



2024 - 2025 Family Student Handbook

MPA Board approval on June 25, 2024

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Montessori Peaks Academy is a Jefferson County Public Charter School and Tuition-Based Preschool Program.

This handbook is subject to change based on current health mandates or policy amendments.

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Welcome to Montessori Peaks Academy

Vision Statement

Montessori Peaks Academy is an educational journey, preparing each child to uniquely contribute to our shared community.

Mission Statement

It is the mission of Montessori Peaks Academy to achieve high standards of individual excellence by guiding the whole student through an exceptional educational experience based on the educational philosophy of Maria Montessori.

Montessori Philosophy

MPA's environment is not limited to its campus. We see the world as our classroom and invite all aspects of its culture into our space. The MPA adults work together to create a prepared physical and spiritual environment of equity and belonging through lessons, materials, and activities that promote cultural appreciation.

Diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging are dynamic processes in continuous growth. MPA is devoted to the evolution of our changing world through examination of the school's policies and practices, learning resources, professional development, communication, social-emotional wellness, and quality of global engagement.

Dr. Maria Montessori, an Italian physician, observed that children possess an intrinsic need to explore and learn about the world and a natural propensity to absorb knowledge and information provided to them.

Montessori philosophy is based on a deep respect for the individual child. A Montessori classroom environment is specially designed for specific multi-aged groups. The child has access to a variety of materials: equipment, activities and furniture appropriate for his/her age, interest, and ability. Central to the environment is the trained teacher who assists the children in the unfolding of their individual personalities.

A Montessori program achieves a balance between a child's needs for freedom of movement and social interaction, and equally compelling needs for order, independence, concentration, and challenge. Qualified, caring adults guide children to

moments of discovery that give great joy and a sense of dignity as independent human beings. Children learn to think for themselves, collaborate with others, and become actively involved in their own education. Children then take ownership of their knowledge, have confidence in their opinions, and are better prepared to face the challenges ahead.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the Montessori process is that abstractions are not taught directly; instead, the necessary components are provided so that the children can move from concrete to abstract concepts in their own time, thus providing a longer-lasting impression. This means that children arrive at new and deeper knowledge through their own creative thought developed during their work. Children can achieve this through the exploration of hands-on materials which are arranged on the shelves sequentially in order and in degrees of abstraction and complexity. These manipulative materials are self-correcting and provide maximum potential for success.

History of Montessori Peaks Academy

In August 1996, a Steering Committee of parents was formed which researched, prepared, and submitted a Charter Application to the Jefferson County Board of Education. In June 1997, the Charter Contract was approved. Montessori Peaks Academy was Jefferson County's first public Montessori Charter School, opening its doors in September 1997.

The school is now housed in its own specially designed buildings, with the main campus completed in the Fall of 2003 with an 11,000 square foot addition completed in September 2007, and the North campus completed in March of 2024. Our Charter was renewed by the Jefferson County School Board in 2019 for five years.

Commitment to Nondiscrimination

Montessori Peaks Academy does not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, or age in its programs or activities. Inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies should first be directed to the MPA Board of Directors' designated representative. Further inquiries should be directed to the Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 1961 Stout Street 3rd floor, Denver, CO 80294.

Commitment to Equity

Montessori Peaks Academy is a community that accepts all groups, affirming and engaging the perspectives and backgrounds of the whole child's universe (family/caretakers, educators, school, community, and the world). We acknowledge that our world communities are seeking response, recognition, and representation through its educational systems. Daily, we use the Montessori foundations of the child, the adult, and the environment to create an authentic atmosphere of acceptance, inclusion, and belonging based on race, orientation, gender identity, disability, spiritual beliefs, and culture for all.

The needs of mankind are universal. Our means of meeting them create the richness and diversity of the planet. The Montessori child should come to relish the texture of that diversity. - Dr. Maria Montessori

MPA families and educators work together to develop an equitable and inclusive learning environment, where all feel accepted and valued, while guiding the child as a citizen of the world. The teachers, parents/guardians, and students are partners in using Dr. Montessori's method of scientific observation and global relationships to honor the uniqueness of each child and classroom. MPA is committed to our community through evaluation and reflection, collaboration, ongoing education, and participation as members in a diverse society.

An education capable of saving humanity is no small undertaking: it involves the spiritual development of man, the enhancement of his value as an individual, and the preparation of young people to understand the times in which they live. - Dr. Maria Montessori

Charter Schools Information

The Colorado Charter Schools Act was enacted in 1993 to enhance educational opportunities for students in Colorado by giving parents/guardians, teachers, and community members an avenue "to take responsible risks and create new, innovative, more flexible ways of educating all children within the public school system." The Act seeks to provide an atmosphere in Colorado's public schools for alternative learning experiences.

Charter schools are non-sectarian, non-religious and non-home-based; schools governed by a group of parents, teachers and/or community members within a specified public school district. A “Charter” is negotiated between a Charter School and its school district, which allows a Charter School to operate free from certain specified school district policies and state regulations.

Charter schools are subject to the same or higher student performance standards as other schools in the district, as mandated by state law. Charter schools provide an effective means for more students to meet Colorado content standards by utilizing time, resources, and instructional strategies in more effective and efficient ways.

Teacher Qualifications

Lead Teachers (Guides) at MPA are Montessori trained/certified for their respective age groups (Primary, Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary, Middle School) and will implement Montessori teaching practices and curriculum in alignment with the philosophy of Maria Montessori.

In addition to the Montessori training/certification, the following requirements are upheld for the designated levels:

- ***Teachers and Interventionists of K - 3rd grade students*** must complete evidenced-based training in teaching reading, as designated by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and the Colorado READ Act in SB 19-199 ([PDF](#)).
- ***Middle School Teachers (Guides)*** at MPA will achieve and maintain the requisite designations/certifications for their assigned content areas: Math, Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies.
- ***Primary teachers and assistants*** also hold, or are in the process of acquiring, an Early Childhood Teacher Qualification Verification Letter from the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care.

Assistant teachers are present in all our classrooms, with one full-time assistant for each classroom through 6th grade. Our Middle School classrooms have part-time assistant support. Most assistants have previous experience in school or childcare settings. Many of our assistants have taken Montessori overview courses.

Montessori teachers strive to:

1. Awaken a child’s spirit and imagination.
2. Encourage the child’s normal desire for independence and high sense of self-esteem.
3. Help children develop the kindness, courtesy, and self-discipline that will allow them to become a full member of society.
4. Help the student learn how to observe, question, and explore ideas independently.

MPA Board of Directors

The Constitution of the State of Colorado delegates authority to run public schools to the Board of Education of each local school district, with oversight by the State Board of Education. The Jefferson County School District, through the Charter Schools Act, has delegated most of the decision-making authority for Montessori Peaks Academy to its Board of Directors.

Montessori Peaks Academy is a corporate entity separate from the Jefferson County School District and operates autonomously under the direction of its Board of Directors. The Board of Directors of Montessori Peaks Academy, in accordance with the school’s Charter contract with the Jefferson County School District, is responsible for making all governance and policy decisions affecting the students and staff. The MPA Board of Directors is an elected board of seven parents, one staff member elected by the staff, and one community member appointed by the MPA Board.

Regular meetings of the MPA Board of Directors are held monthly. Notices announcing the dates, times, and locations of Board of Directors’ meetings are posted on the bulletin board in the front lobby of the school 24 hours prior to the meetings and on the school website.

Special meetings and executive sessions addressing issues requiring confidentiality as provided for in the Colorado Open Meetings Law, may be called as needed by the MPA Board of Directors.

The Board meets once a month to discuss the various elements of school governance. These meetings are open to the public and to any community member who might wish to attend. While the meetings are open, it is important to remember this is a formal

meeting and the dialogue primarily exists between Board members as they discuss the various items on the agenda. However, there is a designated time for community members to share their thoughts with the Board during each meeting. This time is called “Community Comments,” and you are welcome to sign up to speak during this time. A sign-up sheet for comments can be found on the lobby bulletin board of the school, along with the meeting agenda.

If you wish to share ideas or concerns with the Board, you are welcome to reach out to any Board member individually. Contact information for each member is found on the school website. The Board welcomes feedback from the community.

For reference, all corporate documents (i.e. by-laws, articles of incorporation, BOD policies, BOD Meeting Schedules, etc.) are located on the school website (http://www.montessoripeaks.org/mpa_board_of_directors/meetings_and_communication) and are also available in the front office for public review upon request.

The Board does not generally have access to confidential files of students, school personnel, or other federally or state mandated confidential information.

Enrollment

Montessori Peaks Academy participates in the Enroll Jeffco system. District policy JFBA-R authorizes charter schools to follow their own enrollment policies in compliance with state and federal law. Montessori Peaks Academy ensures that its enrollment policies meet federal and state best practices for charter schools. Montessori Peaks Academy currently follows Jefferson County Public Schools enrollment policies and process.

Jeffco Enrollment Process

As a part of the district choice enrollment process, families utilize Enroll Jeffco, the electronic application system for their child(ren). Montessori Peaks Academy utilizes the Jeffco Enroll systems for all students ages PreK - 8th grade. Jeffco Public Schools completes the lottery electronically. Families then receive notification of a space or the number on the waitlist. Montessori Peaks Academy administration is responsible for overseeing the choice enrollment process for the school and the operational administration of Jeffco Enroll with families.

As a part of the enrollment process, after a student has been offered a space, parents or guardians will be asked to notify the school if their child is on a 504 or an IEP. Jeffco Schools will request further information to ensure that the school can service the student's needs. These considerations will be reviewed on a case by case basis by Jefferson County Schools. Montessori Peaks Academy adheres to the Colorado Revised Statute [C.R.S. 22-54-103] stating that students enrolled in Kindergarten shall be five years old as of October 1st. Students enrolled in pre-k must be 3/4 years old by the first day of school.

Sibling Status

Siblings of currently enrolled students are given priority enrollment. Before the start of any school year, if priority status has been given to a sibling of an enrolled student, and the original student then withdraws, the sibling's enrollment status will be changed to non-sibling.

Eligibility

Any and all students are welcome to apply to attend Montessori Peaks Academy. Montessori Peaks Academy does not discriminate against applicants or their families on the basis of: race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, parent's marital status or political affiliation, veteran status, or any other protected status. Montessori Peaks Academy shall comply with all Jefferson County Board of Education approved policies and regulations, and the requirements of federal and state laws concerning the education of students with special needs. Montessori Peaks Academy works to ensure full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Re-enrollment Procedures

1. By January, parents of students currently attending MPA will need to provide an intent to return via Enroll Jeffco by the deadline for all Jefferson County Public Schools.
2. The Jeffco Student Placement Lottery is held by the school district. See the Jeffco website for specific dates. MPA will follow the Jeffco District guidelines to include the specific dates.
3. Vacancies will be filled by siblings of currently enrolled students and then by

students or staff members, followed by the students on the Enroll Jeffco site.

