activities, alternative placement, restitution or making amends, in-school suspension, suspension or expulsion from the School and removal from participation in School activities. School personnel that violate this policy will be disciplined or terminated.

### ***Definitions***

***Hazing*** -- For purposes of this policy, "hazing" means intentionally or knowingly committing an act that: (1) endangers the physical health or safety of a school employee or student; involves any brutality of a physical nature such as whipping, beating, branding, calisthenics, bruising, electric shocking, placing of a harmful substance on the body, or exposure to the elements; involves consumption of any food, liquor, drug, or other substance; involves other physical activity that endangers the physical health and safety of a school employee or student; or involves physically obstructing a school employee's or student's freedom to move; involves any forced or coerced act or activity of a sexual nature or with sexual connotations, including but not limited to asking prospective or active team members to remove articles of clothing or expose or touch private areas of the body; and

(2) is done for the purpose of initiation or admission into, affiliation with, holding office in, or as a condition for, membership or acceptance, or continued membership or acceptance, in any school or school sponsored team, organization, program, or event; or if the person committing the act against a school employee or student knew that the school employee or student is a member of, or candidate for, membership with a school, or school sponsored team, organization, program, or event to which the person committing the act belongs to or participates in.

The conduct described above constitutes hazing regardless of whether the person against whom the conduct is committed directed, consented to, or acquiesced in, the conduct.

***Bullying*** -- For purposes of this policy, "bullying" means intentionally or knowingly committing an act that: (1) endangers the physical health or safety of a school employee or student; involves any brutality of a physical nature such as whipping, beating, branding, calisthenics, bruising, electric shocking, placing of a harmful substance on the body, or exposure to the elements; involves consumption of any food, liquor, drug, or other substance; involves other physical activity that endangers the physical health and safety of a school employee or student; or involves physically obstructing a school employee's or student's freedom to move; involves any forced or coerced act or activity of a sexual nature or with sexual connotations, including but not limited to asking prospective or active team members to remove articles of clothing or expose or touch private areas of the body; involves sexually explicit language directed towards a school employee or student; and (2) is done for the purpose of placing a school employee or student in fear of: physical harm to the school employee or student; or harm to property of the school employee or student.

### **CANCELED/BOUNCED CHECKS**

Checks sent for payment of expenses are subject to a returned check fee of \$25.00.

### **CAFETERIA/FOOD SERVICE**

Hot lunch will be available. Information will be available at the beginning of the school year. All lunches must be eaten in the supervised area. There is no eating food in the halls or outside on the playground. Students are expected to dispose of all refuse in available garbage cans to help keep the area clean. Parents who qualify for Free or Reduced lunches are encouraged to apply at the beginning of the year in order to be eligible for the most benefits. Families that experience a change in life style through-out the year are also eligible to apply through-out the year as needs arise.

### **CALENDAR**

The school calendar is posted on the Mountain West Montessori Academy web site, [www.mwmacademy.org](http://www.mwmacademy.org). This calendar lists all vacations and special events.

### **CELL PHONES**

See "electronic devices".

### **CHILDREN (SIBLINGS) AT SCHOOL**

Children who accompany a parent to school must be under direct supervision at all times. Parents are responsible for supervising their children during parent meetings, book fairs, assemblies, weekends or any school activity.

## **CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY**

Mountain West Montessori Academy (the “School”) takes seriously the legal responsibility of its personnel to protect the physical and psychological well-being of its students. We believe that the school’s personnel have an important role to play in the elimination of child abuse because they are in a unique position to observe children over extended periods of time on a daily basis.

Utah law requires that whenever any person, including any school employee, contracted or temporary employee, or volunteer who has reason to believe that a child has been subjected to incest, molestation, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect, or observes a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances which would reasonably result in sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect, he/she shall immediately notify the nearest peace officer, law enforcement agency, or the Division of Child Family Service (“DCFS”). The law provides serious penalties for failure to fulfill one’s duty to report. If a school employee has reason to believe that a child may have been subjected to incest, molestation, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect, or observes a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances which would reasonably result in such, the employee shall immediately make an oral report to the nearest peace officer, law enforcement agency or DCFS, and to the School’s Director.

## **CLASSROOM CELEBRATIONS/PARTIES**

Classroom celebrations that involve food will be allowed 3 times per year at the Administration’s discretion. Such celebrations shall comply with the following:

- a) All foods made available will comply with state and local food safety and sanitation regulations.
- b) Faculty, staff and parents will be encouraged to make healthy and fun activities the focus of the celebration rather than food.

## **CLOSING OF SCHOOL**

If the school is to be closed due to storms, road conditions, etc., information will be available on our website, [www.mwmacademy.org](http://www.mwmacademy.org). Parents will also be notified via the school’s communication systems. As a general rule, we follow the same closures as Jordan School District.

## **COLD WEATHER**

Since fresh air and exercise are two very important aspects of a healthy lifestyle, students are taken outside each day. If the administration determines that the weather is inclement or the temperature is below 28 F or if the air quality is ranked as negatively impacting children’s health, students may have indoor recess. In addition, all students K through 9th grade will have outside physical education activities at the teacher’s discretion. Students must dress appropriately. *(If your student has a health condition that can be negatively impacted by air quality and indoor recessed accommodations need to be made please provide notification and a doctor’s note to the front office.)*

## **COMMUNICATION/UPDATES**

To help parents be aware of special events and activities, the school publishes frequent update emails and online updates on our website, at [www.mwmacademy.org](http://www.mwmacademy.org) under the “news” section. You may sign up to receive a notification each time a new item is posted. You may also opt-in for text messages from the school by texting the word “Alert” to 22300.

In addition to updates, the school or individual classes occasionally send home flyers with important information about upcoming events or activities. We strive to give parents the information they need to help their children be prepared for class each day, so it is important that parents be responsible for and aware of all information published in this handbook, monthly calendars, newsletters, and other written communication that is sent home with your children. Please help us ensure you receive communication in a timely manner by updating your email address with the MWMA office or on Aspire.

## **COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT**

Dr. Maria Montessori believed in creating a learning environment that fosters courtesy, grace, respect, and responsibility. These values are a cornerstone on any quality learning environment and especially MWMA. We recognize that part of the learning experience includes making mistakes. When student behaviors negatively impact the learning of others it brings an imbalance to the learning community. Students who have such behaviors will be expected to make a sincere attempt to repay the learning community they have disrupted to the best of their ability depending on the actions of the students. This process of making amends for their actions may include assigned community improvement activities. The assigned community improvement activities will take place outside of the standard instructional time and at the convenience of the educator who is supervising them. The time and place to complete such activities will be provided to the student and they will need to make arrangements to attend/participate. It is expected that students participate in community improvement with a respectful attitude and helpful behavior.

## **COMPUTERS/INTERNET ACCESS**

The use of the computers by our students is an important learning experience in technology. Our classroom teachers are required to use technology in their classrooms. All staff working with children using computers, monitor internet and intranet access. It is our goal in this program for the computers to become a tool for students in applying their skills to solve problems in striving to reach their full potential. Students and parents are expected to sign an acknowledgement before using computers at Mountain West Montessori Academy.

The following rules apply to all users:

- Users will not damage any computers, printers or any media/technology equipment at Mountain West Montessori Academy.
- Users will not bring any software in any form to use and/or install on any computer at Mountain West Montessori Academy.
- Users are not to e-mail other students while on the computer at Mountain West Montessori Academy.
- Users will not change any settings and/or formats on any computer at Mountain West Montessori Academy.
- Users will follow all rules for use of software technology installed on computers at Mountain West Montessori Academy.
- Users will only access the internet while at Mountain West Montessori Academy under supervision of a Mountain West Montessori Academy Employee.
- Users, while on the internet, will only explore and/or use sites and areas as directed by the instructor.



- Users who are unsure if a site is acceptable will request assistance from the instructor.
- Failure to follow the above rules WILL jeopardize privileges to use the media/technology available at Mountain West Montessori Academy for anywhere from two (2) weeks to the remainder of the school year, to be decided by the supervising instructor.
- Users are subject to additional rules governing use of media/technology at Mountain West Montessori Academy, which may be added at the discretion of the supervising adults.

Any student wishing to use a personal laptop computer in school must have approval from the Director. In addition, if the computer is determined to be a detriment to the student or class' learning environment, permission for use may be revoked. Remember, Mountain West Montessori Academy cannot be responsible for lost or damaged property brought from outside of school.

