

## **Montessori at Mountain School**

### **General Information**

Montessori at Mountain School is the preschool and kindergarten program for Telluride Mountain School, Telluride's fully accredited, independent school serving children from preschool through high school. The Montessori program provides traditional Montessori education and fulfills the mission of Telluride Mountain School, a not-for-profit, 501(c) 3 organization dependent on tuition and voluntary contributions for support.

#### **History**

Montessori at Mountain School ("M@MS") was established in 1995 by a small group of dedicated parents committed to providing Montessori education in Telluride and was known as Telluride Montessori School. In 2002, the program moved to the Mountain Village to accommodate a growing school population and more comprehensive programming. In January of 2004, the Montessori completed a formal merger with the Telluride Mountain School. The school purchased a new facility at Lawson Hill in June, 2005. Telluride Mountain School, including the M@MS program, received full accreditation through the Association of Colorado Independent Schools in May 2006. The school moved into its new facility and was accepted for membership in the National Association of Independent Schools in the fall of 2006.

#### **School Mission**

Telluride Mountain School offers a program of challenging academics that promotes critical thinking, aesthetic expression and ethical behavior, while encompassing a commitment to community service, global citizenship and engagement with the natural world. The school culture embraces independence, personal responsibility, compassion, curiosity and joy.

#### **Montessori Program Objectives**

In designing early education that matches the school mission, M@MS:

- Creates a specially prepared environment where children are free to learn
- Offers a complete collection of the finest quality Montessori learning materials
- Employs a certified teaching staff who demonstrate high standards and growth
- Provides children an excellent foundation for future learning in a rigorous academic setting
- Prepares children to respect individuals, different cultures, and the natural world
- Builds a committed community that supports the school's mission

#### **Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy as to Students**

Montessori at Mountain School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

## **Maria Montessori**

Dr. Maria Montessori (1870–1952) was Italy’s first female M.D. whose lifelong, world-wide study of children and advocacy for their needs led to historic advances in education. The “Casa de Bambini” or Children’s Houses she established were based on her appreciation of the importance of the child’s own activity in education. Through her deep respect for children and her outstanding skills of observation, she originated child-centered education. Today, many of the practices and principles of Montessori education have been co-opted into conventional “best practices.”

## **The Montessori at Mountain School Approach**

At Montessori at Mountain School, we offer a supportive early learning program for children of three to six years. Our beautiful classrooms are filled with an extensive collection of the finest Montessori learning materials, and our teachers are certified Montessori educators who love working with children and demonstrate the highest standards of personal and professional growth. Inspiring an early love of learning, our teachers assist young children to learn to care for themselves, others and their environment in a manner that builds core values, including respect, love of learning, responsibility, and integrity. A sophisticated early academic curriculum prepares children for the rigorous academic program of the upper grades. We encourage you to visit and observe our school as we bring to life the values and principles outlined in our mission, values, and objectives.

## **Lower School at Telluride Mountain School**

Children completing the primary program at Montessori at Mountain School will be ready to attend first grade anywhere but are uniquely suited to continuing their education in Mountain School programs. The first through fourth classrooms offer a unique blend of Montessori and traditional programming, and the teachers have both Montessori and elementary training. The small class sizes combined with comprehensive learning materials and best practices from Montessori and other traditions enable children to learn in an optimal environment that supports and extends their early learning.

## **Governance**

Telluride Mountain School is governed by a board of directors, including Grace Engbring, Seth Cagin, Harley Brook-Hitching, Lynn Roberts, Michaels Bradley, Stephanie Anagnostou, Miles Welch, Andy Krueger, and Mary Johnson.

## **Administration**

The Associate Head of School, Karen Walker, is responsible for the day-to-day operation of M@MS and the oversight of the programs, facility, and staff. She may be reached through the main school number at 728-1969 x 14. Pamela Sante, Business Manager, is responsible for tuition billing, bookkeeping and other financial aspects of the school. She may be reached at 728-1969 x13. Please feel free to contact these individuals.