Each new sibling must have a completed application for the following academic school year by the date of the first lottery, usually mid-January.

Evaluation and Dismissal from Program

Montessori Peaks Academy is committed to providing every opportunity for students to feel comfortable and to make a positive adjustment in the classroom environment. However, there are times and circumstances when a student may experience difficulties, such as:

1. The student is not fully toilet trained and independent with bathroom skills.
2. The student is not making the adjustment in the classroom environment.
3. The student's behavior is inappropriate over an extended period of time.

The principal, in consultation with parent(s), school and district staff, and appropriate professionals, will determine a course of action which would include making accommodations. If the accommodations do not achieve the desired result, the parents may be asked to withdraw their child and seek a more appropriate educational environment.

Preschool parents must sign a school readiness agreement during registration indicating their child is ready for school in a Montessori environment. This document must be on file at the school.

Withdrawal of a Student

A student may be withdrawn from MPA by notice provided by parent/guardian at least thirty days in advance of the withdrawal date. The parent/guardian should contact the school secretary to obtain appropriate paperwork. Parents are responsible for any outstanding invoices.

Registration and Student Fees

Primary and Before/After Care Tuition

The Montessori Peaks Academy Primary and Before/After School Program tuition is based on an academic year and is paid on a 10-month payment schedule. Students are

admitted for the full academic year.

The obligation to pay the agreed tuition is not subject to adjustment for illness, absence or any other reason, to include district closures and late starts for weather-related instances. If it becomes necessary to withdraw your child, written notice is required THIRTY DAYS PRIOR TO WITHDRAWAL. Withdrawal will not be accepted after April 15th.

Tuition is based on a ten-month cycle, August through May, and is billed on the 15th of the month prior. Tuition is due by the first of the month—if not paid by the 5th, students cannot return to school until fees are paid, including any late fees. August tuition is due at August student registration, along with each student's materials fee. If a student is enrolled after the school year has begun, the first and second month's tuition is due on or before the first day the student begins school. If a student is withdrawn during the school year, no prorated refund for tuition will be made for the month in which the student leaves the school. The paid activity fees will be prorated to the student's last day of attendance. No refunds for either tuition or fees will be considered after April 15th for the current academic year. A \$20.00 late fee will be charged for any outstanding invoices 10 or more days past due.

Children of parents/guardians who have not paid invoiced tuition and/or other applicable fees will not be accepted into the Montessori Peaks Academy tuition-based programs until a zero balance is achieved. Any family desiring to continue enrollment must have a zero balance before the first day of the month. Special payment arrangements can be made with the Business Manager and must be approved by the Administrator. Montessori Peaks Academy may use all legal remedies in collecting past due amounts. The parent/guardian agrees to pay late fees, collection costs, attorney fees, and court costs reasonably incurred and associated with the collection of unpaid invoices/statements. All tuition and/or other applicable fees must be current and paid in full prior to the following yearly registration.

Financial Aid for tuition-based programs is not offered by MPA. Funding is accepted by a state aid program. Families can apply to the Child Care assistance programs through the CCCAP. MPA will be contacted by such programs and work with agencies providing aid.

Questions regarding billing should be directed to the Business Manager, who is in the

office from 8:30 am until 3:30 pm during the school year.

Registration Fees

A registration fee is charged for each student each academic year to cover the cost of consumable supplies. This fee is non-refundable. Waivers for the registration fee are granted by the principal for students eligible for free or reduced lunch under the National Income Poverty Guidelines-Board of Education Policy JQ.

In addition to the registration fee, each student will receive a supply list of student materials needed for the year.

Parents of students may be held liable for materials damaged in the classroom if the damage is the result of negligence and/or misbehavior.

School Hours, Attendance, and Operations

School Hours

1. Full day Primary Program (PreK 3 - K): 8:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.
2. Half day Primary (PK) 8:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M.
3. Elementary Program (1st - 6th): 8:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.
4. Middle School Program (7th-8th): 8:15 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.
5. Homeschool Program: 8:30 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.
6. Before School Program: 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 A.M.
7. After School Program: 3:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M.
8. Office Hours 7:30 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.

Attendance

Attendance Policy

Daily attendance is critical to a student's continuity of learning and is the combined responsibility of the parents, the school, and the student. The Colorado School Attendance Law requires compulsory school attendance for children ages seven to sixteen. This law makes parents responsible for their children's attendance, requires schools to keep accurate records of daily attendance, and to report annual attendance.

Regular attendance makes it possible for teachers to meet the goals of the school and the District. The school cannot teach students who are not present.

Students are expected to attend school for all days of the established school calendar. When illness, family emergency, or family business requires your child to be absent, parents/guardians are expected to call the MPA attendance line at 303-948-5991 by 8:30 A.M. Students who are not called in by 8:30 A.M. will be given an unexcused absence until contact has been made. When calling, please leave the following:

1. Student's name
2. Student's teacher and grade level
3. Date and reason for absence
4. Parent's name
5. Telephone number where you can be reached during the day

Absences resulting from temporary illness, injury, extended disability of the student or family, or emergencies will be excused if a reason for the absence has been communicated via the attendance line (303-948-5991)

Any other absences must be excused through prior arrangement with the school office and with notification to the principal and teacher. A Pre-Arranged Absence Form must be filled out, submitted, and approved by administration at least three days prior to the absence. **Personal vacations taken during regularly scheduled school sessions are discouraged. Supplemental work will not be provided by the teacher or school prior to a vacation.**

Following an absence, it is the **student's responsibility to request make-up work.** "Make-up work should reflect class assignments missed during an absence, and a reasonable amount of time should be allowed for work completion. Time allowed to make up work is twice the number of classes or days missed (two days allowed for make-up work for each day of absence); however, an extension of this time limit may be approved by school administration." *Jefferson County Public Schools Conduct Code, page 32.* Students are expected to keep up with current work while completing the make-up work.

Testing periods are especially crucial times for student attendance. We ask parents to plan for students to be present during standardized state testing and other testing

periods and to make appointments and other scheduled absences after school or before or after testing. Refer to the school calendar and weekly newsletters for testing date information.

A parent/guardian whose child has significant absences (four or more absences in a semester or seven or more absences in a school year) may be subject to legal proceedings. Parents of students with ten or more absences due to health concerns will be required to submit a letter from their child's physician for any subsequent absences.

Tardy Policy

On time arrival at school is very important to a student's academic achievement and successful school experience.

The elementary school day starts at 8:00 A.M. Tardy slips will be given to students at 8:05 A.M.

The middle school school day starts at 8:15 A.M. Tardy slips will be given to students at 8:20 A.M.

The homeschool day starts at 8:30 A.M. Homeschool Students arriving after 8:35 will be considered tardy.

Parents are asked to call the school by 8:00 A.M. to report if a child will be arriving late.

If a child is late on a day that a field trip is scheduled and the class has already left for the field trip, he/she will be added to another classroom as student/teacher ratios allow until the class returns from the field trip. Students, especially at the elementary or middle school levels, with excessive tardiness may be asked to make up missed work at home.

Inclement Weather and Extreme Temperatures

In the event of excessively hot or cold temperatures, the students' outdoor playtime will be adjusted accordingly. Children should be prepared to participate in outdoor activities on a daily basis. Drinking water is made available to the children and play times may be shorter and/or involve different kinds of structured play activities to accommodate the temperature.

School is closed only at the discretion of the school principal or the president of the Board of Directors, and Jefferson County School District. Every effort will be made to give parents maximum advanced notice of any school closures.

In cases of inclement weather we will follow Jeffco policy and practice. ***Montessori Peaks Academy will be closed if all Jefferson County Public Schools are closed and will have a 2-hour delayed start if all Jefferson County Public Schools declare a delayed start.*** Due to the large size of the Jefferson County School District, weather conditions can vary in different parts of the County. There may be instances when only schools in certain areas, such as the mountain schools, may be closed and Montessori Peaks Academy may or may not be affected.

Any changes in open/closed status for Montessori Peaks Academy will be announced, just like any other public school, on all major TV stations and through a District wide phone notification system or email. If it is announced that Jefferson County Public Schools are closed, Montessori Peaks Academy will be closed. If it is announced that Jefferson County Public Schools will observe a two-hour delayed start, Montessori Peaks Academy will observe a two-hour delayed start. Before school programming will also run with a two-hour delayed start. There will be no morning preschool on delayed start days.

Visiting the School

State and federal laws mandate that all visitors and parents must sign in at the administrative office before entering any area of the building. Unauthorized visitors are prohibited from entering the school. All visitors, including family or friends, must follow the school's procedures for visits by checking in at the office using the Raptor system and obtaining and wearing a visitor name tag. Visitors will be asked to show proper identification and state the reason for the visit. The number of visitors at any one time may be limited as their presence could be distracting to the supervision of students.

Parents

Parents are welcome to visit the school. This provides an opportunity to observe the work the children are doing, and gives insight into your child's relationship with others. Please schedule your visit with your child's teacher at a time when it will be most meaningful for you and your child. Lead teachers may limit the number of visits and time

of visits in order to ensure that the educational program for each student is not disrupted. Visits should not exceed one hour. Visiting the classroom begins in October. This allows students and teachers to settle into a classroom routine. This is known as “normalization” and is very important to children's development.

To maintain confidentiality, parents are expected to speak to the Lead Teacher about their child only. Parents are expected to keep observations of other students' behavior confidential.

Parents should never discipline another student when visiting the school. If a parent's child is involved in a behavioral situation with another student, the parent/guardian should contact the teacher for help sorting out the problem.

Siblings and Friends

Siblings and friends, including MPA graduates, can visit classrooms on a limited basis with prior permission.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures (Car Line)

Parents are responsible for transporting their children to and from school and we encourage the use of car pools.

