

## **PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE**

### **MOUNTAIN SKY JUNIOR HIGH TEAMS**

Welcome to Mountain Sky! Here we believe in a middle school concept that provides a smaller school-within-a-school feel through academic teams, a daily advisory period for social skill development, and strong elective and exploratory classes. All students and academic teachers form teams for both grade levels. Each team consists of groups of students taught by the same teachers for math, language arts/reading, science and social studies. The goal of each team is to support student learning by increasing communication and planning integrated units. Teachers on each team meet weekly for team planning and are able to meet with parents. Our goal is to provide the best education during an age where they also face difficult social challenges. We look forward to working with you to continue developing our students into future leaders.

## **MISSION STATEMENT/GOALS**

We believe an excellent middle level education increases student achievement and is a purposeful process which challenges students according to their abilities, promotes ethics and life-long learning and teaches citizenship. Our highly qualified staff provides rigorous, engaging instruction daily in all subjects, including electives. Academic teams provide a small school feel, improve communication and promote curricular integration, while building and practicing life and communication skills. At Mountain Sky our plan for learning is known as the "Eagle Way" and includes these equally important goals:

### **A Safe and Positive Environment**

We will model a code of ethics where acceptable positive behavior is the only goal. We will help students to better understand and adapt to their constantly changing needs as well as help them appreciate their individual differences.

### **Academic Achievement for all Teams**

We will develop and use a learning program that provides student-centered instruction that meets the needs of adolescents. We expect all students to succeed.

### **Emphasis on Parent and Community Involvement**

We will involve family and community as integral and active partners in our work to create a successful school program.

### **Site Based Decision Making**

We will strive to include faculty, staff, students and parents in the decision-making process.

### **Excellence in All Aspects of Learning**

In all curricular and extracurricular learning experiences, teachers will be facilitators of learning excellence.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Two-way communication is essential for school success. At Mountain Sky we work hard at listening; we believe this part of the communications act demonstrates we care. Also, we want to speak and write so that the parents and community of Mountain Sky listen. Here are some examples of how we communicate:

- Eagle Vision – weekly schedule posted in all classes
- School Newsletter – sent home monthly with students and posted on school Web site
- Parent/Student Handbook and Student Planner
- Progress Reports and Report Cards
- Parent/Teacher Conferences (formal and informal)
- School and Teacher Web sites/e-mails

- Open House and other parent meeting nights
- School Marquee
- School-sponsored Events
- SPICE (Students/Parents in Cooperation with Educators): A PTO organization
- Phone Calls: Positive and Constructive
- Site Council Meetings and Minutes
- Parent Orientation
- Team Meetings/Conferences
- Parent/Community Forums
- Individual Teacher Web sites
- Dial In and Dial Out

## **School/Parent Resources**

16225 North 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85023

Principal /Asst. Principal..... 602-896-6100

Attendance..... 602-896-6121

Health Office..... 602-896-6110

School Web site: <http://mountainsky.wesdschools.org>

Secret Witness Line..... 602-864-3870, Ext. 5211

District Office: ..... 602-347-2600

School Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.;

Dismissal 2:30 p.m. on Early Release Wednesdays

Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

## **Student Telephone Usage**

Students should not use their own telephones during school hours. Urgent and emergency calls may be made from the office with permission from the office staff or administration. Classroom phones are not for student use unless the teacher approves.

## **ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

Mountain Sky Junior High conforms to guidelines as set forth by the Washington Elementary School District and the state of Arizona.

### **Arriving Before School**

Students should not be dropped off at school earlier than 8:30 a.m. unless enrolled in a before-school program.

### **Arriving Late to School**

Students arriving after the late bell must report to the Attendance Office presenting a note from home signed by a parent or guardian. The student will then receive an admit slip indicating excused or unexcused. The teacher will issue discipline consequences for one or two tardies.

### **Leaving School Early**

1. Parents or parent designee should sign the student out at the Attendance Office located at the north side of the front office building. A picture ID will be required to release the student.
2. At the time the student leaves school he or she must report to the Attendance Office to meet his or her parent.
3. If a student returns to school after signing out, he or she must report to the Attendance Office to receive a pass to return to class.

## **Attendance/Truancy**

In order to assure students are successful and meet current state legislation, which requires all students to attend 90% of the school year, WESD has implemented a Truancy Prevention Unit (TPU). The TPU will work in conjunction with the City Justice Courts to identify students who are chronically absent or are truant.

When a student reaches five unexcused/unverified truancies, 10 excused absences or 10 unexcused tardies, the school will make a referral to the TPU for appropriate actions (see District guidelines). In order to avoid this eventuality, there are several precautions to take: (1) reinforce being on time and good attendance, (2) call the school each time a student will be late or absent, (3) present any medical documentation to the nurse and/or attendance clerk if illness will be a consistent, foreseeable issue.