### **COMPUTER/TECHNOLOGY USAGE**

Computers may be available for student use in each classroom and in the library. There are also portable computer labs available to students. Students should only be on a computer when supervised by faculty, and must follow school policies regarding computer usage. Students must have a teacher's permission to use classroom computers. All students must sign the Internet User Agreement form before accessing the internet. Student use of MWMA computers is a privilege. All students will sign the acceptable use agreement before being allowed to use the technology lab or the laptops. All use of computers must have educational objectives. It is not appropriate to use school computers for online gaming, chat rooms, instant messaging, and etc. Any use that violates federal or state laws or school policy may result in Community Improvement Assignments and/or suspension. Students who vandalize or use computers for any inappropriate activities will receive consequences that correlate with the degree of their behavior and may be responsible for the cost of the damage done to devices.

Any student wishing to use a personal laptop computer/device in school must be approved by administration and sign a personal device in school use agreement (See also Electronic Devices). In addition, if the computer/device is determined to be a detriment to the student or class' learning environment, permission for use may be revoked. Remember, MWMA cannot be responsible for lost or damaged property brought from outside of school.

### **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

Mountain West Montessori Academy places high value on grace, courtesy, respect and responsibility. As such, we encourage parents/guardians and staff to develop open and respectful lines of communication with each other for the benefit of MWMA students. However, we acknowledge that from time to time, situations may arise that are upsetting. If a parent/guardian, student, staff member or other individuals or groups are not satisfied with a decision, policy or act or believes that MWMA has violated or is violating any rule or regulation, they may take the following steps:

1. Discuss the complaint with the staff member that has direct responsibility for the problem.
  - a. Within a week, take the complaint directly to the staff member involved (in the case of violation of laws or issues with school-wide policies, the school Director would be the appropriate staff member) to resolve the problem through discussion.

- b. MWMA is committed to using communication to work out problems, therefore, the two parties involved may request mediation from the staff member's immediate supervisor if direct communication fails or would be inappropriate.
    - c. If the aggrieved person is not satisfied, the person should move to step two (2) within one week.
  2. Discuss the complaint with the staff member's immediate supervisor.
    - a. If a solution is not found between the two parties involved then it should be taken to the staff member's immediate supervisor for discussion including use of mediation if necessary. If the original complaint was with the school Director and discussion (as mentioned in step 1) has not worked, move directly to step three (3).
    - b. This should continue through the ranks until the complaint has been discussed with the school Director.
    - c. If the complaint has not been satisfactorily addressed after talking with the MWMA's Director, move to step three (3). This should occur no later than a month from the original complaint.
  3. Submit the complaint in writing to the Director.
    - a. The Director may speak to all parties involved and will try to resolve the issue through discussions with those people. Otherwise, within two weeks, the Director will give a written decision concerning the complaint, giving the reasons for the decision.
    - b. If the Director's written decision is unsatisfactory, move to step four (4) within one (1) week.
  4. Submit the complaint in writing to the Chair of MWMA's Board Directors.
    - a. Upon receiving the written complaint, the Chair shall request copies of all written communications from Step three (3).
    - b. The Chair shall convene a complaint review committee consisting of Board members (with no fewer than three (3) board members) that shall meet within 10 working days to discuss the issues. Those involved in the complaint shall have a right to attend the meeting.
    - c. The complaint review committee shall decide on the matter by majority vote and shall respond in writing to the person issuing the complaint and the Director no later than 30 days from the receipt of the complaint.
    - d. If the complaint review committee is unable to reach a decision and/or the complaint is of such a nature that it might interfere with the normal functions of the school, then the committee shall bring this matter to the full board for consideration. The Board will review the complaint at the next scheduled Board meeting after receipt of the request. The Board's decision shall be final and shall be made within 10 working days of the hearing.

### **Exceptions to Procedural Steps**

Mountain West Montessori Academy recognizes that there may be certain circumstances in which it may be inappropriate to resolve a problem as prescribed above. Therefore, the following exceptions are instances where some of the steps above may be bypassed to seek a resolution by the next higher authority: (i) The complaint or problem involves a known or suspected violation of the law; (ii) The complaint or problem is clearly not within the authority of the staff member's supervisor to resolve; or (iii) the complaint falls under the scope of IDEA, Utah Code Ann. §§

53A-15-301 through 53A-15-305, or other rules or regulations protecting disabled individuals. Compliance with Section 504 & IDEA.

At MWMA, we recognize the importance of addressing complaints of parents of students served under IDEA, Utah Code Ann.§§ 53A-15-301 through 53A-15-305, or other applicable laws protecting disabled individuals. Due to the complexity and importance of these procedural safeguards, MWMA has adopted the procedures endorsed by the Utah Board of Education in their handbook entitled Special Education Policies and Procedures. As part of MWMA’s complaint policy, we have established procedures to allow parties the opportunity to resolve disputes through a mediation process that is available whenever a due process hearing or an expedited due process hearing is requested. These procedures are outlined in the Special Education Rules handbook § IV.J. If the application of any provision of our complaint policy to a student with a disability is not permissible, or becomes impermissible, under IDEA or other law, MWMA will implement other actions consistent with the conflicting law or regulation which shall most closely correspond to the requirements of this policy.

### **CONFISCATED ITEMS**

Any item determined by faculty/staff to be a distraction or danger to the students or learning environment may be confiscated. A parent will be contacted and may pick up the item from the front office. Any item confiscated more than once during the school year, may be kept by the Administration until the end of the school year and picked up by a parent at that time.

### **CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION**

Mountain West Montessori Academy is committed to preparing students to be constructive contributors in their community by focusing on academic, personal and social development. The learning environment of MWMA is based on the Montessori philosophy because of its emphasis on the development of the whole child. Dr. Montessori recognized that children have an innate desire to learn and, given the proper environment, they will thrive intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically. This “prepared environment,” as Dr. Montessori termed it, includes not only the classroom with its materials and authentically trained teachers, but also the social setting and atmosphere. Under this philosophy, it is imperative that the learning environment supports the whole child.

The Montessori philosophy, which was initially developed for underprivileged and handicapped children, specifically addresses diversity in communities by providing a child-centered, individualized approach to teaching and learning. MWMA’s educational approach addresses the community’s diversity to ensure that no child is left behind. The educational tenets of our philosophy and methods of instruction supporting our mission and distinguishing our program are:

***Individualized & Differentiated Learning:*** Montessori education is built upon the tenet that all learners are individuals in style, pace, and interests. MWMA’s individualized curriculum allows children to strive for their own personal best. Teachers, students, and parents at MWMA partner and develop educational goals that provide measurable, yearly objectives. Teachers will provide Weekly Work Plans to support the educational goals by listing the specific actions to be taken each week. These goals and plans support the student’s personal development; they allow students to make choices themselves on a daily basis and assess their personal growth, which leads to the development of subsequent plans. Providing students with differentiated instruction (integral to

individualized learning and the Montessori philosophy) has been demonstrated to increase success and satisfaction in school. Teacher will work to guide and challenge students as they progress and will help foster situations where the student is successful, situations where a student is unsuccessful will result in intervention by the teacher to guide the teacher back onto a successful path.

***Mixed-age Groupings:*** Authentic Montessori classrooms span three years at the elementary level. These mixed age settings provide several benefits to the student. They more closely model real life situations where people of varying ages and experience work and live together. Children in this setting also benefit from peer tutoring opportunities that naturally occur. Older students' model and motivate the younger students. The younger students aspire to what the older students can do. Skills are thus reinforced for not only the younger students but also the older students. The benefits of collaborative learning arrangements extend beyond academic achievement. The social climate of these classrooms enhances social relations, discipline and individual well-being. In the Middle School program every effort is made to allow students access to mixed age classrooms while in keeping with the state office of education's requirements for graduation. Our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade programs are designed to be an alternating two-year cycle in order to make mixed age classrooms available in the middle school program.

***Integrated Teaching & Learning:*** Montessori education emphasizes interdisciplinary teaching to encourage students to make connections across the curriculum and to their own personal lives. Emphasis will be placed on projects that require open-ended research and in-depth study using primary and secondary sources as well as other materials. The Montessori didactic materials were specifically designed to enable students to understand the connections in their learning. When students understand these connections in their learning activities, they become more motivated learners.

***Prepared Environment:*** Montessori environments are designed to enable instruction to progress from the concrete, hands-on exploration to concept development to abstract understanding. Elementary classrooms at MWMA will have an abundance of carefully sequenced Montessori materials to support this learning progression. The Middle School classrooms teach more abstract concepts and concrete materials are less applicable. Middle school students learn from project based experiences, solving real world problems, inquiry based learning, designing their own learning with the Capstone class, and experiences.

***Teacher's Role:*** Montessori teachers are trained to be scientific observers of their students and the learning environment. These observations will guide teachers in their lesson presentations and in their evaluation of each student's progress. Teachers guide students by making changes in the environment, offering invitations for inquiry and direct instruction. Teachers will work to create and sustain a classroom and school culture where demonstrations of respect, initiative, risk-taking and persistence in learning are the norm. In the younger grades, teachers will work with individuals or small groups.

