

MULBERRY SCHOOL
2021-22
STUDENT AND PARENT
HANDBOOK



Teaching the way children learn best!

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MISSION

Mulberry School inspires children to a life of learning and positive contribution to community. By weaving creativity and social learning into every day, we foster intellectual and social success for a lifetime.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Mulberry School is a non-profit 501(c) (3) corporation. The Board of Trustees provides strategic planning and makes school policy in accordance with Mulberry School's Mission Statement. The Board also hires and conducts performance reviews for the Head of School (HOS). It is the HOS's responsibility to hire and supervise staff, implement curriculum, oversee the facility, and implement Board policy. The Board meets regularly during the year. Every Mulberry parent is invited to attend the open portion of each meeting.

PARENT ASSEMBLY COUNCIL

All parents are members of Mulberry's Parent Assembly Council (PAC) and elect its officers. PAC is responsible for community-building events. PAC meets monthly and all parents are invited to attend these meetings.

HISTORY

Mulberry is now in its 58th year!

Mulberry School was founded in 1963 as a one-room parent-cooperative nursery school. Local members of the American Association of University Women saw the need for a school that included parents as part of the educational process. In 1965, Mulberry School moved to Hamilton Avenue in San Jose.

Mulberry remained a parent participation preschool until 1983 when Kindergarten was added. The school grew and continued to add classes. In 1994 Fifth Grade was added and in 2016 Middle School. Mulberry School now offers Preschool classes beginning at 2 years old, as well as Junior Kindergarten through Eighth grade.

In fall 2005, we moved to our present location in Los Gatos. With a long-term lease, we have made many improvements to the property, including a new preschool yard, a performance stage, gardening areas for all grades, and kitchens in both the preschool and main building for cooking instruction and projects.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

[Experience the Joy of Learning at Mulberry School](#)

Progressive Education: At the heart of a great education, one finds students who are intellectually and collaboratively engaged learners. Mulberry students learn how to think critically and solve problems. We create a balance between integrated thematic projects, direct instruction, and inquiry-based learning, providing each student with opportunities to become self-reflective thinkers through active, creative classrooms. No one educational perspective works for all students. Our faculty has the education, knowledge, and flexibility to choose from proven methods and techniques, allowing us to meet the needs of a broad base of learners. Students are academically challenged at their own level and always encouraged toward higher levels of personal excellence and achievement.

Social & Emotional Education: At the core of our instruction, Mulberry fosters social and emotional growth through the Positive Discipline model, giving time to class meetings, and supporting day-to-day interactions.

We empower students to be nurturing and contributing members of the community, valuing not just the developing intellect, but the well-being of the whole child. Our students know who they are, express themselves with eloquence, and advocate for themselves and others.

Creativity: Creativity is everywhere at Mulberry School. The creative process is integrated throughout the curriculum at every grade level. Students master diverse media. Every child's imaginative self-expression is nurtured through a combination of teacher-led and free exploration activities.

Honoring Differences: Diversity is explored and celebrated, in its many forms, throughout our school program and school campus. We provide an environment where differences in culture, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, religion, and family tradition are safely shared and respected. Students learn to appreciate their fellow classmates, both for their similarities and differences.

Community: As the foundation upon which our school is based, community enhances all aspects of the Mulberry program and student learning, with parents, teachers, and the administration supporting children and one another. The rich community of Mulberry creates a sense of belonging and mutual respect across the generations. Furthermore, the collaborative process, which is prevalent throughout our school, develops students' abilities to communicate comfortably with adults, creating people who function constructively in a system of democracy.

At Mulberry School, we value each member of our community, supporting one another in a life-long process of engaged learning.

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS (ESLRs)

By graduation, Mulberry students will be:

Lifelong learners...

Lifelong learners, who joyfully acquire new knowledge and skills. They will have a strong academic foundation and will be prepared for school beyond Mulberry in reading, writing, math, social studies, and the sciences. They will utilize a range of resources and technology to conduct research. Through real-world experiences, students will develop important life skills that will reinforce academic ideas and concepts. Our graduates will effectively reflect upon their own learning and will apply new knowledge to their lives and the world around them.

Critical thinkers...

Critical thinkers, whose curiosity drives them to ask complex questions. They will analyze, synthesize, evaluate, and apply information. Problems will be solved using logical reasoning, experience, and innovative, creative thinking.

Effective communicators...

Effective communicators, who are confident speakers, active listeners, and expressive writers. They will communicate their ideas, feelings, interests, and knowledge through a range of creative media including art and music.

Socially responsible and conscientious citizens...

Socially responsible and conscientious citizens, who are collaborative, respectful, compassionate, inclusive, and kind. They will resolve conflicts peacefully and demonstrate personal integrity.

Resilient, motivated students...

Who take initiative and show perseverance. Our students will work hard toward achieving personal goals and will take reasonable risks and view mistakes as opportunities to learn. Through their efforts, they will gain an awareness of their own strengths, struggles, and learning styles. Students will have acquired time management and organizational skills and developed the focus necessary to be successful.

Globally, environmentally, and culturally aware human beings...

Globally, environmentally, and culturally aware human beings, who contribute to improving their school, their community, and the world. They will appreciate and embrace human diversity. They will begin to understand the impact of humans on global ecology and the crucial importance of sustainability.

Healthy balanced individuals...

Healthy balanced individuals, who understand the importance of making healthy choices regarding food and physical activity to maintain a strong mind and body.

CORE VALUES**Discovery**

At Mulberry School, children experience an environment where their natural mode of learning is nurtured. Children are encouraged to try new skills, make guesses, and use their senses, and as such are constantly being taught that their natural curiosity opens fascinating doors to the world. Discovery is an ongoing process that continues every day, and because they practice this way of learning throughout their years at Mulberry, our students emerge as confident, curious learners. The world is there for them to explore.

Integrity

A true indicator of personal integrity is the manner in which one handles him/herself when mistakes or errors in judgment are made. Children at Mulberry School integrate the idea that meaningful, deep learning cannot occur without such errors, and understand that through the challenge of mistakes, one must hold onto honest, humble attitudes and behaviors. Our students are young people of high character who display personal integrity in word and deed.

