

Mountainside Elementary School Parent and Student Handbook



Mountainside creates a safe, respectful, fun, and rigorous learning environment where students experience success.

5506 Harr Ave. Colorado Springs, CO 80902

719-382-1430

www.ffc8.org/mountainside

Principal: Melanie Baker

Assistant Principal: Julie Maiatico Christiansen

Dean of Students: Kirsten Knight

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year! It is with great excitement and honor that I extend a warm welcome to each and every one of you. I am thrilled to serve this wonderful community and look forward to partnering with you in providing the best possible educational experience for our students.

First and foremost, I want to express my deep appreciation for the trust you have placed in me to lead Mountainside. I am fully committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment where every student can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Together, we will foster a culture of excellence, respect, and collaboration that will empower our young learners to reach their full potential.

At Mountainside, we believe that education is a collaborative effort involving parents, teachers, staff, and the community at large. I am a firm believer in the power of strong relationships and open lines of communication. My door is always open, and I encourage you to reach out to me with any questions, concerns, or ideas you may have. Your insights and perspectives are invaluable, and together, we can create a vibrant and supportive learning community for our children.

One of my top priorities as the principal of Mountainside is to ensure that every child receives a high-quality education that addresses their individual needs and talents. I am committed to fostering a culture of continuous improvement and providing our dedicated teachers with the resources and professional development opportunities they need to excel in their roles. By working together, we can create a dynamic learning environment where our students are challenged, engaged, and inspired to become lifelong learners.

In the coming weeks and months, I will have the pleasure of continuing to build relationships with each of you and your children. I eagerly anticipate greeting you at school events, parent-teacher conferences, and other special occasions. Please stay tuned for updates on upcoming activities and opportunities to engage with our school community.

Lastly, I would like to express my gratitude to the exceptional staff at Mountainside. Their unwavering commitment to our students' success is truly commendable, and I am honored to work alongside them. Together, we will ensure that Mountainside continues to be a place where every child's potential is nurtured and celebrated.

I firmly believe that by working together as a strong partnership, we can provide an exceptional educational experience for our students. I am confident that with your support, our children will achieve remarkable things and create a bright future for themselves.

Thank you for entrusting us with your children's education. I look forward to an incredible journey of growth, discovery, and success.

Warmest regards,

Melanie Baker

melaniebaker@ffc8.org

Principal, Mountainside Elementary

Phone: (719) 382-1430

Mountainside Elementary School Guidelines 2024-25

SCHOOL HOURS

The school bell begins the school day at 0730. Students are to arrive at school no earlier than 0715. Students who would like to eat school breakfast may enter the cafeteria beginning at 0705 and will then be dismissed to their classroom at 0725. Students not eating school breakfast will proceed straight to their classroom upon arrival at school.

Except for students eating breakfast, we do not provide student supervision before 0715. For your child's safety please ensure your child does not arrive before 0715.

Learning begins at 0730. Students who are not in their classrooms at 0730 are considered tardy.

Student dismissal is 1425 M-F.

NO STUDENTS ARE KEPT AFTER SCHOOL unless participating in an after school club or after school tutoring. Watch for dates and times of clubs and tutoring opportunities as we move through the school year. Please make sure that your child understands where they are to go at the end of the school day.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Walking: Plan a safe route for your child. Students are not permitted to ride bikes, skates, or wear shoes with wheels, etc. on school property. Children should be encouraged to respect other people's property by not taking shortcuts, staying off lawns, and out of flower beds. They should be warned about accepting rides, talking to strangers, and playing in the streets. **Student conduct off of school grounds must be monitored by parents.**

Drop-offs: Kindergarten through 5th grade students may be actively dropped off in the "drop-off zone" of our front parking lot, and buses will drop students at our traffic circle. **Preschool parents must park in the lower parking lot and walk their student(s) into the PK classroom to sign them in.** Please follow these guidelines for a successful and stress-free drop-off experience:

1. Cars arriving to drop-off/pick-up students enter through the lower parking lot and follow the two perimeter lanes to the loading/unloading zone in front of the building.
2. Child is ready to get out of the car (fully clothed, backpack ready, breakfast eaten if breakfast is provided at home, etc...).
3. "Good-byes" and "Have a nice day" messages are said before pulling into the drop-off zone.
4. **Follow guidance of Mountainside personnel and pull forward as far as possible in the drop-off zone** before unloading children.
5. Driver must remain in the vehicle.
6. If your child is going to take time to unload due to larger projects, is not ready to exit the vehicle, or needs to finish eating then please park in the lower parking lot.
7. If your child exits the vehicle on the passenger-side of the car, wait for school personnel to walk them around to the sidewalk.

8. Once your child is unloaded please **follow the car in front of you to exit the drop-off zone** (please be patient and safe).

Pick ups: Students may leave Mountainside at the end of the school day in one of four ways: walk home (or to a care-giver), car pick-up, meet a parent in front of the building and walk to the parking lot, or take the bus to daycare.