## **Faculty**

M@MS is very proud of its faculty members. The current teaching staff, in addition to holding a bachelor of arts or sciences, received their training from either the Association Montessori International (AMI) or the American Montessori Society (AMS) and are certified to work with children in the Montessori program. Please refer to the school website for individual qualifications and profiles. The faculty comprises knowledgeable professionals who are dedicated to nurturing

awareness, respect, responsibility, independence, and achievement in the children. Assistants in the classroom typically hold a bachelor's degree and undergo in-service training to work in the Montessori.

## Programs

### School Programs Offered at M@MS

We offer programs for children from three through six years of age during the school year and observe holidays on a typical school calendar. We offer a four or five-day program for preschoolers. Children of kindergarten age attend a five-day program.

### Primary Program

Our Primary Program for children aged three through six operates from 8:45 to 1:45 each day. Drop off is between 8:45 and 8:50 and school activities begin promptly at 8:50. Parents may arrange directly with the teacher to pick up their child any time between the end of the work cycle and 1:45. Our primary program is offered five days a week, and parents may choose either a four (Tuesday – Friday) or a five-day program.

The Primary Program includes group activities, time to work independently or in small groups with the Montessori materials, lunch, outdoor play time and enrichment activities including art, music, movement, cooking, crafts and other selections. All children also participate in Spanish language instruction. Occasionally we benefit from local specialists such as Mark Galbo for music, Jen Julia or Sally Davis for drama, and instructors from Telluride Dance Academy for movement.

The Primary Program is a three-year program and provides the greatest benefit to those who complete the entire cycle, including the kindergarten year. Families choosing to enroll children at age two years, nine months, understand that the program is then a four-year program. Starting early does not enable the student to complete the curriculum ahead of schedule. Occasionally, children are accepted into the Montessori when they are four or even five, particularly when the family indicates an intention to continue with Mountain School programs. These children still benefit from the program, but not always to the degree of those who have attended the entire program.

### Nap/Rest Program

Parents requiring that their preschool aged child attend a longer school day may register their child for the Nap Program, which extends the child's day for an hour and includes quiet time for a nap, listening quietly to music, a story or a recording, or looking at a picture book.

### The Kindergarten Program

The kindergarten year is an integral and vital part of the program, and families entering the program indicating that they intend to attend kindergarten with M@MS and continue in the Mountain School for first grade receive priority in admissions. We strongly believe in the importance of completing the Montessori cycle and offer challenging work for children from five through six years of age that supports their early academic and social learning in a developmentally appropriate setting. Children who are of an age eligible to enter kindergarten in the local schools (currently five by October 1) are also eligible for the kindergarten year at M@MS. Children may be accepted early or late as described below in Exceptional Admissions.

Kindergartners participate in the Primary Program with extra Montessori programming in the afternoon five days a week. While the morning work cycle provides individual lessons to every child based on their personal development, afternoon instruction offers small group lessons in academic skills, including reading, writing, math, and Spanish.

### **Morning Program**

The Morning Program is a shortened day for children under age three, three-year-olds enrolling in their first school program, and other children benefiting from a shortened day. The morning program concludes after the work cycle, at 11:45 a.m. This program is recommended as an introductory program for the first trimester to allow a smooth transition into school routines and to prevent over-tiredness for very young children. It may be extended beyond the first trimester if the child continues to benefit from a shortened day.

### **Financial Aid**

Financial Aid is available for those who qualify. The school sponsors a Financial Aid Program, funded by grants and contributions and makes awards to families in the school community. The purpose of the financial aid program is to 1) maintain families who have demonstrated a commitment to the school and 2) promote socio-economic diversity in the M@MS community. Financial aid awards are based on demonstrated need. Interested families must submit a Parents' Financial Statement to School and Student Service for Financial Aid. Awards are based on the recommendation of SSS. Applications are available at the school office, or you may apply online: <<https://sss.ets.org/>>. Please notify the administration if you apply online so that they may be on the lookout for the report from SSS. The deadline for applying is April 30 of the year prior to enrolling; exceptions may be made in certain circumstances, but funds are limited and a timely application helps ensure an adequate award. Funds are limited.