General Expectations at ALL Car line times:

- Attend to safety of all students, staff, and drivers at all times
- Use of cell phones by drivers while in the carline is prohibited for the safety of all.
- Parents and all drivers are expected to proceed cautiously and act respectfully toward other drivers, parent/guardian volunteers, and staff.
- Pull all the way forward as directed by staff. Your child will be escorted to the car by staff.
- Use the signage that is given to you by your teacher all year for safety of child placement in the correct car.
- **Do not back up**....only move forward with caution
- Do not pass other cars in carline during drop off or pick up
- Use crosswalks to cross parking lot and street, thus ensuring your own safety, as well as role modeling safe behavior for your child

Morning Arrival and Dropoff

Arrival Time:

- PreK through 6th grade - School begins at 8:00 A.M.(Doors open at 7:50) at the Main building.
- Middle School - School begins at 8:15 AM (Doors open at 8:10) at the North building.
- Homeschool - School begins at 8:30 A.M. (Doors open at 8:25) at the North building.

Primary Students

All primary students are escorted by their parents to their classroom and **signed-in on the attendance sheet at the classroom**. Arrivals after 8:10 will be signed-in at the office. Parents of primary students park in the northwest parking lot. For students enrolled in the Before school program, please sign their attendance book.

Kindergarten and Elementary (Kindergarten-6th)

Kindergarten and Elementary School students are dropped-off at the “hug and drop” carline in the morning. Please stay in your car. Parent/guardian volunteers will assist the students out of the car.

Middle School (7th-8th) and Homeschool students (Kdg-8th)

Middle School and Homeschool students are dropped-off at the North building entrance. Homeschool students will be met by teachers in the car line.

Afternoon Dismissal and Pickup

Dismissal Time:

- PreK through 6th grade students - Students dismissed at 3:00 PM from the Main building.
- Homeschool and Middle School students - Students dismissed at 3:30 PM from the North building.

Driving: Primary and Kindergarten parents

Parents must enter the property from the Kipling and Capri side. Staying in the right

lane on Capri, turn right immediately into the northwest parking lot or kindergarten carpool line.

Pick-up: Preschoolers (3 and 4 year olds)

- Parents meet their preschoolers at the classroom or After School Program at the end of the child's day and **are required to sign them out on the attendance sheet**. This includes early dismissals.

Pick-up: Kindergartners

- Kindergartners are dismissed for carline or the After School Program at the end of the school day. Staff will put students into the car and **ask the parents to sign their students out**.

Pick-up: Kindergarten with older Siblings

- All students will stay with their teachers at dismissal time. Please pick up kindergarteners first and then turn into the Elementary lane of traffic to pick up older siblings.

Driving: Elementary parents

Parents must enter the school property from the Jellison and Bowles side of the school. Turn left onto the school driveway, staying in the left lane to proceed to the two lines for sidewalk pick-up.

Pick-up: Elementary and Middle School students (1st-8th Graders)

- Elementary students are dismissed for carline or the After School Program at the end of the school day. Staff will walk the students to the cars.

Driving: Middle School and Homeschool Parents

Parents must enter the school property from Bowles, to Jellison. Proceed down Jellison which turns into W. Capri Avenue. Turn right on the road (just before Kipling) that goes behind the North building. Proceed around the building and pull up in the line to reach the front of the building.

Pick-up: Middle School and Homeschool Students

- Homeschool students are dismissed for carline at the end of the school day. Staff will walk the students to the cars.
- Parents of Middle School students may meet students in the car line or

park and have the student carefully walk to the car.

Cones will be placed at the school drive entry to divide Primary/Kindergarten lanes and Elementary lanes. **Parents who enter from the wrong direction will be required to drive through the carline following the above pattern.**

Authorization for Student Check-out and Pick-up

Only authorized adults may pick up and sign out a student. Authorized adults are those who are 18 years or older and have been designated by the parent/guardian. Adults authorized to pick up students must be on file with the student's record. In addition to written authorization on file, we request that the parent/guardian inform the school staff when their student is being picked up by an authorized adult other than themselves. MPA staff members will ask to see the ID of any unfamiliar person entering the program site.

A **request for the student's early dismissal** should be made in writing to the teacher and the front office. The request should include the date and time the student will be picked up.

1. The adult picking up the child for early dismissal must come to the office.
2. The office personnel will call the **Elementary and Middle School** student's class and notify the teachers that the child should be released for early dismissal. The student will come to the office to be signed out and released.
3. The office personnel will call the **Primary** class to notify the teachers that the student is to be released for early dismissal.
4. **On Fridays when Kindergarten students have Specials classes**, office personnel will go to special class (music, art, PE) and pick up the student. Students will still be released from the office and the parent(s) will need to sign the student out. The office personnel will retrieve the student's items from the classroom and bring them to the parent.

Other than emergency situations, classes and students should not be interrupted for early dismissal. Any student leaving the school for early dismissal *must be signed out by a parent/guardian either in the office (Elementary and Middle School Students) or on the classroom roster by the Primary/Kindergarten classrooms*. Student safety is very important to MPA.

Students are never permitted to leave school during regular hours, or if enrolled in the Before or After School Program, without permission. No student may go off-campus alone during school hours.

MPA's Late Pick-up Policy

It is the policy of Montessori Peaks Academy not to leave children unattended on the school campus at any time. Therefore it is imperative that children who are **not** enrolled in the **After School Program or an After School Enrichment Activity be picked up on time.**

The Late Pick-up fee is \$1.00 per minute, per student after 11:15 am for Primary half-day students, after 3:15 pm for primary and elementary students, and after 3:45 pm for Homeschool students. This fee will be added to the family's Jeffco account. **After the third occurrence per semester, the late pick-up fee will be doubled.**

We understand that emergencies do arise, and it may become impossible to get to the program on time. Please notify the program if this occurs.

If parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached and a child is still at the program at 4:00 pm, the Jefferson County Sheriff's department will be contacted to assist in locating a parent/guardian.

If there is a change during school hours, the office will be sure that the teaching staff has been notified of the change of individual picking up the student. This would include play dates, parties, or other occasions which would involve a different pick-up arrangement.

Lost and Found Items

Small "lost and found" items of value are to be turned into the main office. Areas containing other unclaimed articles are located near the front entrance of the school. **It is important to clearly label your child's clothing and other belongings.** At various times during the school year unclaimed articles are displayed and, if unclaimed, are donated to worthy organizations. Please encourage your students to assume responsibility for all of their personal items during the school day.

Community Use of Facilities and Equipment

Parents and other members of the larger community may apply for use of the MPA building (gym, server, classroom, etc.) by completing an Application for Building and Facility Use form. The form is sent to the office for approval. Approval must be obtained before the activity can be added to the school master calendar and the activity is promoted within the community. Additional events will be planned around classroom and school events, which have priority on the school master calendar. Fees are charged if MPA staff is needed for set-up and event clean-up. Forms should be submitted at least 30 days in advance of the event; and blank forms can be found outside the office.

MPA equipment, including copiers, fax machines, computers, and printers are for school use only. Community members may make copies for a school-related event only.

Parents are not permitted to use school equipment for personal business.

Parent/Guardian Involvement and Communication

Research shows that strong parent/guardian participation has lasting and beneficial effects on a child's education and correlates with student achievement as well.

Becoming significantly involved in a child's education and school can produce effective results and add to the strength of our community.

Parent/guardian participation is highly encouraged and critically important to the success of Montessori Peaks Academy, and to the educational experience of its students. Charter schools are mandated to allocate (return) 5% of all Per-Pupil Revenue back to the District. Further, charter schools do not receive any funding from Jeffco School District for building acquisition, utilities, insurance, and building maintenance, creating an increased financial burden. Therefore parent/guardian involvement is even more crucial for the success of our program.

Parent/Guardian Education

Parent/guardian education at MPA is sponsored by the PTA and is an important learning experience for parents and guardians. Parents are given the opportunity to become familiar with the guiding philosophy of the Montessori Method, as well as topics of interest for parents.

Volunteering at Montessori Peaks Academy

MPA is committed to safeguarding children. One way to uphold this commitment is to require all persons who are volunteering, working with children in any form, attending a field trip, or assisting with any off hours event, check in using the Raptor system. Driver's Licenses will be checked at the front office, and once checked in through Raptor, a badge will be provided. Please keep badges on where they may be seen by MPA staff.

Parents are encouraged to become involved in the school at all levels. Each family is asked to contribute 50 volunteer hours (25 hours for single parent/guardian families) per academic year. This equates to approximately five hours per month. Due to their part-time attendance, homeschool families are not asked to contribute a specific number of hours. Each family will be asked to log their volunteer hours using the form on the PTA website. The link for this website is found on the MPA website under Parent/Guardian Resources.

Tracking of volunteer hours is important, as many grants application decisions are partially based on the volunteer commitment at our school. Being in attendance at school functions (parent/teacher conferences, musical productions, etc.) does not count toward the volunteer hour commitment. The only exceptions to this rule are attendance at parent/guardian education nights and Board meetings.

To maintain confidentiality, parents are expected to speak to the Lead Teacher about their child only. Parents are expected to keep observations of other students' behavior to themselves.

Community Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement

As a community volunteer assisting at Montessori Peaks Academy, a volunteer has been authorized by the Principal to act as a school official, subject to the direction and control of the school administrators and teachers.

Volunteers may have access to student information including educational records, observations of behavior, and personal interaction. Student educational records include all records, files, documents, and other materials that contain personally identifiable information on any student, as well as the personally identifiable information itself (including student grades).

Volunteers must agree to maintain the confidentiality of all student educational records. Volunteers may not disclose student education records or personally identifiable student information. Additionally, volunteers will report observations and/or concerns to the educational staff and not to other parties, including the child's parents.

Volunteers must understand and agree that a failure to maintain the confidentiality of all student educational information may disqualify an individual from further service as a community volunteer at Montessori Peaks Academy.

Volunteer Release

Volunteers will sign an agreement during the registration process, which states the following:

In consideration of my voluntary participation in the Montessori Peaks Academy building and grounds, and or related activities, I understand I hereby release and discharge Montessori Peaks Academy Charter School, the Jefferson County School District and their/its successors, heirs, assigns, directors, officers, employees, supervisors, agents, attorneys and representatives, from any and all actions, causes of action, claims, demands, losses, damages, costs, attorney fees, judgments, liens, indebtedness and liabilities whatsoever, known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected past, present, or future, with regard to all matters that could have been raised in an action on the merits regarding the aforementioned activity in which I have elected to voluntarily participate.

Volunteer Opportunities

Many volunteer opportunities are available to parents. Check with your student's lead teacher for classroom volunteer needs.

Accountability Committee

The Accountability Committee serves in an advisory role to the Board of Directors of Montessori Peaks Academy. The committee is charged with helping to approve, implement and monitor an annual school improvement plan, as well as administer and evaluate all surveys. The committee works with Administration and the Board to help the school meet its educational goals.