****Kindergarten students must be picked up by their parent and/or an older sibling from the Kindergarten playground/courtyard. Parents, please use the lower parking lot to park and then follow the sidewalk from the parking lot to the kindergarten classroom area. Children in Kindergarten are not allowed to walk home without being accompanied by a parent, caregiver, or older sibling (per 2013 Memorandum from Ft. Carson's Garrison Command).**

****Preschool students must be signed out of the classroom by their parent. Parents of PK students who need to park must do so in the lower parking lot and then walk up to pick up their student.**

The bell will ring at 1425 releasing students from school. Students will remain in their classrooms with their teachers to be dismissed in the following manner:

- Students in grades 1-5 will exit their classrooms and line up in their assigned locations at the front of the building. Bus riders will walk inside the building to the bus loading area. Bus attendance will be checked by adults on bus duty.
- Kindergarten bus riders will be escorted by adults on duty from their classrooms to the bus. Bus attendance will be checked as students board the bus. Kindergarten students who do not ride the bus will remain with their teachers until picked up by a sibling or dismissed directly to a parent/guardian. Parents who drive to pick up kindergarten students must first park in the lower parking area and walk to the kindergarten dismissal area for student pick-up. Kindergarten students will not be released to cars in the turn-around lane.
- Parents please communicate to your child's teacher the way he/she will be leaving school at the end of the day. If this should change throughout the school year, then please communicate the change to your child's teacher in writing. Please make sure your child knows where to go at the end of the school day.
- If your child's dismissal plan changes during the day, please contact the school via our new "dismissal change" link (available on our website) or by phone at (719) 382-1430 before 1345 so we are able to get your instructions for that day to your student and the student's teacher. Remember that any adult picking up your child must be listed as an approved emergency contact in IC.

Students who walk home: Students may walk off campus via the sidewalk down Fort Street toward Harr Ave. Mountainside Elementary School adheres to the student supervision guidelines provided by Fort Carson's Garrison Command in the 2013 memorandum.

Students who meet their parents: Parents will need to park in the overflow parking lot and meet your child at the front of the building. Students will be waiting with their classroom teacher.

Students who are picked up by car: Students will wait with their teachers until the parent's car arrives in the pick-up zone. Students should enter the car from the curb side. In order to keep

the traffic flow moving, stay in your car and don't park. **Follow directions and guidance from school staff in the pick-up lane to keep traffic flowing and students safe.**

Students who ride the bus: Teachers will safely load students on the bus at the end of the day. Attendance will be checked as students load the bus.

Entering and Exiting the building: Students eating breakfast may arrive at 0705 to enter the cafeteria via the music hallway doors only. Students not eating breakfast at school should arrive no earlier than 0715. There is no outside adult supervision prior to 0715. Students not eating breakfast are expected to enter and exit the building through their designated entry doors. Kindergarten and students eating breakfast will enter through the music hallway doors. First through fifth graders will enter through the east main entrance. See the attached map for specific door assignments.

When leaving school at dismissal time, students are escorted to the pick-up zone by their classroom teacher. Older siblings will meet their younger siblings at the younger child's classroom teacher waiting area. Bus riders will dismiss through the music hallway doors. Kindergarten students will be dismissed from their classrooms into the kindergarten playground/courtyard area. All other students will dismiss with their classroom teacher through the east main entrance doors.

All adults entering the building during school hours must enter through the main entrance to the building, provide a state or government issued ID, and will receive a visitor badge that must be worn at all times while in the building.

Pets: DO NOT bring pets or emotional support animals on school grounds. Only trained service animals are allowed on school grounds. Students may be afraid of and/or allergic to them. If you have questions please see the district's animal policy.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance areas for each elementary, middle school and high school of the district are drawn up by the administration and approved by the Board based on geography and student population projections. In establishing school boundaries, consideration shall be given to the densities of student populations in an area in relation to the relative capacities of the schools, the equalization of enrollments in classrooms and efficient use of transportation facilities. A student's designated attendance area shall be based on the legal residence of his parents/guardian.

STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Regular attendance is vital, however, so is protecting the health and safety of Mountainside students, families, staff, and community members. It is imperative that students who have an active fever are not sent to school, even if that fever is controlled by medication. Please contact the school if your child is going to be absent, and whenever possible, please schedule doctor, dental and therapy appointments after school hours.

To report a student absence, please access the "student absence" link (available on our website). Attendance will be taken within the first 5 to 10 minutes of the school day. To enter a class late, a child must obtain a pass from the office.

The following are excused absences. However, ALL absences are unexcused until we receive parent communication regarding the reason for the absence.

- Personal illness. If the illness exceeds three consecutive days, a doctor's note is required.
- Death of a relative (provide documentation)
- Observance of religious holiday
- Military block leave- up to 5 school days with a copy of military orders
- Doctor, dental and therapy appointments with proper documentation (If possible, please schedule such appointments after school hours.)
- Emergency situations- such cases may be approved by administration on an individualized basis

The following are unexcused absences:

- Personal illness that exceeds three consecutive days without a doctor's note – While we understand illness happens, a parent phone call or note will not constitute an excused absence if it extends past the three-day timeframe.
- Military block leave without orders
- Family events- vacations, birthdays, family visits, other family members' appointments, etc.