Collaboration

Collaboration is present in every facet of our children's experience, whether in the classroom or on the playground and in the interaction with children and adults alike. Children's skills in working together are constantly taught, modeled, and practiced in getting tasks completed and problems solved. Students learn mastery of conflict resolution and the democratic process in regular examination of how to positively and productively work together.

Community

We value each member of the extended Mulberry community, supporting one another in a life-long process of engaged learning. We define community as the students, families, alumni, teachers, and administrators, all of which combined is the foundation upon which our school is based. Families are involved in many ways. Since we began, parent participation has been an integral part of our program. Every family's contribution is invaluable, creating and cultivating an enriched, supportive educational environment. Working together, community enhances all aspects of our program. What results is a strong sense of belonging and mutual respect.

Engagement

At Mulberry, our students are not passive receptacles of information, but drivers of their own learning. Assignments require they reach for personal excellence and meaning. With aspects of emotional intelligence built into the curriculum, students not only study math, science, language arts, and social studies but are also encouraged to understand their own personal growth as learners. Our children learn by doing, through experience, and active problem-solving. They participate in the education and development of others in many ways, as well; through our “buddy” system, with older students helping younger peers read or learn science; via social problem solving during class meetings; in learning and growing during group project work. In addition to our students, parents are actively engaged through participation on committees, in the classroom, or lending their special talents to help enrich the children’s experiences.

Self-Knowledge

Our faculty understands the importance of developing in our students the skills associated with intelligent behavior, of which meta-cognition (knowledge about your own thoughts and the factors that influence your thinking) is a key quality. Children come to understand how they learn best, as well as how they know what they know. Furthermore, with Positive Discipline integrated into the very fiber of our school’s culture, our children are daily provided opportunities to resolve conflict in meaningful ways, as well as to question and reflect upon their responses to people and situations. From this critical set of experiences, students learn how their actions impact others, as well as how to positively act in the face of their own emotional response to another.

TUITION POLICIES

2022-23 Deposit and Tuition Payment Schedule

Payment Options

Payment of annual tuition can be completed on the following schedules:

Option 1

1 payment of tuition in full	June 2022 (Receives 2% prepay discount)
1 payment of tuition in full (PS)	Sept 2022 (Receives 2% prepay discount)

Option 2

2 equal payments of ½ of annual tuition	June 2022 and November 2022
2 equal payments of ½ of annual tuition (PS)	September 2022 and January 2023

Option 3

10 equal payments of tuition	June 2022 through March 2023
9 equal payments of tuition (PS)	Sept 2022 through May 2023

2022-23 Deposits, Fees, and Payments

Deposits

- **Elementary and Middle School:** A 10% deposit will be due February 18th, 2022 through FACTS and will be deducted from your first tuition payment in May. Re-registration enrollment fees of \$150 are paid through RenWeb. Enrollment in a payment plan adds \$140 in service fees in addition to any credit card fees.
- **Preschool:** A \$250 non-refundable deposit is required to hold your spot for the next school year. The deposit will be deducted from your tuition if you enroll. Non-refundable application fees are \$150 and enrollment fees of \$140 are applicable for payment plans.

Withdrawal

If you choose to withdraw from Mulberry School, please send an email to the Enrollment Director to inform of your intent to withdraw.

Please note that tuition is non-refundable. The entire year's tuition is due and payable even if your child does not attend Mulberry for all, or any, of the Academic Year, regardless of the payment option chosen.

Independent schools make financial commitments before the start of the school year based upon the signed contracts that they have for the year. These are fixed costs and do not change regardless of any withdrawals in enrollment during the school year.

Mulberry carries tuition insurance on each family. For a family that prepays annually or semi-annually and needs to withdraw from Mulberry, a prorated refund may be applicable and returned if and when reimbursement is received from our insurance carrier. For a family that pays monthly and needs to withdraw from Mulberry, the remaining installment payments may be waived when and if reimbursement is received from our insurance carrier. Please contact Mulberry's office for further details.

Tuition Payments and Fees

All monthly and annual tuition payments and fees are made through FACTS. Details can be found on RenWeb and when logging in to FACTS. Details are also available in the office.

Tuition Assistance (Elementary and Middle School only) and Emergency Funds

The goal of our tuition assistance program is to allow children to attend Mulberry School who might not otherwise be able to do so. Families requesting tuition assistance must demonstrate financial need and have a strong commitment to the school. Enrolled students must be in good academic standing. All families applying for tuition assistance for the 2022-23 school year must apply for tuition assistance through FACTS alongside their re-enrollment application. Additionally, emergency funds have been set aside to help families in short-term financial crises who are unable to pay tuition. All families applying for emergency assistance should also apply on FACTS and complete the same paperwork required for tuition assistance.

You can contact Mulberry School's office to obtain a copy of the tuition assistance policy.

Additional Charges

Field Trip Charges for the 2022-23 School Year will be billed via FACTS. PAC Fees of \$15.00 per student will be charged via FACTS at the beginning of the school year.

Tuition and Extended Care Non-Payment

When tuition and/or Extended Care payments become in arrears, FACTS and/or Mulberry will contact the family by email. A repayment contract will be established if necessary. Families with non-payment histories, or who break the repayment contract, may be subject to dismissal or denied enrollment.

If any outstanding balance is 30 days or more in arrears, Mulberry reserves the right to engage a collection agency. If non-payment occurs for 60 days, the office may notify the parents in writing that the child may no longer attend Mulberry School. Past tuition payments are still the parents' legal responsibility and Mulberry reserves the right to engage a collection agency, the costs incurred of which shall be the responsibility of the parents or guardian.

Late Fee Policy

Fees for families that are late picking up their children from Preschool and Extended Care will be rounded to the half-hour after a five-minute grace period. This policy applies to both morning and all-day sessions in Preschool. The late fee will be billed through your FACTS account.

Returned Payments

When a payment is returned, FACTS will notify the payee and assess a \$30 fee.

