

GENERAL INFORMATION

***** 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 model of Maria Montessori.

*****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 may be directed to the Executive Director of Employee Relations, 1829 Denver West Drive, Building #27, P.O. Box 4401, Golden, CO 8401-0001.

If at anytime a parent of Montessori Peaks Academy wishes to file a complaint or report a licensing issue, they may do so by contacting:

Child Care Licensing
Front Range Community College
Westminster Campus Box 34
3645 W. 112th Ave.
Westminster CO 80031
303-404-5092

***** Charter Schools Information**

The Colorado Charter Schools Act was enacted in 1993 to enhance educational opportunities for students in Colorado by giving parents, 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.

***** 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 building, completed in the Fall of 2003. Our Charter was renewed by the Jefferson County School Board in 2005 for five years.

***** 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. It is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of parents of students enrolled at the school, one teacher and one member from the community. The Board of Directors is charged with ultimate responsibility for all activities at the school, although such activities are routinely delegated to the principal, faculty members, committees or parent volunteers for action.

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 8 parents, one staff member elected by the staff and one community member.

Regular meetings of the Board of Directors are held monthly. Notices announcing the dates, times and locations of Board of Directors' meetings are posted on the front door of the school 24 hours prior to the meetings.

Special meetings of the Board of Directors, including executive sessions, may be called to address issues requiring confidentiality as provided for in the Colorado Open Meetings Law.

All meetings are open to the public, except those convened in executive session. A Community Comment section is scheduled at the beginning of each meeting of the Board of Directors for parents, teachers or other community members to address the Board of Directors. All community members are welcome to address the Board of Directors. During Community Comments, participants are asked to address the Board respectfully

and concisely. The Board will listen to all comments and will not respond to the issues addressed or take action on issues immediately. The Board will communicate its decisions/actions to involved persons separately and in a timely manner, as determined by the Board of Directors.

***** The Montessori Model of Education**

Dr. Maria Montessori, and 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 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 make their own abstractions. This means that children arrive at abstraction through their own creative thought developed during their struggle to understand. Children can achieve this by working with concrete materials that are arranged sequentially on shelves. These manipulatives are self-correcting and provide maximum potential for success.

VISITING THE SCHOOL

*****General**

State and federal laws mandate that all visitors and parents must report to the administrative offices before entering the classroom (except parents or other authorized persons may drop-off or pick-up their children at the designated times). Unescorted visitors are prohibited from entering the school. All visitors, including family or friends, must follow the school's procedures for visitors by filling out and signing the visitor log and obtaining and wearing a visitor name tag. Visitors must show proper identification and state the reason for the visit. The number of visitors at one given time may be limited as their presence could be distracting to the supervision of children. Under no

circumstances should a parent provide a visitor or any other person with the family school entry security code.

*****Parents**

Parents are encouraged 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 insure that the educational program for each child is not disrupted. Visits should not exceed one hour.

*****Siblings and Friends**

Siblings and friends visiting your child's classroom can be disruptive to both your child's and other children's educational experience. Please do not allow friends and siblings to accompany your child to class or visit the classroom during school hours.

PROGRAMS AND HOURS

***** Educational Programs**

Montessori Peaks Academy offers programs for children, age three through 6th grade. Preschool and AM Kindergarten are tuition based. The half-day Kindergarten through 6th grade programs is tuition free, as we are a Jefferson County Public Charter School.

1. Primary: Preschool and Kindergarten

3 year olds:	am half or full day	Mon.-Fri. or Mon.-Thurs.
4 year olds:	am half or full day	Mon.-Fri.
Kindergarten:	full or pm half day	Mon.-Fri.

2. Lower Elementary: Grades 1, 2, 3
3. Upper Elementary: Grades 4, 5, 6

***** Before and After School Programs**

1. Primary Level: 3 years old through Kindergarten
2. Elementary Level: 1st through 6th grade

*** School Hours

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. Elementary Program: grades 1 st – 6 th | 8:00 am to 3:00 pm |
| 2. Full-day Preschool/Kindergarten Program | 8:00 am to 3:00 pm |
| 3. Half-day Preschool | 8:00 am to 11:00 pm |
| 4. ½ day Kindergarten | 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm |
| 5. Before School Program | Begins at 7:00 am |
| 6. After School Program | Ends at 6:00 pm |
| 7. Office Hours | 7:30 am to 4:00 pm |

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Before/After School Programs Coordinator: Lori Lubthisiphon
303-972-2627 ext 102

Students enrolled in the Before School Program can enter the building any time after 7:00 am. After School Program students must be picked up no later than 6:00 pm. Supervision will be provided in the Before/After School Program(s) designated areas only. Therefore, **students must be signed in to the program each day and signed out each day by a parent, or other authorized person.** We offer Non-Contact and Vacation Days Camps. Please see the school calendar for a schedule of days offered.