Attendance is recorded for the morning (AM) session and the afternoon (PM) session. Each session is considered a one-half day of attendance/absence. Two one-half days of absence equal one full day of absence.

Attendance Codes:

- Tardy – Student arrives between 7:30 – 9:00 a.m. (0730-0900)
- Part Day A.M. absence – Student arrives between 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. (0900-1100) OR student leaves before 11:00 a.m. (1100) and returns to school.
- Part Day P.M. absence – Student leaves after 11:00 am (1100) and returns to school.
- Half Day A.M. absence – Student arrives between 11:01 – 1:00 p.m. (1101-1300)
- Half Day P.M. absence – Student leaves between 11:00 – 1:00 pm (1100-1300) with no return.
- Reverse Tardy – Student leaves between 1:00 – 2:25 p.m. (1300-1425)
- Policy around excused vs. unexcused

- Documentation is required for students absent after 3 consecutive days for illness, or if the student is on an attendance plan
- All absences are unexcused until we receive parent communication regarding the reason for the absence.

Parents will be called from our automated dialer to notify you of your child's absence if the office doesn't receive a phone call to report a child's absence. Please do not hang up on the call. This policy is for your child's safety and in compliance with school law. If the school is not notified of a child's absence, then the absence is coded as unexcused. Make up work will be provided for excused absences. Please call the office to request school work at least one (1) day prior to picking up the work.

***All parents must review and sign that they have received the attendance policy at registration. (See attendance policy FFC8 School Board Attendance Policy)**

ILLNESS GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL

1. Children who have temperatures of 100.0 (Fahrenheit) or above should not attend school, **EVEN IF** their fever can be reduced with medication. Children should remain home until their temperature has been normal (98.6) for **a minimum of 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications. Exclusion time may be extended based on communication between school nurse and family of individual symptoms and circumstances.**
2. Children who have cold symptoms such as: a constant runny nose, with abnormal color (green, yellow, white) or thick nasal discharge, constant coughing, or lung congestion should not be in school.
3. Children who have been diagnosed with an infection and have been placed on medication should not return to school until they have taken the medication for a full 24 hours after the first dose.
4. **Children who have had vomiting or diarrhea should not attend school until there has been no vomiting or diarrhea for a minimum of 24 hours. Exclusion time may be extended based on communication between school nurse and family of individual symptoms and circumstances.**
5. Children who have an undiagnosed skin rash or open skin lesion should not be in school.
6. Children who have red, inflamed eyes with a thick discharge and have a fever and/or behavioral changes should not be in school.

If any of the above signs and symptoms are present at school, the student will be removed from class to the nurse's clinic, and the parent will be contacted to promptly pick-up the child. We do not like children to miss school, but keeping sick children home will improve everyone's attendance and health in the end, and it will help to limit the illness being passed from student-to-student and student-to-staff. If your child is hospitalized or treated for an infectious disease, please provide a written statement from the health care provider indicating that your child is no longer contagious and is cleared to return to school.

www.cdephe.state.co.us/cd/epidemiology/manual/school/guidelines.pdf

TARDIES

- Students are considered tardy if they are not in class at 07:30 (0730). Frequent tardies and students being picked up early interfere with your child's learning, disrupt the classroom, disturb the classroom schedule, and may interfere with support services your child receives.
 - An extension to the time allotted for a tardy may be determined by individual building administrators in the cases of inclement weather, local traffic/construction issues, bussing issues, etc.
 - Students are tardy if not in their seats at 7:30 (0730).
 - Students may be marked tardy from 7:30-9:00 (0730-0900), but the dialer goes out at 8:30 (0830).

Habitually tardy students may serve detention or other consequences as deemed appropriate. A reverse tardy is when students are checked out of school early. (See attendance policy [FFC8 School Board Truancy Policy](#))

BOOKS, SUPPLIES, SCHOOL PROPERTY, & LIBRARY BOOKS

Text Books: These are furnished by the school district free of charge. However, a fine will be assessed for lost or damaged books.

Supplies: School supply lists are posted on the [Mountainside Elementary Website](#), and are identified by your child's grade level. Each student will need a backpack for transportation of items to and from school. If at any time, you are unable to purchase the recommended school supplies, please communicate with your child's teacher or our school counselor so we can work together to support your child's learning.

Laptops: Each student will be assigned a Chromebook to use for the duration of their enrollment during the school year. Kindergarten through fifth grade students will be assigned a Chromebook and charger to utilize in class as assigned and on limited check-out as directed by their teacher. **You will need to pay for lost or damaged Chromebooks and chargers.**

School Property and Library Books: The teacher will show students how to use the library. Libraries are friendly places with many books to help children learn to enjoy reading. When a book is checked out, families need to be sure to read and return it on or before the due date. **You will need to pay for lost or damaged books.** This holds true for damaged school property also.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

We serve breakfast and lunch to students. Students may eat school breakfast in the cafeteria before the school day begins, from 0705-0725 am. Lunch will be served to students in the cafeteria, and students will have assigned seating during that time. Lunch periods are 30 minutes long. Students will be encouraged to focus on eating so their bodies and brains are properly fueled and ready to engage in learning in the afternoon. Each grade level and lunch time has behavior expectations to be followed so that students have a safe and enjoyable lunch

period. Due to seating limitations in our cafeteria, guests will not be allowed to join students during meals except on special event occasions where we have been able to plan for additional seating.

