

HEARTWOOD



Aspen Academy Community Resource Guide 2022-2023

MAKE THE WORLD B



heart• wood

/ˈhārt,wood

NOUN The dense inner part of a tree trunk, yielding the hardest timber.

Dear Aspen Academy Community:

We are excited to bring you the newest edition of Aspen Academy's Heartwood Community Resource Guide. Do you remember some of your first days of the school year?

As you reflect on this, give yourself a self-affirmation that you have invested in the opportunity for a beautiful whole child educational experience for your student here at Aspen Academy. Celebrate witnessing the return of your investment as your child quickly bounds through those doors with enthusiasm, a renewed spirit of curiosity, kindness and hope to make this world a better place.

We encourage gratitude to self for the choices your family has made to create this experience for your child and gratitude to those that fill Aspen Academy with an energy that is palpable. We invite you to enjoy entering the year with eyes wide open to the endless possibilities of intentional engagement and the resounding ripple of love and care this brings.

We are excited for you to witness the beautiful moments of your child developing as you move through the 2022-2023 school year. Moments that may at first feel

small to us, often big for them; moments that when looked at collectively, make life big!

As this new year begins, take a moment to consider how your gifts of time, talent and treasure can enhance this community as you lean in and love it, in your unique way. Time moves faster and faster with each coming year.

It is our hope that this resource promotes your valuable engagement and gratitude for the possibilities that come with a new school year and new intentions. Also, the information within these pages will help all of our new families feel WELCOME and immersed in our community while allowing our long-term families to renew their opportunities for connection and growth.

We would like to thank all of our parent and teacher contributors, the Aspen Marketing and Communications team—Jordyn Linnell and Theresa Letman, as well as the Aspen Academy administration for all of their efforts in bringing this newest edition of Heartwood to our community. Lean in, love in and enjoy setting your intentions to make this 2022-2023 school year great!



In kindness,
Aspen Academy Parents,
Erin Chain and
Amanda Jackson Oriol

**Heartwood Community
Resource Guide sponsored
and provided by**

AMANDA JACKSON
BROKER ASSOCIATE, REALTOR™

Amanda is the proud mom of
Katie Oriol (4th), Weston Oriol
(8th), Brady Oriol (Alumnus),
Jackson Oriol (Alumnus).



**AMANDA
JACKSON**



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A Letter From Our Head of School

A home to grow, learn, and lead in...

As a school that fiercely believes in continuous improvement, the past year was largely shaped by the words of Seneca: "The whole future lies in uncertainty: live immediately." We have been committed to resilience, committed to grow, and committed to demonstrating what it means to live from our values: Be Kind. Do Good. Work Hard. Make the World Better.

Over the past year, our dedicated faculty brought to life new opportunities for our students to learn, from our Inaugural Math Bee for Kindergarten-second grade to resuming Adventure Week and Speech & Debate Day. From Kindergarten STEAM students presenting to the U.S. Patent Office to 8th graders working tirelessly to perform their incredible graduation dance, there were countless moments of learning from August to June.

We have continuously sought to lead through and out of this pandemic. For us, leading means coming back to our roots: to creating a place of belonging for each student, faculty and staff member, parent, grandparent, and family member. By focusing on that culture, and with the support of our incredible parent community, we've achieved **100% faculty retention in both our Lower School and Middle School.**

One of the most rewarding aspects of growing, learning, and leading is celebrating our success. Aspen Academy has received numerous well-deserved accolades in recent months:

- At year-end, we learned that **85% of Aspen Academy students are in the top 10% of U.S. students in math and reading.**

- We were recognized as a **Denver Business Journal Best Places to Work** (the singular school on the list).
- Last month, we celebrated our third win as a **Top 3 Colorado Parent Family Favorite.**

The momentum of these well-deserved acknowledgements frames the year to come. In 2022-2023, we'll offer our most robust catalog of parent volunteering opportunities and parent engagement activities. We'll experience students, inspired by our remarkable faculty, who accomplish feats we can only imagine. We'll connect and make memories to last a lifetime in a place that's a lifelong home to so many in our community. For 2022-2023, we will continue to grow, learn, and lead and look forward to having each of you on the journey with us.

With Kindness,



Kristina Scala, Head of School

kristina.scala@aspenacademy.org



Our Values

Be Kind.

Do Good.

Work Hard.

Make The World Better.



Our Mission

We edify and inspire
students, parents and
educators to grow,
learn and lead.



Our Vision

We are a national leader in innovative and transformative education.



Hello from our Academic Directors



Dana Kohls

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**Lower School
Director**

Dana Kohls

Ask me about: Pre-K to 4th Grade

It is a thrill to lead as Lower School Director of Aspen Academy. It is truly an honor to be a part of a community living and holding each other accountable to the values of kindness, hard work, and seeking to do good in all facets of life. Combined with the values of Aspen Academy, our exceptional team of educators will strengthen next-generation education skills through relevant, meaningful, and engaging learning and reinvigorate our commitment to character and leadership development through our one-of-a-kind curricula and programming on Leadership, Finance and Entrepreneurship. Relationships are at the heart of a thriving community and it is my goal that each student and family feel a strong, deep sense of love and belonging during a time that will put our commitment to those values to the test. We are committed to one another more than ever and I look forward to knowing and serving all students and families in the upcoming year! I love observing in classrooms, observing students at their best and being reminded repeatedly of the intention, passion, and skill it takes for our educators to make it look effortless. My heart is happiest when I'm in a classroom. Our teachers' ability to serve and meet the needs of students at an exemplary level during a year of many changes that were beyond our control is nothing short of inspiring. We never lost sight of our mission, vision and values.