SCHOOL DAY INFORMATION

School Schedule

Office Hours 8:30 - 4:00 pm

Preschool Schedule

Regular Hours 9:00 am - 12:00 pm or 9:00 am - 4:30 pm

Before School Care 8:00 am - 9:00 am

Elementary Schedule

	Hours	Drop Off
Junior Kindergarten	8:30 am - 11:50 am	8:20-8:30 am
Kindergarten	8:30 am - 12:50 pm	8:20-8:30 am
Grades 1-2	8:40 am - 2:40 pm	8:30-8:40 am
Grades 3-4	8:50 am - 2:50 pm	8:40-8:50 am
Grade 5	9:00 am - 3:00 pm	8:50-9:00 am

Middle School Schedule

	Hours	Doors Open At
Grades 6-8	9:00 am - 3:00 pm	8:50-9:00 am

Extended Care Hours

Junior Kindergarten	11:50 am - 3:00 pm
Kindergarten	12:50 am - 4:00 pm

Staff In-Service Days and Meetings

On occasion throughout the year, there will be no school in order for the faculty to participate in professional development activities. Extended care will not be available on in-service days.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

Please refer to the most recent Mulberry School COVID-19 Safety Plan for procedures.

Dropping Off Lunches, Clothes, and Other Items

If your child forgets to bring her or his lunch, clothes, or any other items and you would like to drop them off, please drive up to the curb and call the office at 408-358-9080.

Birthdays

The teacher will inform parents of any special agreements made regarding birthday celebrations. Students are not required to celebrate their birthday in class, but if s/he chooses to do so, please speak with the teacher about what might be brought in for the festivities. Some children choose to bring in food items, while others give a book or game to the class in celebration of their birthday.

Preschool requests that food items are **NOT** brought in for birthdays due to allergy concerns.

Clothing

Since our students are encouraged to play actively outdoors and participate energetically in PE, children should dress appropriately. For safety reasons, “Croc”-type shoes, open-toed shoes, slip-on beach shoes, and dressy shoes and boots, as well as clothing with drawstrings or cords are not recommended. Sneakers are the most suitable footwear for Mulberry’s playgrounds. Clothing that is likely to be removed should be labeled with the child’s name. Children should bring a labeled change of clothing every day, in the event of water play, weather changes, or accidents.

We expect that all children will dress in school appropriate manner. Bare midriffs, “short shorts”, cuts in clothes, and exposed backs are not acceptable.

Toilet Learning

Preschool has no toilet learning requirements.

To enter Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten, children must be fully toilet learned.

Nutritional Guidelines at Mulberry

Mulberry encourages students to eat lunches and snacks that are healthy and nutritious. Good, healthy food provides the fuel necessary for students to learn their best throughout the school day. Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dairy, and protein are all good choices when considering what to pack for lunch. Encourage your child to choose water for proper hydration throughout the day.

Non-nutritive calories from sugar-filled snacks, drinks, and other types of “junk food” are not recommended during school hours and are better left at home. Furthermore, as we do our part to protect the environment, please use recycled paper and/or reusable containers throughout the year. Working with your child to bring a healthy, “greener” lunch to school every day will benefit everybody. We ask parents to be mindful of how they pack their child’s lunches. Please use non-disposable items whenever possible.

EXTENDED CARE

For the 2021-22 school year, Extended Care will only be available to JK and Kindergarten students after school. Consistent with our educational program, Extended Care staff uses Positive Discipline to encourage students to self-regulate behavior, while providing a safe, respectful, fun environment. The daily schedule includes both indoor and outdoor activities.

All children using Extended Care must be fully toilet trained.

If you are interested in enrolling your child in Extended Care, please contact Daniela Gunther.

Extended Care Hours:

Junior Kindergarten: 11:50 - 3:00 pm

Kindergarten: 12:50 - 4:00 pm

We reserve the right to not release your child to an unauthorized person, to anyone we strongly suspect is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or to anyone exhibiting inappropriate behavior. Photographic identification will be required of any person not known to the Extended Care staff.

Mulberry expects that children will behave acceptably while in Extended Care. Children who consistently ignore agreements related to appropriate conduct may be restricted to limited hours in Extended Care or may not be permitted to use the program.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Mulberry School's attendance policy reflects our commitment to student safety. It ensures that all students are accounted for when they are on our campus. In addition, regular attendance and punctuality are important to each student's academic and social success. Late arrivals and early dismissals are disruptive to the classroom and deprive your child of valuable teacher instructions and in-class discussions. Moreover, learning to be punctual is an important life skill.

Both tardiness and absences are recorded daily and appear on progress reports.

Absences

In keeping with our school's values and the Student Code of Conduct, all Mulberry students are expected to attend class daily. We understand that situations arise that may cause a child to be absent and, therefore, recognize the following as excusable absences:

- Illness or injury of the student.
- An absence is required by law, such as a quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer or a subpoena or other order for the student to appear in court.
- Appointments with healthcare providers, including medical, dental, and optometry appointments. (We strongly encourage wellness and other non-urgent appointments to be scheduled after school hours.)
- Attending the funeral services of a member of the student's family, for a duration of time approved by the Head of School in their sole discretion.
- Spending time with a member of the student's immediate family who is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from, deployment to a combat zone or combat support position, in an amount at the sole discretion of the Head of School.
- Attending the student's naturalization ceremony to become a United States citizen.
- Observance of a religious holiday or other religious obligation of the student's religion.
- Any other justifiable reason, which may include, but is not limited to, a voluntary court appearance, additional time off related to the death of a family member, etc. The Head of School has sole discretion to determine whether a particular reason is justifiable.

Absences not listed above are considered unexcused. This includes family vacations and sporting/performance events. With adequate notice and approval, it is possible to arrange an independent study program to make up missed coursework for extended absences through your classroom teacher and the HOS.

Elementary and Middle School:

If your child is going to be absent for any reason, please email the Office at dgunther@mulberry.org by 9:00 a.m. Please also copy your child's teacher on the email. Parents whose children are not in class by 9:00 a.m. will be contacted by the School.

Preschool:

If your child is going to be absent for any reason, please email one of the Preschool Directors, Bonnie Potenza, at bpotenza@mulberry.org or Amy Moreno amoreno@mulberry.org by 9:00 a.m.

In case of excessive **unexcused absences**, i.e., 5 separate unexcused absences per trimester or more than two 4-day or longer unexcused absences per trimester, a meeting will be arranged between the parents, student (if appropriate), teacher, and HOS to discuss and create an attendance improvement plan.