## **Admissions & Enrollment**

### **Ages**

We generally accept children who are three years old in our Primary Program; children who are within a few months of three may also be accepted on a space available basis and provided the child is ready for school. Parents must recognize that early admission to the program will not speed up their child's development, and children who are not yet three will spend four rather than three years in the Montessori program and progress to first grade along with their peers.

### **Older Children**

M@MS accepts a limited number of newly applying four and five year old children into the program. Children with Montessori experience are given priority as are children who will be attending kindergarten and enrolling in Mountain School programs for the elementary years. The primary program is most beneficial to those completing the entire cycle, including the kindergarten year.

## Exceptional Placements

A child must be 5 by October 1 to enter kindergarten. If parents want to pursue the placement of a child who does not meet this deadline they must:

- Have developmental testing done at their expense (acceptable tests include the Brigance Inventory of Early Development II, Gesell Developmental Observation, the Woodcock Johnson III or other test that provides developmental age). Test results must demonstrate adequate readiness levels in the areas of cognitive, physical, social and emotional development for placement in kindergarten.
- Agree to two years of kindergarten if this is the decision of the school.

All placement decisions are entirely at the discretion of the school and are final.

## First Grade Placement

Children successfully completing the kindergarten year at M@MS will be offered a seat in the first-second grade classroom, provided there is adequate space, the family is in good standing with the school, and the student may optimally benefit from the academic program. Students will be offered a contract for first grade in the February prior to the fall of first grade.

## Special Needs Children

Montessori at Mountain School is a wonderful setting for children of diverse abilities but does not offer special services for children with exceptional needs. Our teachers do not have training in special education. We urge parents, professional consultants and support staff to work together with our teachers to determine if Montessori at Mountain School is the optimal placement or if another program is more appropriate.

Parents, school administration and professional advisors also determine if the rigorous academic program of Telluride Mountain School, grades 1 – 12, represents the best placement for children with significant learning disabilities.

## Toileting

Generally, children approaching three years of age should be using the toilet, and we do not permit diapers in the Primary Program (exceptions may be made for certain medical or other conditions). If a child is not consistently toileting independently, including managing clothes and wiping, by the time of their enrollment date, please consult with the classroom teacher to set a new start date.

## Application and Admission

Please contact the school for an application packet. Parents of children applying to the school should first observe a classroom. Make an appointment with the Head of Lower School or a teacher, and plan to observe without your child. There is a \$50 non-refundable registration fee levied during the application process. The deadline for applying is March 1 for the following school year, and on a rolling, space available basis thereafter.

Some of the criteria for admissions are a balance of age and sex in the classroom, family interview, diversity of community, and fit of the family and child into the school community.

During the spring before each new school year, the program's admissions committee will determine how many of the existing students will be offered a re-enrollment contract and will be attending. Then children from the application pool will be considered for admission. We mail admissions decisions by the end of March indicating if your child has been accepted, declined admission or placed into a waiting pool. Waiting pool applicants are often seated well before the start of the school year. Please do not contact the school or admissions personnel regarding the status of your application before you have received a decision. Admissions decisions are final.

### **Enrollment Deposit**

A non-refundable \$750 enrollment deposit is required by April 15. All deposits must be accompanied by a signed Enrollment Contract included in the enrollment packet. Deposits should be mailed so we can rely on the postmark to establish that the deadline has been met. For returning students the enrollment deposit will be rolled over to the following school year.

The deposit may only be applied against the final tuition bill of the kindergarten year and will not be refunded for voluntary withdrawal of the student under any circumstance.

### **Enrollment Contract**

With the Enrollment Contract, parents assure the school that they understand M@MS accepts children who intend to stay for more than one year and who plan to attend kindergarten at the school. It also promises that the child will attend the full year and assures that tuition for the full year will be paid, even if the child is taken out of school voluntarily for lengths of time. Credit is not offered and makeup days are not available for missed days of school.