Students in the Before and After School Programs are expected to adhere to the same behavior expectations as any Montessori Peaks Academy student. Failure to exhibit appropriate behavior in these programs will result in the child being removed from them. Children will be given three opportunities to change their behavior. Parents will be notified in writing if their child's behavior is in question.

*** Enrollment and Registration

1. Eligibility: The MPA Before and After School Programs are open to children ages 3 through twelve who are enrolled at MPA.
2. Orientation: Before children can participate in the Before and After School Programs parents/guardians must obtain a Before and After School Programs Handbook from the Program Coordinator. Registration forms are found in the back of the handbook.
3. Registration Procedure: The required Registration/Emergency Care Form, the last page of the Handbook signed by a parent/guardian and the Monthly Calendar must be completed before a child may attend the program. Parents are required to inform the Before/After School Programs Coordinator of any Health Plans on file with the school.

4. Late Pick-up Fees: It is important that we have additional contact phone numbers if parents cannot be reached. We understand that emergencies do arise, and it may become impossible to get to the Program on time. If this happens, we expect a call from the parent/guardian. **If parents cannot be reached and a child is still at the Program at 6:30 pm, the local sheriff department will be called.** A late fee of \$1 per minute, per child is assessed after 6:00 pm. After the third occurrence, this fee is doubled. Continued “late pick-up” abuse will result in the child being removed from the program.

ATTENDANCE

***Attendance Policy

Daily attendance is critical to a child’s continuity of learning and is the combined responsibility of the parents, the school and the child. The Colorado School Attendance Law requires compulsory school attendance for children age seven to sixteen. This law makes parents responsible for their children’s attendance, and 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 are expected to call the MPA attendance line at 303-972-2627. 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, under normal circumstances, be excused. Any other absences must be excused through prior arrangement with the school office and with notification to the principal and teacher.

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. Keep in mind that not all work is in written form, but includes projects, discussions, and other instructional activities which cannot always be made up.

Testing periods are especially crucial times for student attendance. We ask parents to plan for students to be present during CSAP and other testing periods and to make appointments and other scheduled absences after school or before or after testing.

A parent whose child has significant unexcused absences in a school year may be subject to legal proceedings. Parents of students with 10 or more absences may be required to submit a letter from the child's physician.

*****Tardiness**

On time arrival at school is very important to a student's academic achievement and successful school experience. A student arriving at school after 8:10 is considered tardy and must stop at the office for a tardy slip to give to the classroom teacher. Parents are asked to call the school 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 placed in another classroom until the class returns from the field trip. Students, especially at the elementary levels, with excessive tardiness may be asked to make up missed work during recess.

*****Check-out During School Hours**

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. Any student leaving the school during these time periods *must be signed out in the administrative office by a parent or guardian*. Students will only be released to individuals who have been designated as "authorized persons to pick-up" the student with original parent signatures on file with the front office. A parent may not call in to the school to allow a person not listed on their authorized pick-up list to pick up their child. If a change in pick-up must be made, please come in person to notify the office and the teacher of the change or send a written notification to the teacher. This would include play dates, parties, or other occasions which would involve a different pick-up arrangement.

A written notification to the teacher should be sent requesting early dismissal. Other than emergency situations, classes and students should not be interrupted for early dismissal.

***** School Closure/Delay Due To Inclement Weather**

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

In cases of inclement weather, Montessori Peaks Academy will be closed if **all** Jefferson County Public Schools are closed. Because Jefferson County is so large and weather conditions can vary in different parts of the County, there may be instances when only schools in certain areas may be closed and Montessori Peaks Academy may or may not be affected. Please refer to news broadcasts on the following television and radio stations:

KLZ-560	KOA-850	Channel 4	Channel 9
KHOW-630	KYGO-950	Channel 7	

Any changes in expected arrival or departure times for Montessori Peaks Academy will be announced, just like any other public school, on TV and radio. If it is announced that Jefferson County Public School are closed, Montessori Peaks Academy will be closed.