In the event a student misses 5 or more **excused absences** per trimester, a meeting will be arranged between the parents, student (if appropriate), teacher, and HOS to discuss the impact of the absences on the student's ability to fulfill the academic requirements of the program. If the excused absences are due to a disability or extenuating circumstances, the school will follow its reasonable accommodations policy by engaging in the interactive process with the family.

Tardiness

A tardy is defined as a student arriving at school after 8:30 am for JK and Kindergarten, after 8:40 am for 1st and 2nd grade, after 8:50 am for 3rd and 4th grade, and after 9:00 am for 5th through 8th grades.

If your child is tardy, these steps must be followed to ensure that the administration can account for all children on campus in the event of an emergency:

- JK through 2nd grade: drive up to the curb and call the office at 408-358-9080. A staff member will pick up your child from your car.
- 3rd through 8th grade: drive up to the curb and send your child from your car directly to the office to pick up a tardy slip.

In case of excessive tardies, (3 tardies in 2 weeks) a meeting may be arranged between the parents, student (if appropriate), teacher, and HOS. A written agreement for on-time arrival at school may be required by the school.

Early Dismissal

If a student must leave class before the end of the day, the following steps must be followed to ensure that the administration can account for all children during an emergency.

- Drive up to the curb and call the office at 408-358-9080.
- A staff member will get your child from the classroom and bring them to your car.

HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

Harassment and bullying are unacceptable conduct at Mulberry School. These behaviors occur when an individual is subject to treatment in the school environment that is hostile or intimidating. Harassment or bullying of any member of the Mulberry School community (students, staff, or family members) by another member is prohibited and will not be tolerated. At Mulberry School, **all members of the community** are treated with respect and dignity. This policy refers to incidents between students, between adults and students, or between adult members of the community.

Harassment can be directed toward an individual under conditions such as the following:

- **Verbal harassment**: demeaning comments, statements, slurs, name-calling, jokes, or anecdotes.
- **Written harassment**: suggestive, threatening, or obscene letters, notes, or invitations.
- **Physical harassment**: unkind, unwanted, and/or unlawful physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal movement.
- **Visual harassment**: leering, gesturing, or displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons, or posters.
- **Cyber harassment/bullying**: sending or encouraging others to send abusive, hurtful, offensive, or unwelcome messages via email, chat, IM, Facebook, text messages, etc.

Bullying involves:

- intentional behavior aimed at harming another,

- recurring incidents,
- a power differential, and
- a strong need for power and dominance.

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to,

- unwelcome sexual advances,
- requests for sexual favors, and
- other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment may take various forms, including verbal, written, physical, visual, or cyber harassment.

Students and/or adults who feel that they have been harassed may directly inform the person engaging in such conduct that it is offensive and must stop. In some circumstances, it may be easier for a student and/or adult to speak with their teacher or the Head of School. Allegations of harassment or bullying will be treated seriously and will be reviewed, investigated, and acted upon in a prompt, sensitive and thorough manner.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Mulberry School strives to provide a safe, nurturing, and innovative learning environment that is physically and emotionally safe for students and in which children may learn and grow successfully. Mulberry's Code of Conduct is based on the school's values of collaboration, self-knowledge, community, engagement, discovery, and integrity. The staff and faculty are committed to modeling, teaching and guiding expected positive student behaviors. Courtesy, kindness, compassion, respect, and problem-solving strategies are practiced and valued by faculty, staff, students, and parents.

Together, our goal at Mulberry School is to assure that each child has the opportunity to be a successful and contributing member of our community and that all students learn to understand how their actions affect others. We believe that parents play the utmost important role in supporting and guiding their children in achieving these expectations.

Mulberry School's Code of Conduct is based upon a philosophy of respect. We define respect as due regard for the feelings, wishes, rights, or traditions of others.

We have:

- Respect for all human beings;
- Respect for the earth and all living things;
- Respect for all school and personal property;
- Respect for the guidance provided by teachers, staff, and parents;
- Respect for our school community;
- Respect for our neighbors and neighborhoods.

If a student's behavior falls outside the Code of Conduct, depending on the circumstances, parents may be notified and requested to meet with the Head of School to discuss appropriate strategies and consequences, which may include the development of a behavior plan.

Positive Discipline

The Positive Discipline Parent Education and Classroom Management models are aimed at developing mutually respectful relationships. Positive Discipline teaches adults to employ kindness and firmness at the same time and is neither punitive nor permissive.

We generally follow these five criteria for Positive Discipline:

- Kind and Firm at the same time. (Respectful and Encouraging) ‘Firm’ means that the limit does not change.
- Help children feel a sense of Belonging and Significance. (Connection)
- Effective Long-Term. (Punishment works short-term but does not effectively teach desirable behaviors and has negative long-term results.)
- Teach valuable Social and Life Skills for good character. (Respect, concern for others, problem-solving, accountability, contribution, cooperation)
- Invite children to discover how capable they are and use their personal power in constructive ways.

The tools and concepts of Positive Discipline include:

- Mutual respect. Adults model firmness by respecting themselves and the needs of the situation, and kindness by respecting the needs of the child.
- Identifying the belief behind the behavior. Effective discipline recognizes the reasons kids do what they do and works to change those beliefs, rather than merely attempting to change behavior.
- Effective communication and problem-solving skills.
- Discipline that teaches (and is neither permissive nor punitive).
- Focusing on solutions instead of punishment.
- Encouragement (instead of praise). Encouragement notices effort and improvement, not just success, and builds long-term self-worth and empowerment.

<https://www.positivediscipline.com>

Please keep in mind that the School has sole discretion to determine whether Positive Discipline is appropriate under the circumstances, which means that in cases of serious or repeated misconduct, the School may decide that immediate dismissal is warranted.

Student Rights

Every student has the right:

- to be treated with respect, including but not limited to not being subject to bullying, or harassment based on race, ethnicity, disability, gender, religion, or any other status protected by law;
- to an environment free of distractions/disruptions that impede learning;
- to be physically and emotionally safe;
- to have a clear understanding of school rules and behavioral expectations and consequences;
- to be taught school-wide classroom behavior;
- to participate in making plans for changing problematic behaviors.