At this time, no student will be charged for school-provided breakfast or lunch. **A la carte milk will be priced at \$.50. Second meals for elementary and secondary students will be the same price and portion size as adult meals. Cost for second meals are \$2.50 for breakfast and \$4.75 for lunch.**

You may pay breakfast and lunch bills online through the Mealtime Online Payment link on the Nutrition Services site at www.ffc8.org or by sending a check or cash with your child to be deposited into their lunch account. **We encourage all families to fill out the “Free and Reduced Application” form, as this information is used to support funding for school programming throughout the year.** This can be done with a paper copy or can be completed online at <https://fountainftcarson.rocketscanapps.com/>. Free and Reduced Lunch applications **must be completed each school year. You will be notified upon return to school when the application is due.** Please check out the Nutrition Services website for menus. [Nutrition Services](#)

GUIDELINES REGARDING TREATS/SNACKS FOR STUDENTS

If you choose to have your child eat a snack in their classroom, it must be provided by you. The school does not provide snacks to students.

The following guidelines must be followed by all parents and staff members when providing students with snacks or treats during the school day or after-school activities:

Trans Fats. State law prohibits schools from “making available” to students any food or beverages that contain any amount of industrially produced trans fat. This applies to all food and beverages available on school grounds during the school day and extended school day, including classroom parties and before and after-school clubs. Schools are encouraged to offer nutritious choices along with other snack foods at classroom parties and before or after-school activities. **Homemade baked goods will not be served to students during the school day or at after-school student activities.** Parents are encouraged to provide sealed, store-bought baked goods or other trans fat free items for classroom celebrations and snack time. The District’s nutrition services program complies with all federal, state and local requirements, including the recently enacted ban on trans fats. All food items purchased from Food Services for student activities will be trans fat free. Many food items may or may not contain trans fat depending on the brand. A list of common trans fat free store-bought grocery items will be available in the school’s office.

CHILD CUSTODY

In most cases, when parents are separated or divorced, both parents continue to have equal rights where their children are concerned. If you have a court order that limits the rights of one parent in matters such as custody, visitation, or pick-up, please bring a copy to the office. **Unless your court order is on file at Mountainside, signed, and specifically states denial requests, we must provide equal rights to both parents. We cannot go on word of mouth alone or anything that is currently pending a court’s decision.**

COMMUNICATION

Communication is vital between home and school. Teachers will notify parents when they have a concern. It is also essential that parents contact the teacher when they have questions or concerns. Mountainside uses the following methods to communicate with parents and families:

Remind and Infinite Campus Dialer: Mountainside uses an automated dialer for important news and information. You will be asked at registration to provide contact information. Keep all information up to date and please check all texts and voicemails. Teachers will utilize multiple forms/methods of communication to connect with students and parents. Please share with your child's teacher if you are unable to receive a particular form or method of communication.

Website: Please visit our school website at: www.ffc8.org/mountainside. Our website is updated monthly.

Reporting Student Progress: Report cards will be issued to students at the end of each semester (January and May). Progress reports will be sent home throughout the school year. Parents may also access their child's progress reports through our new gradebook system called Otus. Parent/teacher conferences are held twice a year at the end of the first quarter and mid-way through the third quarter. Parents may request a conference with a teacher at any time of the school year when they have concerns.

Communication Protocol: Mountainside takes pride in the positive relationships between parents and teachers. If for any reason you have a concern, please directly contact the teacher first. If the problem continues, then contact a school administrator. The administrator will facilitate a meeting to resolve the issue. Thank you for helping us to solve problems at the level where they can most appropriately be addressed.

EVIDENCE-BASED GRADING

WHAT IS EVIDENCE-BASED GRADING?

Allows teachers to assess and report on individual standards.

A proficiency scale 1-4 is used to score each standard. Secondary report cards (6-12) include a single grade for a subject.

Evidence-based grading and reporting emphasizes growth of your child over time.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF EVIDENCED-BASED GRADING?

Provides more meaningful and specific information about your child's progress.

Creates multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate proficiency if the standard was not mastered the first time it was taught.

Ensure that a student's final grade fully communicates their learning over specific skills and standards.

WHAT DOES A PROFICIENCY SCALE MEAN?



4 At this level, your child has a sophisticated understanding of the standard and can apply or use concepts in specific situations. Not every standard has the opportunity for a 4.

3 **Level 3 is the goal for ALL standards.** Your child has demonstrated **adequate** mastery of the knowledge and skills expected at this grade level.