## **Admissions Dates**

- **September:** School begins the Tuesday after Labor Day weekend.
- **November - March:** Applications are sent out to prospective new students
- **February 15 :** Current students sign up for the following school year.
- **March 1:** Completed applications are due from prospective new students for September enrollment.
- **March 30:** Notifications of admissions decisions are mailed
- **April :** The following year's deposit is due from new students
- **April - August:** New applications are considered on a space available basis

### **Withdrawal of Child**

For students enrolled for the first time at M@MS there is a 6-week grace period after initial enrollment during which your child may be withdrawn from the school without any additional payment beyond the non-refundable enrollment deposit and any tuition due for the period of actual enrollment. Should you wish to withdraw your child at any time, written notification is required. Should you withdraw your child after the 6-week grace period then you are responsible for tuition for the full school year.

Throughout the year, we reserve the right to withdraw educational services to your child if: (1) you do not pay your tuition bill; (2) in our judgment, we lack the special resources to serve a special need of your child properly; (3) we do not receive your cooperation in dealing with a problem concerning your child; (4) you do not provide the school with immunization documents; (5) you do not provide the school with other required forms. In the event that M@MS elects to withdraw services for any of the above reasons, the administration will notify the parents in writing.

### **Tuition and Late Fees**

Tuition may be paid annually, semi-annually or monthly over a ten-month period. The monthly tuition payments are due the first day of every month commencing on July 1st and ending April 1st. Please note that the July and August payments each represent one tenth of the annual tuition and does not reflect attendance for those months.

Tuition may be prorated for families admitted during the school year, provided that a place is not held that would otherwise be filled by a student with a year-long contract.

A late fee of \$10 will be added to unpaid balances when they are more than 10 days late. A charge of 1-1/2% (18% per year) will be added to accounts 30 days overdue.

A convenience fee of 2.5% of the payments due will be added to payments made by credit card.

A return check charge of \$25 will be added for checks returned for “not sufficient funds” or for any other reason.

After the 10th of the second month of tuition delinquency, a letter must be submitted by the family in question to the business office outlining a payment plan. If a family has not paid or contacted the school in writing for two full months, the child may not attend school, and the school will notify the family in writing that it has withdrawn services. A record of late tuition may affect future enrollment.

If your child misses school, you must still pay tuition.

### **Visiting Children**

Occasionally, we welcome children into our classroom on a short-term basis when they are alumni or have Montessori experience. These children attend without an Enrollment Contract. This arrangement is offered provided the visiting child does not displace a child with a year long commitment to the school, attends a regular four or five day program, is current with tuition payments, has the approval of the teacher and the administrator, and abides by all the usual school Policies and Procedures. Families with visiting children will be billed in advance on a prorated basis for the projected period of their enrollment.

## **Parent Support**

### **Volunteers**

M@MS is dependent upon your volunteer support. Parents are asked to assist with various tasks which are important to the operation of the school. Please volunteer for one of these jobs. If you have a special interest or skill to share with the school then speak with the classroom teacher or administrator. We welcome your participation and thank you in advance for your help.

## Parent Responsibility

We expect our parents to uphold the mission of the school. In addition to supporting the school through tuition payments, parents may expect to:

- Make voluntary donations to our Annual Fund and participate in fundraising efforts
- Attend twice annual parent teacher conferences
- Attend a back to school meeting
- Observe twice annually in the classroom
- Attend occasional all-school events or celebrations
- Participate in occasional parent education events
- Promptly read all school correspondence, including weekly “Friday Letters”
- Check parent folder for written correspondence

## Fundraising & The Annual Fund

Telluride Mountain School, including M@MS, is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation. Fundraising events take place throughout the year. Tuition revenues cover approximately three-quarters of the cost of the M@MS program. The school has an annual giving program that is an important part of the school’s continued operation. Every school family, faculty, and staff member will be asked to donate to the Annual Fund on a level that matches their means and values. All Annual Fund contributions received from Montessori families are applied to the costs of the M@MS program. Additionally, funds for financial aid must be raised through events, donations and grants. Donations beyond tuition are tax deductible, greatly needed and sincerely appreciated.