MPA Board of Directors

The Board of Directors of Montessori Peaks Academy, in accordance with the school's Charter contract with the Jefferson County School District, is responsible for making all governance and policy decisions affecting the students and staff. The MPA Board of Directors is an elected board of seven parents, one staff member elected by the staff, and one community member appointed by the Board. Regular meetings of the Board are held monthly.

MPA Board of Directors Committees

The MPA Board of Directors welcomes all MPA communities to attend and participate in the various committees created by the MPA Board. These committees provide valuable feedback and insight which affect board decisions and activities.

Classroom Volunteers

Parents come to the school and work under the direct supervision of classroom teachers, helping with classroom chores and working with students. Parents volunteering are expected to sign a Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement, which outlines the responsibilities of volunteers to respect the confidentiality of the classroom and students. The school will perform a background check for parents who volunteer in the classroom. Parents who breach this trust may not be permitted to work with students in the classroom.

Volunteer involvement is at the discretion of the Lead Teacher and may not disrupt the learning environment.

Hot Lunch Helpers

Volunteers assist the Hot Lunch Coordinator in serving school hot lunches to students, managing lists and District paperwork, and cleaning up at the end of lunch. Sign-up at registration or see the Hot Lunch Coordinator to participate.

Morning Car/Drop-off Volunteers

In the morning, parents are needed to assist with kindergarten and elementary drop-off. The arrangements are informal—just show up at 7:50 until 8:10 and join the other volunteers at the hug-and-drop curb. This job is very important and truly appreciated, as it supports the safety of our students.

PTA

The MPA PTA sponsors activities such as the Book Fair, teacher appreciation activities, fundraisers, school social events, and more.

Communication Guidelines

We strive for open communication at Montessori Peaks Academy. We appreciate your thoughts and ideas and encourage you to discuss them with the appropriate person(s).

MPA Board of Directors and Principal

The MPA Board and Principal welcome community input. To contact the Principal, you may call, email, make an appointment, or drop in to talk.

To contact the MPA Board, send an email using the addresses found on the MPA website. You may also attend a Board meeting and sign up for Community Comments.

In addition, each year the Board directs the Accountability Committee to conduct a Parent/Guardian Survey and communicate results to the Board. The Board encourages the community to use this opportunity to give feedback to improve and refine the MPA programs.

Classroom Communication

For most effective communication regarding classroom or individual issues, **please talk to the child's lead teacher**, not the classroom assistant, other staff member, or another parent.

If you need to talk with your child's teacher, please contact them or the office and leave a voicemail or email for the teacher. Please allow *24 school day* hours for a staff member to respond to your communication, **or** by the end of day on Monday when contacted over the weekend. School hours are 7:30-3:30 for staff.

A child's school behavior can be affected in many ways by problems or changes at home. Please let the lead teacher know if anything of a stressful nature is occurring in your family life.

Arrival and departure times are not appropriate parent-teacher discussion times. Please do not try to engage the teachers or students in conversations during this time.

Teachers may still be preparing the classroom for daily activities or directing their attention to the students. Children separate from parents more readily and prepare themselves for the classroom routine if an efficient parental departure is practiced.

During a busy school day, please feel free to leave a voicemail through the main office for teachers or correspond via email. All staff email addresses are listed on the school website. Check with your child's teacher for his/her preferred method of communication.

Office Communications

Messages regarding illness, changes in your child's schedule and appointments need to be made through the office. Please call the office if your child is absent. **Changes in address, phone number, and/or e-mail address, need to be updated in the Infinite Campus Parent Portal immediately.**

MPA Website

Current information may be found on the MPA website, including calendars, school-wide newsletters, and access to classroom websites. Go to: www.montessoripeaks.org.

Family-to-Family Communication

MPA is unable to publish or give out any personal information about our families, including phone numbers, without the written permission from that family. A class may have its own directory that is parent-led. If your family wishes to be listed, the class representative will provide a form to be completed by the family.

To alleviate hurt feelings regarding birthday party invitations, please do not distribute party invitations through the school. Individual classes may supply a class directory for family communications only for those that have given permission to include such information in a class directory.

FERPA Opt Out of Publishing Jeffco Directory Information

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") affords parents rights with respect to disclosure of their student's educational records and personal information. FERPA defines **Directory Information** as student data that is not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Jeffco policy JRA/JRC limits Directory Information to:

- Student Name

- School-based email address
- Participation in official activities and sports
- Weight & height of athletic team participants
- Dates of school attendance
- Grade level
- School enrollment status
- Honors and awards received
- Most recent schools attended
- Student's official school photo

A parent/guardian may not opt out of their student's information being used for educational purposes as defined by FERPA.

Parents will continue to communicate their opt out preferences via the district registration Agreements tab.

Directory Information has been noted in the Jeffco policy JRA/JRC: "Photographic, video, and electronic images..." to specify "student's official school photo." To better align with FERPA law, only photos that are education records will be protected, including the student's official photo, as used in Campus or the ID badge.

Families that have chosen to Opt Out of JRA/JRC are given the opportunity to have students' photos taken and published in the yearbook. The administration will have a written form with permission from parents to publish students' photos in the yearbook.

Parent/Guardian Concerns

Parents or guardians who have concerns should first contact the classroom teacher regarding the situation. If no solution can be reached, then the parent/guardian should contact the principal and discuss the concern. The principal will arrange a conference as soon as practicable with the parent(s), teacher, and/or other persons. The principal shall have 20 days to conduct the necessary inquiry and to respond to matters of concern. Parents may present pertinent information and documents relating to their concern to the principal for consideration.

If the parent(s) is (are) not satisfied with the decision of the principal, an appeal may be made to the MPA Board of Directors by submitting a written request for appeal within 10 days after receipt of the decision for which review is sought. The request for appeal

should include copies of all prior written decisions and a statement of the complaint and reasons for appeal.

The MPA Board may accept or reject the matter for review. The Board reviews written appeals. If the Board rejects the matter, the principal's decision will be final. If it accepts the matter, the Board's decision will be final.

Health and Safety

Montessori Peaks Academy complies with all Jefferson County School District and the Division of Child Care, the Colorado Department of Education, the Colorado Department of Human Services approved policies and regulations, and complies with all applicable federal and state laws concerning student welfare, safety, and health without limitation. The school is also in compliance with Jefferson County School policies and laws addressing accident prevention and emergency/fire/disaster response, the reporting of child abuse, and any state regulations governing the operation of school facilities.

Health

Health aides in our district schools are not required to have a nursing license or other medical certification to perform as a School Health Aide. MPA has a Health Assistant who carries out health care during the school day. MPA employs a Colorado Department of Education Licensed School Nurse Consultant who, in collaboration with Jeffco Health Services, provides training and delegation as well as oversight to the health room.

The school health room is available to those students who become ill or injured at school, or who require medication during the school day. If a student has a fever or requires medical treatment, the parent/guardian is called to pick up the student as soon as possible. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached by phone, the next person listed as an emergency contact will be called. Minor bumps, bruises or scrapes are treated by our staff. Parents may be notified by phone from the Health Room if injuries are of a more substantial nature. We follow Colorado Emergency Guidelines for calling 911. Any accident involving a preschool/kindergarten student or a student attending the Before or After School Program requiring medical attention by a healthcare professional or admission to a hospital must be reported to the Colorado Department of Human Services within 24 hours. The school is also required to report these situations to Jeffco

Risk Management.

Parents are asked to notify the Health Aide and the classroom teacher if an injury sustained at school required a trip to a healthcare professional.

General Illness Guidelines

Although we encourage and expect regular attendance, in an effort to maintain the good health of all students, please refrain from bringing your child to school if she/he is sick. If a student has been given fever or cough reducing medicine they are probably too ill to attend. This will reduce the overall number of illnesses among the students.

If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms at school, a parent/guardian emergency contact is notified by Office Staff **ONLY** to come and pick the student up within one hour of the call. Students should not call or text from the classroom at any time for medical reasons.

- Deep coughing
- Temperature above 99 degrees Fahrenheit
- Red and/or irritated rash
- Yellow or green nasal or eye discharge
- Diarrhea or vomiting

Failure to pick up your child within an hour of notification may result in hospitalization of the child and notification of appropriate social services authorities.

Children may not return to school until they have been symptom-free for 24 hours without medication.

Injuries and Illness Impacting Participation in Activities

A child who is too ill to play outside should not be brought to school. The school nurse may make exceptions to this policy on the recommendation of the student's physician for children with conditions such as cold-induced asthma.

Parents of students who have sustained injuries (concussion, broken bone, sprain, etc.) which impact their ability to participate in school activities, such as P.E., playground, field trips, etc., should send a written physician's note indicating that the child cannot participate in such activities and for how long. MPA follows Jeffco's policies for

concussion management. Physician's restrictions are followed until released by said physician.

Communicable Illnesses

Parents of children who have been exposed to or contracted a contagious disease may notify the school as soon as possible. Please follow the procedures for contagious illness so that exposure can be kept to a minimum:

- **Chicken Pox:** Children may not return to school until all blisters are scabbed over.
- **Strep Throat:** Medication (prescribed antibiotics) must be administered to the child for **24 hours** before he/she returns to school.
- **Conjunctivitis:** Attendance may be determined on an individual basis.
- **Vomiting:** The child may return to school **24 hours** after the last episode.
- **Diarrhea:** The child may return to school **24 hours** after the last episode.
- **COVID 19:** CDC and CDPHE guidelines will be followed.

The diagnosis of communicable illnesses such as Covid 19, measles, mumps, hepatitis, diphtheria, rubella, salmonella, tuberculosis, meningitis, giardia, and shigella may be reported to the school.

Parents of students who have been exposed to communicable illnesses outside of school may inform the school of their exposure.

Student Food & Nut Allergies

Jeffco Public Schools and Montessori Peaks Academy (MPA) recognize the growing number of students with potential life-threatening food and nut allergies in our classrooms today. Accordingly, it is our responsibility to provide as best as we can, effective strategies for students, staff, and parents on how to prevent exposure to specific potential allergens along with training staff and students on how to recognize signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis. MPA believes a cooperative partnership between our families and our staff is the best way to achieve this goal.

Embedded in the “Montessori Way” is teaching and learning how to treat others with grace and courtesy as we become “family” in each classroom, and as a school community. These concepts are paramount as we (students, staff, and parents) collectively and collaboratively create a safe learning and working environment for everyone at MPA and inform all of our students, as appropriate for their age, about

allergy awareness for themselves, as well as, in care and support for their classmates who may have a life-threatening allergy.

