

# The Children's Kiva Montessori Charter School



**Children's Kiva**  
MONTESSORI SCHOOL

## 2023 - 2024 Student and Parent Handbook

Kiva Montessori  
*Grades K-8*  
601 N. Mildred  
Cortez, CO 81321  
970.564.9377  
[www.kivacharter.org](http://www.kivacharter.org)

Approved by the Children's Kiva Montessori School Board of Directors on **August 01, 2023**

August 7, 2023

Dear Kiva Families,

Welcome to The Children's Kiva Montessori Charter School! We are very honored that you have chosen our school to meet the educational needs of your child or children! As a mom, I understand the hope, concerns, and trepidation of sending a child to school, and we are grateful you chose our school to meet this important need for your family. We are extremely proud of the education we offer our students and know that the continued success of our charter program is dependent upon the support and collaboration among our students, parents, teachers, and all stakeholders. Together, we can ensure another year of vibrant, joyful, rigorous learning experiences for your child.

The purpose of this Student Handbook is to inform everyone of general information, procedures, policies, and rules for our school. We ask that you share this information with your child, ask for clarification if needed, and keep a copy for future reference. Kiva Charter students and parents are expected to follow these school rules and respect the school's policies and procedures. We hope to model exemplary behavior and respect in order to maintain our welcoming, unified, inclusive, and loving environment for many years to come.

Thank you for taking the time to read and discuss this information with your student. If we make any changes to this document during the school year (like adding board members, etc.), we will add the revision date under the approval date on the title page. We are so glad you are here this year, and I truly hope you enjoy the Kiva Charter experience!

Warmly,

*Ms. Lurleen McCormick, Ed.S., M.Ed.*

Head of School

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*"Never help a child with a task at which he feels he can succeed."*

— Maria Montessori

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## **Vision and Mission**

### **Vision**

Children's Kiva Montessori School is a place of vibrant and joyful learning where students are immersed in academic, emotional, and social growth on their way to becoming kind, confident, and engaged members of their communities.

### **Mission**

Children's Kiva Montessori School builds a strong foundation for children. We challenge students through integrated curriculum; we work in supportive and engaging environments; we collaborate with one another; we embrace diversity; and, we explore our passions.

## **Abbreviations/Acronym Guide: [Click here](#)**

## **Accreditation and Membership**

### **Accreditation**

Children's Kiva Montessori School (Kiva Montessori) is an autonomous Public Charter school serving children grades K-8, as well as a 501c Non-profit governed by an all-volunteer Board of Directors accountable to the Colorado Department of Education, State, and US Federal Government. Our board, administrators, staff, and parents work together to create a unified accredited program for ages 5-14.

We operate under the Colorado Charter School Act (C.R.S. 22-30.5 et seq.). Our teachers and students strive to meet and exceed the training qualifications and academic achievement standards of their colleagues in traditional Colorado schools.

### **Membership**

Our School is a member of the Colorado League of Charter Schools.

## **Anti-Discrimination Statement**

As an equal opportunity employer, CKMS authorized by the Montezuma-Cortez School District RE-1, does not discriminate on the basis of ethnicity, race, religion, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, or disability.

## **Organizational Structure**

The Kiva Montessori School is under the authorization of Montezuma-Cortez Re-1 School District (District). Though we partner with RE-1 on specific large scale logistical management, like school-specific tech support, our school is governed by an independent volunteer [board of directors](#). We operate under a renewable contract with RE-1 and are fully responsible for maintaining our own budget, curriculum, teacher training, and Colorado Department of Education accreditation. Because we are a school of choice, our elementary and middle schools are ultimately responsible to our consumers: the parents and students who make the choice to attend.

## **Kiva Charter Board of Directors 2023-2024**

President- (Interim) Alexis Cospier

Vice President- Susan Miller

Treasurer- Jolene McElwain

Secretary- Megan Waterman

Members- Karen Cook

## **Administration**

Our administration is responsible for the day-to-day operations of our school.

## **Head of School – Lurleen McCormick**

The head of school is responsible for and accountable to the board of directors for all aspects of school operations. These include:

- enrollment
- education programs
- community relations
- fiscal management
- personnel management
- property management

These responsibilities are administered in a manner consistent with Montessori philosophy and in the best interest of our school. The head of school delegates responsibilities, provides appropriate leadership, and works with the district, State of Colorado, staff, parents, and community to effectively achieve the school's mission, vision, and goals.

