



# MULBERRY

*the creative school of silicon valley*

## PARENT PARTICIPATION – ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL

Parent participation is at the heart of the Mulberry educational experience. At Mulberry, parent participation goes well beyond the understanding that involved parents improve student outcomes. Mulberry parents bring talents and enthusiasm to the classroom; and more hands means more small group work is possible, extending and enriching student learning. Moreover, our children have the opportunity to form personal relationships with many different adults in the classroom. As a result, we believe Mulberry students approach the world of adults with greater ease and confidence. And yet, while the focus of participation is on serving students, parents' gain is no less profound.

Mulberry parents have an unparalleled opportunity to be part of their child's educational growth. We learn to understand our own developing child in the context of developing peers. We build our own parenting skills by observing and practicing Positive Discipline as modeled in the classroom. And, just as the children do, we form friendships that last a lifetime.

### Classroom Level Participation

#### 1. Aide in Child's Class Once a Week (can be parents, grandparents, etc.)

**Junior Kindergarten & Kindergarten:** Adult works one shift of three hours per week.

**1<sup>st</sup> grade – 8<sup>th</sup> grade:** Adult works one shift of three hours and 20 minutes per week.

#### **Multiple Children at Mulberry**

**Multiples in Elementary School Only:** Parents are asked to work one and a half classroom shifts each week or equivalent. Families with multiple children in the same class work time and a half in that room. For parents with children in two grades, typically the need is greatest in younger classrooms and the full shift is worked there.

**Multiples in Preschool and Elementary:** Parents are asked to work one and a half classroom shifts each week. The full shift is worked in preschool.

#### 2. Class Meetings

Class meetings are held approximately quarterly in elementary school. Attendance is required of the participating parent. **These meetings are critical, as they allow for community building, cohesion of class culture, and a calm environment for parents to learn their roles related to participation.**

#### 3. Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of the curriculum. Driving is shared equally across families in the class.

#### 4. Participating Adult Training

Within the first year of attending Mulberry's elementary or middle school program, participating adults are required to take our 6-week Positive Discipline class or an equivalent positive discipline class offered through various local organizations. Non-participating parents are also encouraged to take the class. Cost of the class is \$100 per person.

Mulberry is a community in which all families participate. When families are faced with difficulty meeting the commitments specified above, there is a process for working out a flexible agreement.

**Process for requesting elementary classroom-level participation flexibility:**

- Parent and teacher discuss available flexible arrangements. These arrangements will vary from year to year and class to class. They are made at the teacher's discretion, based on the needs and best interests of the children and their educational experience.

**School Level Participation**

**1. One Committee Job per Family**

Work supporting the school community is done by parent committees, with each family contributing approximately 40 hours of work over the course of the year. Parents are given a description of committee roles and asked for three preferences. Assignments are for the school year.

**2. One 4-Hour Event Support Commitment per Family**

Each Mulberry family commits to working a maximum of 4 hours at one All School Event. This is in addition to your Mulberry Committee assignment. These are community building events, meant to provide opportunities for Mulberry families to come together. Parents are given a description of committee roles, including when during the year work would be needed, and asked for three preferences. Your 4-hour will be spent helping with set-up, activities, or clean up.

**3. Steppin' Out Auction Contribution**

Steppin' Out, our annual dinner-dance and auction gala, represents our largest fundraising effort each year. Every family donates or solicits one or more items for the school's annual auction. A \$75 value is suggested.

**4. Annual Campaign**

Mulberry's annual giving campaign, *The Magic of Mulberry*, occurs in November. We encourage every family to donate the equivalent of one month of tuition if possible. Funds raised from this effort go toward supporting our program.

**5. Elementary & Middle School Back to School Night**

Each elementary and middle school family shall be represented at the annual Back to School Night. Infants may be brought but other children should not attend.

**Process for requesting school level participation flexibility:**

- Parent goes to the Head of School to request flexibility regarding committee work.
- The Head of School, the Business Manager, and the appropriate PAC president will then examine what arrangements can be made to accommodate the parent's needs.
- The granting of such requests is based on the needs of the committee and the best interests of the program.