It is important to note that in Jeffco School's Policy JLCDA, Students with Food Allergies, it states the following: "Reasonable accommodations shall be made to reduce the student's exposure to agents that may cause anaphylaxis." MPA's effort to address these reasonable accommodations will be to implement guidelines and protocols to limit and prevent exposure to food and nut allergens. It is understood that to be successful in these efforts will require the support of MPA's community of students and parents.

MPA is an Allergy Aware School. However, in our effort to ensure a safe learning environment, there will be some classrooms that will be designated as a "Nut Free Zone." Accordingly, a sign will be posted by the classroom's entrance door. Communication will be sent from the Principal to each of these classrooms stating that the classroom is a Nut Free Zone and asking for the full cooperation of classmates and parents to help maintain a safe and healthy classroom for students with a life-threatening allergy. Additionally, MPA staff will be trained on how to communicate and maintain a Nut Free Zone and to respond to a situation requiring immediate medical attention. A review of food and nut allergies will be included with training on how to use an EpiPen with a delegation to administer medication as necessary.

Students and families can best support MPA as an Allergy Aware School and with classrooms that are designated as a Nut Free Zone by honoring the following expectation: Please refrain from bringing/sending any nut products in lunches, snacks, and other foods. This would include any lunch prepared for a field trip. A student will always have permission to eat what he or she brings to school. However, if the food/lunch that is brought would create a concern for classmates with a life-threatening allergy, the student bringing the allergen will be directed to eat in an area outside the Nut-Free Zone. Communication from school to home will ask for care and compliance in the future.

As a preventive measure, students are not to share or trade snacks and other foods at any time while at school under the care/supervision of an MPA staff member. Aside from this being a simple healthy practice, compliance with this rule will ensure that an allergen will not present a health concern to another student who is allergic to nuts and certain foods.

It cannot be overstated that the success of this practice to preclude the presence of these allergens at MPA will be directly dependent upon the support and efforts of students, parents, and staff alike. If you have any question(s) regarding everyone's role with this expectation/ practice, please contact the office.

Note: In August 2018, Jeffco School published the document Managing Life-Threatening Allergies in School-aged Children: Guidelines and Practices Handbook. This document was referenced and used in this section of the MPA Family Handbook.

Colorado Immunization Law

Immunization requirements, as stated in Colorado law, are strictly enforced for all Jefferson County Public School students. Colorado law requires proof of immunizations or exemption prior to the first day of school. Noncompliance will result in suspension or removal from school. A student may be exempted from the immunization requirements due to religious or personal beliefs. The exemption process may be found at the CDPHE site: <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/vaccine-exemptions>

Medications

All medications must be checked into the Health room and only administered by trained personnel as delegated by MPA's School Nurse Consultant. A **Medication Agreement** must be completed by the child's health care provider and the parent/guardian. Medications, including over-the-counter items, must be in the original pharmacy packaging. The student's name must be on the store packaging.

Prescription Medicines must contain the following information:

1. Student Name
2. Medication Name
3. Time when Medication is to be dispensed
4. Dosage
5. Route (either oral or topical)

Prescription and non-prescription (over the counter) medications for eyes or ears, all oral medications, topical medications, inhaled medications, and certain emergency injections can be administered only with the written order of a person with prescriptive authority and with written parental consent. MPA is not able to administer any

homeopathic medications.

Under no circumstances may any medication be given to a student to bring to school, to possess at school, or to be administered by the student at school. This is a very serious violation of the Jefferson County Public School Conduct Code and the Colorado Department of Human Services, Rules and Regulations. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary measures up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Essential Oils

Any type of essential oil or Cannabidiol (*CBD*) will be considered contraband and not permitted to be in a student's possession on campus. The exception would be if an essential oil or cannabidiol was prescribed by a physician as a necessary medication for a student. In this case, it would be handled by staff as any other medication with a requirement to have completed the form Medication Administration in School or Child Care and stored/held in the school Health Room.

Health Care Plans

Students having health concerns that may be life threatening, such as peanut, nut and food allergies, severe asthma, etc. may have a Colorado Department of Education Health Care Plan. **Please bring these issues to the attention of the Health Aide as soon as possible so that a plan can be developed and implemented in conjunction with our nurse consultant and your child's health care provider.**

Health Care Plans for any severe medical need are developed by our nurse consultant and your health care provider to assist us in assuring that the health needs of your child are met within the school environment. This information is strictly confidential. Staff will be advised on a "need to know" basis.

Sun Protection - Primary, Before and After Care Students

The Colorado Department of Human Services Division of Child Care requires the use of sunscreen. The school must obtain the Primary and Before and After Care parent/guardian's written authorization for applying sunscreen to their child's exposed skin prior to outside play. The school will provide stock sunscreen for Primary and Before and After Care students. The sunscreen will be applied 20-30 minutes before outdoor activities and reapplied as directed. Sunscreen will not be applied to any broken skin or if a skin reaction has been observed. Any reactions observed will be reported to

the parent/guardian. Children over 4 years of age may apply sunscreen to themselves under direct supervision of a staff member.

Parents or guardians may opt to supply sunscreen from home. The sunscreen must be SPF 30 or higher, labeled with the child's first and last name, date provided, and within the expiration date. A doctor's permission is not needed. If a parent/guardian chooses not to have sunscreen applied or provide sunscreen, the parent/guardian agrees to send their child to school wearing sun protective clothing, i.e., wide brim hat that covers face, ears and neck, loose fitting shirts and dresses with sleeves and collars or covered necklines, longer style skirts and shorts.

Stock Sunscreen: **Rocky Mountain Sunscreen SPF 30**

Active Ingredients: Avobenzone—1.8%, Homosalate—7.0%, Octocrylene—5.0% **Inactive Ingredients:** Water, Butyloctyl Salicylate, Sorbitol, Aluminum Starch Octenylsuccinate, VP/Eicosene Copolymer, Stearic Acid, Phenoxyethanol, Ethylhexylglycerin, Polyglyceryl-3 Distearate, Sorbitan Isostearate, Triethanolamine, Dimethicone, Carbomer, Disodium EDTA.

Safety

Montessori Peaks Academy complies with all local and state rules and regulations by providing an environment that is free of all known health and safety hazards in accordance with all Social Services, Health Department, and Jeffco School District rules. We make a conscientious effort to correct any situation that could endanger the health and safety of students and adults at our school. We appreciate your support in helping us identify any safety hazards.

Emergency Situations

Please keep your child's Student Information Form and Emergency Information Form up-to-date. In case of an emergency, we contact persons listed in your Infinite Campus Portal. If parents cannot be reached we will have the Emergency Contacts listed. Changes in address should also be reported on the site in a timely manner.

Montessori Peaks Academy will follow the Jefferson County Public Schools District Safety Plan and Emergency Procedures. To view the most updated information and definitions please visit the Jeffco Safety & Security webpage at <https://www.jeffcopublicschools.org/services/safety-security>.

Locating a Lost Child

Staff are responsible for knowing the number of students in their supervision at all times. Continuous head counts are made throughout the day, particularly at transitions. Students are never to be left unsupervised.

If a student becomes separated from their group, one staff member searches the building and grounds while another supervises the group with the assistance of administrative staff. If the student is not found within 5 minutes, the following calls are made:

1. Principal and/or Office Staff
2. Jefferson County Sheriff's Department
3. Custodial parent/guardian

Child Abuse and Neglect

In accordance with the Children's Code of the State of Colorado, all staff must report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the Jefferson County Department of Social Services or the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department. If a parent/guardian of Montessori Peaks Academy wishes to report suspected child abuse or neglect, they may do so by contacting:

Jefferson County Social Services: 303-271-4357

Child Care Licensing

Montessori Peaks Academy is licensed by the Colorado Department of Human Services. The license indicates that the school has met the required standards for a child care facility. If you have a concern about the child care services at this school, please contact: Colorado Department of Human Services

Division of Child Care: 303-866-5958 or 1-800-799-5876

Family Privacy and Access to Student Records and Public Documents

Montessori Peaks Academy follows the Jefferson County Schools policies regarding family privacy (FERPA—Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act). The school also follows Jefferson County Schools policy regarding the public's right to know, CORA (Colorado Open Records Act). These are detailed on the Jefferson County website,

found on the Jeffco Board Docs, <https://www.boarddocs.com/co/jeffco/Board.nsf/Public>. The Jeffco policy about family privacy is policy JRA/JRC, and the policy pertaining to public right to information is policy KDB.

Photos of Students

Students in the Preschool/Kindergarten classrooms may have their photos taken. These photos may be used in school publications or on the school website. MPA will note the portion of the registration form with permissions.

Elementary Students will give permission/not give permission to their photos being taken via JeffCo Connect. MPA will adhere to these preferences.

Montessori Materials and Breakable Items

The use of glass, sharp, and small educational items in a Montessori classroom are an important component to the Montessori philosophy, the development of the whole child, and the prepared environment. These materials provide an important principle of the prepared environment called “the control of error” which is a built-in quality that allows the child to notice a mistake. It provides feedback that allows the child to learn and improve their skill independently by engaging the senses. These items might include glassware, sewing needles, pin punchers, scissors, and kitchen tools (such as developmentally appropriate knives, peelers, graters). Children are supervised and given lessons on the use and safety procedures of these materials.

Academic Program

Montessori Peaks Academy offers programs for children, age three through 8th grade. Preschool is tuition based. Students four years of age will now go through the Universal Preschool Program for initial acceptance. Tuition is agreed and based on the UPK proration. Kindergarten through 8th grade programs are tuition free, as we are a Jefferson County Public Charter School.

1. Primary:

3 year olds: Half day or Full day Mon.-Fri. or Mon.-Thurs.

4 year olds: Half day or Full day Mon.-Fri.

5-6 year olds -

Kindergarten: Full day Mon.-Fri.