## **Business Manager – Natasha Lamm**

The Business Manager is responsible for overseeing and planning the business and finance operations of the organization, including preparing the annual budget and monthly and annual financial reports and maintaining human resource documentation.

## **Kiva Staff Members 2023-2024**

*Head of School* - Lurleen McCormick

*Operations Administrator* - Robert Rime

*Counselor* - Andy Waterman

*Office Administrative Assistant* - Violet Melendy

*Business Manager* - Natasha Lamm

*Food and Maintenance Director* - Justin Novak

*Registered Nurse* - Sandra Vestral

*Guide/Teacher for Ages 5-6 (Kindergarten)* - Tasha Freeman

*Guide/Teacher for Ages 6-8 (1st/2nd)* - Althea Ellis

*Guide/Teacher for Ages 7-9 (2nd/3rd)* - Sandra Smith

*Guide/Teacher for Ages 9-11 (4th/5th)* - Katie Uran

*Guide/Teacher for Ages 10-12 (5th/6th)* - Meghan Grundvig

*Guide/Teacher for Ages 12-14 (7th/8th)* - John Whitehead

*Guide/Teacher for Ages 12-14 (7th/8th)* - Daniel Acosta

*ESS, MTSS, RTI, 504, GT, & ELL Guide/Teacher for Ages 5-10 (K-4th grade)* - Neisha Calhoun

*ESS, MTSS, RTI, 504, GT, & ELL Guide/Teacher for Ages 10-15 (4th-8th grades)* - Cassy Whitehead  
*Interventionists/Title Guide/Teacher for Ages 5-10 (K-3rd grades)* - Kathy Carpenter  
*Interventionists/Title Guide/Teacher for Ages 10-15 (4th-8th grades)* - Dr. Sue Garlick  
*Paraprofessionals* - Kerry Scales, Krystal McCoy, and Orion Thybony (Part-time)  
*Specials/Electives Guide/Teachers* -

- Cassie Panther (STREAM - Science, Technology, Robotics, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics)
- Josh Glenn (Music, PE, Adventure and Outdoor Ed.)

*Substitutes* - Dawn Phykitt, Carole Hitti, and Kellie Power

### **Community Partnered Leadership Committees:**

School committees are made up of staff, board members, parents, and community partners working together on specific projects and goals. This is a great way to get involved and time on committees counts toward the required parent involvement hours.

## **Academic Programs and Environment**

Kiva Montessori has selected a Montessori approach to its academic practice because of the inherent nature of Montessori to provide individualized instruction that is appropriate, engaging, challenging, and standards-based for every student. Montessori classrooms are set up to create a student-centered environment where each student's needs are addressed individually. Students of all abilities can be productive, important members of Montessori classrooms.

Please read our more thorough explanation of the [Children's Kiva Montessori School's Academic Programs and Environment](#). But here are a some important highlights

- Mixed age grouping
- Teachers as guides
- Inquiry learning
- Project-based learning
- Student focused, i.e. not what will the teacher teach but what will the student do
- Three-period lesson structure: naming, recognition and recall
- Community based methods
- Critical indicators that demonstrate healthy development
- Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to provide guidance and assistance from general education to more targeted and intense needs, including [Montessori Graces and Courtesies](#), [Peace curriculum instruction](#), [Social Emotional Learning Competencies and Wellbeing \(SEL\)](#), [Restorative Practices and Positive Behavior Intervention Supports \(PBIS\)](#), School Counselor lessons and meetings, support from Exceptional Student Services (ESS) in partnership with the [San Juan Board of Cooperative Educational Services \(BOCES\)](#), and [bullying prevention](#).
- Classroom formal and informal assessments as well as standardized testing (CMAS, NWEA and DIBELS)
- [Second Step](#) Social And Emotional Guidance Curriculum

### **Discipline**

Discipline will follow the flow of our Positive Behavior Intervention and Support Plan (PBIS). Minor and Major infractions will be predetermined.

- Minor offenses will be addressed with the teacher and student “reflecting” on what could be done differently and collaboratively deciding on an appropriate consequence.
- A second minor offense of the same nature will be “reflected” on in a different classroom and parents will be consulted to help decide what else can be tried and what an appropriate consequence should be.
- A third minor offense of the same nature is considered a major offense and will result in an office discipline referral (ODR). Parents and the Head of School or designee will consult together on a more intensive plan and more effective consequences. Restorative Practices will be used throughout the reflection process.
- Major offenses will result in an automatic ODR.
- When necessary we will refer to the [Colorado Compilation of School Discipline Laws and Regulations](#).