A letter will be sent by the school to the families of students who are approaching or pass the midway point for unexcused absences, excused absences and tardies. Parent cooperation is of the utmost importance in assuring student success.

We ask that you understand that all schools are partially identified as excelling, highly performing, improving, underperforming or failing, based on their attendance. If you wish to see Mountain Sky continue to be considered an outstanding school, we all need to work toward outstanding attendance.

#### **Attendance for extracurricular participants**

- A. Athletes must attend school for at least half day to be eligible to participate in any extracurricular event.
- B. An unexcused absence from practice or event could result in team suspension or dismissal.
- C. Students suspended from school may not attend practice or participate in any games during the suspension.
- D. **Students must leave campus promptly at the end of practice and games with a parent/guardian. Two or more infractions of these rules may result in a team suspension or dismissal.**

## **SAFETY**

### **Health Office**

It is imperative that parents update all phone numbers (cell, home and work) throughout the year in order for the health office to reach parents when there is an emergency.

All prescription and over-the-counter medication must be administered through the health office, with the exception of EpiPens and inhalers. A Request for Giving Medication Form must be signed by a parent/guardian, and the physician ordering the medication prior to administering the medication. Additional forms are required for EpiPens and inhalers that are to be self carried. These forms are available in the health office. Students who purposefully misuse or distribute medication to other students are subject to disciplinary action.

### **Bicycle Area**

Bicycles may be stored and secured during the school day in the bicycle area located on the east side of the school, next to room 306. This area is available until students are expected to be in homeroom. Entrance to and exit from this area shall be through the north side gates. Students must use Greenway or the west side of 7th Avenue at dismissal. **Rollerblades are not permitted on the campus at any time. Students are to walk their bikes while on the Mountain Sky campus/crosswalks.**

### **Bus Safety**

Student safety on the way to and from school is of vital importance. Riding the bus to school is a privilege, not a right. **If a student demonstrates behaviors that interfere with the safe transport of other students, he or she will be written a bus referral: consequences may range from a warning to suspension from bus-riding privileges. Students are only allowed to ride the bus to which they are assigned; requests**

**for temporary bus passes will not be honored due to safety concerns (this is a Mountain Sky Middle School policy).**

**When waiting for the bus, students are expected to demonstrate the following behaviors:**

- Wait for the bus in the assigned area no more than five minutes prior to bus arrival, then line up safely to board the bus.
- Do not interfere with traffic or play in the street; do not walk onto community members' property (stay on sidewalks); behave in a safe manner.
- Treat others with respect (speak to others appropriately, no horseplay, etc.).

**Student behavior expectations when riding a school bus are as follows:**

- Sit in assigned seat, facing forward with backpack placed underneath the seat.
- Remain seated until the bus driver arrives at your designated stop and opens the door.
- Talk quietly so the bus driver can focus on traffic and safety.
- Depart the bus in single file so all riders can get off the bus safely.

**The following behaviors interfere with safety and can result in a bus referral:**

- Changing seats while the bus is in transit.
- Standing (on the seats, in the aisle, etc.).
- Using inappropriate language.
- Touching others inappropriately; harassing/bullying others.
- Throwing items in or out of the bus.
- Placing arms or head outside the bus window.
- Changing buses or bus stops.

**Students are not allowed to ride a bus or use a stop other than the one assigned based on home address.**

### **PE Lockers**

PE locks are issued to all students. PE lockers are to be used for storing school materials and clothing during PE only. Only clothing used specifically for PE should be left in the lockers overnight. Money, watches, jewelry, etc., are not to be left in lockers. Ask the PE teacher about security of valuables. PE lockers are school property and are given to students on loan for the school year. The school authorities reserve the right to inspect the lockers at their discretion. Students should **NOT** abuse their lockers or give the combination to any other student. **The school is not responsible for items missing from lockers or the locker area. Students and their parents are advised to not bring valuables, technology or large sums of money to school.**

### **Backpacks are permitted on campus**

Backpacks are permitted on campus; however they are not required. Students are to store their backpacks in the teacher-designated area upon entering the classroom. **Backpack weight is a parent/student responsibility.**

### **Items Not Allowed**

**Candy** – Candy is allowed only in a quantity that can be consumed during the student's lunch period. **The sale of candy, gum or any item for profit by an individual is strictly prohibited.**

**Gum** – There is a strict no-gum policy in all school areas. The policy and consequences will be posted in every classroom.