2. Lower Elementary: Grades 1, 2, 3
3. Upper Elementary: Grades 4, 5, 6
4. Middle School: Grades 7-8
5. Homeschool Programs: Grades K-8
 - Kindergarten - 2nd grade Tuesday
 - 3rd-5th and 6th-8th grades Wednesday
 - 1st - 3rd and 4th - 6th grades Friday

Curriculum and Instruction

Montessori Peaks Academy has adopted the Montessori curriculum. The Montessori curriculum focuses on child-centered, individualized learning, and is a precise, content-rich, and stimulating instructional program designed to assist students in developing a strong academic foundation of both knowledge and skills. Students at Montessori Peaks Academy make smooth transitions from concrete learning to abstract thinking, attain mastery of basic skills and knowledge, and develop strong proficiencies in problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

Montessori Peaks Academy incorporates appropriate teaching methodologies at all levels to ensure that students remain challenged and strive to reach their potential in all areas. Montessori Peaks Academy further enriches its curriculum with “specials” classes in art, music, and physical education at the K-8th levels. Education in these areas helps develop the whole child, providing students with extended opportunities for creative self-expression, physical activity, cooperative learning, teamwork, and exposure to other cultures. The art, music, and physical education teachers also work closely with your child’s classroom teacher to integrate elements of the classroom work with the “specials” activities.

MPA Homeschool Programs follow Montessori and experiential learning philosophies. The focus is on developing strong critical thinking and social, emotional skills while exposing students to a wide range of materials, topics, and experiences.

Academic Standards

Montessori Peaks Academy is a public school and participates in all state and federal mandates regarding student achievement. MPA students are expected to achieve or exceed high academic standards, including those established by the Jefferson County

School District and the State of Colorado. Mastery of such proficiencies will result in acceleration to higher-level material, enabling students to further maximize their learning potential. Those students who are unable to meet such standards receive additional teacher assistance and specialized support as appropriate.

Parents/guardians may select resources at their own cost to assist their students in particular areas of growth.

Learning Environment

The Montessori program places children within learning environments that span multiple years of academic and social development, creating a more natural learning community for students. Montessori teachers are well trained to accommodate a wide range of abilities and needs within the multi-age classroom, and students benefit from interaction with a more diverse group of peers.

Each of the classrooms at Montessori Peaks Academy is prepared for meeting the intellectual, physical, emotional, and social needs of each child as an individual. Specially designed and sequenced manipulative materials, especially at the lower grade levels, help isolate skills to be learned and direct the child through the curriculum to mastery, building self-confidence along the way. Although there are both large and small group activities throughout the day, the child's academic instruction is frequently individually presented. As a student progresses through the curriculum, he/she is presented with academic skills and knowledge from an increasingly vast array of reference materials. Each classroom has its own classroom library and technology, as well as access to resource materials.

The classrooms are divided into specific learning areas that include practical life, sensorial, language, mathematics, geography, history, science and the arts. To foster self-motivation and self-discipline, students are expected to choose any material for work that has been introduced to them by their teacher. They may repeatedly work with the material on their own so that they have the opportunity to discover the underlying concepts and to attain mastery of skills contained in the particular work.

Assessments

A strong assessment package includes student bodies of evidence and standardized testing starting in kindergarten. Student progress is documented throughout the year. Parents are encouraged to review student progress with the students' lead teacher at

conference sessions held in the fall and the spring of each academic year.

MPA and/or the Jefferson County Public School District students take the following assessments at the following approximate time frames each academic year:

- **ACCESS** to assess emerging English language skills for second language learners
- **MAP** (Measuring Academic Progress) for kindergarten through eighth grades—computer administered language arts and math assessments for interim assessment given August, December and May
- **CMAS** (Colorado Measures of Academic Success): Language Arts and Math given to grades 3-8, and Science given to Grades 5 and 8, administered during the month of April
- **DIBELS 8** (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills): Grades K – 3rd throughout the year
- **CogAT** (Cognitive Abilities Test) each October for 2nd graders

Parents who have questions concerning the assessment programs should contact the student's lead teacher or the principal.

Student Support

Each individual child's academic, emotional, social, artistic, and physical progress is observed, assessed, and fostered by the classroom teacher. In reporting to parents, teachers will measure the student's progress based on the Montessori approach, as well as Jefferson County's expectations and the student's individual abilities, development, and personal motivation.

Montessori Peaks Academy welcomes learners of all abilities and learning styles. However, the Montessori teaching method may not be appropriate for all students.

Parents of students who have identified academic support needs prior to enrollment at MPA must provide the school with a copy of the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), READ Plan, Advanced Learning Plan (ALP), and/or 504 Plan. If there is a question about the ability of the MPA program to accommodate the recommendations contained in the above plans, a properly constituted staffing team will be convened to determine whether MPA is an appropriate placement for the student and, if so, the manner in which the above plans will be implemented at MPA.

MPA has a fully staffed Learning Lab with intervention and special education services for Kindergartners through 8th graders. An Individual Educational Plan (IEP) requires the coordination of service providers, teachers, and administration. After evaluating your child's needs, special educational professionals and classroom teachers work in a collaborative effort in providing assistance to your child's needs. An IEP is a formal plan that outlines the educational strategies and modifications required for children with exceptional needs and is part of the federally regulated special education process. Services are delivered through a variety of instructional means including, but not limited to, individual and small group instruction, alternative classroom seating and/or placement, behavior contracts, modifications of assignments and testing procedures, instructional pace, and classroom teacher support. The District's referral process is used to identify and support students whose performance indicates they may require special assistance.

Preschoolers are evaluated through [Child Find](#), who will then make preschool-based recommendations. MPA does not service preschool IEPs. Students do become eligible for special education services with MPA in August of their Kindergarten year.

MPA Homeschool Programs welcome learners of all abilities and learning styles. However, as an enrichment program, we DO NOT provide services outlined in an IEP or 504, and services will need to be waived in order to participate. We will, however, make reasonable accommodations for students previously assigned a 504 or IEP.

Educational Resources

The **MPA Library** is located on the lower level of the school just beyond the elevator. It is available for staff and student use. Elementary classroom groups are scheduled at the teacher's discretion based on each classroom's individual needs. Preschoolers have two time slots during the week in which they may attend the library with their parents after their school day. Kindergartners attend the library every week with their classmates. Parent/guardian volunteers who are working with individual students are welcome to sign up for library times as well, but will need to work around classroom schedules.

Students may not be in the library without direct adult supervision. This includes before school, after school, evenings, and off-days. Students may not come to the library

without an accompanying adult during parent/teacher conferences or other meetings.

Misconduct in the library will result in students being sent back to the classroom and losing library privileges for a period of time.

Books and other media items may be checked out for two weeks, with renewal possible two more times, as long as the item is not on hold. Parents and guardians may also check out items from the student library or the parent/guardian library for two weeks at a time. Students having overdue materials may not check out another book until the overdue item is returned, or reported by a parent/guardian to be lost or damaged.

Once a book has been out of the library for two months or more, the family will be invoiced for the cost of the book plus a processing fee. Parents may also purchase the book from an outside source and replace the book themselves, as long as it is comparable to the item lost.

Information about the missing book is sent to the business manager, who will then add the cost of the book to the family's account in the Jeffco Family Portal.

Student Progress - Parent/Guardian Conferences

Ongoing evaluation and assessment assists teachers in determining the educational and developmental needs of individual students. Teachers monitor student progress on a continuous basis, and convey information to parents on both a regular and “as needed” basis.

Primary teachers hold fall and spring parent/guardian conferences to discuss the students’ academic progress and physical/social development. Mid-year and end-of-year report cards are written for kindergartners and progress reports are written for preschool students.

Elementary and Middle School teachers write report cards for their students near the end of the first semester and final report cards sent in the mail within two weeks of the end of the school year. These report cards are designed to maximize information about your child’s progress.

Parents/Guardians are expected to attend formal conferences twice a year. Times and dates are scheduled through your student’s lead teacher. These conferences are

approximately 20 minutes in duration, allowing teachers and parents time to discuss the progress of their children.

Enrichment and Extracurricular Programs

Homeschool Program

The MPA Homeschool Programs are all-day programs. The classrooms apply Montessori philosophy and a project approach to provide students with a rich and experiential learning environment. Basic Montessori and STEAM materials are introduced and used to foster deeper understanding, encourage student individuality, creativity, and socialization while developing critical thinking and a love of learning. We accept students with different learning capabilities but we do not service IEP's or other education plans as we are an enrichment program.

We follow the current year's MPA Academic Calendar and classes are held from 8:30-3:30 each school day.

The following grade levels are offered on the days listed below.

- Tuesday - Lower Elementary: K - 2nd grade 8:30 AM- 3:30 PM
- Wednesday- Upper Elementary: 3rd - 5th and Middle School: 6th - 8th, 8:30 - 3:30
- Friday- Lower and Upper Elementary: 1st -6th grade, 8:30 AM- 3:30 PM
- Kindergarten, 7th, and 8th grade students attend one day a week.
- 1st - 6th grade students have the choice of attending one or two days a week, on either or both days those grades attend.

The Tuesday and Wednesday classes provide home-schooling families with Montessori and project-based experiential learning experiences for Kindergarten through 8th grade. We provide knowledgeable and experienced instructors for all of our programs. Students remain with their teachers all day, giving large windows of time for exploring learning topics. Students visit the school library during their day each week.

The Tuesday Lower Elementary (K-2nd) classes have a maximum of 20 students per classroom. Students are guided through lessons and projects on topics of study chosen by the teacher.

The Wednesday Upper Elementary (3rd-5th) and Middle School (6th-8th) classes have a maximum of 20 students per classroom. Upper Elementary students are guided through lessons and projects on topics of study chosen by the teacher. Middle School students are guided through lessons and projects that are collaboratively developed between the teacher and students. These topics can extend as long as student interest and deep learning continue to happen.

The Friday Lower Elementary (1st-3rd) and Upper Elementary (4th-6th) classes are our original and longest running homeschool program. Enrollment caps at 20 students per level. Friday students split their day between classroom time and participation in Art, Music, and PE classes with MPA's Specials instructors. This provides students with a wide range of experiences throughout the day and shorter work periods with their classroom teachers. Learning topics work similarly to the Tuesday and Wednesday programs, incorporating Montessori and project aspects, but on a smaller scale due to time constraints.

All of the after-school programs sponsored by MPA are available to all Homeschool students, as well as the science fair, school pictures, the school yearbook, talent show, social nights for Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary students and families, growing and changing (5th grade), and the 6th grade trip. Homeschool families can also choose to participate in state testing with the full-time students. Contact the Homeschool Director for further information.

Montessori Peaks Homeschool Programs do not participate in all state and federal mandates regarding student achievement. The Homeschool Programs are purely enrichment based.

Parents can request that their homeschooled student participate in the standardized state or federal tests throughout the year by August 20 (Fall MAP), December 1 (Winter MAP), and March 1 (CMAS, Spring MAP). In these cases, parents are expected to adhere to the previous set schedule of testing by the state and MPA. Students are expected to be prompt and not miss testing sessions unless ill with a proper excuse.