***Parent Involvement:*** Communities consist of various types of families and MWMA acknowledges that the term "parents," includes legal guardians. MWMA considers all caregivers to be vital partners in the education of their children. Therefore, parents will be welcome at MWMA and will

be encouraged to participate in and help set the direction of school life. **With the importance of parental involvement in mind, please be aware that MWMA also values the creation of a learning community. During the first weeks of school we will be working hard to establish a strong learning community in each classroom and we ask that in consideration of time that parents delay classroom visits until after the first six weeks of school.** In conjunction with teachers and students, parents will be encouraged to provide input and feedback on the educational goals and Weekly Work Plans. MWMA is committed to providing frequent parent education opportunities so that the Montessori philosophy is well understood and embraced.

**Character Education:** Personal and social education will be integrated into MWMA's learning program. Classroom life will emphasize the Montessori values of grace, courtesy, respect and responsibility. Dr. Montessori's Peace Education efforts, which were acknowledged by her being nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, will be a cornerstone of the Character Education program. Teachers will model these values and expect them from students throughout the school.

**Community Connection:** Children grow and learn in an increasingly expansive and diverse community. Students at MWMA will first come to understand the world and their part in it by discovering the community within the classroom, then by contributing to the life of the school and caring for the surrounding plant and animal habitats, and finally by supporting the larger community beyond the school.

### **Methods of Instruction**

Mountain West Montessori Academy's curriculum is divided into four levels:

- Level 1: K (Early Childhood)
- Level 2: 1-3 (Lower Elementary)
- Level 3: 4-6 (Upper Elementary)
- Level 4: 7-9 (Secondary I)

MWMA will consist of Kindergarten (the Early Childhood program), Lower Elementary (grades 1-3), Upper Elementary (grades 4-6), and Secondary I (grades 7-9). A teacher and an assistant will be assigned to each elementary class that consists of approximately 27 students.

Each student will stay with the same teacher for each level (or grade). This continuity maximizes teaching and learning because students do not spend time every year getting to know new teachers, classrooms and entire new peer groups. Research on this approach demonstrates increased student achievement and greater parental involvement both of which are central to MWMA's mission.

A foundational Montessori tenet is that students must have long uninterrupted daily work periods (3 hours) each day. Therefore, the morning will be dedicated to this core work time. The afternoon will include lunch, recess, and time for cultural subjects. This design supports the development of a strong collaborative professional environment by providing teachers with time for planning and meeting during the school day, including regular curriculum and assessment meetings.

In the Kindergarten and Lower Elementary programs, our program will provide an array of specially developed materials and methods. These allow young children to build concepts from concrete models and experiences through self-directed activity and peer and teacher interaction.

These core materials become less evident in the Upper Elementary and Middle School as students begin to transition to symbolic and abstract conceptual understandings.

## **CUSTODY**

In cases of separation or divorce in which one parent or guardian has custody of the children, the School sometimes receives special requests or instructions regarding the children. In order to clarify the legal regulations and to prevent a misunderstanding, the following information is offered regarding the rights of non-custodial parents:

According to FERPA: “In the case of divorce or separation, a school district must provide equal access to both natural parents, custodial and non-custodial, unless there is a legal binding document that specifically removes that parent’s FERPA rights.”

In this context, a legally binding document (certified court order) is required to prohibit a parent’s access to education records or to place restrictions on when and where a parent may contact the child at school. Mountain West Montessori Academy cannot legally limit access to a child based on a handwritten note, telephone call, email or comments on registration forms from one parent. The school must have a copy of a certified court order noting any restrictions.

## **DISCIPLINE**

### **Discipline/General Expectations**

The Montessori program nurtures self-discipline, which develops over a period of many years. The basis of discipline is respect: respect for oneself, for others, and for the environment. The adults and children in the prepared environment set limits for behavior based on the group’s need for a safe and mutually respectful community.

If a student has difficulty following the rules of the community, the response will be ageappropriate. Personal attention, distraction, substitution and/or removal from the situation are typical approaches. Many instances resolve themselves as the student, within the bounds of safety and common sense, experiences the logical consequences of his actions (i.e. wiping up after throwing a paint can on the floor.) If the student disregards the rules of the classroom community, the Teacher seeks the underlying causes in order to help the student understand the inappropriateness of his/her actions and to find a constructive alternative.

If such behavior occurs repeatedly, the Teacher may request the Director and/or other classroom teachers to observe and offer consultation before the parents are contacted for their support and cooperation.

The following are some guidelines of Montessori discipline that parents should seek to apply at home as well as at the school:

- Hold the child to a standard; he will rise to expectations
- Behavior: think satisfaction and motivation vs. gratification and manipulation
- Separate the “denial/hurt/suffering” of growing up from real deprivation
- Make reward internal not external
- To maintain strong, effective discipline, seek consistency and clarity
- Catch children “doing something right”

- Engage, interest the student  
Redirect the child from destructive, negative behavior
- Involve, stimulate the student
- Be respectful. Maintain unconditional love.
- Use humor to defuse, not to deflate. Sarcasm bites and hurts.
- Let natural consequences flow from inappropriate behavior

### **In the Classroom**

- The teacher will create a classroom environment that establishes clear, consistent expectations for students.
- Teachers will have Classroom expectations (Essential Agreements) in their classroom which:
  - Are developed collaboratively between students and teachers
  - Define behavioral expectations
  - Are agreed upon as expected school behaviors

This method of discipline works to address the behaviors in a way that will teach the student ways to respond appropriately the next time a frustrating situation arises.

In the event of more serious behavioral issues such as intentional injury to another student, seriously reckless behaviors likely to result in or that do result in injury to others, serious property damage and or safe schools' violations will result in additional discipline up to and possibly including suspension and expulsion. (MWMA follows the legal guidelines of Utah Safe Schools Policy)

### **DONATIONS/ANNUAL GIVING**

Mountain West Montessori Academy greatly appreciates donations from parents, extended family and friends. We are very grateful for monetary donations or donations of educational materials for our office and classrooms; however, please confirm that donated items are needed before bringing them to the school. Donations may be tax deductible. Check with your tax advisor as appropriate.

### **DRESS CODE**

The following comprises MWMA's general dress policies. In general, students are expected to wear clothing which is clean, well-fitting, worn correctly, and free of tears and/or holes.

#### **Bottoms**

Pants must be in solid colors only, in the following colors: black, grey, brown, khaki, or navy blue. They may be flat or pleated front in chino, twill, khaki, or corduroy. Cargo pants (pants with outside pockets) are not allowed. No jeans of any color are allowed. Pants must be worn at the waistline and cover all undergarments. Both boys and girls may wear shorts that come to or below mid-thigh in any of the same solid colors. Girls may wear skirts, skorts, jumpers, or capris in any of the same solid colors but all must come to or below mid-thigh; further, tights, leggings, or inconspicuous shorts must be worn underneath skirts and jumpers. Tights and leggings may be any color, solid, print, or patterned. No style of bottoms may have characters, words, or logos. Socks

may be worn in any color or pattern; however, socks and tights must be free of holes, pictures, or logos.

### Tops

Shirts must be of a collared style (polo, oxford, blouse, turtleneck, or dress shirt) with long or short sleeves, and in one of any of the following **SOLID** colors: white, blue, yellow, purple, or red. Shirts may not display characters, words, logos, or drawings with the exception of the MWMA school logo or name. White or grey t-shirts may be worn underneath the collared shirt, and shirts must long enough to be tucked in. All buttoned-down shirts must remain buttoned even when wearing an undershirt.

Sweaters or sweater vests, as well as cardigans and fleece vests may be worn in plain **SOLID** red or navy blue. No hoodies will be allowed at school. Winter parkas and coats that have an attached hood may be worn to school and placed in a locker or designated storage areas. No clothing item may display characters, words, logos, or drawings with the exception of the MWMA school logo or name.

### Shoes and Boots

Shoes and boots may not be open-toed, backless, character, sandals, lighted, heels or wedges over 1/2”, make sounds, or overly distracting. “Heelies” are not allowed for safety reasons. All shoes and boots must be worn with socks or tights. Shoes must be tied or fastened. Snow boots must be changed into school-approved socks or socks and slippers while inside the building.

### Inside Socks and Slippers

Because Montessori students often work on the floor, elementary students will remove their outside shoes and wear socks or socks with slippers in the classroom to promote comfort, cleanliness, and a quiet classroom environment. Appropriate slippers include: croc slippers, slipper socks, or any slippers that are not open-toed, backless, character, sandals, lighted, or otherwise distracting. **MWMA STRONGLY ENCOURAGES students to have HARD SOLED slippers.** In the event that students need to exit the building in an emergency or drill we do not stop to change shoes. The slippers may stay at the school.

### Hats/Caps

No hats or caps, including winter hats and baseball caps, may be worn inside the building.