Corey Sampson

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**Middle School
Director**

Corey Sampson

Ask me about: 5th-8th Grade

Welcome to Middle School! We are excited to have our kids back in the building to grow, learn, and lead. I look forward to continuing to support our students' learning and the work of our talented and caring teachers. Our middle school teacher team has a combined experience of teaching well over 10,000 students. I know that we, as a school community, recognize how exciting and important these adolescent years are and how we can support them and make each student feel a deep sense of belonging. We support them in our intentional approach to leadership development, building their strengths and awareness of those strengths to make the greatest impact in their home and community. Our academic program is challenging, integrated, and engaging. I love walking into classrooms and seeing the teachers and students getting excited about a concept, struggling with something new and not giving up, or celebrating the hard work they have done. We promote learning not just in the classroom, but with real world experiences and project-based lessons. The successful middle school student isn't just a student who will succeed in high school, but will succeed inside and outside the classroom and be prepared for life. We can't wait to work with you all as part of this journey.

Feeling love for our teachers?

Please let us know. We love to celebrate their contributions to your students' lives!

Jennifer Gravlee

Ask me about: Essentials, Extracurriculars and Bear's Club

Welcome to the new school year! I am excited to start my 7th year here at Aspen Academy and I am honored and excited to lead and collaborate with the amazing essentials team this year. I have had the privilege of serving our community in different ways from the classroom to the leadership programs, and now as the Director of Programs. When moving to Colorado in 2016, I immediately knew Aspen was the place for me. Along with our Aspen values, our school community is committed to building relationships, teaching the whole child, and providing a safe and unique environment where children are encouraged to think outside of the box, ask questions, change the world and be themselves. We are focused on consistently working to grow our programs and athletics while teaching our students life skills and opening their eyes to all the opportunities the world has to offer. As the Director of Programs, I am looking forward to partnering with each and every one of you, continuing to serve our community, building stronger relationships, and taking our programs even higher. Our essentials teaching team brings next-level talent to the community as well as heart, passion, and soul. We can't wait to see you all and have an amazing school year together, because together is always better.



Jennifer Gravlee

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Interim Director of Programs



Three-Legged Stool

At Aspen Academy, we are committed to developing students who learn for life, not just for school. This includes focus on three key areas:

Leadership + Entrepreneurial Development

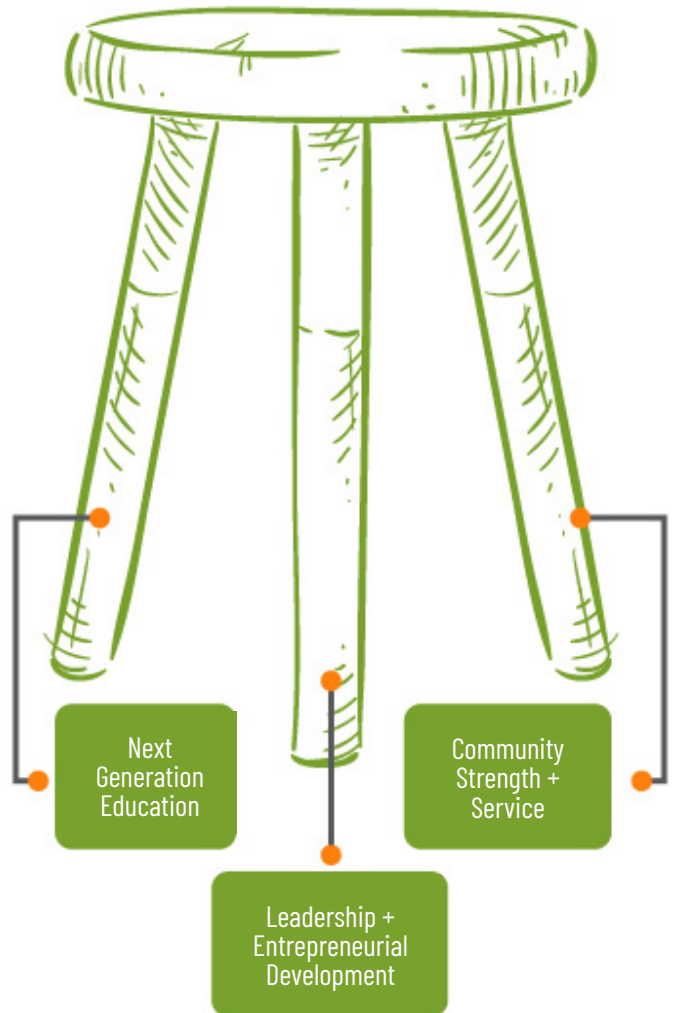
Unique among other schools, Aspen Academy has a strong emphasis on leadership and entrepreneurial development.

Next Generation Education

Since our inception in 2005, we have remained focused on developing passionate, lifelong learners who graduate from our school empowered to be confident, curious and innovative.

Community Strength + Service

Our students are taught skills and participate in activities to help them become engaged members of the local and global community.



How do Aspen trees represent our community?

Aspen tree stands have created one of the largest organisms in the world. They are perpetually starting new shoots in the unlikelyst of places. The trees in the same grove color and grow at different rates.

They stand proud and beautiful on their own, but at their root, they all connect—as should a vibrant and effective community of learners.

Students, just as a single aspen tree, are honored as individuals at Aspen Academy. Each has their own distinctive abilities, learning styles, interests, and magnificent dreams that will determine the uniqueness of their own path of growth. Yet, no matter where or what our students grow to become, they will always be strengthened by their community.





Aspen 101

Enjoy this quick introductory course on some common terms/phrases/unique pieces that make our amazing school one of a "Kind."

Conferences

Fall Conference Days:

October 6th (All Day/No School)

October 7th (All Day/No School)

Spring Conference Days:

February 2nd (All Day/No School)

February 3rd (All Day/No School)

Conferences are a great opportunity for one-on-one time with grade level and essentials teachers. This year we will be taking two days for conferences for families to have more 1:1 time with teachers. PreK-3rd conferences are between parent and teacher and 4th-8th is between parent/student and teacher.