Contributions to M@MS are currently eligible for both Federal tax credit and the Colorado Child Care Tax Credit, which may make contributions cost as little as twenty-five cents on the dollar after tax benefits. Please consider carefully your ability to give and support the valuable work of early childhood education.

## The Classrooms

### Our Classrooms and Teachers

Our program is located at 200 San Miguel River Drive and offers beautiful, spacious classrooms filled with natural light and views of the surrounding peaks, river and valley. Along with the connected outdoor play area, staff offices and lobby, the facilities are specifically designed as safe and supportive Montessori learning environments for children from 3 to 6.

By filling our space with enticing Montessori materials, we provide children with a highly enriched environment in which they choose the direction and pace of their early education. There is always a certified Montessori teacher present during the Montessori work cycle, accompanied by an assistant when classroom numbers require it per state regulations. The teacher is trained to observe each child’s development and introduces new materials as the child becomes ready to absorb them. Instead of being taught all at once in a group by a teacher in the front of the room, children learn from the self-correcting Montessori materials that have been presented by the teacher. Since the classroom is multi-aged, they also learn by watching more experienced children. Later, they reinforce what they know by showing others the materials they are familiar

with. The teacher is continually introducing more challenging work as well. We have materials that can satisfy even the most precocious six-year-old.

### Lunch and Snack

Parents provide a nutritious lunch daily for their students. Students will take uneaten food home, instead of throwing it away. This will help you determine how much your child is eating at lunch time. Please, do not send:

- Junk food, sweets or treats; desserts
- Highly packaged foods such as Lunchables or Gogurts
- Candy or gum
- Lunchboxes with commercial motifs (such as characters from a popular movie).

Also, please keep waste to a minimum with reusable containers.

Parents provide snack ingredients to their child's classroom on a rotating basis. A teacher or parent volunteer will provide a shopping list, and a teacher prepares a snack for the class daily. Snack is available for the duration of the morning (except during the last half hour before lunch) and a second snack is offered during the afternoon session.

### Field Trips

- On occasions when a field trip is appropriate, the following guidelines apply:
- Parents or guardians will be notified at least 2 days in advance of any field trip.
- Parents or guardians must have a signed Field Trip Authorization Form on file.
- An accurate itinerary will be posted at the school.
- A list of all children and staff on a field trip will be kept at the school.
- Adult-child ratio of 1:6 (1 adult with 6 children)
- At no time will there be fewer than 2 adults accompanying a group of children leaving the school.
- Children will be actively supervised at all times.
- No child will be in a public restroom without an adult supervising.
- No field trip will take place using private vehicles.
- A buddy system will be used. Each child will be paired with a partner and coached on being responsible to and for others.
- All children will walk together as a group in pairs with adults in the lead the middle and at the rear of the group. The group will stop together at street crossings and proceed safely. An adult will be positioned in the center of the street to hold traffic while all children cross.
- The staff will have with them on a field trip the Emergency Contact and Emergency Medical Care Authorization information for each child.
- Staff will take a first aid kit in a portable carrying case.

Parents must provide their own transportation to and from the school.

In the event of a late arrival on the day of an outing, we do not offer care at the school and the parent will have to make another arrangement.

### **Visitation and Observation**

You are welcome to visit. Our environment is unique, and it is wonderful to watch the children learning in a space made just for them. Please make arrangements with the administrator or teacher. All visitors to the school must sign-in.

Formal observations are scheduled two times each school year in the spring and fall. You will be asked to schedule a specific time for your observation.

### **Arrival**

Children should arrive at the school five minutes before class begins. Classroom doors will be open from 8:40 to 8:50. Early arrivals may wait with parents in the lobby or outside. After 8:50, a closed door means that class time has begun, and you should send your child quietly into the classroom. An assistant or teacher will help your child undress and join activities in progress.

Children with siblings attending Mountain School first through twelfth grade programs are welcome to arrive as early as 8:30. They will be supervised until school starts.