Additional reading on the Montessori Method can be found in the library.

Suggestions: [Montessori the Science behind the Genius](#) - Lillard
[Montessori Today](#) - Lillard

Before and After School Programs

Before/After School Programs Phone Number: 303-972-2627 ext 135

The MPA Before & After School Program (BAS) is open to students ages three through twelve who are enrolled at MPA. We do not provide transportation to or from the program. To register, the parent/guardian must submit the required registration forms on the school website. The registration forms must be completed at the time of enrollment and annually for the student to attend the program. We are licensed through the Colorado Department of Human Services, and are required to maintain specific staff-to-child ratios at all times. Therefore, spaces may be limited and based on a first come, first served basis. If the program is at capacity, families can choose to be placed on a waitlist.

Required registration forms include the following:

- Registration/Emergency form.
- Acknowledgement of BAS Handbook and Rules.
- Health Appraisal form.
- The current monthly attendance calendar or the semester calendar.

All of these forms can be found on the school website under the Before and After School Care icon. It is the responsibility of the parents to provide copies of any health plans or information about the special needs of their student prior to attendance.

The Before & After School Handbook has important information pertaining to the program. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to review the BAS Handbook and submit the Acknowledgement of BAS Handbook and Rules form with their registration paperwork. This form can be found on the registration page of the Before & After School webpage.

Before School students can enter the building at 7:00 am. Students attending the Before School program must be signed into the program by a parent/guardian upon arrival. Students may not sign themselves into the program. Students attending the After School program will be signed into the program when attendance is taken by the after school staff. After School students must be pick-up by 6:00 pm. Only authorized

adults may pick up and sign out a student. Authorized adults are those who are 18 years or older and have been designated by the parent/guardian. Adults authorized to pick up students must be on file with the BAS program. In addition to written authorization on file, we request that the parent/guardian inform the after school staff when their student is being picked up by an authorized adult other than themselves. BAS staff members will ask to see the ID of any unfamiliar person entering the program site.

The Late Pick-up fee is \$1 per minute, per student after 6:00 pm. This fee will be added to the family's Jeffco account. **After the third occurrence per semester, the late pick-up fee will be doubled.** Continued abuse of late pick-up will result in discontinued use of the program.

We understand that emergencies do arise, and it may become impossible to get to the program on time. Please notify the program if this occurs.

If parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached and a child is still at the program at 6:30 pm, the Jefferson County Sheriff's department will be contacted to assist in locating a parent/guardian.

Students enrolled in the BAS program are expected to adhere to the same behavior expectations stated in the Montessori Peaks Academy Family Handbook. The staff strives to model for students the proper way to interact with their peers and adults. Realistic and natural consequences, redirection or separation from the problem, and discussion with the student are all techniques of discipline used in a positive way. Staff will assist with negotiating and reasoning to guide the student through conflict. Parents will be notified in writing if their student's behavior is in question.

After School Enrichment Classes

A variety of enrichment classes are offered to MPA students after regular school hours. Participation in these classes is optional, open to full time and homeschool students and is based on a contractual agreement between the parent/guardian and the instructor. The classes are fee-based, payable directly to the enrichment instructor. Background and fingerprint checks are conducted for all enrichment class instructors. This information is kept on file in the main office. Students are always under direct supervision during enrichment class activities. **Any communication regarding the**

enrichment classes should be directed to the instructor or the administrators of the program.

Teachers send students to After school programming and enrichment activities based on the rosters. Otherwise, students will be sent to carline pick-up and may be late for the enrichment class.

Snacks may not be provided by the enrichment providers, so plan accordingly. **Be prompt in picking up students from their enrichment classes at their designated location.**

The Classroom

Snack Information

Primary students are asked to bring a nutritious snack each day. The snack should include at least two food groups. Families may opt to participate in ordering snacks through the hot lunch program.

Elementary and Middle School students may bring their own snacks each day, or families may opt to participate in ordering snacks through the hot lunch program.

Homeschool students bring their own snacks each day.

Lunch Information

Students provide for their own lunch each day, either by bringing a lunch from home or by participating in the hot lunch program. Hot lunches are available for students in Preschool through 8th grade daily, Monday-Friday. Snacks are available through the hot lunch program to students in Preschool-8th grade daily, Monday-Friday.

Homeschool students bring nutritious “sack” lunches every day.

Information regarding the online application for free or reduced lunches is available at registration. You can log on to www.applyforlunch.com to get started. If you think you may qualify, please fill out the form. It allows us to potentially waive fees and receive grants to help cover costs.

Birthday Celebrations

Student birthdays should only be recognized with non-food celebrations. Many schools already have similar policies in place and celebrate students through other types of fun recognition. This standard is in addition to the guidance on healthy celebrations and non-food rewards in the District Wellness Policy and Guidelines.

The Wellness Policy is based on federal requirements, community input, and addresses nutrition, allergy, and equity concerns. We will also be sharing ideas developed by Jeffco students on healthy ways to recognize birthdays.

Classroom Celebrations

Classroom cultural activities and celebrations, holiday observances and parties are held at the discretion of the classroom teachers as approved by the school principal. Such activities shall be nonreligious, nonsectarian, and shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, religion, ancestry, disability, or need for special education services. Parents must notify the classroom teacher in advance if they prefer their child not participate in a particular observance.

Personal Belongings

Students should not bring personal items such as money, toys, candy, or electronics. Check with your classroom teacher where necessary personal items (backpacks, extra clothes, jackets, lunches, school work, etc.) will be stored. Medicines, lip balm, sanitizer, or lotions will be held in the Health room. Ask the Health Aide for appropriate paperwork.

Smart Watches should be left at home. If a student needs to reach their parents they will be given time and accommodations to call their parents from the office.

Clothing

Students are expected to dress appropriately for school work, garden/outdoor work, outside weather conditions, and general safety. For health and safety reasons, shoes are to be worn at all times. In an effort to bring focus and attention to the work in the classroom, we are asking that you avoid sending your children with clothing, lunch boxes, shoes etc. that could be distracting or impede their independence. Clothing garments supporting the use or endorsement of liquor, tobacco, drugs, or violence are

not allowed. Students will be notified of clothing that does not meet the community norms and will be asked to wear additional clothes provided by the school.

Students must dress sensibly, neatly, cleanly, modestly, and comfortably. For health and safety reasons, shoes or slippers are to be worn at all times. Students must wear shoes appropriate for outdoor play. Flip-flops and shoes with wheels are not allowed. Students may be asked to remove hats and hoodies if they are impacting the learning environment in any way.

Students should be dressed appropriately for P.E. class: sneakers with laces or Velcro. Check with lead teachers for “Specials” class schedules.

During periods of inclement weather, students should have a change of clothes and/or shoes available at school. Students do not go outside to play on days when the temperature is above 100 degrees Fahrenheit or below 25 degrees Fahrenheit.

Bathroom Concerns (Primary Wing)

Like all Montessori preschool programs, our program requires a degree of independence from students in order for them to have a positive experience. Even though each of our Primary classrooms have both a lead teacher and full-time assistant, students need to be able to manage many self-care tasks on their own. All students enrolled in our program should be able to feed and dress themselves as well as be independent in the toileting process. By this we mean that students can manage their toileting needs independently and should be accident free prior to starting school. We understand that accidents do occasionally happen and these are handled discreetly. Each Primary student needs a change of clothing. Our Primary program is licensed by the Colorado Department of Human Services as a preschool. As such, we are not equipped to have diapers or disposable underwear at school – including rest time.

Trips and Extracurricular Activities

Lead teachers are responsible for making sure field trip information and permission slips are handed out, signed by parents and returned to school. Paperwork should be handed out no later than a week prior to the due date for field trip paperwork. All permission slips must be signed and on file in order for a child to participate. Lead teachers are responsible for maintaining all safety issues on the field trip. Copies of attendance logs, emergency forms and any pertinent medical information are taken on the field trip, as

well as medications and first aid kits.

Montessori Peaks Academy will use Jefferson County School District school buses for the majority of the field trips. Students are required to adhere to Jeffco's Code of Conduct regulations while being transported in District buses. District bus drivers discuss emergency plans and behavioral expectations before each trip begins.

Transportation for field trips may also be provided by private family vehicles. Parents involved in transporting MPA students on field trips *must provide a copy of their current Colorado driver's license and current insurance information to lead teachers for each field trip.*

Office staff will retain field trip information regarding the destination and travel itinerary, times of departure and return, a list of students, lead teachers, other staff, and chaperones on the field trip, names of drivers providing transportation, along with their vehicle information and cell phone numbers.

Parents providing transportation are responsible for the safety of the students riding in their cars. They must sign an acknowledgement that they have read the guidelines for transportation safety on field trips.

General guidelines:

1. Parent/guardian drivers must be aware of the following safety rules and review them with students:
 - a. Students are not permitted to ride in the front seat of a vehicle.
 - b. **Students are to be securely buckled into an approved booster/car seat as required by law. This means all students under the age of 8 are required to use a booster/car seat.**
 - c. Students must keep seat belts properly fastened and adjusted.
 - d. Students must remain seated while the vehicle is in motion.
 - e. Their arms, legs and heads must remain inside the vehicle at all times.
Students must be loaded and unloaded out of the path of moving vehicles.
 - f. Students must never be left unattended in the vehicle.
 - g. Parents may not smoke in the presence of students.
 - h. Parents must follow Colorado State Law regarding the use of cell phones.

2. Parents are responsible for providing proper car/booster seats for the safety of their own children. **If a student does not have proper safety equipment they**

will not be allowed to participate in the field trip.

3. If a student is late for school on a day that a field trip is scheduled and the class has already left for the field trip, he/she will be added to another classroom as student/teacher ratios allow until the class returns from the field trip.
4. If a student becomes separated from the class group, the lead teacher or another adult will make a thorough search of the area and enlist the help of local authorities before informing the following people:
 - a. Police
 - b. Custodial parent/guardian
 - c. Primary Coordinator and Principal
5. If an emergency occurs en route or on the return trip to MPA, the driver should:
 - a. Ensure that all students are accounted for and safe.
 - b. Assess the situation.
 - c. Call 911 if appropriate, and administer first aid as necessary.
 - d. Call the cell phone of the lead teacher in charge of the trip
 - e. The lead teacher then notifies the Primary Coordinator and Principal.
6. Lead teachers are directly responsible for the supervision of students and parents/chaperones on all field trips.