Parking Lot

Your child's safety is our #1 priority. Parking lot etiquette is expected from all of our families, your child's caregivers and your extended family. Please remember:

- No phones or stay off phones in our parking lot
- Drive slowly and carefully
- Use crosswalks

Please model and support the development of positive life skills when crossing roads and navigating a parking lot safely with your student. PLEASE USE sidewalks and only cross at crosswalks.

Did you know? All of our faculty and staff have assigned duties during drop off and pick up to
[CONTINUED Page 11]

AMP'd

Aspen Morning Program (AMP'd) pronounced "amped" takes place on every other Friday from 8:30-9:00 am. AMP'd is a fully student-run program featuring broadcast news, grade level performances, essentials showcase and student talent corner. Students, parents, and teachers look forward to every AMP'd.

Grade Level Community Meetings

NEW!

Following your student's performance at AMP'd, spend time with other grade-level parents and our Lower School Team or Middle School Team Director, Student Success Coach and School Counselor, learning about exciting aspects of the year for your student.



CONTINUED from page 10. keep students safe! Please be kind if they ask you to move. Parents can provide their children permission to walk or bike ride to/from school as appropriate, given the age of the child and appropriate communication with the Aspen administration. We will continue on our staggered drop-off and pick-up times assigned by grade levels. For convenience, families with siblings are grouped together based on the older sibling's grades (start times) and the younger siblings' times (dismissal). Please refer to the Student & Family Guidebook (pages 47-51) for specifics. In order to ensure that families are able to park and retrieve their children at the appropriate time, we ask that parents or caretakers pick up children and immediately proceed home.

Field Trips

What is the school field trip uniform? Why is this required?

Field trips are back for the 2022-2023 school year! For safety reasons we ask all students to wear a specific field trip uniform: Black pants or skirt, white shirt with Aspen Academy logo. When we take our students into the community, we are proudly representing our school as well as optimizing the safety of each child. A black and white consistent uniform allows our chaperones to keep everyone in direct sight. Please refer to the Family & Student Guidebook for everyday school uniform guidelines.



Last Day

Friday, May 26th will conclude our 2022-2023 school year. Traditionally we come together as a community and celebrate our children on the last day of school. Our cherished 8th graders and their beloved families are celebrating a culminating year and moving on. Meanwhile, our dear Kindergartners are celebrating a year that has allowed them steadfast practice as a crew member within our Aspen Academy community. We celebrate their ability to uphold our values through their positive behaviors personally and academically. The day wraps up with a reunion for alums from every graduating class and a field day out on Curtis Field. This is an incredible opportunity for us to celebrate with all members of our community as we close the year academically. Witnessing the young hearts and eyes of our Kindergartners, alongside our 8th graders, sends an impactful visual message of the movement of precious time among all of our lives.





LIFE (Leadership, Finance, & Entrepreneurship)

LIFE is Aspen Academy's critical success factor. It assures that our students gain a sense of prominence in their leadership, finance, and entrepreneurial development. LIFE is a combination of our daily leadership curriculum, Bear's Student Enterprises (BSE), Student Mentor Program, Service Learning Projects, Entrepreneurs Expo, AMP'd and Shark Tank. All of these components are created to honor the inherent worth and infinite potential of every student.



Bear's Student Enterprises

Our capstone program is an opportunity for our 7th/8th grade students to operate a variety of businesses on campus, including the Bear's Store, Bear's Cafe and our broadcasting team hosts AMP'd.

Student Mentor Program

Each year, every student is provided the opportunity to be a mentor or mentee. Our 4th-8th grade students are often found reading, teaching, and sitting alongside their younger mentee students from grades Pre-K-3rd. The mentor/mentee relationship extends the length of the school year. The pair will often attend school events, play games, and enjoy fun activities together while keeping in spirit with our commitment to leadership.

Service Learning Projects

Our students are taught skills and participate in activities that empower them to become engaged members of society. The Aspen Academy student body participates in over 7,000 hours of service-learning projects annually. All of our service-learning projects are age-appropriate and relevant to each grade level.

Entrepreneurs Expo

A family favorite event at Aspen Academy is the Entrepreneurs Expo, when each grade exhibits the class business they created for the year. Problem solving and collaboration are fundamental skills that are showcased at the expo each spring.

Shark Tank

The culmination of our LIFE curriculum for 8th grade students is their business plan competition for "Shark Tank" where they pitch their business to local entrepreneurs in competition for a prize.

AMP'd

Every other Friday, our students participate in a student-led, school-wide performance called AMP'd. Every AMP'd is packed with comedy, talent, and amazing performances featuring two different grades at each show. You want to make time to attend AMP'd as often as possible!



Leaders Always and Everywhere

Our on-campus Leadership classes are daily 30-minute classes fueled by LiFE curriculum and revolve around a monthly practice to engage and inspire our students in their leadership of self, others and as global citizens.

In addition to personal finance, these are the themes we teach during leadership:

- 1. LEAD YOURSELF:** You Matter. Live with purpose. You can do big things.
- 2. YOUR MIND IS YOUR SUPERPOWER:** You can't change things outside of yourself, but you can change what's inside.
- 3. TIME IS YOUR MOST PRECIOUS RESOURCE:** How will you spend it?
- 4. CHOOSE JOY:** Be genuinely grateful in your interactions; happiness comes from within.
- 5. BETTER TOGETHER:** Extraordinary things happen with the cooperation of many minds.
- 6. BE CURIOUS:** Always ask what's possible.
- 7. THOUGHTS ARE THINGS:** Everything starts with an idea; you give it life.
- 8. BE THE DIFFERENCE:** Serve a cause greater than yourself.
- 9. LEAVE YOUR MARK:** Always leave it better than you found it.
- 10. HAVE AN ADVENTURE:** Play and rest are just as important as working hard.



**Rachel
Adkins**

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**Mark
Musselman**

Director of LiFE
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Aspen Ventures

True to our vision, Aspen Academy believes in transforming education. As such, we have two home grown ventures that fuel that vision: Future Holders and MODI.