Please be on time! Our days are short and the learning time is valuable. An uninterrupted three-hour work cycle is important to the Montessori approach. Parents are requested not to bring children into the middle of a school session and to schedule extracurricular activities around school time whenever possible. Speak to the teacher or administrator if you have a situation that requires special scheduling.

### **Dismissal**

Children should be picked up at the conclusion of their program at 11:45, 1:45 or 2:45. Pick-ups between 11:45 and 1:45 may be arranged on an as-needed basis with your child's teacher, and parents with children in the Primary Program are welcome to pick up after the work cycle or lunch or during recess on any day. For regular pick-ups, there is a grace period of ten minutes after the scheduled pick up time. After that, there will be an extra charge of \$1 per minute added to your bill with the date noted. Staff will continue to supervise children until they are picked up. In the event that a parent does not arrive to pick up a child, the school personnel will attempt to contact the parents, guardians or emergency contacts to arrange to gather the child. In the event that no one can be located over the period of an hour, the school personnel will release the child to the custody the San Miguel Sheriff's Department.

### **Elevator**

The elevator is available to families in the M@MS program with some guidelines for use. Children should not ride the elevator without an adult, and children (and parents) riding the elevator should not "race" those using the stairwells. Please help us maintain a safe and respectful school environment by upholding this policy and remember that other students are still working when Montessori dismisses.

### **Sign-In and Out**

State law and good practice require that we maintain accurate records of attendance. Parents' responsibility in this matter includes signing children in upon arrival and out at dismissal. This procedure is extremely important to the safety of children and our knowledge of their whereabouts. Please do not allow children to sign the sheet: it is a legal document. Parents and others listed on the Emergency Release form may sign students out without additional notification. In the event that you know that someone other than those listed will pick up your

child, you must fill out an alternate pick up form, located near the sign-in/out sheet. If the individual picking up your child is not known to the staff, they must present a picture id before we will release your child. Please avoid last minute changes to pick up plans, and only under emergency situations should changes in pick up plans be phoned in. Please help us keep children safe by following these protocols.

## **Student Information**

### **Assessment of Student Progress**

Teachers keep a record of each student's progress. Parent and teacher conferences are held in the late fall and in the spring, along with a written report of student progress. Informal conferences may be held at your request. Please call to our attention any area of development you feel is important so that we may help your child grow.

### **Testing**

Beginning in kindergarten, the school uses some standardized testing to screen for adequate progress in the acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy concepts. In the event that a student is not making adequate progress, the teacher will meet with the family to implement various strategies to increase achievement, including school activities and activities for families at home, such as counting, playing cards, rhyming, and reading together.

### **Learning or Behavioral Referral Policy**

Occasionally, our teachers encounter a suspected learning or behavioral difficulty. Montessori at Mountain School reserves the right to require the parents to seek appropriate educational or psychological testing to help determine the nature and scope of the child's difficulty. Based on test results and professional advice, the child's parents, teachers, and the consulting professional will determine what, if any, changes will be made in the child's educational program or if outside support is necessary. In some cases, the teachers and administration of the school may determine that Montessori at Mountain School does not have the necessary resources to offer.

### **Student Forms**

Each student is required to have a current school year Health Form, Emergency & Child Release Form, Immunization Form, and Field Trip Permission Form for the student's files. Forms are part of the enrollment process and are for the safety and well being of all M@MS students. The release form is due before the child may attend, and medical forms must be submitted within 30 days of enrollment. If these forms are not received, the student will not be allowed to attend school until the forms are submitted. You must notify the office immediately if there is a change in your address, home phone number, or daytime emergency phone number.

### **The Health and Safety of Your Child & Immunization Exemption**

Your child's health is a matter of major importance to all of us. Upon enrollment a Health Form, which is a statement of the child's current health status, must be completed and signed by a health care professional within the last 12 months. Information and instruction on the care of each child who has an identified health condition or development concern, such as seizures, asthma, diabetes, allergies, heart or respiratory conditions and physical disabilities must be provided by the parents and health care provider.