Student Responsibility and Behavior Guidelines

The Jeffco Board of Education and MPA Board of Directors recognize that appropriate student behavior is a major contributor to the creation of a positive and productive environment for all students. It is the further belief that the prime objectives of the discipline program should be to:

- Assist the students in the development of the ability to make good choices.
- Assist students in the development of behavior that is socially acceptable, respectful and mindful of the dignity of others.
- Ensure the right of others to learn.

All students enrolled in Montessori Peaks Academy are subject to Jefferson County School District Discipline Policies as contained in the *Jeffco Public Schools Conduct Code*. **The Conduct Code is available online at [Code of Conduct](#) and must be read and understood by each MPA student and parent.** The student and/or parent/guardian must sign a declaration of understanding of the Jeffco Conduct Code each academic year. Failure to complete the statement of understanding will result in the student not being able to attend school. The acknowledgement form at the end of this handbook also includes the conduct code.

General Behavior Guidelines

The following guidelines are provided to easily acquaint parents and students with general behavioral expectations at MPA. They are not intended to supersede any provision of the Jefferson County Public Schools Conduct Code. In all cases, the Jeffco Conduct Code will be followed, and its provisions will determine the requirements, procedures, and process involving student discipline.

1. Under no circumstances is a student to bring a weapon to school. Any item that could be used as, or construed to be, a weapon should not be brought to school.
2. Students must respect each other and each other's property. School property must also be respected and treated with care. Parents of students may be held liable for materials damaged in the classroom if the damage is the result of student negligence and/or misbehavior.
3. Any action between students that makes a student feel threatened or uncomfortable should be reported to a teacher or staff member immediately. Students should never be encouraged to take matters into their own hands. Bullying is not tolerated at MPA . Bullying is defined in the Jefferson County Conduct Code.
4. Staff is to be treated with respect. Students may not show disrespect to their teachers or other staff in their attitudes or actions. Reasonable instructions given to students by faculty and/or staff must be followed. Any conflict between students and faculty/staff will be reported to the Principal.
5. Appropriate language, tone of voice, and vocal volume will be used throughout the school. Any use of language or gestures by students that is generally considered obscene and/or profane will not be allowed.
6. No drugs of any type including alcohol and/or tobacco are allowed to be possessed and /or used by students at any time while at school. These include

any illegal or controlled substances, prescription drugs or over-the-counter medications. All medications the student must use for health purposes while at school are to be brought by the parent or guardian in the medication's original container to the clinic for distribution by authorized school personnel. Please refer to the Jefferson County Public School Conduct Code for further information.

7. Students will conduct themselves at all times in a manner that does not threaten the safety and welfare of other students or school personnel.
8. Students will promote the physical safety and personal security of all others.
9. Students will conduct themselves with a high degree of self-discipline and will not engage in assaultive behavior which includes fighting or arguing with other students or school personnel.
10. Students will not engage in any behavior that discriminates against others on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, age or disability.
11. Students will practice and encourage honesty in academic work and all other behaviors.
12. Following an absence, it is the student's responsibility to request make-up work.

"Make-up work should reflect class assignment(s) missed during an absence, and a reasonable amount of time should be allowed for work completion. Time allowed to make up work is twice the number of classes or days missed (two days allowed for make-up work for each day of absence); however, an extension of this time limit may be approved by school administration." Jefferson County Public Schools Conduct Code, page 5. Students are expected to keep up with current work while completing the make-up work.

Dress Code

- Clothing garments supporting the use or endorsement of liquor, tobacco, drugs, or violence are not allowed.
- Sleeveless tops must have straps that are at least 1 ½ inches wide.
- Shorts must cover at least three inches or more beyond where a swimsuit would end. T- back shirts are not acceptable.
- Midriffs or shirts tied above the waist are not permitted.
- Students must dress sensibly, neatly, cleanly, modestly and comfortably.
- For health and safety reasons, shoes or slippers are to be worn at all times.
- Students must wear shoes appropriate for outdoor play.

- Flip-flops and shoes with wheels are not allowed.
- Students may be asked to remove hats and hoodies if said articles are a distraction to the learning environment.
- Students should be dressed appropriately for P.E. class: sneakers with laces or Velcro.
- During periods of inclement weather, students should have a change of clothes and/or shoes available at school.

Behavior Support

We hold high expectations for student behavior. Students are expected to respect authority, accept responsibility, respect the rights of others, take care of their own property, and respect the property of others. Each parent is expected to read, acknowledge, and help their child(ren) become familiar with the "Jefferson County Code of Conduct."

Montessori Peaks Academy uses Responsibility-Centered Discipline (RCD) to empower students to take ownership of behavior. Responsibility-Centered Discipline uses a "Give 'em Five" approach to addressing behavior by incorporating the following five themes into conversation with students:

- Support – Use supportive statements that connect to your relationship with the student or identify a strength that she possesses.
- Expectation – Let the student know the expectation you have for him in the class.
- Breakdown – Communicate where you see the expectation breaking down or failing to be met.
- Benefit – Tell the student how meeting the expectation benefits her.
- Closure – Determine whether the situation has been resolved or whether the conversation is at a place where you can feel comfortable moving on.

Discipline Procedures at Montessori Peaks

1. Teachers and other staff document behaviors of concern on the "MPA Discipline Report". Parents may or may not receive a copy of the report and/or a phone call from the office staff.
2. Repeated offenses may be documented in the District Behavior tab in the Jeffco tracking system.
3. Continued discipline issues may be considered habitual, subject to disciplinary

actions outlined in the Jeffco Code of Conduct, including suspension.

4. Behavioral consequences are based on the discipline issue. Serious offenses will have consequences outlined in the Jeffco Code of Conduct, including suspension and expulsion. Less serious offenses will be dealt with by the administration and the staff. The school supports the use of problem solving with and between students, as well as consequences that logically fit with the behavior. Community service is also a consequence that gives the student(s) an opportunity to give back to the school community.

Preschool Guidance and Discipline (3 and 4 Year Olds)

The Montessori philosophy honors each child and ensures that children are guided in a positive manner. Each teacher continuously demonstrates positive interactions with each child and guides the child in learning and respecting others socially and emotionally. Teachers support positive behavior and redirect any unacceptable behavior. Realistic and natural consequences, redirection or separation from the problem, and discussion with the student are all techniques of discipline used in a positive way. Teachers will assist with negotiating and reasoning to guide the student/s through conflict and challenges. Montessori Peaks Academy values the parent-teacher-school relationship and will work in collaboration to assure the best positive experience. Communication with parents focuses on sharing the joys of learning as well as areas for growth.

Our teachers are trained and work to identify the social, emotional, and developmental needs of each child. However, there are times when children may need additional support. If the school feels that the preschool child's behavior does not demonstrate readiness or endangers the safety of themselves, other children, or staff, we will notify the parent/guardian and begin with a parent-teacher conference. Staff will work with the family to develop a plan of action. When a plan of action is developed, the family may be given information on how to access an Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist to support the child. If the child is a danger to themselves, other children, or the staff, we may choose to request your child remain home for a discussed period of time. Once the child returns to school, if the child is still a danger or not demonstrating appropriate readiness, it will be discussed if the child is ready for school or if the school is the right environment for the child.

Kindergarten students are part of the licensed Primary program; however, they are

additionally held to the Jeffco protocols and the Jeffco Code of Conduct.

Technology Guidelines

Montessori Peaks Academy is committed to providing its students access to technology to support students' learning and academic success. The use of electronic devices in the classroom is growing and expanding. Students can now have access to the internet, podcasts, digital note taking, eBooks, and countless educational applications via their cell phones, iPads, netbooks, laptops, Chromebooks, and iPods. While not a requirement or expectation, we want to embrace the future and reach out to our 21st Century Digital Learners by incorporating this technology into our classrooms. In order to do this, we ask that you and your child have a clear understanding of expectations.

Student Technology Use

Electronic Devices may be used during class ONLY with teacher approval and supervision.

If an electronic device is out during class without the teacher's approval or is being used in a way that is not part of a teacher directed activity:

- First offense: Student will be reminded to put it away
- Second offense: Device will be taken from the student and delivered to the office. A parent/guardian must pick it up.
- Subsequent offenses: Device will be taken and a parent/guardian must come in to pick it up.
- Students may use office phones to contact their parents. At no time should a student leave the classroom and use their cell phone or smartwatch.

If an electronic device is brought to school it is the students' responsibility. Teachers and Staff of Montessori Peaks Academy are not responsible for the safety of personal items.

All computers, tablets, smart phones, smart watches, and other technology having Internet access must be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. Consequences for misuse are outlined in the Jeffco Code of Conduct and the form, "Student Use of the Internet."

In order to use MPA Chromebooks, students must have on file signed copies of Jeffco's Student Use of the Internet and the MPA Electronic Devices Use Contract. These forms outline expectations and consequences for misuse.

At the appropriate levels, instruction includes basic computer literacy, keyboarding, multimedia presentations, research applications, internet safety and problem solving, and support for math, reading, and writing.

Parent/Guardian Technology Use

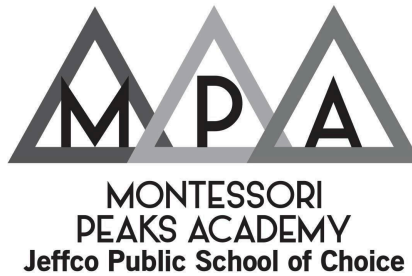
Parents should call to leave messages for your child ONLY in cases of emergency. Personal phone calls or messages for students create disruptions for your child and his/her classroom.

Parents should refrain from using cell phones during carline. This creates a dangerous situation for students and our staff.

Television/Video/DVD

On a very limited basis, age appropriate educational videos are viewed. The classes may show G rated videos, which will usually be scheduled in advance and parents will be informed of the date and title of the video. Only "G" rated movies/audio visual presentations will be shown in Preschool/Kindergarten classrooms. If a video with a rating other than G is being shown, parents may choose for their children not to participate and an alternative activity must be provided for the child. Appropriate staffing ratios and staff supervision will be maintained at all times.

Acknowledgement of Receipt of MPA Family and Student Handbook



Please read the following and sign this form to acknowledge your receipt, reading, and understanding of the attached Montessori Peaks Academy policies.

- I have received and read the MPA Family and Student Handbook.
- I understand that by signing this document I am agreeing to uphold the information and policies listed herein.
- I understand that in addition to the Montessori Peaks Academy Family and Student Handbook, I must read and acknowledge all required documents required in the Jeffco Enroll system.

Student Printed Name

Guardian Printed Name

Guardian Signature

Date