### Accessories/Body Adornment

Brown or black belts may be worn but cannot include logos, chains, or other distracting paraphernalia. Jewelry, make-up, and hair accessories may be worn as long as they are not a distraction or danger. Hair must not obstruct student vision. Sunglasses may not be worn in the building. Ear gauges, spike jewelry, and visible tattoos (temporary or permanent) are not permitted.

### Field Trips

For field trips, outings, or presentations, the Director may require a school-wide shirt color to help identify our students and enhance school spirit. Information regarding this policy will be presented to families prior to school starting each year.



### School Spirit Shirts

Students may choose to purchase “school spirit shirts” that may be worn in addition to the other allowable shirts.

### Free Dress Day Standards

On free dress days, students are still expected to dress in a manner that positively impacts the learning environment. Clothing must be tasteful and not compromise safety standards for our students. The following are not permitted: baggy or saggy pants, tank tops, shorts or skirts higher than mid-thigh, bare feet, open toe or high-heeled (over 1/2”) shoes, and clothing that displays obscene, vulgar, lewd, or sexually explicit words, messages, or pictures. Clothing must not expose midriffs, buttocks, or undergarments. No clothing assumed as gang-related is allowed.

### Middle School Privilege

Students in grades 7 through 9 may choose to participate, through Student Council or other means, in parliamentary procedure to formulate recommendations about the following dress code additions for each new school year:

1. The wearing of blue jeans (that are free from holes, rips, fraying, logos, & distractions)
2. Additional solid color(s) for middle school shirts

Based upon these procedures each year, a student committee may present student recommendations to the school board. The school board and administration will decide whether to allow these additional dress codes privileges for Middle School students only. These decisions will be made on a yearly basis, and will not automatically carry over to the next year.

### Administration Has Discretion

This policy is intended to create a framework to meet the purpose as stated at the beginning of this policy. As styles change, or if questions arise, the Director, as the Governing Boards’ designee, has the authority to determine whether or not a student’s dress is in keeping with this policy.

### Fitness Dress Code

Middle School students will be required to dress in approved fitness wear for fitness class. Students will have to change for PE classes.

- Approved Athletic shoes (ALWAYS required for PE in Middle School)

### Consequences for not wearing proper dress code:

When students choose not to comply with the dress code standards they will be sent to the front office to call home for the correct clothing. Continuing infractions will be dealt with on an individual basis. In all cases, the Director has the final authority regarding dress code decisions. Any variance of this policy must have prior approval.

### **DROP-OFF & PICK-UP PROCEDURE**

As is the case with many charter schools MWMA anticipates a high number of students will arrive to and from school via carpool. To ensure the safety of your children and yourself, and to facilitate an efficient process, please keep the following in mind: We realize that drop-off/pick-up can be somewhat complicated at times. We would like to offer a couple of suggestions to make it a little easier for everyone.

- Remember that we are models of **Grace and Courtesy** and our students are always watching how we react to difficult and stressful situations.
- The street in front of the school is extremely busy and unsafe for picking up students, please utilize the organized carpool plan or pick another location off the street to meet.
- The parking lot of the Church to the west of the school is also extremely busy and not supervised for pick-up and drop off. MWMA recommends that families use the organized carpool system to pick up and drop of students safely.
- Please be patient and courteous toward MWMA staff, students, and other drivers.
- Stay in your vehicle at all times.
- Refrain from mobile phone usage while driving on school grounds.
- Students will exit and enter from the **RIGHT SIDE** of the vehicle and at the **CURB**.
- **BE AWARE:** By law, all vehicle occupants must be secured in a seat belt and children **UNDER 8** must be secured into a car seat or booster seat **BEFORE VEHICLE IS IN MOTION**.

### Drop off & Pick Up Plan

The specific drop off and pick up plan is available in the office and will be emailed to each family.

### Pick-up

Students must be picked up at dismissal or immediately following an after school program. Student who are not picked up from the school in a timely manner and parents are unavailable by phone may be referred to DCFS or the local police for their own safety.

### DRUGS/ALCOHOL/TOBACCO

Any student who possesses, controls, uses, sells or arranges the sale of real, look-alike or pretend illegal drugs or controlled substances, including alcohol and tobacco, may be suspended, expelled, referred for police investigation and/or prosecuted.

The following may result in mandatory suspension or expulsion and be reported to authorities;

- Possession or use of an alcoholic beverage within 1,000 feet of school property or school sponsored event or during school hours.
- Selling, giving or delivering or distributing tobacco products within 1,000 feet of school property or school sponsored event or during school hours.
- Being under the influence of alcohol within 1,000 feet of school property or school sponsored event or during school hours.
- Sale, control or distribution of a drug or controlled substance within 1,000 feet of school property or school sponsored event or during school hours.
- Sale, control or distribution of drug paraphernalia within 1,000 feet of school property or school sponsored event or during school hours.

### EDUCATIONAL LEAVE

Vacations should be scheduled during natural breaks in the school year. This way, your child can experience the excitement of new places, while not missing any instruction. If you cannot schedule vacations during a natural break, we ask that you notify the school. The request for educational leave should be filled out before your child leaves. It is expected that the homework will be

completed by the due date and concurrently the child is expected to complete on-going assignments and not fall behind.

## ELECTRONIC DEVICES

### Definitions:

- “Electronic Devices” means beepers, pagers, cell phones with or without video or picture-taking capability, MP3 players, iPods, and other electronic media, transmitters, receivers or players.
- “School day” means the hours that make up the school day according to the School’s schedule.
- “School-sponsored activities” means field trips, curricular and extracurricular activities, and extended school-sponsored trips or activities, including school-provided transportation to and from such activities.

Electronic devices may be possessed and used during the school day and during school-sponsored activities as follows:

- Individual teachers may approve the use of electronic devices for specific tasks throughout their class period. (This is for Middle School students. Elementary students should not have electronic devices in school.)
- Electronic devices must remain out of sight in a bag or backpack and be turned off during times that teachers have not specifically designated for their use.
- Students may not use or respond to electronic devices during instructional time or during other times designated by teachers or the Principal. They may check devices during lunch provided that they do not cause a disruption to the learning environment.
- Electronic devices may not be used to threaten, embarrass, harass, or intimidate other students, teachers, volunteers, School guests, or School employees.

A student will receive one warning prior to discipline for violating this policy unless the violation involves cheating or constitutes a violation of the School’s Safe Schools Policy or Bullying and Hazing Policy or at the discretion of the Principal. On the second violation of this policy, the electronic device will be confiscated, labeled, and held in a secure location. The Principal, teachers, and other individuals designated by the Principal may confiscate electronic devices according to this policy.

The School is not responsible for loss, damage or theft of any electronic devices.

The School will make reasonable efforts to notify parents/guardians that the School has a student’s electronic device in its possession. Parents/guardians who show identification may retrieve confiscated electronic devices during school hours or by appointment. *The School will retain unretrieved electronic devices until the end of the school year, at which time all personal data will be cleared from the devices before their disposal.*

The Principal may impose other additional disciplinary consequences for a student’s violation of this policy as the Principal determines is reasonable under the circumstances, including the nature

of the violation and other disciplinary actions in which the student has been involved. Such disciplinary actions may include:

- Loss of the privilege to possess or use electronic devices
- Disciplinary letter to the student's parent/guardian that is placed in the student's file
- Community Improvement
- In-school suspension
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Loss of the privilege of participating in school-sponsored activities or of receiving honor recognition

## **EMERGENCY CONTACT**

The school uses the emergency contact information you provided for us when you registered online. If your child becomes ill or is injured at school, or there is an emergency evacuation this is the information we use as our reference. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the school of any changes to home phone numbers, emails or contact names and phone numbers. If a child is in need of immediate medical assistance, 911 will be called and if necessary, they will be transported by ambulance to the nearest medical facility.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES/DISASTER PLAN**

As an important safety precaution, fire, earthquake and other emergency drills are held at regular intervals as required by law. Instruction in safety procedures is given in all classrooms by the teacher at the beginning of the school year and reviewed periodically. Also, a campus exit route map is posted in each classroom.

## **EXTRA-CURRICULAR PARTICIPATION POLICY**

A student needs to be present for 2 hours of a school day to participate in extra-curricular activities. Any student who has been suspended from MWMA for any reason shall also be suspended from attendance at or involvement in any extra-curricular activity during the full period of the suspension.