Future Holders was founded to expand our impact in the development of personal leadership, finance and entrepreneurial skills of our nation's youth. Our proprietary curriculum of over 2,000 lessons is hosted in an online platform and currently serves over 1,200 students in schools across the country.



Our **MODI** furniture line helps students MOve and Discover for improved memory, attention, mood and academic achievement. Developed in partnership with feedback from 1st grade students, Kristina Scala received the patent for the MODI design in 2019. Sales from MODI support Aspen Academy.



Community Events



Tissues & Tea

AUG 23 | 8:15-9:15 am

Community Center

Not quite ready to head to work or home after dropping your student off for their first day? Parents are invited to join our Parent Civic Organization (PCO) after drop-off to meet other parents and celebrate the start of the school year. We'll provide the tissues and tea!

Back to School Nights

Middle School Back to School Night

On Campus Event

SEP 1 | 5:00-7:00 pm

Lower School Back to School Night

On Campus Event

SEP 8 | 5:00-7:00 pm

All parents are strongly encouraged to attend our Back to School Nights to meet teachers and learn about the year ahead from our faculty. Please make plans for childcare as this is a parent-only event.



Seasonal Learning & Parent Cocktail Events

SEP 21, FEB 9, MAY 4 | 6:00-8:00 pm

All parents are invited for an evening of learning and community at Aspen Academy at various times throughout the school year. We will be inviting a variety of parenting and child experts to guide and coach us on important topics for the journey of parenthood.





Family Work Days

NOV 5 + MAY 13 | 9:00 am-12:00 pm

For years we've enjoyed inviting families to campus on a weekend in the Fall and Spring to help with groundwork and campus work (touching up paint, cleaning, etc.). This time can be applied to volunteer hours for families and is often a fun and engaging community-building event. Join us in helping to beautify and clean up our campus!

Winter Ball

JAN 27 | 6:00-8:00 pm

Our Winter Ball is an opportunity to honor our children and celebrate a special night with them. Students are asked to bring a VIP escort (parent or other relative) for a magical, unforgettable night. Attire remains "fancy dress," and photos and select food will be available for purchase. A live DJ will play favorite music for all ages!



Town Hall Events

**AUG 21, NOV 10, JAN 26 STATE OF THE SCHOOL, MAY 11
5:00-6:00 pm | Virtual Events**

Learn important details for our school year from our Head of School, Kristina Scala. All families are highly encouraged to attend this important Zoom meeting to give feedback, learn about important announcements, and ask questions in real time. The State of the School will act as our Winter Town Hall, and this event will be mandatory for all parents to attend. Register and submit questions in advance.



Town Hall

November 10, 2021
5:00 PM

ASPEN ACADEMY TRADITIONS

At Aspen Academy, we have a few traditions that we hold dear to our heart every year. On the next few pages you will find some of our favorite traditions that always create life-long memories for our families. We look forward to seeing these traditions grow in the 2022-2023 school year.

MENTOR MENTEE



"As someone who has been at Aspen for almost 10 years I have been able to experience being both a mentor and a mentee. I loved being a mentee because it gave me a glimpse of being in a different grade. It also made me feel special that someone older than me cared about me! Being a mentor I got to learn from my former mentors (both the good and the bad) to be the best role model I could be. One thing that was hard was getting a different kid every year and learning how make them feel special. Overall my time spent being a mentor/mentee has taught me life lessons that I will hold onto forever!"

Ava Tarrant, 8th Grader



"Not only was the mentorship a building block for friendship and leadership, it also has laid a foundational understanding for how our son can support and be friends with other kids younger and older than him in everyday settings. It was a highlight of Harlan's school year - therefore a highlight for all of us!"

Murphy Family | Harlan, Kindergarten

AWARDS: STUDENT LEADER OF THE WEEK & BIG BEAR

LiFE (Leadership, Finance and Entrepreneurship) equips Aspen Academy students with the skills, habits, attitudes and knowledge to lead themselves, others, ideas, and organizations well. The program fosters confidence, curiosity, and innovation in our lifelong learners.

As an initiative of our LiFE program we love to celebrate our students and teachers weekly.

Each week, Aspen Academy teachers choose one student to be the **Student Leader of the Week**. They are recognized for encompassing all of these leadership skills. Each student leader of the week gets a shout out in the newsletter and receives a coupon for a free donut from Bear's Cafe.

Aspen also recognizes staff who exemplifies all of these leadership characteristics with the **Big Bear Award**. Typically, the award is given out on Thursdays by the previous winner of the award. It's an excellent opportunity to see co-workers celebrating their teammates across grades and departments. As a bonus, the teacher who is awarded with Big Bear receives the large stuffed black bear, a special parking spot and a free lunch during the week.



Kid Leaders of the Week

Sebastian Park and Sunand De in 6th Grade

Mr. Walder, Lead Facility & Campus Coordinator, has nominated Sebastian and Sunand as this week's leaders. Every day, after the 5th/6th grade lunch you can find these students organizing and tidying the cafeteria. They lead and coordinate with their peers with respect and kindness. No one asks them to do this, they simply have taken it upon themselves to show up every day, with friends to do the right thing and lend a hand. Congratulations to these two and thank you for their hard work!



ASPEN ACADEMY TRADITIONS CONTINUED

All of Aspen's Bee competitions aim to help our students grow their confidence and gain personal experience in public speaking, as well as grow and learn from their mistakes. And just as important, getting the applause their hard work deserves.

ACADEMIC BEES: MATH + SPELLING BEES

SPELLING BEE

FEBRUARY 17, 2023 | GRADES 3-8

Aspen's Spelling Bee is always a fun, community-wide event. Students in grades 3-8 have preliminary contests to identify Aspen Academy's top three spellers in each grade level. Then the top three from each grade compete in the finals on February 17, 2023, with the winner going on to represent Aspen Academy regionally.