RE-ENROLLMENT, ASSESSMENT, WITHDRAWAL

*****Re-enrollment Procedures**

1. In January parents of students currently attending MPA must declare their intentions for attendance for the next academic year.
2. By March 1st of each year, the principal and the Board of Directors determine the number of spaces available for the next school year.
3. Students in the lottery pool will be contacted to fill any vacancies available.

*****Assessment**

We, as a school, are committed to providing every opportunity for children to feel comfortable and to make a positive adjustment in the classroom environment. However, there are times and circumstances when a child may experience difficulties, such as:

1. The child is not fully toilet trained.
2. The child is not making the adjustment in the classroom environment.
3. The child's behavior is inappropriate over an extended period of time.

The Principal, in counsel with parent(s), staff and appropriate professionals, will determine a course of action which may include making accommodations in the present classroom, transferring the child to another classroom, or seeking a more appropriate educational environment.

*****Withdrawal of a Child**

A child may be withdrawn from MPA by notice provided by parent/guardian at least four weeks in advance of the withdrawal date. The parent should contact the enrollment secretary to obtain appropriate paperwork.

CHARGES AND BILLING

The Montessori Peaks Academy Primary, Kindergarten, and Before/After School Program tuitions are based on a ten-month academic year and payment schedule. Students are admitted for the full academic year. A 10% discount is offered if tuition for the academic year is paid in full by September 30th, 2006. A 5% discount will be applied to semester (5 month) prepaid tuition. The second semester payment is due by January 30th, 2007. A Second Child discount of 10% is available for siblings enrolled in the tuition based Montessori Peaks Academy Primary / Kindergarten programs. The discount is applied to the lesser of the tuition fees for the second and/or subsequent children.

The obligation to pay the agreed tuition is not subject to adjustment for illness, absence or any other reason. 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 due by the third Friday of each month, August through May. August tuition will be paid during August student registration. All activity fees are due at student registration. If a child is enrolled after the school year has begun, the first and second months tuition is due on or before the first day the child begins school. If a child departs during the school year, no proration refund for tuition will be made for the month in which the child 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 who do not pay any invoiced tuition and/or other applicable fees will be excluded from 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 Administration. Montessori Peaks Academy may use all legal remedies in collecting past due amounts. The undersigned 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.

Questions regarding your billing should be directed to our Business Manager, who is in the office from 8:30 until 4:00.

PARENT SUPPORT

***** Parent Participation**

Research shows that strong parent 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 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 5% of all Per-Pupil Revenue back to the District, also charter schools do not receive any funding for facilities, creating an increased financial burden. Therefore parent involvement is even more crucial for the success of our program.

***** Volunteer Hours**

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 families) per academic year. This equates to approximately 5 hours per month. Each family is asked to keep a running "tab" of their volunteer hours. A volunteer tracking sheet is attached to each student's Friday Folder. Please remember to fill out this sheet with **your volunteer time** served. It is very important that we keep track of volunteer hours at MPA, as many grants make decisions based partially on the volunteer commitment at our school. Being in attendance at school functions (parent/teacher conferences, musical productions, etc.) does not count toward volunteer hour commitment. The only exceptions to this rule are attendance at parent education nights and Board meetings.

***** Volunteer Opportunities**

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

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 8 parents, one staff member elected by the staff and one community member. Regular meetings of the Board are held monthly.

Financial Oversight Committee

This committee works in conjunction with the Board of Directors and the Administration to ensure responsible fiscal practices and procedures.

Community Relations Committee

This committee oversees the volunteer program at MPA, announcing volunteer opportunities and preparing the parent skills survey. This committee calculates annual volunteer hours and sponsors the Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner.

Technology Committee

This committee helps design, oversee and implement MPA's technology needs.

DAG (Design Advisory Group)

This committee helps MPA to design new facilities and grow through utilization of our 3A-3B bond monies.

Accountability Committee

This committee serves in an advisory role to the Board of Directors of Montessori Peaks Academy. It assists in planning ways to enhance the quality of education by assessing needs and setting/monitoring school goals based on those needs. The committee is charged with helping to develop, approve, implement and monitor an annual school improvement plan (SIP) with supporting profile information. It works with Administration and the Board to help the school meet its educational goals.

PTA (Parent Teacher Association) and its Committees

Montessori Peaks Academy is supported by an active PTA. The PTA sponsors many yearly activities such as a book fair, the annual SpringFest celebration, teacher appreciation activities, fundraisers, school dances and much more.

The **Literacy Committee** focuses on reading programs at MPA. This committee works directly with the Principal and supports classroom teachers.

The **Art and Cultural Committee** organizes and facilitates school musicals, play and other events to broaden exposure to the arts in a multicultural way.