## **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS & PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

MWMA has adopted policies for student records and information consistent with FERPA and PPRA, 20 U.S.C. 1232 g. In 2010-2011, notice in the student and parent handbook of the referral procedures and of the availability of services for eligible students with disabilities. Teachers implement research-based and/or peer-reviewed interventions and provide documentation of the results on the Documentation of Response to Intervention Form which is then reviewed by the school's problem-solving team: the Child Study Team (CST). The CST includes an administrator, at least one special and general education teachers, and others as necessary (see additional description of the CST in the Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) evaluation process in Section II of this Manual). The CST reviews student progress, identifies recommendations for instructional and/or behavioral interventions as needed and considers the need for a referral. The team must determine whether interventions have been implemented with fidelity and for a sufficient amount of time. A referral is completed if an evaluation for special education is recommended. The referral form should document parent contacts regarding concerns about the student's educational performance. The review of existing data and evaluation determination is conducted in

collaboration with the problem-solving team. If the action taken is to conduct a full evaluation, the Special Education Director is assigned to coordinate all areas to be assessed as part of the full evaluation. If the referral is not going to result in a full evaluation, the school's administrator in collaboration with the Special Education Director should send the parents a Written Prior Notice of Refusal to take the action of conducting a full evaluation and existing data; information should be placed in an inactive special education folder.

For more information see the school website.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Teachers are encouraged to take their classes on educationally oriented or service learning field trips. Permission slips will be sent home whenever your child's teacher contemplates such a trip. Permission from parents is needed for participation in field trips. These slips must be signed by the parent and turned in to the school. If the slip is not signed and returned, your child will not go on the field trip. Teachers are asked to notify all parents about upcoming field trips in a timely manner. For safety purposes, students may be asked to wear a red polo for fieldtrips.

### **FITNESS CLASS & OUTDOOR RECESS**

Children are expected to participate in outdoor and physical education activities with their class. Consideration will only be given to children who have a medical excuse with a doctor's or parent's note for not participating.

### **FOOD/DRINK POLICY**

Food and drink are permitted only in designated areas. Students are encouraged to bring a water bottle with them so they can hydrate continually during the day. Teachers will be encouraged to identify their students' allergies and dietary restrictions and work with parents to address individual needs.

### **FORGET SOMTHING**

If your student forgets something from home and you are delivering it to the school, please leave it with the front office. This allows us to respect the instructional time of the teacher and the students, so interruptions are minimized.

### **GRADING SCALE**

#### **Mountain West Montessori Academy Middle School Grading Scale:**

100% - 94%	=	<b>A</b>	76% - 74%	=	<b>C</b>
93% - 90%	=	<b>A-</b>	73% - 70%	=	<b>C-</b>
89% - 87%	=	<b>B+</b>	69% - 67%	=	<b>D+</b>
86% - 84%	=	<b>B</b>	66% - 64%	=	<b>D</b>
83% - 80%	=	<b>B-</b>	63% - 60%	=	<b>D-</b>
79% - 77%	=	<b>C+</b>	59% & below	=	<b>F</b>

### **GUM**

No gum is allowed on campus at any time (this includes before and after school hours).

## **HARASSMENT, HAZING, BULLYING AND INITIATIONS**

Harassment is defined as unwanted verbal or physical advances or threats. The difference between fun and harassment is how it makes the victim feel. Harassment, hazing, or initiations of any type are not permitted in school or extracurricular activities. Students guilty of harassment of any type; threats, hazing, intimidation or initiations, may be suspended and/or referred to law enforcement for disciplinary action. The school shall act to investigate all complaints of discriminatory or other harassment, verbal or written, and to discipline or take other appropriate action against anyone who is found to have violated this policy.

*Bullying Prohibition and Prevention:* All students should feel safe at school. Mountain West Montessori Academy has no tolerance for bullying. Bullying is a form of harassment and is defined as: The repeated intimidation of students by the real or threatened infliction of physical, verbal, written, electronically transmitted, or emotional abuse, or through attacks on the property of another. It may include but is not limited to actions such as verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, including ethnically based or gender-based verbal put-downs, and extortion of money or possessions. Such conduct is disruptive to the educational process and therefore, bullying is unacceptable behavior. Students who engage in any act of bullying while at school, at any school function, in connection to or with any school sponsored activity or event, or while en route to or from school are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion. Consequences will depend on age, situation, and child's previous behavioral issues. Law enforcement officials shall be notified of bullying incidents, as required by law. This policy also applies to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student's act of bullying. Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited. Since Utah is a NO BULLYING state, bullying will result in severe consequences.

## **HEALTH AND RELATED ISSUES**

If your child has had a fever, has vomited, or had diarrhea, or has had any rash that may be disease related or if you do not know the cause, the child should stay home until you have been able to check with your family physician.

### *Becoming Ill at School*

If a student becomes ill at school, every effort will be made to contact the parents who should be available to come check the student out at the office and take the student home. We require that you, or someone you designate, pick up your child.

### *Chronic or Serious Conditions*

Chronic or serious conditions such as diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, etc., which could conceivably require emergency treatment, should be brought to the attention of school personnel immediately and noted on the registration card. The parent should also inform the child's teacher of any medical conditions.

## **HOMEWORK**

Montessori is a very hands-on environment, as such we strive to provide students with meaningful learning experiences that are connected to the real world. We ask that you read with your child every night and take opportunities to engage with your student in projects and topics they are interested in exploring further. Research shows that students learn best when their world is their

classroom, naturally home is the center of that world. Your elementary student will not come home with nightly worksheets or more “traditional homework,” but they will, from time to time, have projects and other activities to work on at home as well as in the classroom. Students who are struggling academically may be given materials from their teacher to get additional practice with at home. Our middle school students will have service learning experiences, projects, math practice, and reading assignments that will need to take place outside the classroom.

### **ITEMS FROM HOME**

The school cannot assume responsibility for any items brought to school. We ask parents to be observant in making sure that when valuables are brought to school, they are brought to the teacher for safe keeping. Valuables should never be left in the students' cubby or locker. If you feel your property has been stolen, contact an administrator; however, there is no guarantee your property will be recovered.

### **LIBRARY DONATION OPPORTUNITY**

Mountain West Montessori Library will gladly accept gifts of new books and other solicited materials. Students are encouraged to donate a book to the library on their birthday.

### **LIBRARY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY**

Volunteers are welcome in the library. Time spent here qualifies towards the 30 hours yearly volunteer expectation. Time can be scheduled in regular weekly intervals, or we welcome parents who can drop by and give time here and there. The volunteers help with shelving the books, returning and entering books in the computer, putting labels and barcodes on books, creating Montessori materials for parent checkout, pulling books for teachers, straightening shelves, cleaning books, and assisting students in finding book choices. It is a warm, welcoming environment.

### **LOCKERS**

Lockers are available to students in grades 7 – 9. Lockers are school property and should be treated with respect. They are made available for student use to store school supplies and personal items necessary for use at school and may be used with the following conditions:

- No food should be left in a locker overnight. Stickers are not allowed on the inside or outside of the locker.
- Students should keep their lockers locked at all times.
- Students are not allowed to share a locker.
- Students are responsible for locker damage and condition.
- Students may not write in or on lockers or decorate with anything that is difficult to remove.
- Students must keep their lockers clean.
- Students must use the locker and lock assigned to them and should not share their combination with friends. (In the event that a student needs to make a change to lockers please notify the front office.)

Violation of locker usage will result in an appropriate consequence. MWMA retains the right to inspect the locker and its contents to ensure that the locker is being used for its' intended purpose, and to eliminate hazards, maintain sanitary conditions, attempt to locate lost or stolen material, and prevent the storage of prohibited/dangerous materials such as weapons, illegal drugs, alcohol,

or tobacco. Lockers remain school property and students will have no expectation of privacy. MWMA assumes NO responsibility for loss or damage to any item in a locker, locked or unlocked.

Any damages should be reported immediately to the office and any damage caused by misuse will be charged to the student occupying the locker. These lockers are not to be used to store items which cause or can reasonably be foreseen to cause, an interference with school purposes or an educational function or which are forbidden by state law or school rules. Repeated infractions may result in termination of the use of lockers in which the locker fee will be forfeited. Restitution will be made for any damage to lockers.

## LOST AND FOUND

All “lost and found” articles such as clothing, lunch boxes, backpacks, glasses, etc. are to be brought to the office. Every effort is made to get students to check the “lost and found” area and claim their belongings. All major items of clothing, lunch boxes, and backpacks should be marked with your child's name. If your child is missing something you sent to school with him/her, please feel free to come and look through the “lost and found” boxes. All articles not claimed by the end of each month, will be donated to a local charity.

## LUNCH PROGRAM

Students will need to bring a lunch every day or make arrangements to purchase lunch from the school cafeteria. Lunch balances may be paid online or by having your child bring money to school give it to the front office. Families with restricted household incomes may apply for free and reduced lunch with forms in the front office. Please make sure the lunch box is cleaned daily. Lunch boxes should be labeled clearly with the child’s name. Please provide a nutritional lunch including juice or milk. **Soda, caffeinated beverages and candy are not permitted.** We encourage all students at our school to help reduce waste by bringing lunch in reusable containers. Please help us learn to keep our environment clean and healthy. Lunches cannot be refrigerated at school so include an ice pack if the lunch is perishable. In the case of a forgotten lunch, students will be allowed to call parents twice.