## **General Admissions**

Children’s Kiva Montessori School is a school of choice, open to children from 5 through 14 years of age. New families wishing to enroll should refer to the [enrollment process and policies](#) on our website.

### **Re-enrollment**

Subsequent school year enrollment takes place in January. Families wishing to continue enrollment at Kiva Montessori must submit an *Intent to Return* form by the specified deadline in order to reserve their child(ren)’s space for the upcoming school year. If we do not receive the necessary paperwork by the specified deadline, we will release your child’s space and it will be filled from the enrollment queue.

All returning families are strongly encouraged to attend one of the scheduled Registration Days prior to the start of school to complete paperwork, pay material fees, and receive class placement information.

### **Breakfast and Lunch Fees**

We are excited to announce that all students may **eat for free during the 2023-24 school year!** Students will **not** be charged for lunch or breakfast.

### **Materials Fee**

As a public charter school, Kiva Montessori does not charge tuition. However:

- A materials and supplies fee is assessed each year per student and is due in August. The fee covers all “back-to-school” supplies.
- The fee for the 2023-24 school year is \$175
- Materials needed for hybrid or online-distance learning will be provided.
- For students who qualify for free and reduced meals; the fee is reduced by 50%.
- Fees are nonrefundable and not prorated.
- Payment plans may be arranged.
- If you are able, please consider making a donation to support our families in need.

## School Hours, Drop-off, Pick-up Procedures

### Hours:

School is in session from 7:45 am to 3:35 pm, whether on campus or off.

### Daily Schedule:

- No supervision is provided before 7:45 am
- 7:45 am drop off (breakfast and connections)
- 8:00 tardy bell rings (No breakfast after 8:00)
- 3:35 dismissal

### Student Drop Off - Please refer to the new Carline and Parking Lot Map below

- Again, no dropoff before 7:45 am, there is no supervision.
- Dropoff will be from 7:45 am to 7:55 am. Students proceed to their classrooms.
- Parents are expected to enter the parking lot from Empire Street. Follow the new car-line and parking lot map, and exit only onto Mildred Road.
- The curb in front of the school is the DROP OFF "HUG & GO" ZONE. PLEASE Keep moving forward, and DO NOT PARK in the DROP OFF "HUG & GO" ZONE.
- If you wish to accompany your student to the front door, or wish to come into the school, please park in the DESIGNATED PARKING ON THE OUTSIDE PERIMETER of the parking lot and walk along the perimeter to the crosswalks to bring your student to the front door.
- We will have staff present outside at drop off. These adults will be in the various areas of the DROP OFF ZONE to assist children out of the cars and into the building.
- Parents who bring their child to school after 8:00 am, must park their vehicle in the designated parking areas, walk their child into the school and sign them in.