MATH BEE

MAY 12, 2023 | GRADES K-2

The Math Bee is aimed at nurturing mathematical skills among students in grades K-2 in a challenging environment. Similar to a Spelling Bee, the students solve math problems. The foundation of everyday life increasingly involves mathematics and technology. The primary goal of the Math Bee is to help students feel more confident about their math skills while also offering the excitement of competition-and Math can be FUN.



ENTREPRENEURS EXPO

APR 28, 9:00-11:00 am | ALL GRADES

The Entrepreneurs Expo is a school-wide event where grades PK-7th go to market with a product or service that they have worked together, as a team to create. With the goal of solving a problem, students promote their final products via sales and marketing techniques that they have learned throughout the year. The product is finally available for sale to the whole community at the Entrepreneurs Expo. This family favorite event gets the students excited to share what they have learned in their LiFE classes.

In early spring, the “expo” rumblings carry through the hallways. Students sharing what their grade is developing or what they are hoping to purchase from another grade fills students’, teachers’, and parents’ conversations. Eighth graders also introduce their products and/or service to the community prior to the anticipated Shark Tank event. We can’t wait to see you at this amazing Aspen tradition event.



ASPEN ACADEMY

2022-2023 IMPORTANT DATES

DEC

23-30 No School - Winter Break

JAN

2-6 No School - Winter Break

9 No School - Faculty Professional Development

16 No School - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

27 Early Dismissal

FEB

2-3 No School - Parent-Teacher
Conferences

17 Early Dismissal - Faculty
Professional Development

20 No School - Presidents' Day

MAR

24 Early Dismissal - Faculty
Professional Development

27-31 No School - Spring Break

APR

15 Gala

28 Early Dismissal - Instructional
Workshop, Entrepreneurs Expo




MAY

11 Spring Town Hall (Virtual)

12 Early Dismissal
- Instructional Workshop

26 Early Dismissal - Graduation,
Field Day, Report Card Preparation,
Community Picnic

KEY

-  All School Event
-  No School or No Classes
-  Early Dismissal

- C Conferences
- E Early Dismissal (See Times Below)
- G Gala
- N No School
- T Town Hall

Early Dismissal Times

11:15 am - 5th-8th

11:25 am - 2nd-4th

11:35 am - PK-1st

In order to stay up-to-date with calendar changes please find the link to our online calendar and instructions to sync with our calendar via the QR Code below.



AUG

9-19 Faculty & Staff Pre-Service

21 Fall Town Hall (Virtual)

22 New Family Orientation, Student and
Family Registration, Classroom Open House
& Community Picnic

23 First Day of School

SEP

1 Middle School Back to School Night

5 No School - Labor Day

8 Lower School Back to School Night

23 No School - Student Assessment
Report Development & Instruction
Workshop for Teachers

OCT

6 -7 No School - Parent Teacher Conferences

10 No School - Fall Break

28 Early Dismissal - Faculty
Professional Development

NOV

10 Fall Town Hall (Virtual)

18 Early Dismissal - Faculty
Professional Development

21-25 No School - Thanksgiving Break



Aspen Academy Calendar



AUGUST

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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SEPTEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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OCTOBER

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NOVEMBER

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DECEMBER

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JANUARY

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29	30	31				

FEBRUARY

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MARCH

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APRIL

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MAY

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JUNE

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JULY

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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					



FAMILY PROFILE

The Lawrence Family; Martin & Alana, Sennon (alumnus), Moji (6th grade), Adeola (4th grade).

Why we chose and continue to choose Aspen Academy

Meeting with the founder Miss Kristina Scala and founding member Miss Lynda Sailor 11 years ago was inspiring and reassured us of a sense of discipline, growth and accountability that we were seeking for our children. As soon as we began our journey as members of the Aspen Academy community, we saw that leadership and growth in our children.

While we cherish the school leadership, we couldn't be more grateful for the head start that Miss Cordero gave our son in Pre-K, this experience continued on with the first teachers of our middle and youngest daughters both had.

Our children are not only happy at the school, but they are growing to be better parts of our family every day. When we ask them if they are happy at Aspen Academy, they often ask, "why are you asking?" Because they are always eager to go to school and participate in all the school has to offer.

Through academics and accountability, Aspen Academy has built our children so strong to become even more resilient for what they will encounter in high school or perhaps college and life in general. In conclusion, we regard Aspen Academy as a great head start, a place every kid should have a chance to learn and grow.

We are truly happy to be a part of the school.



COMMUNICATIONS

We strive to share relevant and engaging communication with our community using tools that give you access wherever you are! Below are a few tools parents have noted as their favorites to keep them informed.



Canvas:

Canvas is a trusted source for grades, assignment information, social events in the classroom, and tracking daily academic progress. Every feature in Canvas has been designed to make access smooth and easy for you, and to make teaching and learning even easier. If you have trouble logging in, please speak with your director for support.

Newsletters:

Every Thursday, you will receive a newsletter from the Marketing and Communications Office with school events and activities. Read this weekly for important upcoming events that your student is involved in, invitations to events, and informative updates from faculty and staff. If you are not receiving the newsletter please reach out to our Marketing Manager, Jordyn Linnell at jordyn.linnell@aspennacadey.org.

Social Media:

Follow us on any or all of the below social platforms to stay in the loop, watch AMP'd when you can't make it, or read blogs that our staff is writing.



@AspenAcademy



Aspen Academy



Aspen Academy



@Aspen_Academy



@Aspen_Academy

Calendar:

Parents can access every Aspen Academy calendar on our website. From this location you can also add the Aspen Calendar to your Outlook, Gmail, or iCal calendars using the RSS feed. Look for more information in the newsletter. See QR code on page 20.





Parent Civic Organization

The Parent Civic Organization (PCO) is Aspen Academy's parent leadership group.