THE MONTESSORI EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

*****Teacher Qualifications**

Lead Teachers at MPA are Montessori trained and certified and must also possess a four-year degree.

Assistant teachers are present in all our classrooms. Assistants must 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 his/her normal desire for independence and high sense of self-esteem.
3. Help him/her develop the kindness, courtesy and self-discipline that will allow the student to become a full member of society.
4. Help the student learn how to observe, question and explore ideas independently.

*****Curriculum**

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. 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.

*****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 further benefit from interaction with a more diverse group of peers.

Each of the classrooms at Montessori Peaks Academy is specially prepared to meet 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 academic skills and knowledge from an increasingly vast array of reference materials. Each classroom will have its own classroom library and computer(s); as well as the book nook and resource materials area.

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.

Students at Montessori Peaks Academy are not compared or paced with other students in the classroom. Each individual child's academic, emotional, social, artistic and physical progress and growth is observed, assessed and fostered by the classroom teacher.

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 are staffed for special education prior to enrollment at MPA **must** provide the school with a copy of the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), Individualized Literacy Plan (ILP), Advanced Learning Plan (ALP), or 504 Plan. If there is a question about the ability of the MPA program to accommodate the recommendations contained in the IEP, 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 IEP will be implemented at MPA.

*****Technology**

Montessori Peaks Academy is committed to providing its students with the most exciting, innovative technology to support students' learning and academic success. At the appropriate levels, instruction includes basic computer literacy, keyboarding, multimedia presentations, research application, problem solving, and support for math, reading and writing. MPA utilizes technology instruction in each classroom. Please review the technology learning skills with your individual lead teacher. The Board of Directors has an active Technology Committee.

*****Academic Standards**

Montessori Peaks Academy is 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. The school may recommend outside educational resources. Parents may then select resources at their own cost to assist their student in particular areas of growth.

A strong assessment package includes student bodies of evidence, development of student portfolios and standardized testing. All students at Montessori Peaks have academic portfolios and progress sheets that detail their progress throughout the academic year. Parents are encouraged to review these items with lead teachers, particularly during biannual conference meetings. Conference sessions are held in the fall and the spring of each academic year.

MPA and/or the Jefferson County Public School District students take the following standardized tests (at these approximate time frames) each academic year:

1. Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP):
Reading, Writing, Math: Grades 3rd-6th February and March
2. Science Grade 5 March
3. Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA): Grades K - 3rd April/May
4. DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills): Grades K – 3rd throughout the year
5. BEAR (Basic Early Assessment of Reading): Grades K -2nd March/April
6. Basic Reading Inventory (BRI): Grades 4th- 6th May
7. Embedded Curricular Assessments as required by Jefferson County Public Schools

Additionally, MPA tests all 2nd graders and new students in the CoGAT aptitude tests each September.

Parents that have questions concerning the standardized testing program should contact the student's lead teacher or the Principal.

*****Student Progress/Parent Conferences**

Ongoing evaluation and assessment assists teachers in determining the educational 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. Students will also become involved with long and short-term goal setting and self-evaluations.

Elementary teachers write mid-year evaluations on their students near the end of the first semester and final evaluations prior to the end of the school year. These evaluations are designed to maximize information about your child's progress. There is a rubric section for all the main content areas as well as a narrative component explaining areas of strengths and weaknesses. Parents 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.

THE CLASSROOM

***** Snack Information**

MPA is a peanut and tree nut free school.

1. **Preschool and Kindergarten parents** are asked to provide a nutritious snack on a rotating basis for their child's class. Classroom snack schedules and a suggested snack list is sent home to parents in the Friday Folders or posted outside the classroom. Please be aware that the Primary Wing is completely peanut free due to severe peanut allergies. Additional allergy warnings are posted outside the classrooms.
2. **Elementary students** bring their own snacks each day.

***** Lunch Information**

1. **Full-Day Preschool and Kindergarten children** bring "sack" lunches everyday except when they participate in classroom Pizza Day.
2. **Elementary 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 1st-6th grade daily Monday-Thursday. Fridays continue as Pizza Day. Hot lunches may be purchased for \$2.40 per meal on a monthly basis. Pizza is \$1.00 per slice and is coordinated by classroom.

***** Clothing**

Parents' good taste and judgment is the key in determining what constitutes acceptable dress/grooming for students. Students must wear clothing that is suitable for both indoor study and outdoor play. Behavior and attitude toward school are often related to appearance and manner of dress. Students may not wear any items that disrupt the educational environment or become a distraction from schoolwork. No clothing with offensive printing, graffiti or language including, but not limited to, alcohol, illegal substances, swastikas, confederate flags, violence or criminal activity may be worn.