2 Your child has demonstrated **partial** understanding of the knowledge and skills expected at this grade level.

1 Your child has demonstrated **limited** understanding of the knowledge and skills expected at this grade level.

- A student on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) might receive a modified score indicated by an asterisk.

Should I be worried if my child scores a 1 or 2? No, especially in the beginning of the year. It means that your child has not mastered the standard *yet*. The goal is to achieve a 3 by the end of the school year.

For more information, visit: <https://www.ffc8.org/academics/grading-in-ffc8>

COUNSELOR/SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST/BEHAVIORAL MENTAL
HEALTH TEAM

Individual students and families may obtain support for social, emotional or behavioral challenges through our school counseling office, our school psychologist or the Behavioral Health Team (part of Evans Hospital to serve Mountainside students and families) which includes a school psychologist assigned from Evans Hospital to serve families or a Military Family Life Counselor (MFLC). A full-time school counselor is on staff to assist students in meeting with success in school by meeting individually, in small groups, and in large group settings. To ensure that students are successful in the school setting it is essential for students to be present in school and in class. Our counselor will work with families to provide attendance and truancy support. Both our counselor and school psychologist will work with students during the school day to provide support for social, emotional and behavioral challenges. Military family members may be provided support through the Evans Hospital Behavioral Mental Health Team on-site at Mountainside through a referral process. Staff at Mountainside will work with families to coordinate the appropriate level of support for your child's success.

An annual permission slip is needed for children to work with the MFLC or Evans' Psychologist.

CRISIS DRILLS AND PROCEDURES

Monthly safety drills are held to practice various procedures for safety in our school setting. Our school utilizes the Safety Response Protocols indicating specific responses to threats and incidents. The 5 categories of response as outlined in our Safety Response Protocols are:

- **Evacuation:** Students and staff leave the building. This may be done in response to an incident inside the building where personnel needs to be removed for their safety. Students and adults will proceed to a predetermined location to await further instructions.
- **Secure:** Perimeter doors to the school are secured and remain locked, but activity inside the building continues normally. This may be done in response to an incident occurring outside the building.
- **Hold:** Perimeter doors to the school are secured and remain locked, and students and staff are required to remain in the classroom or activity areas. Hallways are to remain empty until the incident has been resolved. This may be done in response to a situation isolated to a specific location in the building, or to a situation where there needs to be a free flow of traffic throughout the hallways (a medical situation).
- **Shelter:** Students and staff move to safe and secure locations within the building, or off the exterior grounds. This may be done in response to a weather threat (e.g. lightning, tornado, high winds).
- **Lockdown:** Students and staff secure all internal and external doors, and remain in the secured location until school administration or law enforcement direct them to remove themselves from a situation. This may be done in response to an incident inside or outside the building that may place the safety of students or staff in jeopardy unless they remain in their secured location.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Mountainside Elementary believes one of the most important aspects of education is to provide students with skills and language to make appropriate behavioral choices. At the foundational level children must feel physically and emotionally safe in school so that they can maximize their learning potential. Mountainside students learn the skills needed for working and learning cooperatively with each other throughout their educational day.

The adults at Mountainside Elementary take time to model and teach children how to translate expectations into action in different situations. At the beginning of the year, we introduce rules and behavioral expectations and guide students in practicing them. Using respectful words and tones of voice, we remind children of these expectations. When children behave positively, we acknowledge the behavior and encourage students to follow the example set. These actions let children know what the expectations are and help them stay motivated to meet those expectations.

In deciding how to handle a student's behavior choice, we take into account the child's age and emotional development, the severity of the infraction, and how likely it is to happen again. Our goal in administering any consequence is to provide the child the opportunity to learn from their behavior so when faced with a similar situation in the future they will make a positive choice. Behaviors will be dealt with first from the classroom teacher. Adults may:

- Simply give a reminder or tell the child to do something different.
- Have the child sit closer to the teacher or other adult (often just being closer to an adult helps children remember what they're supposed to do).
- Use "take-a-break" (the child goes to a distraction-free space in the room for a little while to regain self-control).
- Limit the child's choice of activities for a while (for example, blacktop games only at today's recess; try field games tomorrow).
- Involve the child in fixing situations caused by his or her behavior choice (for example, helping the custodian clean up if she/he has made a mess in the bathroom).

When a student needs additional supports due to the safety, severity, or frequency of the behavior, adults may:

- Refer child to the school counselor, school psychologist, or building administrator to address the issue.
- With adult support, child may be asked to process the behavioral situation away from his/her classmates to receive a consequence or create a plan to change the behavior in future situations.

Disciplinary consequences may be imposed by building administrators as deemed appropriate based on the child's behavioral infraction. Parents will be notified in writing or by phone call of the child's consequence. Be assured the consequence of all disciplinary action will be confidential and will not be shared with other parents or students involved.

Student safety is a primary responsibility for the staff and families at Mountainside. In our attempt to be proactive to eliminate the practice of bullying within our school, please see information regarding bullying information and possible consequences if bullying behavior is discovered [here](#).