Student Responsibilities

Every student has the responsibility:

- to attend school regularly (except due to illness);
- to arrive to school on time;
- to be on task in the classroom, completing projects as assigned or agreed upon;
- to follow the School Code of Conduct;
- to respect the rights of other students, teachers, and participating adults in the community;
- to use appropriate language;
- to respect and treat school property with care;
- to be willing to resolve conflicts with others through discussion and problem-solving techniques;
- to ask an adult for help if a situation becomes too difficult to handle independently.

Process for Meeting the Student Code of Conduct

The following is the general process that the School has put in place to support students in meeting the Student Code of Conduct. However, it is important to note that each case is unique and, in some cases, at the sole discretion of the Head of School, none or not all items of this process may be followed before a decision is made to discipline a student, up to and including suspension or terminating enrollment.

1. Classroom Agreement

Each classroom teacher will have in place a classroom agreement created with the students at the beginning of the school year. These agreements, in addition to classroom management plans, equip teachers to consistently respond to student behavior in the classroom, on the playground and on field trips.

2. Behavior Improvement Plans

If additional support is needed, in many cases, the student may be referred to the HOS to implement a behavior improvement plan, which may include some or all of the following procedures:

- A student is referred based on a behavioral choice or a series of choices that could not be addressed in the classroom.
- A meeting is arranged between the parents, the student if appropriate, the classroom teacher, and the HOS, generally within 48 hours, if practicable. The school has the discretion to deny the student the ability to return to class until the team has met and a behavior plan has been implemented.
- A behavior improvement plan is created. This may include requests for more information, a plan to teach desired behavior changes and monitor the student's progress, service learning, and/or alternate schedules. If necessary, an independent home study plan may be temporarily put in place to evaluate the child and the ability of the child to successfully return to the classroom at Mulberry School. If so, the independent home study plan will be overseen by the HOS in consultation with the classroom teacher.
- A follow-up meeting may be scheduled, generally for 3-4 weeks later, to check in on the student's status. In general, the behavioral contract either ends because the behavior is corrected, continues for a specified time, or is modified as the situation warrants.
- A second follow-up meeting may be set, generally for 2 weeks later. If the case is resolved, the time clock resets as appropriate; if it is not resolved a meeting may be scheduled with the Head of School as appropriate before an expulsion decision is made.
- All timelines provided in this process are general only, and the School may decide, in its sole discretion, to adopt different timelines depending on the circumstances.

3. Meeting (If Applicable) Before Termination of Enrollment Decision Is Made

In most cases, before deciding to terminate the enrollment of a student from the School, the School will notify the parents of its intent to terminate the enrollment of the student and schedule a meeting with the parents, and if appropriate, the student. The purpose of the meeting will be for the parents and, if appropriate, the student, to provide any information that they might wish for the School to consider before the School makes a final decision on whether to terminate the enrollment of the student. The School will consider the information provided by the parents and/or student before making its final decision. The decision to terminate enrollment is at the sole discretion of the Head of School and shall be final. The parents will receive written notice of the decision. In addition, as applicable and appropriate, recommendations for a new school placement may be given to the family.

Mulberry School reserves the right to terminate enrollment at any time and without completing any or all of this process if the Head of School determines, in their sole discretion, it to be in the best interests of the child/parents or the School community.

CLASSROOM SUPERVISION AND DISCIPLINE

Supervising Our Children

Maintaining a safe and respectful school environment is critical to fostering nurturing, positive learning conditions for every student. While adults are asked to help enforce the school's rules, one must remain mindful of the importance of applying common sense in all areas, even when specific rules do not exist.

Classroom

As a school that follows the Positive Discipline Model and is a Positive Discipline Demonstration School, we teach our students to make responsible choices, helping everyone to feel respected and supported. All teachers are trained in the Positive Discipline model and facilitate parent education to support these practices. In addition to Mulberry's Code of Conduct, each teacher works with students to create a classroom agreement. The teacher informs students and parents of agreed-upon behavioral guidelines. In addition, the following guidelines are offered for both inside and outside of the classroom.

1. Every child gets a "clean slate" every day.
2. Corporal punishment is never used.
3. Never shame or blame.
4. Connect before you correct. Ask the student(s) a question/check-in to make sure you understand the situation before correcting.
5. Pick your battles. Before correcting a student, ask yourself if the situation really matters. If it does, briefly but firmly state your point and ensure that she/he follows through. If, on the other hand, it is not important, let it go.
6. Encourage verbal expression, especially when a student is frustrated or upset.
7. Encourage students to discover on their own, offering suggestions and helping when it is requested by the student.
8. Explain instead of just saying "no" whenever possible.

Preschool Transitions

Starting school can be a challenging transition for many young children. We ask, therefore, that you come with your child the first couple of weeks if you anticipate this will help. Some additional tips when the year starts are:

1. Avoid pushing your child to try new tasks. S/He will explore as comfort levels increase.
2. Remain in the background, but do not slip away without saying "goodbye." Let your child know when you are leaving, reminding him/her that you will be back at the end of the school day.
3. Your child's behavior may suddenly change during your first participation days (e.g., clingy, shunning friends, demanding parent attention). While this is a typical temporary reaction, be prepared to defuse these behaviors.

Preschool Guidelines

To foster a consistent, safe environment for our preschoolers, parents are to follow and help enforce the following rules:

1. Indoor toys and equipment remain indoors. Those toys outside are to remain out-of-doors.
2. Children are discouraged from bringing toys from home.
3. Children are not to be lifted onto play equipment, but rather should be encouraged to climb only as high as they can comfortably attain on their own. Children can be helped down from equipment as needed.

4. The use of carpentry, gardening, and science tools must be supervised at all times.
5. In helping children solve problems, use reflective listening and help children brainstorm alternatives, predicting likely outcomes from each option. Once agreements are reached, inform the teacher of these.

HEALTH

The health and safety of our children are our primary concern at all times. Mulberry maintains compliance with all city, county, state, and federal environmental, health, and safety regulations.

Enrollment Forms

All required enrollment forms must be completed and returned to the front office before your child may attend class.

Student Vaccines

Mulberry School complies with all county, state, and federal immunization laws applicable to the School. For more details on the immunizations required, visit www.shotsforschool.org.