Students must dress sensibly, neatly, cleanly, modestly and comfortably. For health and safety reasons, shoes or slippers are to be worn at all times (except during nap periods for preschool students). Students must wear shoes appropriate for outdoor play. Hats and caps may not be worn inside the school.

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

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

*** Materials

Students and/or their families must pay for any school equipment or materials they damage. Parents of students may be held liable for materials damaged in the classroom if the damage is the result of negligence and/or misbehavior. A materials fee is charged for each student each academic year to cover the cost of consumable supplies. This fee is non-refundable.

*** Field Trips

1. Individual classroom teachers are responsible for making sure field trip information and permission slips are handed out, signed by parents and returned to school. Paper work is handed out no later than 72 hours prior to the field trip. 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.
2. All parents involved in transporting MPA students on field trips **must provide a copy of their current driver’s license and current insurance information to lead teachers for each field trip.** Driving on field trips counts toward the completion of volunteer hours.
3. Parents are responsible for providing proper car/booster seats for the safety of their own children. **If a child does not have proper safety equipment they will not be allowed to participate in the field trip.**
4. Montessori Peaks Academy has access to Jefferson County School District school buses which may be used from time to time for field trips. Students are required to adhere to behavior regulations while being transported in any school bus/vehicle to sponsored events. District and/or MPA bus drivers discuss emergency plans and behavioral expectations before each bus trip begins.

***** 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.

***** Lost and Found Items**

Small “lost and found” items of value are to be turned in to the main office. An area containing other unclaimed articles is located at the bottom of the stairs. It is important to clearly label your child’s clothing and other belongings. At varying times during the school year unclaimed articles are displayed and, if unclaimed, are donated to worthy organizations. Please encourage your student to assume responsibility for all of their personal items during the school day.

COMMUNICATION INFORMATION

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).

*****Classroom Communication**

For the most effective communication regarding classroom or individual issues, please talk to the child’s lead teacher rather than the assistant or another parent.

If you need to talk with your child’s teacher at any time, please do not hesitate to call the office and leave a message for the teacher. 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.

We ask parents to be respectful. 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.

***** Friday Folders**

Friday Folders are sent home every Friday. They contain all pertinent school information: the Peek at the Peak and Sneak Peek, (newsletters), notices, field trip signups and teacher newsletters. Volunteer Hours tracking sheets are on the back cover of the folder. Teachers request that the Friday Folders be returned the following Monday with information, responses, etc. from parents. Parents of preschool students who attend Monday through Thursday receive Friday Folders on the following Mondays.

***** Office Communications**

Messages regarding illness, changes in your child's schedule and appointments need to be made through the office. Please call the office between 8:30 and 9:30 am if your child is absent. If we do not receive a call, the Enrollment Secretary will call to confirm the absence. Please notify us immediately when there are address, phone number and e-mail changes.

***** Electronic Communication: Website, E-mail**

Information may also be found on the MPA website at www.mpeaks.net. Parents are encouraged to communicate informally with all members of the MPA staff. During a busy school day, please feel free to leave a voice mail through the main office for teachers or correspond via email. All staff email addresses are listed in the school directory.

***** 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. Every year we publish the MPA Student Directory. If your family wishes to be listed in the directory you must check the section of the Registration Form giving us your permission.

***** Parent Education**

Parent education at MPA is an important learning experience for moms and dads. Parents are given the opportunity to become familiar with the guiding philosophy of the Montessori method and our program's goals and expectations. Parent education nights will be held at 6:30 pm on the third Wednesday of every other month.

***** Use of Phones**

1. Parents: Please 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. Please refrain from using your cell phone at car line. This creates a dangerous situation for our students.

2. Students: Students are allowed to use the school telephone ONLY in cases of emergency and with the expressed permission of their lead teacher or the main office. Cellular telephones are not to be used by students during school hours. Any cellular telephone possessed by a student must be kept with the student's personal possessions and turned off during the school day. Any student not adhering to this policy may have a cellular phone confiscated by a faculty or staff member to be returned to the parent or guardian. The school or its employees can not be responsible for any personally owned telephone or its operation.