We also require that the child have certain standard immunizations, and a current immunization record must be on file at the school regarding all immunizations a child has had, including the dates that each immunization was given. Immunizations must be recorded on the Certificate of Immunization supplied by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) or certificate approved by the CDPHE. Tracking of immunizations is done in accordance with state regulations.

If immunizations are not given due to medical, personal or religious reasons, the appropriate exemption found on the back of the Certificate of Immunization must be signed and dated. Parents of a child who is not immunized must be aware that the risk of spread of preventable disease exists.

Your child may be sent home if any symptoms of illness appear during the day. In such cases, your child will be isolated from the others and you will be contacted.

Keep Your Child Home If He or She:

- Has a cold.
- Has heavy nasal discharge.
- Has a constant cough.
- Is sneezing.
- Has a fever of 99 degrees or more or has had one during the previous 24-hour period.
- Has been taking antibiotics for less than 3 days.
- Is fussy, cranky, and generally out of sorts.
- Is just tired and cannot participate fully in school activities. Rest at such times may prevent the development of serious illness.
- Has symptoms of a possible communicable disease. Please notify the school at once if the child does have a communicable disease.
- Has diarrhea, is vomiting ( 2 or more episodes during past 24- hour period), chicken pox, pink eye (conjunctivitis), headlice, strep throat, hepatitis A, herpes, impetigo, scabies, roseola, RSV (respiratory syncytial virus), upper respiratory complications, vaccine preventable diseases.

Frequent and thorough hand washing is important in keeping our school environment clean and our students healthy. Your child will be asked to wash his/her hands during the school day, including before lunch and snack.

In case of accidental injury we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent. If we cannot reach you, we will call the child's physician. If necessary, we will also call an ambulance or paramedics. Until the arrival of a parent, the physician, and ambulance, or paramedics, the director or an assistant will be in charge and make all decisions about the care of the child. You will be expected to assume responsibility for any resulting expense. The school will maintain a parents' signed Emergency Information form. It is to your child's benefit that you keep the school up-to-date on phone numbers, emergency numbers, and other pertinent information.

For many reasons, it is important that you call for your child on time.

Medications cannot be administered at school; we ask that you give any needed medications before or after school. School personnel will apply sunscreen only with written permission and a personal supply of sunscreen.

### **Absences**

All absences must be called in by 8:40 am. It is important for the school to know if your child is ill, if the illness is communicable, if your child is taking a day off, or if your child is on vacation. Please leave the message on the teachers' phone 728-1969 x27. If your call is answered by the Program Coordinator, or other school personnel, please ask to be transferred to that extension to help us maintain accurate records.

### **Discipline**

When discipline is necessary, we use measures that show love and kindness but also firmness and consistency. We attempt to help children gain the confidence and knowledge they need in order to develop self-control. We do not allow children to hurt themselves or others or to destroy property. We do not use physical punishment or language intended to hurt children's feelings. Rather, we try to resolve conflicts respectfully in a positive, cooperative way.

### **Cases of Suspected Child Abuse**

In compliance with the laws of the State of Colorado, all M@MS staff members have a legal and moral obligation to report suspected child abuse. All cases of suspected abuse shall be brought to the attention of the administrator and reported to San Miguel County Department of Social Services at 728-4411.

### **Safety at School**

Please help us maintain a safe and orderly school environment. Once you pick up your child, please supervise him or her on the premises, and do not allow children to go onto the playground, down the stairs, around the building, or into the parking lot unsupervised. Please be aware that once a parent arrives, the parent assumes primary responsibility for the child. This includes periods when teachers may still be supervising other children. Thank you for helping us to maintain consistent expectations, such as no running or yelling within the school building. Other children are still learning!

## **Miscellaneous**

### **Vacations and Change of Environment**

If for any reason there is a change occurring at home, please tell us. We need to know about illness of other family members, deaths of pets or relatives, mom or dad off on a business trip, etc. These changes can affect how your child will behave on a particular day. We need to be aware so that we can give the support your child may need. Please let us know in advance of family trips. When children are not present we miss them and the other children ask.