Adult Vaccines

Santa Clara County requires that all adults participating in preschools provide proof of immunization against MMR and Tdap. If you do not have proof of these available, you will need to see your physician who can do a blood test to demonstrate your immunity. Additionally, proof of immunization against COVID-19 is required, as well as proof of an annual flu shot (or a letter declining a flu shot). A tuberculous assessment is required for participation in preschool, elementary, and middle school.

****The following guidelines must be considered in addition to the most recent Mulberry School Covid-19 Safety Plan.****

Contagious Disease

Parents must notify the office within 24 hours if a doctor diagnoses their child as having a contagious disease. The office will notify the school community of exposure through email and/or posted notices. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Pink Eye
- Lice
- Strep Throat / Scarlet Fever
- Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease

Students may return to school in accordance with the applicable Santa Clara County Exposure Notice.

Mulberry has the right to refuse or send home a child who is not well enough to attend school.

Illness

Students must remain at home when ill. Additionally, to stop the spread of contagious illness, students may not return to school and must be kept at home until they are free of fever, nausea, diarrhea, rash, sore throat, or other signs of illness for 24 hours, or 24 hours after starting antibiotic treatment, if applicable.

Procedures for Sick Children at School

If your child becomes sick at school, you or a person that you have designated for emergencies will be called. A staff member will monitor your child and keep him/her as comfortable as possible until you or your designee arrives. Sick children generally must be picked up within one hour.

Medications Administered at School: Elementary and Middle School

We realize that it is sometimes necessary to give a child medication during school hours. The following procedures must be adhered to before the School can administer medications to children:

- All prescription and over-the-counter medications that need to be taken during the school day must be registered in the School Office, where they will be stored and administered. Students are not allowed to have medication in their possession at School. Exceptions may be made if a medical need exists for the student to carry or self-administer medication in connection with a serious health condition or illness that cannot be reasonably accommodated by keeping the medication in the School Office.
- No medication, whether prescription or over-the-counter, will be stored in the office without the appropriate paperwork completed by the child's physician and/or the parent. For the School to administer any prescription medications to students, an authorization form must be completed and signed by the student's medical provider. This is true for both long-term and short-term prescriptions.
- For prescription medication, the Prescription Medication Authorization Form needs to be completed. For over-the-counter medication, the Over-The-Counter Medication Authorization Form must be completed. For each medication, whether prescription or over-the-counter, a separate authorization form is required.
- Additionally, for Epi-Pens a parent and the child's physician must complete the Food Allergy Action Plan. In the case of Epi-Pens, asthma, and other medication, Mulberry School's Head of School will meet with parents to agree to a written Personal Health Plan for the student to ensure the health and safety of the child while on campus.
- All medications (prescription or non-prescription) must be delivered to the School Office by a parent in their original labeled container and with the proper paperwork. The School will only administer the medication provided by parents. Medication will be administered per the written instructions, as indicated on the container and the appropriate authorization form.
- Should parents choose to administer medication to their child themselves during the school day, we ask that parents drive up to the curb and call the office at 408-359-9080. Mulberry staff will bring the students to the curb and a parent can administer any medication there.
- When medications are to be given for prolonged periods, it is the parent's responsibility to maintain an adequate supply of medication and to inform the School of changes in dosage or frequency, as well as when it should be discontinued.

Once a student no longer needs to take the medication or at the end of the school year, whichever comes first, it is the parent's responsibility to pick up and/or dispose of the medication. Similarly, should the medication expire during the school year, it is the parent's responsibility to replace it. Mulberry staff will send a reminder before the expiration of the medication.

The School Office is unable to store medications over the summer.

Medications Administered on Field Trips

All provisions of the [Medication Administration at School](#) policy must be complied with for medication to be administered on field trips. All medications for the field trip should be dropped off with an administrator at the curb before or on the day of a field trip. A school employee will administer medications on the field trip at the designated time.

First Aid

Minor cuts and scrapes are treated by the staff or supervising parent, using the school's first aid supplies. All staff members are trained in First Aid & CPR biannually.

Red Emergency Backpacks

Emergency backpacks, found in every classroom, must accompany the class at all times, whether to the playground or on a field trip. The backpacks contain a first aid kit, emergency procedures and protocols, a list of student allergies, and Epi-Pens (to be administered by staff) if prescribed for a student in the class.

Blood Borne Pathogens Exposure Control

Universal precautions (gloves, eye protection, etc.) are observed at Mulberry to prevent contact with blood or potentially infectious materials.

Head Lice Policy

Mulberry School works diligently to reduce the stigma associated with lice in our community through education and frank dialogue. Lice do not cause disease nor are they a health threat.

Mulberry School follows the "no-nit" policy recommended by the National Pediculosis Association and [Santa Clara County Vector Control District](#). This policy means children cannot attend school if nits (eggs) are found in their hair.

Preschool Incidental Medical Services Plan

This written plan details how Mulberry Preschool implements Incidental Medical Services (IMS).

Prescription Epi-Pens/Auvi-Qs are in the red backpacks in the classroom that the child is in. The backpacks are hung high up on the wall by the front door where they are safely inaccessible to children.

Non-Epi-Pen prescription medications and nonprescription medications are also in the red backpacks in the classroom that the child is in, hung high up on the wall by the front door where they are safely inaccessible to children.

All medications stored at Mulberry Preschool have unaltered labels and are dated and maintained with the child's name. The refrigerator shall be used to store any medication that requires refrigeration. All medications stored at Mulberry Preschool are attached to written instructions for administration of the medication that are signed by the child's parent (LIC 9221).

Prescription medications are administered following the label directions as prescribed by the child's physician. Nonprescription medications shall be administered following the product label directions on the nonprescription medication container.

When medications are administered, they are noted on the child's medication chart by the staff member giving the medication, and the chart is initialed by the child's parent upon pick up of the child on the day the medication was given.

When no longer needed by the child, or when the child withdraws from Mulberry Preschool, all medications shall be returned to the child's parent or disposed of after an attempt to reach the parent.

ALLERGIES

Mulberry School strives to provide an educational environment that is healthy for all students, including those with life-threatening allergies to peanuts and/or tree nuts. Accomplishing this requires a partnership and clearly defined responsibilities of the School, parents/students, and the School community. With this in mind, Mulberry School sets forth the responsibilities of each to minimize the exposure of students to peanuts/tree nuts or peanut/tree nut products, and to other foods that represent life-threatening allergies within our student body.