*****Grievances**

Concerns, complaints and grievances are to be taken first to the party concerned, second to the Principal, and if not resolved, to the Board of Directors of Montessori Peaks Academy, with appropriate notice to the president of the Board of Directors for setting as an agenda item.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY/BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

All students enrolled in Montessori Peaks Academy are subject to Jefferson County School District Discipline Policies as contained in the *Student Conduct Code* booklet published each year. A copy of this booklet must be received, read and understood by **each** MPA student and parent. The student and/or parent must sign a declaration of understanding of the JeffCo student conduct code each academic year. The form is available during registration and in the front office. Failure to complete the statement of understanding will result in the student not being able to attend class.

***** General Guidelines of Behavior for Students at MPA**

These behavior expectations are provided to easily acquaint parents and students with general behavioral expectations at MPA. They are not intended to supercede any provision of the Jefferson County Public Schools Code of Conduct. In all cases, the Code of Conduct 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 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 on pages 13 and 14 of the Jefferson County Conduct Code book.

4. Faculty and staff members are 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 original containers for the medication to the school clinic for distribution by authorized school personnel. Please refer to the Jefferson County Public School Code of Conduct 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. 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.
9. 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.
10. Students will practice and encourage honesty in academic work and all other behaviors.

ARRIVAL and DISMISSAL PROCEDURES (CARPOOL)

Parents are responsible for transporting their children to and from school and we encourage the use of car pools. If sufficient interest exists, we will try to coordinate car pool information and provide it to parents.

*****Arrival**

Preschool (3 and 4 year olds)

All preschool students are escorted by their parents to their classroom or the before-school program and signed in on the roster sheet. Preschool parents park in the northwest parking lot.

A.M. Kindergartners (5 year olds)

Kindergartners may be dropped off at the “hug and drop” car line in the morning or be escorted to the classroom by their parents. Parent volunteers will assist the children out of the car and ensure that they get safely inside the building. Teachers sign in kindergartners who are dropped off.

P.M. Kindergartners (5 year olds)

Afternoon kindergartners are escorted to the classroom by their parents. P.M. kindergarten parents park in the northwest parking lot.

Elementary students (6 through 12 year olds)

Elementary students are dropped off at the “hug and drop” car line in the morning. Parent volunteers will assist the children out of the car and ensure that they get safely inside the building.

*****Dismissal**

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 roster sheet.**

Kindergartners (5 year olds)

Kindergartners are dismissed for carpool or the after school program at the end of the school day. Parents picking up Kindergartners at carpool (will) turn right into the northwest parking lot, and drive up to the Kindergarten waiting area in front of the Primary wing. Staff will put students into the car and **ask the parents to sign their students out.**

Elementary students (6 through 12 year olds)

Elementary students are dismissed for carpool or after school program at the end of the school day. Parents picking up elementary students pull into the school drive and follow the directions of the school staff to the elementary pick-up circle. Staff will assist the students into the cars.

Students in the After School program (all ages)

Parents park and enter the building to pick up and **sign out their students.**

***** Dismissal Students not picked up on time**

Children who are not enrolled in the After School program, and not picked up by 3:15 pm, are signed in to the After School program at the rate of \$11.00 per day.

STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY

***** General**

Montessori Peaks Academy complies with all Jefferson County School District and The Division of Child Care, 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, including, without limitation, Board policies and laws addressing the reporting of child abuse, accident prevention and disaster response and any state regulations governing the operation of school facilities.

***** Emergency Card Information**

Please keep your child's emergency card information form up-to-date. In case of an emergency, we must be able to contact parents as quickly as possible. If a home, business or cellular telephone number is changed it needs to be reported to the main office, 303-972-2627, immediately. Changes in address should also be reported to the main office in a timely manner.

***** Health**

The school clinic is available to those students who become ill or injured at school, or who require medication during the school day. If a child runs a temperature or requires medical treatment, the parent/guardian is called to pick up the child 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 are notified by phone of any accident or injury requiring an incident report from the clinic. Any accident involving a preschool student and requiring a doctor's visit is reported to the Colorado Department of Human Services.

***** Child Abuse**

In accordance with the Child Protection regarding child abuse, all staff must report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the Jefferson County Department of Social Services or the police department in the community in which the program is located. If a parent 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

*** Illnesses

Although we encourage and expect regular attendance, in an effort to maintain the good health of all our students, please refrain from bringing your child to school if she/he is sick. 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 to come and pick the student up within one hour of the call.

- * Deep coughing
- * Temperature above 100 degrees Fahrenheit (?)
- * Red and/or irritated rash
- * Yellow or green nasal or eye discharge
- * Diarrhea or vomiting

Failure to pick up the 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.