TITLE IX POLICY

Fountain-Fort Carson School District is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from sex-based discrimination, including sexual harassment. It is a violation of policy for any staff member to harass students or for students to harass other students through conduct or communications of a sexual nature or to retaliate against anyone who reports sexual harassment or participates in a harassment investigation.

Under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX"), sexual harassment is conduct on the basis of sex that meets one of more of the following descriptions:

- **Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment:** Any District employee who conditions the provision of educational benefits to a student's participation in sexual conduct.
 - For example, a teacher offers for a student to go on a date with them in exchange for a good grade. This constitutes sexual harassment regardless of whether the student agrees to the request and irrespective of whether a good grade is promised or a bad grade is threatened.
- **Severe and Pervasive Sexual Harassment:** Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person access to the District's education programs or activities.
 - For example, a student repeatedly sends graphic, sexually oriented jokes and pictures to hundreds of other students on social media. Many don't find it funny and ask the student to stop, but they do not. Because of these jokes and images, one student avoids the sender in school, eventually asking to be moved from a class they had together.
- **Clery Act Sexual Harassment:** Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking, as these terms are defined under the Clery Act and the Violence Against Women Act.
 - For example, a student convinces another student to send a photo of their private body part and then threatens to share the photo with the whole school unless the student who sent the photo agrees to let the first student touch their private body part. The student who sent the photo agrees to do it, feeling they had no choice; this constitutes sexual assault.

Students are encouraged to report all incidences of sex-based discrimination or sexual harassment and may do so by contacting the District's Title IX Coordinator for students in person, by mail, phone, or email:

Montina Romero, Title IX Coordinator (students)
10665 Jimmy Camp Road
Fountain, CO 80817
(719) 382-1575
mromero@ffc8.org

Students may request supportive measures during the course of an investigation, including but not limited to: safety escorts, class re-assignment, locker re-assignment, counseling, mediation,

assigned entrances and exits, assigned parking spots, assigned lunch tables, staff check-ins, no-contact contracts, modified passing periods, etc.

DRESS CODE

Student dress should be modest, clean, and not distract students from learning. Parents may be contacted to bring a change of clothing in case of a dress code violation. Please adhere the following guidelines:

- Colorado weather conditions often change frequently with fluctuations in temperature throughout the day. Make sure your child is prepared for the weather of the day.
- The wearing of hats in the building is reserved for special activities and/or spirit days at Mountinside. Hairstyles, hats, or hoodies should not cover the student's face (except in cases of religious expression).
- Tops/shirts should fully cover chest, back, and belly areas. Straps on tank tops should remain in place without falling down and hold the garment in place.
- Shorts and skirts must be longer than fingertips when arms are relaxed at sides, preferably no more than two inches above the knee cap.
- Pants/slacks should be high-waisted enough to cover the body and undergarments when seated on a chair or floor.
- T-shirts must be free of material or humor that disrupts the school environment (vulgar language, sexually explicit references, drugs, alcohol, ...).
- Roller blade shoes/"wheelies"/"heelies" are not allowed due to safety concerns and to prevent possible injury. Closed-toe shoes are recommended to assure student safety because our playground consists mostly of pea gravel, concrete, and grass. **Please make sure that student footwear is appropriate for weather conditions.**

EMERGENCY CHANGES TO THE REGULAR SCHOOL DAY

2 HOUR LATE STARTS AND/OR SCHOOL CLOSURES

As many of you realize, the weather in Colorado can vary widely from day to day and through different parts of the Colorado Springs region. District 8 and Fort Carson Army Base monitor the weather closely in an attempt to provide safe access to schools for students, parents, and staff. Typically District 8 and Fort Carson Army Base are either open at the regular time, or completely closed. However, District 8 and Fort Carson sometimes have different responses to weather. PLEASE BE AWARE THAT ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR CLOSURES WILL LIST FOUNTAIN-FORT CARSON SCHOOL DISTRICT 8 AS: "DISTRICT 8". This description is used to differentiate the school district from the closures or delays that may be called by Fort Carson Army Base.

We do want to make students and parents aware of the fact that the District also has the option of a 2-Hour Late Start. A two-hour late start may be used when a storm is passing through the area, or when additional time may be needed to prepare for students and staff arriving at their schools. Two-hour late starts will be announced through the same channels as a school closure. These channels include local television and radio, Remind, and the district's website.