**Personal technology** – Students may only use cell phones beyond the school gates, before or after school. **During the**

school day, cell phones must be turned off and out of sight. If in violation, the cell phone will be confiscated for parent pickup and further disciplinary action can be assigned.

Electronic games, Music devices, permanent markers, cameras or any disruptive toys or other items – *These items are not allowed on campus and will be confiscated for parent pickup and further disciplinary action can be assigned.*

## DRESS CODE

See District pages of Parent/Student Handbook.

## STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Core beliefs of discipline policy:

1. No student has the right to prevent or disrupt another student's rights to learn.
2. All students have the right to a safe and secure environment in which to learn.
3. The actions of one student will not be allowed to deprive other students from the benefit of outstanding programs.
4. The school discipline plan will promote the students' ability to become productive participants in society.

We believe students and parents must have a strong understanding of our procedures and behavioral expectations in order to prepare for a successful year. Accordingly, the faculty and administration encourage your awareness and participation with the school's Discipline Plan. Parents can help us maintain a safe and orderly environment in many ways. With your child, **review the Parent/Student Handbook** provided by the Washington Elementary School District; **pay special attention to the Discipline Guidelines** including the general Classroom Rules, Discipline Action Chart, Dress Code and the following ten-step discipline intervention plan.

### **Ten-step Discipline Interventions**

In order to facilitate the fine balance of upholding the core values of the school discipline policy, addressing the unique conditions that play a part in guiding the actions of individuals, and offering fair, appropriate consequences for student behaviors and actions, the following Ten-step Discipline interventions have been developed.

### **Ten-step Discipline**

#### **Demerits, Step and Actions**

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|----|---|
| 5  | Step 1. Team/teacher options, phone calls – detentions, letters, meeting with students                            |
| 7  | Step 2. Team/Teacher Options, Phone Calls – detentions, phone calls, meeting with students (contract/agenda book) |
| 12 | Step 3. Meet with parents, student and team.  |
| 15 | Step 4. Refer to counseling/behavior contracts  |
| 20 | Step 5. Review status/contract/mentoring required   |
| 25 | Step 6. Behavior contracts/refer to counseling (opposite of Step 4)   |
| 30 | Step 7. Safe School intervention – (officer meeting, counseling – parenting or student, teen court)               |
| 35 | Step 8. TAP procedures  |
| 45 | Step 9. TAP placement (CCB, team change, modified schedule, ACES/FBI, special ed. placement)                      |
| 50 | Step 10. MDC – alternative placement or expulsion recommendation made to District.                                |

Each infraction will carry a value called a demerit. As a student accumulates demerits, he or she will move along in the steps. Above are the consequences or actions that may be taken by the teachers, student services center and administrators if a student continues to move through the discipline interventions.

Consequences for individual incidents will also have consequences listed under Definitions of Consequences and in the District portion of handbook.

## **Bullying**

Bullying is not tolerated in any form at Mountain Sky, including through digital media. It is our intent to create a positive and safe place for students to learn, and bullying has no place here. If a student is being bullied or knows of a bullying situation, he or she is asked to come to an adult to report the situation. The school social worker is available to receive information about bullying, support the victim, and refer the offenders to administration or authorities.

## ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

### **Promotion Criteria**

**A student in the eighth grade must earn a minimum of a D (1.0) average in each of the academic classes (math, language arts, science and social studies) in order to receive a promotional certificate.** Students who do not meet these standards may be required to attend summer school. For seventh graders the above promotion criteria applies, as well as the possibility of having to repeat any academic subjects simultaneously with the eighth grade curriculum.

### **Student Activities *\*Pending budget adjustments***

- Cross Country/Track and Field
- Volleyball (boys and girls)
- Basketball (girls or boys)
- Cheer
- Wrestling
- Softball (girls)
- Soccer (boys and girls)
- National Junior Honor Society
- Student Council
- Friends of Rachel (FOR) clubs
- Teen Court
- Annual School Musical Performance

### **Extracurricular Selection Guidelines for Sports, Clubs and Activities**

The mission of Mountain Sky is to develop a positive atmosphere and good sportsmanship through competitive team sports and clubs. Mountain Sky coaches and sponsors believe that students need to be challenged through healthy competition with emphasis on ethical standards in preparation for lifelong learning.

#### **Guidelines:**

- Students will be given an equal opportunity to make a team/club/activity through an open tryout system.
- Coaches and sponsors will use skills, knowledge and good sportsmanship characteristics as criteria for participant selection.
- Coaches/sponsors will communicate objective-based selection criteria during an organizational meeting prior to first tryout or application; evaluation will be oral and written.
- Coaches and sponsors will evaluate prospective athletes/members, through a variety of skill-based activities, and work ethics.
- Coaches and sponsors will communicate tryout dates through written announcements, newsletters, PA intercom system and an official posting in the main office and the gymnasium.