A child who is too ill to play outside should not be brought to school. Exceptions to this policy, made by the school Principal with the recommendation of the student's physician, are made for children with conditions such as cold-induced asthma.

*** Contagious Illnesses

Parents of children who have been exposed to or contracted a contagious disease must notify the school as soon as possible. The school will inform other parents of the situation as necessary so that precautions can be taken for their children's health. 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 (Pink Eye)** Prescribed medication must be administered to the child **24 hours** before he/she returns to school.
- * **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.

*** Communicable Illnesses

The diagnosis of a child with a communicable illness must be reported to the school immediately. The school then notifies the State Department of Public Health or the local health department, all staff members and all parents/guardians of the children in the care of the school. Illnesses such as measles, mumps, hepatitis, diphtheria, rubella, salmonella, tuberculosis, meningitis and shigellosis are considered communicable and should be reported immediately.

*** Colorado Immunization Law

Immunization requirements, as stated in Colorado law, are strictly enforced for all Jefferson County Public School students. Students new to the school district are given 14 days from the date of school entry to comply with these requirements. Noncompliance will result in suspension or removal from school. Please see “Immunization Requirements for School Entry” sheet in the summer mailing.

*** Medications

All medications must be checked into the Clinic and administered by trained personnel. A **Medication Agreement** must be completed by a parent/guardian. Medications, including over-the-counter items, must be in the original pharmacy or drug store packaging. The student’s name must be on the store packaging.

Students having health concerns that may be life threatening, such as peanut, nut and food allergies, severe asthma, etc. will require a Jeffco Health Plan. Please bring these issues to the attention of the Clinic Aide as soon as possible so that a plan can be put in place in conjunction with our area nurse consultant. Health Plans 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.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol or other brand names of Acetaminophen) is available in the clinic and can be administered to children as outlined in the District’s Medication Procedures with the signed consent of a parent/guardian.

Under no circumstances may any medication be given to a student to bring to school, possess at school, or administered at school. This is a very serious violation of the Jefferson County Public School Code of Conduct and will be dealt with in accordance with school district policy, which may result in discipline measures up to and including suspension or expulsion.

MISCELLANEOUS

***** Security Codes**

Parents/guardians are given a 5 digit security code at registration to be utilized to enter MPA facilities. The security code keypad is located at the main entrance of the facility. Please enter your security code at this entrance at student drop-off and pick-up times as well as visitation times.

***** Bicycles**

Due to the heavy traffic along Bowles, Kipling and Capri Avenues, **students are prohibited from riding their bikes to school**. Also, there is no place where a child's bike could be secured and the school is not responsible for lost, stolen or broken bikes.

***** Television/Videos**

On a very limited basis, age appropriate educational videos are viewed. The After School Program may show G-rated videos on Video Fridays. These Fridays will be scheduled in advance and parents will be informed of the date and title of the video.

***** Emergency Procedures**

Montessori Peaks Academy staff is trained in Emergency Management Procedures by Jefferson County School District. The Principal holds in-services with staff to cover emergency procedures. Evacuation plans and meeting points are posted in every classroom. The 24 Hour Fitness at 6044 S. Kipling is our designated meeting point outside of the school zone. This area would only be used in extreme situations when it would be unsafe to remain inside the school building. Staff is equipped with walkie-talkies, cell phones and a "lock box" containing class lists and student emergency numbers.

INFORMATION SOURCES WITHIN THE MPA COMMUNITY

Q. Where do I get information about MPA?

A. Parents of prospective students receive a General Information Book and, upon acceptance at registration, receive the "MPA Student / Parent Handbook" which contains valuable information. It should answer most of your questions.

Q. Where do I get information about school rules and student behavior policies?

A. MPA is a Jefferson County school, and parents must read the county student behavior book which is called *Student Conduct Code*. Parents and some older students must sign indicating they have read this book and agree to attend school conforming to its guidelines. See also the relevant pages in the *MPA Student / Parent Handbook* for other information on this subject.

Q. How do I get general information about school activities and committee updates?

A. Read the monthly *Peek at the Peaks* and the *Sneek Peek*, the newsletters sent home every Friday in your child’s Friday folder. Attend monthly Board and Committee meetings.