A 2-hour Late Start means that all bus pickup times, and school start times will be moved back 2 hours. So a normal pickup of 0630 would become 0830, etc. **Also, due to the times for lunch service, breakfast will not be served on delayed start days.** Students will enter the building no earlier than 0915, and our tardy bell will ring to start the instructional day at 0930. **Please do not bring your child early or allow them to arrive at school early on those days. Students may not enter the building until supervision begins at 0915.** The late start also impacts the start time for staff in the building, and staff is not able to provide student supervision earlier than 0915. The District will only hold classes if it believes it is safe to do so. However, if parents believe the conditions are not safe it is always the parent's option to keep students home. The absence will be excused if the parent contacts the school to communicate the decision as being weather related. If you have any questions, please call the school.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

It is the parent's responsibility to make prior arrangements with a baby-sitter or neighbor to take care of their child if arriving home early due to emergency school closings. Please discuss these emergency arrangements with your child periodically.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips have always been encouraged as a part of instruction when they are associated with academic work and have an educational value. Field trips are scheduled as a culminating activity of a unit studied by the students, to supplement the curriculum, and to introduce students to community resources. This activity is a part of academic school work. The field trip is where your child's education will take place on that day. It is our hope to be able to once again include these valuable experiences for our students this year. As a reminder, a child's behavior is expected to be exemplary on a field trip. Please help us to stress to your child these expectations so that the field trip is a positive experience. Permission slips must be signed by the parent before a student is allowed to attend any field trip. If a parent wishes to check their child out of school from the field trip site, then a written waiver/request form should be completed with the child's teacher.

HEALTH

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE HAVE TELEPHONE NUMBERS WHERE YOU CAN BE REACHED IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY. WE ALSO REQUEST THE NAME AND PHONE NUMBER OF A RESPONSIBLE PERSON AS AN EMERGENCY CONTACT IN CASE YOU CANNOT BE REACHED.

- **First Aid** – Office personnel do not diagnose or give treatment other than first aid. Any injury received in school should be reported to the teacher in charge before coming to the office. All major injuries are referred to the parents, or in the case they cannot be reached, the emergency contact person will be notified. In the case of a severe emergency, 911 services will be requested.
- **Hearing/Eye Tests** - Children in grades K-5 and new students are screened each year for visual and hearing problems. Abnormalities are reported to the parents, however, no report is made if the results are normal.

- **Immunizations** – If your child receives immunizations during the school year, please notify the school office so that we may update our records. Immunizations must be current and up-to-date. **FOR FURTHER QUESTIONS OR CLARIFICATION PLEASE REFER TO SCHOOL BOARD POLICY "IMMUNIZATION OF STUDENTS"-JLCB.**
- **Medications** – If a child is to be administered medication during school hours, the parent must supply the school with a completed, signed permission form (obtained from our office) authorizing the school as to the time and amount of medication to be administered. The medication must be in a prescription bottle. Students shall not be permitted to take medication on their own. Students may not bring medication to school. **FOR FURTHER QUESTIONS OR CLARIFICATION PLEASE REFER TO SCHOOL BOARD POLICY "ADMINISTERING MEDICATION TO STUDENTS"-JLCD.**

HOMEWORK

Education is a lifelong process which extends beyond the school. It is important that students recognize that learning occurs in the home and community. Homework is one means of practicing and reinforcing the skills necessary for independent application, and learning outside the school. A broad definition of homework includes not only written work, but also related activities such as viewing specific television programs, news reporting, recreational reading and other activities related to classroom work but are assigned to be done at home.

Why assign homework?

- To provide practice using rigorous application of newly taught skills and concepts.
- To provide opportunities for applying skills and concepts into real world application.
- To allow for deeper understanding and learning.
- To improve life skills such as time management and responsibility.
- To provide the teacher with feedback that identifies students' strengths and weaknesses in understanding.
- To provide additional practice in skills and concepts that were re-taught because students had difficulty understanding them the first time they were taught.
- To provide an informal assessment teachers can use to enhance instruction.

How is homework utilized?

- Homework time and complexity should increase with the age of the students. (Kdg/1st grade – 15 minutes, 2nd/3rd grade – 30 minutes, 4th grade - 45 minutes, 5th grade - 60 minutes.)
 - Students may be asked to read independently, or with an adult, for periods of time in addition to the homework guidelines identified above.
- Feedback to the student will be provided relating to homework that is assigned. This will be verbal or written feedback to the student to communicate next steps in the learning process.
- Teachers will use the information they receive from a child's performance on an assignment to help drive instruction to best meet each child's specific learning needs.
- **Homework will not be graded, but will provide wonderful opportunities for practice and feedback.**

Guidelines for Students and Parents

Be aware of all homework assignments and materials necessary to complete the assignment. Students should understand how the assigned homework will help the student to demonstrate success toward learning targets.

- Be sure you understand the assignment and ask the teacher if you need help.
- Try to set aside a regular time and place to do homework.
- Complete your work and hand it in when it is due.
- Be prepared to ask questions if there were parts of your homework you didn't understand.
- Monitor progress on assignments using Infinite Campus or by communicating with the teacher.
 - Please contact Mountainside for assistance with Infinite Campus username and password.
- If you have questions about an assignment, or need clarification from the teacher about the purpose of the homework assignment, please speak with your (or your child's) teacher.

PARENT PORTAL

Mountainside parents may obtain an Infinite Campus password, since this is one of our major tools for communicating home about students' attendance. Parents will also be able to access student grades through the Otus online gradebook.

LOST AND FOUND

Please make sure your child's name is on all items brought to school so they can be promptly returned to him/her.