## MAKE-UP WORK

Make-up work is permitted for students who have “excused” absences. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain the make-up work from the teacher. Make-up work must be completed within a reasonable time frame as determined by the teacher. If a student is absent, it is his/her responsibility to find out the work that was missed.

## MEDICAL INFORMATION

**Medication** -- The School will comply with applicable state and federal laws regarding the administration of medication to students by School personnel. Accordingly, pursuant to this policy, authorized School personnel may provide assistance in the administration of medication to students of the School during periods when the student is under the School’s control.

The Director will consult with the local health department and/or a registered health care professional for assistance in developing procedures and training necessary for effective implementation of this policy. The School’s Director will ensure that School personnel and parents



are provided with information about this policy. In order to ensure safe administration of medication to students, the procedures outlined here must be followed.

1. The Director will designate a reasonable number of School employees who will be responsible for administering medication to students in the School.
2. The Director will arrange for the Director and all designated School employees to receive adequate training from a licensed health care professional prior to administering any medication. Training should include indications for the medication, means of administration, dosage, adverse reactions, contraindications, and side effects.
3. The student's parent or guardian must complete the parent/guardian section of the Student Medication Form requesting that medication be administered to the student during regular school hours. Parents are responsible for updating the Student Medication Form as necessary.
4. The student's health care provider must complete the Health Care Provider section of the Student Medication Form indicating the child's name, the name of the medication, the purpose of the medication, the means of administration, the dosage, the time schedule for administration, the anticipated number of days the medication needs to be given at school, and possible side effects. The practitioner must also affirm that giving the medication during school hours is medically necessary.
5. A Student Medication Log must be maintained for any student who has medication administered at school, and all employees authorized to administer medication will be notified regarding each student to whom they are authorized to administer medication.
6. Each time medication is given, the person who gave it must document the administration in ink on the Student Medication Log. If the medication is not administered as scheduled, a notation must be made on the Student Medication Log as to why the medication was not given, and the student's parent or guardian must be notified.
7. The Student Medication Form and Student Medication Log will be retained in the student's records.
8. Teachers of the student receiving medication during school hours will be notified.
9. Medication (other than that carried by a student) must be delivered to the School by the student's parent or guardian or designated adult.
10. Medication should be delivered to the School in a container properly labeled by a pharmacy, manufacturer or health care provider. Labeling must include the student's name, the name of the prescribing practitioner, date the prescription was filled, name and phone number of the dispensing pharmacy, name of the medication, dose, frequency of administration, and the expiration date.
11. Medication must be stored in a secure, locked cabinet or container in a cool, dry place, except that: medications that require refrigeration must be stored appropriately; insulin or emergency medications such as EpiPens, Twinject Auto-Injectors, asthma inhalers and glucagon must not be stored in a locked area so that they are available when needed.
12. Authorization for administration of medication by School personnel may be withdrawn by the School at any time following written or verbal notice to the student's parent or guardian, as long as this action does not conflict with federal laws such as IDEA and/or section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The Director may withdraw authorization for administration of medication in cases of noncompliance or lack of cooperation by parents or students unless the student's right to receive medication at school is protected by laws such as IDEA or section 504. Glucagon is an emergency diabetic medication used to raise blood sugar. The

School will comply with the requirements of Utah Code Ann. § 53A-11-604 in the event the School receives a glucagon authorization request from the parent or guardian of a student.

The School will comply with the requirements of Utah Code Ann. §§ 26-41-101, et seq., regarding emergency injection for anaphylactic reactions, in the event any School personnel seeks to become a “qualified adult” under that provision.

### **Self-Administration of Medication by Students**

Students may possess and self-administer asthma medication and/or diabetes medication, as the case may be, if:

The student’s parent or guardian signs a statement:

- Authorizing the student to self-administer the medication; and
- Acknowledging that the student is responsible for, and capable of, self-administering the medication; and
- The student’s health care provider provides a written statement that: *It is medically appropriate for the student to self-administer the medication and be in possession of the medication at all times;* and
- The name of the medication prescribed for the student’s use.

The School will provide an acceptable form for such requests.

Students are not prohibited from possessing one day’s dosage of a non-prescription medication where the student’s maturity level is such that he or she can reasonably be expected to properly administer the medication on his or her own.

### **Individual Health Care Plans**

If your child’s health condition requires a Health Care Plan, please contact the office. A plan will be written with our attending nurse. It is vital that we be informed of health issues that affect your student’s well-being while attending MMA.

### **Illness**

We are concerned about the health of all of our students. If your child is sick, keep him or her home; otherwise, your child will be expected to participate in all activities unless we have a physician’s note. Keep your child home when he/she has a fever, has been on an antibiotic for less than 24 hours, the length of time identified by your doctor, etc. Remember, sending your sick child to school only spreads the "bug" to others. If a situation arises during the school day when a child becomes ill, or is sent to school sick, he/she will be sent home after parents have been notified and proper arrangements have been made to pick up your child. Again, we have the responsibility of providing a healthy learning environment and if a student endangers this environment, we have an obligation to send that child home.

### **Head Lice**

Head lice occur often in schools. When we encounter a case, we call the child's parents to remove the child from school for treatment. We also check children in the affected child's classroom, the

child's brothers or sisters, and close friends from other classrooms if other infected students are substantiated. Isolated cases of head lice are treated as such; only the affected children's parents are notified. If we have several children in a classroom infected, we will send a notice of a head lice outbreak to the parents of all children in that classroom. If we encounter outbreaks in several classrooms, we will send a general notice out to all Mountain West Montessori Academy parents.

## Injuries

Students are instructed to report all accidents to their classroom teacher. Staff members are to report all accidents or injuries to the office. If the injury is an emergency 911 will be called. Parents will be notified immediately, and an ambulance summoned, if needed. It is important that parents keep contact information current with our office. In case of an emergency the school will release the student's medical information to emergency personal. On occasion students do not tell the teacher or office that they have had an accident. Parents who find out their child had an accident at school and know the student did not report should inform the office as soon as possible.

## MONEY AND OTHER VALUABLES

Excessive amounts of money or other valuable items such as electronic devices, iPods, Jewelry, etc. should not be brought to school. There is no place in the classroom to safeguard items of value and children can be careless with money or expensive items. Cell phones must not be on or visible during instructional time – See Electronic Device Policy online. **The school will not be responsible for items brought by your child to school that become stolen or damaged.**

## PARENT CONCERNS

Parents are always free to bring any problems or questions to the attention of the Director. It is the policy of the school for parents to first discuss any classroom concerns with their child's teacher prior to involving the Director. In almost every instance, frankness and consideration of all points of view can bring an equitable solution. Should questions still remain, the parents are invited to bring the concern to the Director. Conversely, teachers will communicate with parents any concerns they may have about a student's progress or behavior. **Any concerns brought to the Director from a parent will be shared with the teacher.** It is only through open and honest communication that issues may be resolved.

## PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Conferences will be held twice each year (October and March), and an additional progress report will be sent out at the end of the school year. This is a time when students, parents, and teachers talk about the students' progress in the school and their individual needs. **Attendance is crucial!** Students will be released early on conference days and may plan on being involved in the conference. This time is considered an official school day and the conference may be led by the student, depending on age. If you need to meet with your teacher more than twice a year or if a problem arises please contact the teacher directly to set up an appointment. Parents may ask for an additional conference at any time.

## PHYSICAL CONTACT (FIGHTING & INAPPROPRIATE DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION)

Fighting will not be tolerated at school, any school function or school-sponsored activity. Students who threaten to fight may be suspended. Any child who hits a student will be automatically

suspended. People who promote, instigate or encourage fighting will likewise be held responsible. Consequences will be determined based on age and past behavior. Fighting is defined as any physical contact in aggression, which would include, but is not limited to: hitting, kicking, pushing, striking a person with any kind of object (i.e.: pencil, elastic band, etc.), or spanking.

Students who display inappropriate attention towards one another in and/or near school or at a school sponsored activity will be reminded to refrain from such behavior. It is distracting and will not be allowed. Examples of PDA (public display of affection) include but are not limited to: kissing, inappropriate hugging, etc. After one reminder, the students involved in inappropriate PDA will receive an office referral and will participate in a parent conference. Additional issues may result in additional consequences.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Students are provided physical education instruction each week and they are expected to participate unless they have an injury or severe misbehavior, which prevents them from doing so. An injury or illness requiring loss of more than three (3) days of gym class requires a doctor's written permit. Physical conditioning is stressed in physical education along with cleanliness, safety and having an enjoyable time. Incorporation of a wide range of interests along with activities that will carry over in future years is the basis of the physical education program.