Life-Threatening Peanut and Tree Nut Allergies:

Mulberry School is designated a “nut sensitive” school. This means that we will take reasonable steps to minimize the exposure of students to peanuts and tree nuts and peanut and tree nut products at school. However, despite the School’s reasonable efforts, the School cannot guarantee an environment free of peanuts and tree nuts or peanut and tree nut products.

While the FDA recognizes coconut as a tree nut, coconut is not a botanical nut; rather it is the seed of a drupaceous fruit. Mulberry School does not include coconut under its peanut and tree nut allergy policy. Should a student be allergic to coconut, Mulberry School’s policy covering life-threatening allergies to other foods will apply.

We have created the following list to clarify responsibilities related to life-threatening peanut and tree nut allergies:

- Students must not share foods brought from home for snacks or lunch.
- Mulberry School will instruct all parents in writing, both globally (through policies) and individually (through classroom communications), not to send any peanuts/tree nuts, or products containing peanuts/tree nuts (based upon product labels), to be eaten as snacks or lunches at school.
- Parents must review food labels including store-made food labels while packing daily lunch boxes, omitting foods that contain peanuts/tree nuts or traces of peanuts/tree nuts. Since children are not supposed to share food brought to school for personal consumption during lunch and recess, simply providing food that is peanut/tree nut-free based on the ingredients label is adequate.
- For student lunches, parents must also exclude homemade foods that contain peanuts/tree nuts or traces of peanuts/tree nuts. Parents must also make reasonable efforts to minimize exposure to foods made at home on equipment shared with peanuts/tree nuts by not using shared equipment whenever reasonably possible and thoroughly cleaning shared equipment and shared surfaces before making nut-free food. It must be understood, however, that many homes do prepare foods that contain peanuts/tree nuts, and that foods prepared in these homes, even if nut-free food, may be prepared on surfaces or with equipment that contains trace amounts of peanuts/tree nuts even with reasonable efforts to clean these shared surfaces. Families at the School are not required to make their homes peanut/tree nut-free and nut-free foods produced in these homes using the above precautions may be provided at School.
- Similarly, Mulberry School will require and instruct parents/guardians that food served at all-school events or for cooking projects or classroom celebrations must be free of peanuts/tree nuts or peanut/tree nut products as reasonably possible. Such food cannot have been processed in factories in which peanuts/tree nuts may have been processed (based upon product labels) or prepared from products processed in those factories (based upon product labels). Parents must also make reasonable efforts to minimize exposure to foods made on equipment shared with peanuts/tree nuts by not using shared equipment whenever reasonably possible and thoroughly cleaning shared equipment and shared surfaces before making nut-free food. It must be understood, however, that

many homes do prepare foods that contain peanuts/tree nuts, and that foods prepared in these homes, even if nut-free food, may be prepared on surfaces or with equipment that contains trace amounts of peanuts/tree nuts even with reasonable efforts to clean these shared surfaces. Families at the School are not required to make their homes peanut/tree nut free and nut-free foods produced in these homes may be provided at all-school events.

- Mulberry School will provide a “super clean zone” where tables will be wiped down before and after use if deemed necessary to meet the needs of a particular student(s). In addition, students who eat at these tables will be required to wash their hands before and after eating at the tables.
- Mulberry School, other than as set forth herein, does not have the capacity to minimize exposure to peanuts/tree nuts in non-cooking areas of our program (e.g., painting, gardening, our outside areas, and inside of buildings).
- Mulberry School will provide each teacher with a list of students in their classroom who have allergies, including those with a life-threatening allergy to peanuts/tree nuts. This list will also be kept in the office and will be updated by the office as required.
- Parents are required to notify the school in writing of their child’s life-threatening allergy to peanuts/tree nuts. Notification must include confirmation from the child’s physician. Parents will need to grant permission to their child’s doctor to release information regarding their child’s allergies to Mulberry staff, so that we may work to provide an environment that minimizes exposure while creating appropriate responses in case of exposure. Mulberry only needs information necessary to understand the functional limitations associated with any allergy and what things it might do to reasonably accommodate the allergy.
- Parents of children with life-threatening allergies to peanuts/tree nuts will work with Mulberry School and the child’s physician to identify any additional reasonable accommodations specific to the needs of the student. If it becomes necessary to implement additional accommodations, and if the additional reasonable accommodations offered by the school are agreeable to both parties, these will be clearly described in a “Personal Safety Plan” created by the school.

Life-Threatening Allergies to Other Foods:

Mulberry School will strive to meet the needs of children with life-threatening allergies to any foods in all classroom cooking projects, and in other areas, as can be reasonably accommodated. We have created the following list to clarify responsibilities related to life-threatening allergies to other foods:

- Students must not share foods brought from home for snacks or lunch.
- Mulberry School will require and instruct parents/guardians that food served to children via classroom cooking projects or classroom celebrations will not contain, to the extent reasonably possible, any food to which a child in that classroom has a life-threatening allergy. This will be an accommodation made in the specific class of that child only and will be written into a “Personal Safety Plan” created by the school. “Reasonably possible” means: (1) parents must exclude foods that contain the identified food or that were prepared from products (based upon product labels) that were processed in factories in which the identified food may have been processed; and (2) parents must make reasonable efforts to minimize exposure to foods made on equipment shared with the identified food by not using shared equipment whenever reasonably possible and thoroughly cleaning shared equipment and shared surfaces before making foods. It must be understood, however, that many homes do prepare foods that contain the identified food, and that foods prepared in these homes, even if meant to be free of that food, may be prepared on surfaces or with

equipment that contains trace amounts of the identified food even with reasonable efforts to clean these shared surfaces. Families at the School are not required to make their homes free of the identified food and foods produced in these homes using the above precautions may be provided at School.