All lost items will be collected and held in the lost and found located in the vestibule next to the main lobby. Items will be removed and donated at the conclusion of each quarter/semester. Students should take home all bags, water bottles, and outerwear at the conclusion of each school day. Students should not bring toys, electronic devices, jewelry, and other valuables to school. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

RECESS

Recess takes place around each lunch period and during the school day depending on the grade level and teacher's discretion. For safety reasons, students are not allowed in the hallways, office, restrooms, or gym without permission during lunch and classroom recess periods. Knowing that Colorado weather changes often and that we try to provide outside recess as much as possible, so be sure your student has appropriate clothing for the weather - coats, hats, boots, gloves, etc.

RECORDS AND WITHDRAWALS

The school office keeps an up-to-date enrollment record on file for each child. If you move or change your residence or telephone number, report the new information immediately. **IT IS**

VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE HAVE TELEPHONE NUMBERS WHERE YOU CAN BE REACHED IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, INCLUDING STUDENT ILLNESS OR INJURY. WE ALSO REQUEST THE NAME AND PHONE NUMBER OF A RESPONSIBLE PERSON IN CASE YOU CANNOT BE REACHED. Children transferring or withdrawing from school must be cleared through the school office. The office would like notification at least 3 days before your child withdraws. Send or bring a note to the office stating the date your child will be leaving. All books and other materials belonging to the school district must be collected before you leave, and fees must be paid, if any is owed. We will send all records to your new school upon the request of that school.

TELEPHONES/CELL PHONES

In order to support a focused learning environment, **students should not receive phone calls or text messages during the school day (via cell phone or smart watch).** Parents should contact the office in the event of an emergency, and a message will be relayed to your child. If a student has a cell phone, it must remain in the child's backpack and turned off during the school day. The school is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen cell phones.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Visitors:

Mountainside Elementary School staff members recognize that parents are an important part of our school. In order for the safety of all Mountainside Elementary students, we ask that all visitors sign in at the office immediately upon entering the building. You will need to present a state, federal, or military picture ID that will be processed through our RAPTOR background check system. You will receive a visitor sticker with your picture and your destination in the building. Please wear this visitor's sticker at all times while in our building. ***We ask that parents wishing to visit their child's classroom communicate with the classroom teacher to ensure that instruction and learning are not interrupted. It is our expectation that the teacher's focus remains on student learning and instruction and that visitors do not disrupt the classroom environment. If you wish to discuss your child specifically, please set an appointment with the teacher.***

Parents are always welcome to visit and volunteer at Mountainside. Visits to Mountainside can aid the student, parent, and teacher. Watch for information home to notify you of parent events and opportunities to get involved during the school day and during specific events throughout the school year.

If you call the school and would like to speak with a teacher, the secretaries will contact them during non-instructional time to inform your child's teacher that you wish to speak with them. Communication with your child's teacher can strengthen your child's educational experience, so utilizing email, phone calls, or video conferencing are all ways that we can maintain a positive home-school relationship in our current environment.

CHILDREN LEARN BEST WHEN:

- They feel they have a choice in the learning process
- They are actively engaged in their learning

- They interact with their environment to construct knowledge
- Their learning builds on prior knowledge and past experiences
- They work cooperatively with their peers
- They have a safe, orderly learning environment
- Their developmental needs are met: well-rested, appropriately dressed for the weather
- They are respected for their uniqueness and are treated as individuals
- There are high expectations from both school and home
- There is collaboration among school, home, and community

2024-2025 Grade-Level Entrances
Mountainside Elementary School



First through Fifth Grades

Kindergarten and all students
eating breakfast



Fountain-Fort Carson School District 8 is committed to Bullying Prevention and Education.

Bullying Prevention and Education

Bullying and other behaviors as defined below are prohibited on district property, at district or school-sanctioned activities and events, when students are being transported in any vehicle dispatched by the district or one of its schools, or off school property when such conduct has a nexus to school or any district curricular or non-curricular activity or event.

Prohibited behavior

- Bullying
- Retaliation against those reporting bullying and/or the behaviors prohibited by this policy
- Making knowingly false accusations of bullying behavior

Definition

Bullying is the use of coercion or intimidation to obtain control over another person or to cause physical, mental or emotional harm to another person. Bullying can occur through written, verbal or electronically transmitted expressions (i.e., cyberbullying) or by means of a physical act or gesture. Bullying is prohibited against any student for any reason, including but not limited to any such behavior that is directed toward a student on the basis of their academic performance or against whom federal and state laws prohibit discrimination upon the bases described in C.R.S. 22-32-109 (1)(II)(I).

Reporting

Any student who believes they have been a victim of bullying and/or other behaviors prohibited by this policy, or who has witnessed such bullying and/or other prohibited behaviors, is strongly encouraged to immediately report it to a school administrator, counselor, or teacher.

A student who engages in any act of bullying, retaliation, and/or other behaviors prohibited by this policy is subject to appropriate disciplinary actions including but not limited to suspension, expulsion, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities.



Fountain-Fort Carson School District 8 operates according to policies established by the Board of Education. For additional information, please refer to Policy [JICDE](#).