Welcome to a new year of parent opportunities and distributed leadership. We are committed to an intentional school community working together to support the needs and efforts of the teachers, administration, students and families. Our Parent Civic Organization (PCO) exists to create an edifying experience that inspires greater aspirations for authentic community leadership. Every parent is a part of our PCO, whether you serve on our officer team or volunteer off campus. Each year a contribution of \$100 per child creates the budget that allows Aspen Academy to live its values out loud! PCO funds gatherings, care and celebrations that embrace our values and support the strengths of our community. Each one of us plays a part in creating and sustaining a diverse and driven parent team that supports Aspen Academy's mission and

vision. Monthly PCO officer meetings are on the 3rd Thursday of each month from 8:30-10:00 am on campus. ALL parents are welcome and encouraged to attend.

The Aspen Academy PCO commitments:

BE KIND:

Collaborate and inspire all members.

DO GOOD:

Set positive intentions and lean into sharing your unique gifts of time and talent.

WORK HARD:

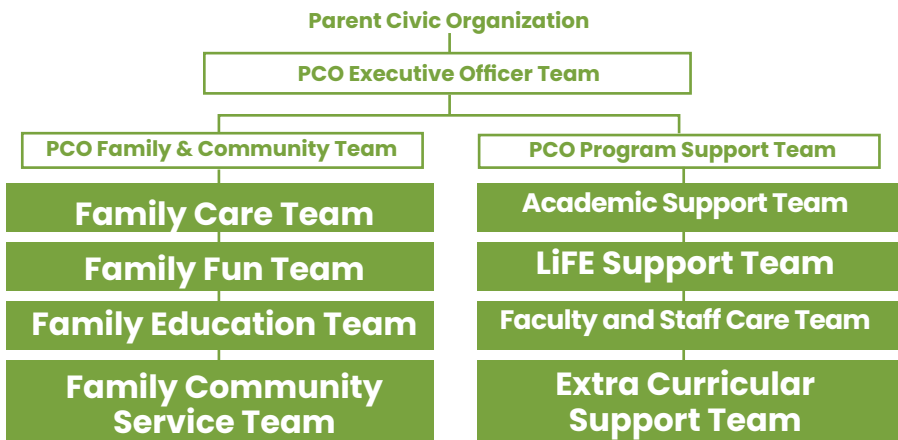
Make this the most amazing place possible for everyone who walks our halls.

MAKE THE WORLD BETTER:

Our children are the future.

PCO MISSION:

Together we inspire an enthusiastic and intentional community of families that foster Aspen Academy's mission, vision and values.



ELEVATE COUNSELING

Elevate is a centralized program that meets the social-emotional, academic support, and diverse needs of all students and families here at Aspen Academy.

The Elevate team is composed of two School Counselors and two Student Support Managers who prioritize all students' social-emotional health and wellness in partnership with parents and caregivers who are the primary educators of their children. This year we welcome a seasoned teacher and Aspen Academy faculty member to the Elevate team: Mrs. Gabriella Fratta, who will serve as the Lower School Student Support Manager. Mrs. Fratta joins the existing team of Elevate team members: Ms. Cindy Hewatt, Lower School Counselor, Mr. Justin Wimbish, Middle School Student Support Manager, and Mr. Jessie Skipwith, Director of Elevate and Middle School Counselor.

Together, the Elevate team brings next-generation education and skills that are transformative in students' lives beginning with identity development, self-care, and recognizing the dignity of each person. Parents are invited to communicate early and often with the Elevate team as a fundamental best practice that provides all students a supportive network of resources in navigating any number of life challenges and growth opportunities. Meeting students where they are, the Elevate program consistently utilizes coaching, intervention and professional development to support others in achieving their full potential.

We look forward to our partnership with you as we collaborate on your students' growth and development throughout the course of the 2022-2023 school year.

- Jessie Skipwith, Director of Elevate



**Jessie
Skipwith**

**Director of Elevate &
School Counselor**



**Cindy
Hewatt,
LMFT**

**School
Counselor**



**Gabriella
Fratta**

**Student
Support
Manager
(Lower School)**



**Justin
Wimbish**

**Student
Support
Manager
(Middle School)**



PCO Care Committee + Birthdays

Your PCO dollars are at work! This year PCO will celebrate teachers and faculty members on their birthday with a gift card. If you'd like to surprise them, the Care Committee maintains an updated Teacher/Staff Favorites list. You can view the list via the QR code below.

Susan Perkins	9-Jan	Brittany Stream	29-Jul
Cathy Shematek	23-Jan	Kelly Thatcher	30-Jul
Brian Fleck	27-Jan	Katie Hamel	4-Aug
Gabriella Fratta	28-Feb	Kristina Scala	8-Aug
Jessica Cho	29-Feb	Jordyn Linnell	11-Aug
Theresa Letman	6-Mar	Dana Kohls	16-Aug
Paul Noel	10-Mar	Debbie Cordero	18-Aug
Amber Hornbacher	14-Mar	Cindy Hewatt	23-Aug
Jack Assaf	14-Mar	Olivia Pederson	26-Aug
Mary Ann Dawson	19-Mar	Martin Robinson	26-Aug
Brooke Jenzano	22-Mar	Jenny White	28-Aug
Phillip Romero	26-Mar	Marie Boneck	30-Aug
Mike Brunstetter	2-Apr	Jade Croghan	6-Sep
Courtney Gray	6-Apr	Maureen Mullen	10-Sep
Lauren Tracey	8-Apr	Megan Kelly	11-Sep
Rachel Adkins	9-Apr	Cathy Delap	13-Sep
Kate Stein	17-Apr	Lynda Sailor	13-Sep
Brett Walder	24-Apr	Mark Musselman	13-Sep
Maya Pingle	29-Apr	Torri Parker	18-Sep
Kirsten Benefield	2-May	Bridget Noel	30-Sep
Courtney Cransom	6-May	Rachel Sachs	7-Oct
Jessie Skipwith	11-May	Lara Hutchison	9-Oct
Alyssa Saucedo	14-May	Julie Moreau	11-Oct
Michelle Grindle	26-May	Alex Jennison	12-Oct
Jennifer Gravlee	1-Jun	Lee Ann Scherlong	19-Oct
Lisa Teets	8-Jun	Marybeth Cabaay	1-Nov
Chris Holtzem	9-Jun	Sarah Harris	3-Nov
Eric Peterson	19-Jun	Zach Couchman	6-Nov
Nicole Witcher	8-Jul	Justin Wimbish	12-Nov
Calynd Gee	19-Jul	Kate Shaw	17-Nov
Carrie Pettigrew	22-Jul	Karen Leyva	19-Nov
Fabiola Lopez	24-Jul	Jamie Sniegowski	27-Nov
Marianne Roe	24-Jul	Annette Calhoun	4-Dec
Corey Sampson	26-Jul	Molly Babineaux	17-Dec
		Tony Cisneros	17-Dec