Q. How do I leave a message for my child’s teacher?

A. You may leave a voicemail directly for a head teacher by phoning 303 972-2627. You may drop a note in the teacher’s mail box which is located behind the door marked “private” to the left of the front doors. See email addresses in the school directory. Alternatively, you may leave messages for the teachers by phoning through the administration as follows:

<u>Area or Topic</u>	<u>Person</u>	<u>Email Address</u>
Principal	Char Weaver ext:301	ceweaver@jeffco.k12.co.us
General/enrollment	Veronica Botcher ext: 300	vbotcher@jeffco.k12.co.us
Financial questions	Donna Kane ext: :303	dlkane@jeffco.k12.co.us
Before & After School Programs	Lori Lubthisophon ext:102	llubthis@jeffco.k12.co.us
Primary coordinator	Dianne Lester ext: 306	dlester@jeffco.k12.co.us

Q. I have a question about health records. Whom do I phone?

A. Fran Dyke: Clinic Aid.

Q. How do I report my child will be absent?

A. Use MPA’s main phone number, 303 972-2627, and leave a message. After 8:00 you may call in the absence to office personnel.

Q. Do I have to report my Pre-K child as being absent?

A. Yes

Q. Where can questionnaires and other items requiring a reply that are sent home in Friday folders, etc. be handed in by parents?

A. A centralized location for returning paperwork is located in the office area for school wide communications. Paperwork specific to your child or your child’s classroom should be kept in the Friday folder to be retrieved by the teacher.

Q. I need to talk to another parent or fellow committee member. How do I get the telephone number?

A. Check if the person is listed in the MPA Directory that is handed out in the fall of each school year.

Q. I have a question about a field trip. Whom do I ask?

A. Field trips are organized by the classroom head teacher. Please discuss any questions with the teacher.

Q. I want to suggest a field trip or speaker. Whom do I contact?

A. Teachers look to parents for help in finding interesting field trips or speakers. Talk to the lead teacher. Don't forget to volunteer to help take care of students on field trips and record your work. These hours count toward your volunteer hours total.

Q. I have a great idea for fundraising. Whom do I contact?

A. Write your idea down and submit it to PTA representative, a Board member, or someone in Administration.

Q. How do I use the door code system?

A. With the door shut and a red light showing on the keypad, push the assigned numbers and a green light will appear on the keypad. Open the door. If for some reason your code is not working, ring the door bell. Your code will only work during school hours.

Q. How are door codes issued? Can I choose my own?

A. Door codes are issued randomly and automatically. You may not choose your code. See Office personnel if you have forgotten or have not been issued a code. Do not share your code with others. If someone other than yourself is going to pick up your child, have them ring the doorbell so they can show their I.D.

Q. Where do I sign in when I am just visiting, but not volunteering?

A. Sign in at the office in the visitor log book. You must sign in if you are in the school not at regular drop-off and pick-up times. If you are doing volunteer work, you must sign in at the volunteer log book to the left of the entry doors and wear a nametag.

Q. How do I contact the Aftercare Program after office hours?

A. The direct phone line to the program is 303-933-3335.

Q. How can I find out more about the policies, procedures and financial stability of MPA?

A. Attend a regularly scheduled meeting of the MPA Board of Directors. Times and dates are listed on the yearly calendar. Copies of MPA's Charter, By-laws, Policy & Procedures and B.O.D meeting minutes are available in the Office.

Q. How do I request a teacher for my child when he/she is moving up grade-levels?

A. The administration of MPA relies on the child's teacher for placement in the new grade level. You are welcome to observe in a classroom at anytime, however your request for a specific teacher must be in writing and IS NOT a guarantee of placement.

Q. Where do I go when I have a concern about my child's classroom?

A. We ask that you always talk to your child's lead teacher first. If your concerns are not addressed to your satisfaction, please contact the Principal or the Primary Director through the front office to schedule an appointment and discuss your concerns.

Q. What do I do when I need to send someone else to pick up my child from school?

A. The person you send must be listed on your child's "Authorized Person to Pick-Up" sheet. Have the person ring the door bell to gain entrance to the building and stop by the office to show identification. **No one** will be allowed to pick up your child without written authorization.

MORE ABOUT MONTESSORI – RECOMMENDED READING

The Absorbent Mind, by Maria Montessori

A Child in the Family, by Maria Montessori

The Discovery of the Child, by Maria Montessori

The Formation of Man, by Maria Montessori

The Montessori Method, by Maria Montessori

Montessori: A Modern Approach, by Paula Polk

Montessori Read & Write:

A Parent's Guide to Literacy for Children, by Lynne Lawrence

The Secret of Childhood, by Maria Montessori

The Public Montessorian, quarterly periodical published by Jola Publications

Tomorrow's Child, periodical published by Jola Publications