### **Clothing and Children's Items**

It is most important that your child can manipulate his or her own clothing. Please allow children to dress in clothing of their own choosing, but avoiding costumes and clothing with motifs of mass commercial appeal. Costumes and clothes with commercial messages distract from the purpose of our educational environment. Simple, easy to handle clothing is the best. Children do

get messy at school, and though we purchase washable paint and art supplies, sometimes they stain. Please leave best dress clothing for special occasions, not for school.

Please keep a set of extra clothes at the school, and LABEL EVERYTHING. If your child has occasional accidents, please provide extra pairs of underpants. In the winter, children need boots, snowsuits, hats and mittens every day. In the classroom children should wear indoor shoes, slippers or something similar. At school, children keep their possessions in an individual cubby.

### **Toys**

We do not allow toys from home as they detract from the learning experience and create stress and conflict. Exceptions are security objects, books and, on a schedule made out for the whole class, educational things for sharing. Toys replicating weapons are not ever permitted. We have an environment filled with enriching activities and materials, which are enough to keep the children actively engaged during the school day.

### **Birthdays and Holidays**

We love to celebrate! If your child wants to share his/her birthday or half birthday at school, we would be most delighted. Please speak to the teacher, and we will plan together. The birthday child may bring a nutritious snack to school to share, or a special book or show and tell item.

Please be sensitive to children's feelings when planning birthday celebrations. Avoid hurting feelings by mailing invitations unless you plan to invite the entire class; then, parent folders may be used to distribute invitations. If your child chooses not to include everyone in his or her class, try to schedule the party for a weekend and arrange for presents to be dropped off at the party location.

We celebrate traditions old and new, embracing our varied cultures and upbringing.

### **Television**

Montessori at Mountain School does not use a television or present videos as part of its educational program for children.

### **Evacuations & Emergencies**

Teachers will conduct regular fire and emergency evacuation drills. In the event of a real emergency, including a lost child, school personnel will contact parents and emergency dispatch for immediate assistance.

### **Complaints and Compliments**

Complaints or concerns regarding your child may be addressed to the teachers or the administrator. If you wish a formal response, please submit your concerns in writing. We also welcome compliments! To file a formal complaint about licensed child care, write the Department of Human Services, Div. of Child Care, 1575 Sherman St. 1st fl, Denver, CO 80203-1714; 303-866-5958 or 970-259-5465.

## **Communication**

Thank you for sharing your children with us. We strive to provide the best environment possible for your child. We acknowledge how difficult it is at times to be a parent and wish to support you in any way we can. Please keep communication open and flowing. The staff at M@MS is always

available to talk about your child's needs. Let us hear from you. We want to know your thoughts, concerns and ideas.

### **Friday Letter**

You will receive letters from the school most weeks with information about school events, reminders about school policies and procedures and information on practice and principles of the educational program at Telluride Mountain School and M@MS. Unless you request a print version of this letter, it will be distributed by email. Please read your weekly letter as it often contains important information and keeps you in touch with the classrooms.

### **Parent Education**

Parent education events are scheduled during the year to provide parents with an overview of Montessori education and other matters of child development and general interest. In addition, we offer a lending library of educational materials for parents to use.

### **Parent and Faculty/Staff File Folders**

A file folder is issued to each family and staff member for communications between parents, faculty, and staff. Please check your file folder every day for information of importance to your family.

### **Communication Boards**

There is a Communication Board located near the entrances to the classrooms, displaying important school related information. Please check the board periodically.

### **Phone Messages**

Messages for classroom teachers, including absence and tardy messages, should be left on the teacher phone 728-1969 x27. Messages will be checked at attendance time, around 9:00 am. In the event that you have an emergency message or unscheduled change in plans, please ensure that a live person gets your message to deliver it. Please do not leave urgent messages on answering machines.

### **Phone Trees**

Occasionally, we will ask parents to participate in a phone tree to disseminate current information about unexpected changes in schedules or other last minute information.