Use the QR code to view our staff favorites list for gift ideas.

Why Volunteer?

Volunteering: Sharing Time & Talent

Each year, we ask families to make a commitment to our community by volunteering 32 hours.

Volunteering models civic responsibility and is an investment in our community and the students who thrive in it. The added help in the classroom and around campus is extremely beneficial to our community but also the experience can be priceless to parents and family members. The benefits of volunteering include: having an experience with your child in a space where they grow, learn, and lead; building a place where you belong by meeting other like-minded parents; supporting teachers who bring out the best in our children as leaders.

Interested in volunteering?

There are a variety of ways to get involved in volunteering as a parent, guardian, or other family member at Aspen Academy. From supporting all grades during lunch to mentoring 8th Graders in their Shark Tank businesses, or from gardening and grounds maintenance to grade level classroom volunteering, or even offering to speak to a class regarding your personal occupation or area of expertise—there are numerous options. Check out our Parent Portal with volunteer opportunities or reach out to your student's teachers to ask about volunteering in the classroom.



PARENT QUOTES

“ ”

Being immersed in this environment for a full day, contributing for a full day, is fulfilling for well beyond just the moments of a full day.

- Josh F.

“ ”

I had a long career in Corporate America, and while I enjoyed what I did professionally, I never felt truly fulfilled. Not to get too sappy, but volunteering in the classroom at Aspen Academy is not only emotionally fulfilling but feeds my soul. When you work with kids, they remind you of what's important in life. I'm reminded of what untethered curiosity and enthusiasm looks like. I'm reminded of what unfiltered creativity can be. I love being a part of that spirit. It's a way to give back to the community in a unique way.

- Jennifer M.



Community Engagement + Development

We have a lot of exciting plans for our community this year! We are ALL IN for Aspen Academy!

Whether this is your first year at Aspen Academy or your 10th, congratulations on being a part of an amazing community. We take pride in continuing to create the monumental opportunity of another special year for our families. We are committed to go "ALL IN," this year and return to our robust calendar of gatherings! Let's bring back traditions, let's up-level our volunteer opportunities and let's create parent events where we can learn together and grow in our commitment to making the world a better place.

I am excited to spend another year as Aspen Academy's Director of Development and Community Engagement and I am committed to tapping into your passions and experiences for you to live your best life in partnership with our community. Let's grab a cup of coffee, a cocktail or just chat. We are "ALL IN" for our children, our community and our world!

Debbie Cordero
Director of Development
and Community Engagement
debbie.cordero@aspenacademy.org
C: 720-331-4853
O: 303-346-3500 ext 105



**Debbie
Cordero**

At Aspen Academy we are committed to running lean and maintaining a balanced budget. We are proud to provide our high quality education for one of the lowest costs in the metro area. The tuition you pay supports teacher salaries and fixed costs, which is why we ask you to contribute resources to support additional, vital programs. NAIS reports show that as of 2020 the average yearly donation is \$1,633 per student. In 2022, let's raise the bar at Aspen Academy. We look forward to working with you through the following fundraising campaigns and events.

Annual Fund

The Annual Fund will begin September 26 and culminate on December 6, 2022 with Aspen Academy Gives Day. Our Annual Fund supports continuing professional development for our teachers, tuition assistance for select students and continuous improvement and updates of our curricula. Look for your opportunity to participate as we begin our school year.





Graduate Gift

The 8th Grade Class of 2023 and their families will partner with our development team to contribute a designated gift to honor their time at Aspen Academy. This tradition honors the legacy of our students as they continue on to high school.

Grand Fund

Each year we celebrate the special grand-people in our students' lives. Mark your calendars now for a sweetheart celebration on February 14, 2023, and look for more information to come. We have GRAND plans to share our community and classrooms with our grandparents and grandfriends.



Grand Council

Are you a grandparent of an Aspen Academy student? We want to hear from you as we cultivate and tap into the wisdom only you can bring to our community. Please reach out to Debbie Cordero to start the conversation of how we can partner in success.



Gala + Capital Campaign

Mark your calendar for April 15, 2023 for another monumental community event. Our Gala is a fundraising benefit with the proceeds supporting a chosen capital improvement project. Aspen Academy is committed to providing world-class campus facilities and optimize learning environment for all of our students.



Legacy Giving

Our success is due to our community for everything you have given to support our program. If you or your foundation are looking for a way to continue to impact the world and the lives of children, join us this year as we learn and educate our community about planned giving opportunities.





ESSENTIALS AT ASPEN ACADEMY

By Maya Pingle, Dance Instructor and Aspen Academy Parent

It is clear that Aspen Academy believes in the whole child when you look at the school day schedule and see Essentials listed twice each day. The word Essentials is defined as: "a thing that is absolutely necessary," and that is exactly what is entwined into our core curriculum. Recognizing that Communications and Literacy, Math, Science and Social Studies can show up in Art, Dance, Drama, Fitness, Music, Spanish, STEAM, and more is why Aspen is a step above the rest.