### **PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION**

School staff and parent volunteers will provide supervision on the playground at recess and lunch. Mountain West Montessori Academy does not provide student supervision on the playground before or after school. All students are expected to leave school or be picked up by a parent/guardian immediately following dismissal.

### **PORNOGRAPHY**

Pornography consists of, but is not limited to (any image, whether still or video), story, or audio, that is sexually explicit in nature. Pornography is not permitted at school for any reason. Students who are found participating in any form of pornography will receive a referral to administrators and may be reported to legal authorities for further actions. Students who are participating in any form of pornography while using a computer, will lose computer privileges for the remainder of the school year.

### **PRIVACY RIGHTS**

Students possess the right of privacy of person as well as freedom from unreasonable search and seizure or property. This individual's right, however, is balanced by the school's responsibility to protect the health, safety and welfare of all students. School employees may conduct searches when they have reason to suspect the health, safety, or welfare of students may be in danger. Any school employee making a search or seizure will follow these guidelines:

- General searches of school property (including personal items found in or on school property may be conducted at any time when there is reason to believe that a violation of a law or school rule has occurred on school property.
- This search of school property may be made without the student being present.

- Illegal items (firearms, explosive devices, weapons, drugs) or other possessions reasonably determined to be a threat to the safety, security of other, or might possibly interfere with school purposes may be seized by school employees.
- Items, which are used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process, may be removed.
- A student may be searched by school employees when there is reason to believe that the student has illegal items or other items that may interfere with school purposes.
- School employees may search motor vehicles parked on school property when there is reason to believe the health, safety or welfare of students might be in jeopardy.

In the interest of student health, safety, and welfare the school may and will use dogs trained in detection of illegal drugs, explosives, and incendiary devices. Local law enforcement would be called to check backpacks, purses, clothing, vehicles in any school parking lot, and other items as appropriate on any school property and/or school sponsored event where dogs may be used.

### **REPORT CARDS/GRADING POLICY**

Elementary School Progress will be recorded not in formal grade but in mastery of skills outline in the Utah State Common Core and Montessori Sequencing. Parents will be able to access reports of what their students have mastered as well as the skills expected for them to be performing on grade level through the Montessori Compass Program online. Teachers and parents will discuss these in detail at parent teacher conferences, parents are welcome and encouraged to e-mail teachers or set up additional parent teacher meetings to discuss student progress as needed.

Middle School Report cards will come out four times a year. Report cards may be accessed through ASPIRE unless otherwise requested.

### **SAFE SCHOOL**

*The purpose of Mountain West Montessori Academy's (the "School") Safe Schools Policy is to help all students develop positive relationships with other students and adults, take responsibility for their actions and learning, and develop the self-discipline necessary to create an environment that is characterized by physical and emotional safety in order to enhance learning for everyone.*

The School will foster a school and community-wide expectation of good citizenship for students and a sense of responsibility in the school community for rules and standards of behavior.

The School will promote and require: student responsibility for learning and behavior in all grades; student conduct that produces a proper learning environment and respect for the personal, civil, and property rights of all members of the School community; parents and guardians of all students to assume proper responsibility for their students' behavior and to cooperate with School authorities in encouraging student self-discipline and discouraging behavior that is disruptive to the School's educational program.

### **SCHOOL PRIDE AND SERVICE**

It is the philosophy of Mountain West Montessori Academy to provide all students opportunities to learn benefits of service. As part of the school curriculum, students will have opportunity to participate in school sponsored projects such as school grounds beautification, tutoring, community service learning experiences.

## **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

Utah law requires that schools furnish students with necessary daily school supplies, such as pencils, crayons, paper, and rulers for elementary students. However, you may desire providing your child(ren) with a pencil box and other kinds of supplies. In addition, periodically there may be specific supplies needed from home for special projects. Classroom teachers will notify parents when this occurs. Check the website for teacher requested donations. A list of required supplies for Middle School students will be provided at the beginning of the school year and on the website.

## **SCREENINGS**

Vision screenings will be conducted for the kindergarten students by the staff during the school year. Please contact the office if you have questions regarding these health screening programs.

## **SELLING PRODUCTS ON CAMPUS**

Selling any products on campus not approved by the administration is prohibited.

## **STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Mountain West Montessori Academy admits students of any race, color, national, ethnic or religious origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission or other school administered programs.

## **STUDENT CHECK –IN AND CHECK-OUT PROCEDURES**

If a student arrives at school after 9:00a.m., the supervising adult must personally escort and sign the student in at the front office. If it is necessary for a student to leave school during the school day, a parent/guardian or designated person on the emergency contact card must sign the child out at the front office. In the interest of student safety, please be ready to show photo identification when requesting to have contact with a student.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

All student records and information contained in them is privileged and strictly confidential. MWMA will not distribute or release information in a child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for the child without the written consent of the child's parents. The school will notify the parents if a record is subpoenaed. All student records are open to parental inspection. Parents wishing to review their child's records will contact the school to arrange completion of the necessary form. The Director, after reviewing the completed form will schedule an opportune time for review. The Director or other designated school personnel will then explain and interpret the student's records to parents as is needed. MWMA will maintain a written log in each child's record indicating persons to whom information contained has been released. This log will be available to the child's parent and the school staff. In some instances when requesting school records, completion of a GRAMA Form may be required. The school will follow the Utah Government Records Access Management Act passed in 1991.

## **STUDENT VISITORS**

To provide for a safe environment, students are not allowed to have student visitors attend school with them at any time during school hours. This also applies to after school activities unless otherwise specified. A school administrator must approve all exceptions.

## **SUSPENSION**

Students who have been suspended from school must not come on campus during the suspension period and are not allowed at extracurricular activities during the suspension period.

## **TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS**

Mountain West Montessori Academy is committed to educating the whole child by utilizing Dr. Maria Montessori's proven educational philosophy and methodology. The staff includes certified and trained teachers and assistants. Teachers at MWMA will have received or be in the process of receiving Montessori teacher certification from an accredited Montessori teacher education institution. Teachers will be certified on the level they are teaching and display expertise in all aspects of the curriculum on this level. All teachers will hold appropriate license and endorsements as outlined in Utah rule.

In order to keep current in educational practices both within the Montessori community and out, the staff is required to complete continuing education credits annually. We as Montessorians have a life-long love of learning; attending professional conferences and other classes and workshops is one of many ways this love of learning is manifested. MWMA will employ a special education teacher to ensure that students with special needs are experiencing success within the inclusion of the Montessori environment.

## **TELEPHONE USE**

Students may only use the office telephone if necessary for emergencies. Any student feeling sick and needing to call their parent/guardian must call from the front office phone.

## **TESTING POLICIES**

Mountain West Montessori Academy's aim for any test or assessment is to use the results as a tool to better understand the specific needs of the students and improve our ability to meet individual student needs and ensure that they are prepared for the next level of education.

Please make sure that your student is in attendance during testing days.

Should a student have a planned absence at the time of these tests, they will be given an opportunity to take the tests at a specified time during the testing window. Students wishing to Opt Out of SAGE testing need to do so with the form approved by the USOE. In order to provide an organized learning/testing environment for all students we request that parents support the school by turning in forms BEFORE the day of the test. Students with forms turned in on the day of testing may be given a test that is later invalidated in the system. Please notify the teacher and front office as soon as possible if your child will be missing the testing. If a student is unable to take the test during that specified time, they will not be allowed to make up these tests.

## **BOOKS /SCHOOL MATERIALS**

Books and other materials will be issued to each student. Mountain West Montessori Academy encourages students to cover their books with book covers to help protect them from damage. If a book/material is lost or damaged, it is the responsibility of the student and parents/guardians to pay for the book and notify the appropriate teacher or administrator.

## **THEFT, EXTORTION, VANDALISM, AND ARSON**

Any student involved in stealing or extorting money, vandalizing school or personal property, or in causing fires of any nature may be suspended and/or expelled, and referred to law enforcement officers. Students found in possession of any incendiary device such as, but not limited to, matches and lighters are also in violation. Any student who destroys or defaces school or personal property will be responsible for restitution and may be referred to law enforcement officers.

## **VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS**

Parents and guardians are encouraged to visit the school frequently and take an active role in the education of their children. Arrangements to visit a classroom may be made by contacting the teacher to set up a convenient time. All non-employee adults must sign in at the front office and pick up a visitor's badge upon entering the building. Any parent who wishes the option to work with students on an individual level must first take and pass a background check. Information regarding this check is available from the Office.

Please leave small children at home if you plan to assist in the classroom. Teachers may not conduct private conferences with parents during instructional time unless a prior arrangement with the teacher has been made. Visitors should also remember to sign out and return the visitor's badge prior to leaving the school.

