

MOUNTAIN VIEW MONTESSORI CHARTER SCHOOL

Family Handbook



“The education of a very small child does not aim
at preparing him for school but for life.”

~Dr. Maria Montessori

To accomplish its mission, the school provides a unique learning environment based on the philosophy and methodology of Dr. Maria Montessori. Teachers are educated and certified as Montessori teachers for the level they teach. Students stay with the same teacher for two years to allow the teacher to get to know each child's unique abilities, interests, needs and style of learning. Formal and informal assessment data is used to determine individual performance levels. This information is incorporated into a learning plan for each student. Trimester learning goals and strategies as well as input from the student and parents are added to the plan. A section of the plan is devoted to personal development. The plan is communicated to the family at the first parent teacher conference of the year and revised as needed. Interventions are added to plans for students who are not making adequate progress.

Parent Outreach

All parents are encouraged to attend school meetings and have access to appropriate representatives of the school to assure successful communication among parents, students and the school. Outreach efforts include monthly newsletters, Internet and E-mail communications regarding the times and dates of all parent and committee meetings, special classroom and school-wide events, and information regarding school operations.

Classroom Observations

Parents are encouraged to observe in the classroom to better understand the program. If you are interested in scheduling an observation of a classroom, please contact the MVMCS office and the visit will be arranged. Observations are to be scheduled in advance of the day you would like to observe. Please note that we do not allow class visitors/volunteers/observers during the first six weeks of school.

Parent Volunteers

Parents are an important component of MVMCS. They are regarded as our partners in education. To that end, MVMCS parents are expected to be involved in their child's education through ongoing participation and through volunteering a minimum of 30 hours per school year.

Volunteer and classroom support opportunities are varied and parents are encouraged to find a way to be involved that best supports their needs and schedules. Parents can volunteer on an ongoing basis or for a one-time need, can help at school or from home, and can get involved in various capacities. For example, parents can serve as members of the MVMCS Advisory Committee, the MVMCS PTA, as office or classroom volunteers, as chaperones of special events and field trips, as guest speakers, or can help with fundraisers.

Parents who wish to volunteer must attend a volunteer training, which is required to be a cleared volunteer. The volunteer training is offered once per month, as well as multiple times the first month of school (dates will be communicated in the newsletter). After attending the volunteer training, parents complete a volunteer clearance form which allows for a background check in the Megan's Law database. Once that step is completed successfully, parent names are submitted to the VESD Board of Trustees for approval as a cleared volunteer for the current school year.

If a parent has been cleared in a previous year, he/she is not required to attend the volunteer training, again. However, the volunteer clearance form, background check, and approval by the VESD Board must be completed anew each school year.

All families are required to commit to 30 hours of volunteer time at Mountain View Montessori Charter School in order to hold their spot for the following year. The required volunteer hours must be completed by May 31st.

Monitoring Volunteer Hours

Parent volunteer hours are monitored through several means. If volunteering on-campus, parents are asked to sign in at the front office. This will enable office staff to record volunteer hours. If volunteering off-campus, parent volunteers are asked to email their volunteer time to jromero@vesd.net. If purchasing snacks or classroom items to be applied toward volunteer hours, parents may return receipts to the office staff.

Advisory Committee

The Mountain View Montessori Advisory Committee consists of four parents, two teachers, one classified staff member, the principal, two VESD representatives (Asst. Superintendents), and one VESD fiscal services representative. These are volunteer positions, with parents being elected to serve. The Committee members serve as ambassadors for our school and work diligently to develop and implement our School Site Plan as well as develop policies that positively affect our school program.

All parents are encouraged to attend meetings of the Advisory Committee. See the monthly school newsletter and website for meeting dates.

Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

The PTA consists of two parents, one non-certificated staff member, one community member at large (who may or may not be a parent), two teachers of Mountain View Montessori, and the principal. This group works together to oversee school events and facilitate non-profit fundraising for the school. This committee coordinates volunteers and promotes school communication and events. The parent positions are elected, volunteer positions.

All parents are encouraged to attend meetings of the the Parent Teacher Association. See the monthly school newsletter and website for meeting dates.

Campus Visitation

At Mountain View Montessori we want our campus to be safe and secure at all times. Anytime a parent or guardian is coming onto the MVM campus, we ask that you sign-in so that the office staff is aware of your presence. We ask that you sign-out so we know when you've exited the campus. This procedure is critical in having a safe campus because we must know who is on campus at all times.

Curriculum

At MVMCS, we utilize Montessori materials, lessons, and principles in the education of our students. We emphasize practice, application, and mastery of skills in reading, writing, and math and integrate lessons with subjects such as history, science (botany, geography, zoology), and art. Early literacy is the primary focus in grades 1-3, while reading to learn is the focus in grades 4-6. Kindergarten is a full day program with an

Family Handbook Acknowledgement of Receipt

I have read and understand the policies and procedures of this school and agree to abide by them including:

- I understand that MVMCS is a site-based school and that my children are expected to be in attendance each day, all day, except for serious illness or emergency.
- I understand that I am responsible to provide transportation to and from school.
- I understand that my child is expected to abide by the school rules – including behavior, punctual attendance, and respect for school property including classroom materials and furniture.
- I understand that the school does NOT provide supervision prior to 7:45 a.m. or after 2:30 p.m. (12:30 p.m. on Fridays). My child must be dropped off by 8:00 a.m. each morning and picked up at 2:15 p.m. each afternoon (12:15 p.m. on Fridays).
- I understand that I am responsible to perform a minimum of 3 hours of mandatory parent participation work per month (September – June) in order to fulfill a total of 30 volunteer hours per year.

After reading the MVMCS Family Handbook, please sign the Parent Acknowledgement/Signature Page (available on the MVM website or in the MVM office) and return to the MVM Office.