- Mulberry School will provide a “super clean zone” where tables will be wiped down before and after use if deemed necessary to meet the needs of a particular student(s). In addition, students who eat at these tables will be required to wash their hands before and after eating at the tables.
- Mulberry School, other than as outlined in this section, does not have the capacity to minimize exposure to life-threatening allergens in non-cooking areas of our program (e.g., painting, gardening, our outside areas, and inside of buildings).
- Parents are required to notify the school in writing of their child’s life-threatening allergies. Notification must include confirmation from the child’s physician. Parents will need to grant permission to their child’s doctor to release information regarding their child’s allergies to Mulberry staff, so that we may work to provide an environment that minimizes exposure while creating appropriate responses in case of exposure. Mulberry only needs information necessary to understand the functional limitations associated with any allergy and what things it might do to reasonably accommodate the allergy.
- Parents of children who cannot be exposed to certain foods (other than nuts) will work with the school and the child’s physician to identify reasonable accommodations necessary to meet the needs of the student. If it becomes necessary to implement additional accommodations, and if the additional reasonable accommodations offered by the school are agreeable to both parties, these will be clearly described in a “Personal Safety Plan” created by the school.

Food Preferences and/or Intolerances That Are Not Life-Threatening:

Mulberry School distinguishes food allergies, preferences, and/or intolerances from life-threatening allergies, the latter of which may create a serious medical condition (and must be confirmed by the treating physician). We cannot guarantee that non-life-threatening food allergies, preferences, and/or intolerances will be accommodated for classroom cooking projects or celebrations.

Parents of children with food preferences and/or intolerances may wish to work with the teacher to have substitute foods on hand if a cooking project or food brought in for a celebration includes food that you do not wish your child to consume for these reasons.

Medications Related to Life-Threatening Food Allergies:

Mulberry School recommends that parents provide Epi-Pens and/or other medications related to life-threatening food allergies for the child’s classroom, the School’s office, and extended care, as deemed necessary and appropriate by the child’s physician.

Mulberry School requires that all medications be accompanied by written instructions from the student’s physician. This information is generally part of an Allergy Action Plan provided by the treating doctor.

Mulberry School requires that parents provide written authorization if they wish for the school to assist their child in the administration of, or to administer the Epi-Pen.

In addition, all provisions of the Medication Administration at School Policy must be complied with for allergy medication, including the Epi-Pen to be administered at school.

SAFETY

Reporting Responsibilities in Suspected Cases of Child Abuse

All concerns regarding suspected abuse of a Mulberry student should be immediately reported to the child's teacher or the HOS. Furthermore, any alleged inappropriate behavior on the part of a teacher, staff member, administrator, participating adult, or student should be immediately reported to the HOS.

Hazards

Any safety hazards discovered during the course of the day that cannot be remedied immediately must be reported to the teacher or the office for corrective action.

Visiting Animals

With prior approval from the teacher, a pet may visit the classroom. Visiting animals are never to be left at school overnight or on holidays. All pets must be leashed or contained. Parents dropping off or picking up a student should note that dogs may not enter school buildings at any time.

Emergency and Disaster Preparedness

A completed emergency form is required for each student and must be submitted every year. Please ensure that your contact information is kept up-to-date with the school and that both parents/guardians are listed as emergency and pick-up contacts, if applicable, as well as the names of those authorized to pick up your child. In case of an emergency, students will be released only to a person designated on that list. Your child will need to be signed out by you or your designee before leaving campus in such a circumstance.

In the event of a major disaster, do not attempt to call the school, as phone lines must be left open. Mulberry uses an emergency notification system for just such circumstances. RenWeb stores phone numbers and upon notification from us that we are in the midst of an emergency, immediately and simultaneously calls all stored phone numbers. Parents will see "411" on their caller I.D. when receiving a RenWeb emergency call.

Following a major disaster, come to school only after you have a safe and comfortable place to take your child, whether at home or at an alternate shelter. School personnel has been fully trained in emergency preparedness procedures, and the school is equipped to provide food, water, and first-aid care for 24-hours and can provide these for an additional 48 hours to approximately ½ of the students and faculty, should this become necessary.

MULBERRY COMMUNICATIONS

Communication of Class Configurations

The week before the start of the new school year, class configurations will be announced by email.

Progress Reports and Parent Conferences

Preschool conferences are held in January and include an individualized portfolio.

Elementary and Middle School students receive progress reports two times per year. You will receive your child's first progress report, in January, and the second and final progress report at the end of the school year, in June. Every fall and spring, parents participate in a formal conference with the teacher: in fall to review assessments and set goals, and in spring to review a student's individual growth and progress with the curriculum, either through a student-led-conference in grades 2-8, or a parent-teacher-conference in grades JK-1.

Meeting with Teachers

Parents are strongly encouraged to email the teacher to schedule a meeting whenever concerns or questions arise. Please contact your child's teacher by email to arrange a convenient time to meet. Teacher email addresses are available on our website.

Mulberry Buzz

The Buzz, Mulberry's newsletter, is sent via MailChimp to all Mulberry families each week during the school year and contains a summary of upcoming events, committee reminders, and other information of interest to the school community. Parents may submit pieces to the Buzz by sending their entry via email to the Director of Communications (dgunther@mulberry.org) by Thursday of each week.

Communicating Concerns/Grievances

Should you develop concerns about a classroom issue, curricular matter, a child, or the work of another parent, speak directly with your child's teacher. **A parent must never communicate any type of concern about a student to other parents or that child's parent. Respectful and appropriate communication is expected of all members of the community at all times.**

If no resolution is reached in working with the classroom teacher, schedule an appointment with the HOS to address your specific concerns. You may be asked to draft a letter outlining the incident of concern and your desired resolution. Information will be culled from all involved parties, and resolution will be sought as quickly as is reasonably possible. The HOS's decisions are final in such cases.

PRESCHOOL PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Classroom Level Participation

- **You may choose one of two ways to participate in the classroom:**

- (1) Volunteer in child's class once a week; or
- (2) Volunteer in child's class two times per month and sign up for a small volunteer "take-home" job.

Multiple Children at Mulberry

Multiples in Preschool Only: Parents are asked to work one classroom shift each week. Teachers may request parents of multiples in preschool to work extra time based on the needs and best interests of the children and the educational program.

- **Parent Education Meetings**

Attendance at parent education meetings is strongly encouraged. Each year there will be approximately 10 to choose from. **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.** At the beginning of the school year, you will receive a calendar listing all of the meeting dates.

----- Please print this page and sign below. -----

I have received the Mulberry School 2021-22 Parent Handbook and will review it with my child(ren).

Child's Name

Child's Name

Child's Name

,

Parent Signature

Date