## **VOLUNTEER HOURS**

Studies show that parent participation is directly related to student success. Mountain West Montessori Academy recognizes that parents want to be actively involved in the education of their children. MWMA recognizes that volunteers make a profound difference in creating a learning environment. We appreciate all the work the volunteers do to make our school successful. Volunteer hours can be hours worked on campus or hours worked at home.

## **WEAPONS**

The School recognizes a responsibility to provide a safe environment where students and employees are free from unlawful and violent acts. A student may be suspended or expelled from school when the Administration has determined that he/she represents a threat to the health and/or safety of other students and/or school employees by:

- Possessing, using, threatening to use, selling or attempting to sell any firearm, facsimile of a weapon, knife, explosive, chemical/weapon/device, martial arts weapon or other dangerous object. A student who is found to have brought a weapon (as defined under section 921 of title 18, United States Code), to school or to a school-supervised activity or to be in possession of such a weapon while at school or when involved in any school supervised activity, or who has threatened the use of a weapon at school or in connection with any school-supervised activity, shall be expelled from school.



- Causing, attempting, or threatening to cause, personal harm, damage to personal or school property, and/or disrupting school activities or transportation. Such actions include, but are not limited to the following:
  - Arson - The willful and malicious burning of any part of a building or its contents.
  - Vandalism – The willful act of damaging or altering the physical appearance or property of the school, staff, or students.

### **WITHDRAWAL/TRANSFERRING STUDENTS**

If a student is transferring to another school, the parent/guardian must fill out the official withdrawal form (located at the front office). A withdrawal form (needing parent/guardian signature) will be generated, grades will be assigned, and textbooks and library materials collected. Student transcripts and health records will be forwarded, once requested from the new school. We cannot send official school records with the family. **In order to facilitate transfer of records and a successful transition, students not returning the next year need to withdraw prior to June 30, this is particularly helpful if they are planning to attend a boundary school within the Jordan School District.**



## Field Trip Administrative Procedures

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Montessori philosophy emphasizes “going out”—the act of bringing learning outside the classroom. This can range from a kindergarten nature walk around the school to a weeks-long out-of-country experience for the middle schoolers. Experiential learning outside the classroom, in all its forms, is an exploration of the world and all the amazing things it has to offer. Our students’ brains are formed and changed by the stimulus they receive. Being out in the world offers a broad range of learning benefits because it broadens experience.

Field trips are a primary way to get students learning outside the school. Our goal is to provide our students with field trips each year that support and enhance our curriculum.

The School recognizes the importance of field trips as a connection to, and an extension of, the regular curriculum. Fees for field trips cannot be charged for students in grades K-6; however, donations for field trips may be solicited. Students in grades 7-9 may be requested to pay a field trip fee. Fee Waiver policies apply. No student will remain behind during a field trip simply for failure to provide a donation or field trip fee.

**FIELD TRIP COORDINATORS** – Teachers will serve as Field Trip Coordinators for all field trips. They will be responsible for estimating costs to formulate the field trip budget as well as scheduling bus transportation if needed and providing permission forms. Additionally, the Field Trip Coordinators will ensure that all procedures are followed in order that field trips are well planned and are enjoyable and educational experiences for all.

**SUPERVISION** – Field Trip Coordinators are responsible for ensuring that adequate adult supervision is maintained on all field trips. Proper ratios of adult chaperones (parent volunteers or school staff) to students for typical field trips are as follows:

K and 1st – 1 : 5  
2nd and 3rd – 1 : 6  
4th thru 6th – 1 : 6  
7th and 8th – 1 : 8  
9th – 1 : 8

The nature of some field trips may require additional supervision as determined by the Director.

**LUNCH** – The School may provide sack lunches for students on field trips, with advance notice on the permission form. Students may also provide their own home lunch. This must be communicated to parents and students.

**DRESS CODE** – Students are required to comply with the School’s Dress Code while on School-sponsored field trips. Exceptions may include if the School Dress Code apparel is not appropriate for the activities of the field trip, such as swimming or skiing.

**PERMISSION** – Parents or guardians must provide written permission prior to their student attending a field trip. A scanned, faxed or other form of a written signature is acceptable. Phone calls and emails are not acceptable forms of signed, written permission. Permission forms must be returned prior to the day of the field trip and must be approved by an administrator before being distributed to students and parents.

**PAYMENT** – All donations or fees must be made to the office. The front office staff will track the money collected and issue receipts. It is the responsibility of the scheduling teacher to arrange payment with the field trip venue. If payment must be made by check or credit card, the scheduling teacher must notify the administration at least two weeks prior to the field trip.

**FIELD TRIP AUTHORIZATION FORM** – Each scheduling teacher must complete the School’s Field Trip Authorization Form and submit it to the Director for review and approval prior to any field trip.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES** – The School does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its educational programs or activities, including with respect to field trips, as demonstrated by the following:

- A. The School provides non-academic and extracurricular services and activities in such manner as is necessary to afford students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in such services and activities;
- B. The School provides non-academic and extracurricular services and activities in such manner as is necessary to afford students with disabilities an opportunity to participate, to the maximum extent appropriate, in such services and activities with students without disabilities;
- C. Students’ Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and Section 504 Plans are in effect for field trips; and
- D. If a parent or guardian of a student with a disability believes the student has been discriminated against by the School with respect to a field trip, the parent or guardian may contact the U.S. Department of Education for Civil Rights (“OCR”) to file a complaint. The phone number and email address for OCR’s Denver Office (the office that serves the state of Utah) is as follows: phone (303-8445695) and email ([OCR.Denver@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Denver@ed.gov)).



Dear Parent/Guardian,

Studies have shown that children of parents who are actively involved in their child's education are more successful in school. Because we want your child to do as well as possible, we ask that you and your child complete your sections of this Contract and return to the school office no later than the first day of school. The MWMA Staff look forward to working with you and your student.

Sincerely,  
Angie Johnson  
Director

# MOUNTAIN WEST MONTESSORI ACADEMY CONTRACT

## PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

*I want my child to achieve, therefore I will:*

### **Make sure my child is ready for school each day.**

On time, well rested, fed, assignments complete (as necessary).

### **Encourage my child's learning.**

Read with/to them, let them see me read, help with homework (if any), utilize online resources for literacy and math, take advantage of school sponsored educational activities.

### **Stay informed of my student's progress.**

Communicate with teachers, review any materials sent home, utilize the online student information system (Middle School) or work plan/ Montessori Compass (Lower Elementary).

### **Support the school.**

Volunteer my time in the school, encourage positive attitudes towards school and learning, learn about the Montessori method.

### **Help maintain a peaceful and ordered learning environment.**

Help maintain proper discipline, support policies and rules as outlined in the handbook and website, be familiar with and follow the school dress code.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

*I want and need to learn, therefore I will:*

### **Come to school prepared each day.**

Attend school regularly and on time, complete homework (if assigned), get a good night's sleep, prepare my school bag the night before.

### **Show respect for myself and those around me.**

Cooperate with others and use the peace table to resolve differences, take care of school materials and computers, follow school rules, be responsible for my actions, follow the dress code.

### **Challenge myself academically.**

Put my best effort into school work, use my work plan/planner as a tool to help me be successful, be responsible for completing assignments, be curious and engaged with my learning environment, set goals for myself that challenge me to grow and learn new things.

## TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

*I want my students to succeed, therefore I will:*

### **Have high expectations.**

Of my students, the school, the parents, and myself.

### **Create a quality classroom environment.**

Provide high-quality instruction, ensure that the work expected of students is meaningful, participate in professional development, and continuously improve based on assessment data.

**Communicate regularly.**

With my students and their families through conferences, notes, phone calls, updated teacher website, student work plans, Aspire/Montessori Compass etc.

**Create a positive learning environment.**

Support school policies, provide positive and productive feedback to students, conduct classroom meetings to provide a productive voice to student needs, provide opportunities for parents to assist and observe in the classroom.

**DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

*I want the students, faculty, staff, and school to succeed, therefore I will:*

**Promote the school’s mission and vision.**

With students, parents, faculty, and staff through the website, school activities, assemblies and email.

**Provide a safe, peaceful, and equitable learning environment.**

Look for and address any safety issues, enforce school policies, maintain discipline in a supportive and constructive manner.

**Provide a sustainable learning environment**

Mange school resources effectively, follow state laws and requirements, create and maintain a school wide improvement plan, foster the long term success of the school.

**Have an open door.**

For faculty, staff, students, and parents to communicate their ideas, questions, and concerns. Foster an ongoing positive relationship with students.

**Foster a strong faculty.**

Hire quality and appropriately licensed teachers, arrange quality professional development opportunities, classroom visits, mentoring and evaluations, nurture a life-long learning culture, encourage a supportive environment where quality teachers feel valued.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director Signature