I am an Essentials teacher and love teaching Dance at this school because there is so much more I can accomplish with a classroom of diverse genders, levels, efforts and needs that produce a richer ground for absorbing and growing all around. The leaders are not always the trained dancers, but many times we are led by the free movers and athletes. We start with everyone on the same page in our warm up and then I give them their tools to participate at their comfort level and they move on and thrive together. And since everyone participates, there is a safe space and energy that allows students to make incredible efforts. **It is pure joy to see students present at the end of a three week session. Or the 8th grade graduation dance, which is a clear representation of incredible teamwork. Everyone dances.**

I also love incorporating the core classes into our dance space. Our floor is numbered, providing safe space and formations. Students identify that they are using basic math when we travel six floor numbers to the right or left. If they are

studying a culture or country, we learn a dance that represents their new knowledge and inspiration. We use science for discovering force and energy and so much more in movement, and students will write and speak their thoughts over music.

The goal for a student in an Essentials class will vary in each category, but the general intention is that students step confidently into our classroom experiences and immerse themselves with interest, curiosity and progress. We are not expecting a student to become a musician, for example, but rather experience the benefits, skills and honor it takes to be one. Embody the skills and experience them deeply. **There is a familiarity when you travel from one Essential class to another: Learn and experience, relate and reflect, present and find pride.**

As a parent at Aspen, I see the confidence and joy that grows each time they return to the classroom. The idea of presenting their work with pride, and connecting an idea from one class to another so they never feel that this is something entirely new and never something they cannot achieve.

I truly believe that non academic core classes entwined in our core curriculum sets Aspen apart from all others. Check out AMP'd as another example of students who experience everything at Aspen Academy.





NEW TEAM MEMBERS

Martin Robinson Music Teacher

What am I most excited about Aspen Academy?

"I am most excited about getting to know my students, their families, and my new colleagues! Everyone I've met has been so amazingly kind and supportive. I'm also really looking forward to learning about the LiFE program."

How many years have I been teaching?

"This will be my 35th year as a music teacher! I taught for 6 years in Southern California before moving overseas to teach in American/International schools in Pakistan, Indonesia, Japan, India, and for the past 18 years at the Taipei American School in Taiwan."



Jamie Sniegowski Art Teacher

What am I most excited about Aspen Academy?

"I am thrilled to join the Aspen Academy community. I look forward to seeing you in the classroom and am ready to inspire creativity, curiosity and innovation."

How many years have I been teaching?

"I was a fine arts faculty member at St. Mary's Academy for the past 17 years. Prior to that I taught workshops and classes for an additional three years, so 20 total years of teaching experience."



Lee Ann Scherlong Drama Teacher

What am I most excited about Aspen Academy?

"I am eager to begin working with all of the students at Aspen Academy in the area of theatre, bringing stories to life! I am passionate about learning and I love teaching all ages!"

How many years have I been teaching?

"I have taught for 25+ years and am active in the Denver theatre community."



Teacher Talk:



Kelly Thatcher

STEAM Instructor

Mrs. Thatcher visited Santa Catalina Island in CA! She was there learning about the conservation efforts on the island and was able to tour the protected lands to see many of the animals and plants we will learn about in STEAM.

Maureen Mullen

7th & 8th grade Math Instructor

Mrs. Mullen spent time in Ouray sharpening up her lesson plans.



Olivia Pederson

3rd Grade Instructor

Ms. R is now Mrs. Pederson after getting married in June! She and her husband enjoyed their honeymoon in Maui.



Summer is always a beautiful time to recharge and relax. Here are a few summer adventures from our teachers!

Calynd Gee

5th & 6th Grade Social Studies Instructor

Ms. Gee took her first trip to the great state of Maine! She got to see the famous L.L. Bean boot, try her first lobster roll, and check out the beautiful coastal campus of Camp Kieve in Nobleboro.



Alex Jennison

7th/8th Grade Biology & Chemistry Instructor

Mr. Jennison enjoyed the first half of the summer in Vietnam and the other half he built a lake house in Wisconsin!



Teacher Talk cont.



Katie Hamel

2nd Grade Instructor

Mrs. Hamel and her kiddos enjoyed their annual month long trip to NY to visit family, spend time with friends, and explore the East Coast. A lot of fun memories were made!

Brian Fleck

4th Grade Instructor

Mr. Fleck hiked the 485 mile Colorado Trail with his dog, Kanna.



Jade Croghan

Kindergarten Instructor

Ms. Croghan spent the summer trying her hand at growing a bunch of vegetables from seeds and is hoping to grow her first luffa (yes, like the sponge!). She also finally finished making an Adirondack chair and enjoyed relaxing in it this summer.



Torri Parker

Pre-K Instructor

Ms. Parker had an amazing staycation enjoying Hanging Lake, white water rafting and a visit to Disneyland!



Kate Stein

2nd Grade Instructor

Mrs. Stein spent her summer traveling, spending time with lots of family and friends, preparing for Baby Stein, and welcoming her nephew!

ONE RULE: BE KIND

Aspen Academy maintains high expectations for our students' behavior and we espouse only one rule: Be Kind. It is amazing to see what happens to a school community when the bar is raised highly, proudly with trust that each of the children will meet the standard that has been set.

As adults of this school, parents, staff and faculty each hold the supreme responsibility of modeling this rule for our children, their friends, and the other adults in the building. Please be mindful always of your important role and let your thoughts, words and deeds reflect a commitment to kindness.

In conjunction with parents, we develop our students' character and leadership skills on a daily basis and we emphasize:

Your character is defined by what you do,
not just by what you say or believe.

Every choice you make helps define the kind of
person you are choosing to be.

Good character requires doing the right thing, always.

What you do matters, and one person can make a big difference.

The consequence of good character is that it makes you
a better person and it makes the world better.