- Coaches, sponsors or advisors will submit a final participation list to the principal prior to the first contest or meeting for that team, club or activity.

**There is a fee of \$25 for participating in after-school sports.**

### **Optional Fees and Expenses**

Parents often inquire about fees charged for various services or programs that go beyond the basic academic programs. Here is a list of common fees:

Student Activity Sticker	\$10.00
Parent Activity Card	\$10.00
ID Replacements	\$3.00
Yearbook	\$30.00
Lunch	\$ 1.60/day
Breakfast	No cost
Milk	25 cents/day
Optional Insurance	\$10.00 - \$120.00
Pictures	\$ 9.00 - \$ 24.00

### **Eligibility for Extracurricular Participants**

Eligibility for competition will be determined by quarter report cards and midterm reports. An academic grade of “F” or conduct grade of “U” in any subject on a District report card or a District midterm report will make a student ineligible for competition until the next report period.

A student may regain eligibility status:

- 1). At the next reporting period (A District report card or District midterm report). This is defined as no “F” in any subject or “U” in conduct or effort. OR
- 2). After a minimum of two weeks from the onset of the ineligibility, the athlete can prove that his or her deficiency has been corrected. The athlete must present proof to the coach and athletic director. The “two week petition” may only be used to make an athlete eligible.

### **Eligibility for Extracurricular Privileges**

Extracurricular activities are defined as school dances, sporting events, performances, organization meetings or functions, and school-sponsored events not aligned with a specific curriculum taking place during or after the academic portion of the day.

Participation in, or attendance at, after-school activities will be based on any three areas; academic performance (no “Fs” or “Us” on prior midterm or grading period), repeated or serious discipline issues (demerits acquired), or poor attendance (either excused or unexcused absences or tardies). The privilege of attending after school activities may be revoked upon review of the administration.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

### **SPICE/PTO**

The Mountain Sky SPICE (Students and Parents In Cooperation with Educators)/PTO organization functions as the primary parent group. An executive committee will guide the work of our parent/teacher organization along with liaison representatives from each of our satellite schools. This group will provide many essential activities and events for Mountain Sky this year. If you are interested in working with this group, please contact the president of our SPICE Organization or the principal. SPICE meets monthly. Check the school Web site for meeting times.

### **Site Council**

Parents are selected for the 12-member site council comprised of five parents, five teachers, one support staff, one community member and the principal. This council has responsibilities in the planning, development and assessment of Mountain Sky's

educational program. Site council meets monthly on the first Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the library.

## **STUDENT CENTER**

### **Student Services Specialist**

Mountain Sky's student services specialist offers students and parents assistance in a variety of ways: advisement on schedule changes, academic support, mediations, behavior modification, and advisement on home-interventions to support student success, after-school clubs and sports, and referral information for other school-related services. To visit the student services specialist, you must have a pass from your classroom teacher (after instruction is provided) to the Student Services Center.

### **OLWEUS Bullying Prevention**

Mountain Sky will continue practicing the behaviors aligned with the Olweus anti-bullying program. Homeroom teachers will use discussion groups, modeling and question/answer sessions to help support the anti-bullying model.

## **STUDENT HONORS/RECOGNITION**

Mountain Sky has a tradition of high expectations accompanied by high standards for excellence. These standards are presented below:

### **Student of the Month E.A.G.L.E. Awards:**

- Earns respect by respecting others first
- Acts on initiative
- Goes the extra mile to “take care of the nest”
- Leads when a leader is needed, follows when others need to lead
- Encourages others to soar

### **National Junior Honor Society**

Mountain Sky requires a 3.83 grade point average for two consecutive quarters to be eligible for consideration for membership in National Junior Honor Society. Seventh graders are eligible to apply based on their grades in their first and second quarters of seventh grade and eighth graders are eligible to apply based on their grades from fourth quarter of seventh grade and first quarter of eighth grade. Membership eligibility is also based on a student's demonstration of the five pillars of NJHS: scholarship, character, service, citizenship, and leadership. A formal induction ceremony is held in the February.

### **Principal's List**

Mountain Sky requires a 4.0 grade point average in order to be named to the Principal's List each quarterly grading period.

## **FOOD SERVICE GUIDELINES**

### **Designated Lunch Area**

The north side, north restrooms, and north hallway are strictly off limits. Access to the library must be through the doors next to room 204.

Not following the basic rules of lunchtime conduct will at a minimum result in the participation in the lunch cleanup crew, held immediately after lunch.