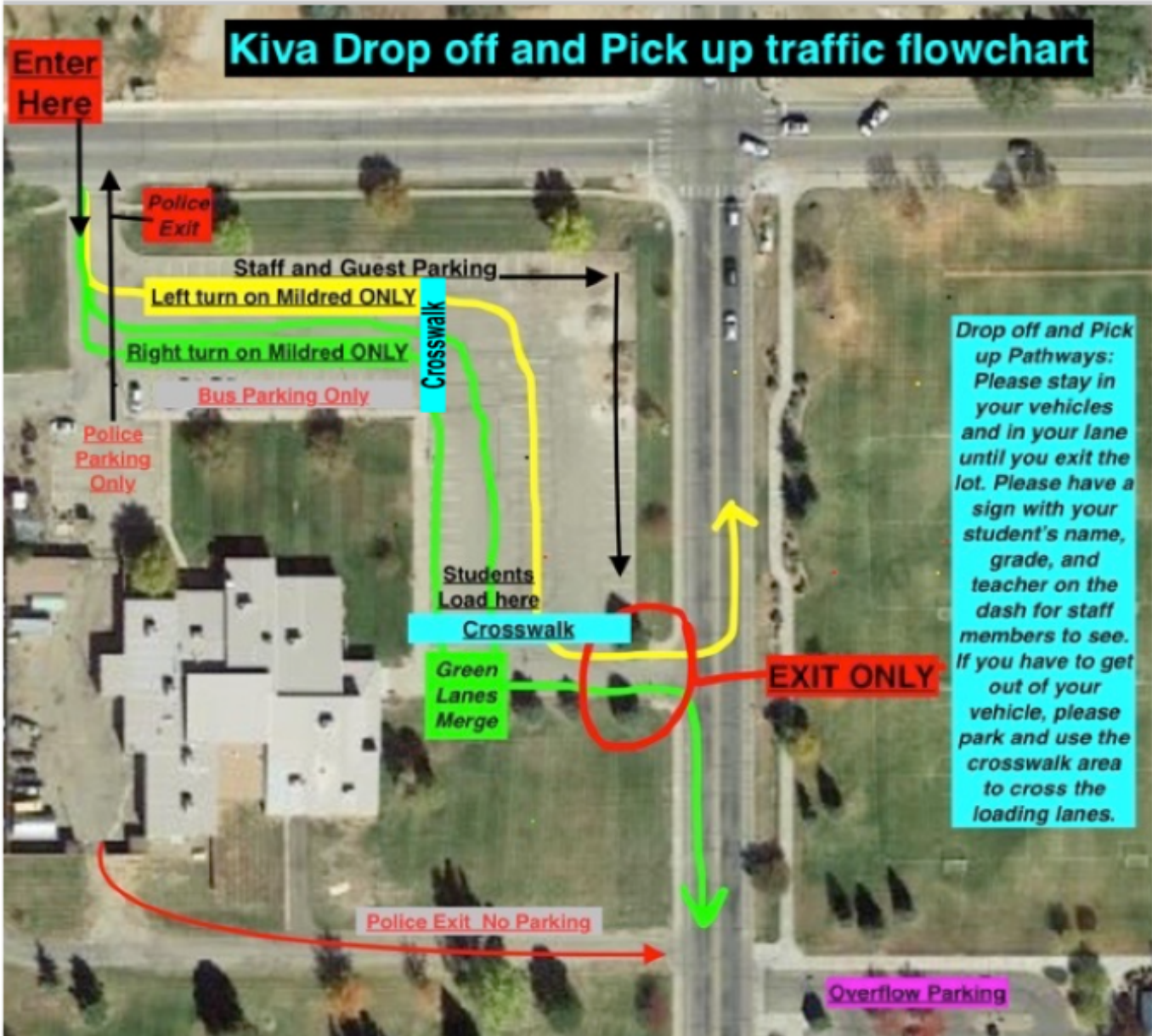
**PLEASE, DO NOT PARK IN THE PICK-UP/DROP-OFF "HUG & GO" ZONE.** Also, be aware that parking in a non-designated area, may result in a warning or ticket issued by law enforcement.

### Student Pick Up

- Students will be ready for pickup each day at 3:35pm.
- Parents are expected again to enter the parking lot from Empire Street.
- The Car-line map shows the traffic will split into 3 lanes: 1 along the curb and 2 and 3 parallel to that. Lanes 1 and 2 will turn right onto Mildred after picking their student up. Lane 3 will turn left onto Mildred.
- Please pick your lane ahead of time, you will not be allowed to exit your vehicle or cross over into the other lanes!
- When dropping off or picking up your students, please continuously pull forward. This keeps things flowing smoothly as cars load and pull out of the "Hug & Go" Zone.
- Please have a large sign with your student's name and teacher on the dash for staff members to see
- If you need to exit your vehicle for any reason during dismissal, Parents/guardians may park in the DESIGNATED PARKING AREA ALONG THE OUTSIDE PERIMETER of the parking lot.
- Please proceed to the crosswalks and do not walk across the parking lot through traffic. Thank you for walking the longer distance to honor the safety of our students.
- When parking, parents/guardians must come to the student-release area using the crosswalks. From there, the child will be released to the parent/guardian. Return to your vehicle and exit onto Mildred.
- Children may not cross the parking lot without an adult.



# Kiva Drop off and Pick up traffic flowchart



## **CAR-LINE FAQs**

### **How early should I arrive on campus?**

During the first two weeks of school, you will want to allow a few extra minutes to get through the car-line. After that, everyone settles into the routine and arriving at 7:45 is sufficient. This allows 5 minutes to proceed through the car-line and 5 minutes for your child to get from your vehicle to their classroom line.

### **What if my student is on crutches or has special needs?**

Under these circumstances, please park in the handicapped parking spots. Let us know if you need a staff member to help support your child out of the vehicle and into school.

### **Can I get out of my car at drop off to help my student with a class project or an instrument?**

No, please park in a designated area, or wait until you have reached the flag pole to allow staff members to assist you with this. Car-line is slowed significantly if a parent exits the vehicle.

### **How can I get through the car-line faster?**

For drop off, have your child ready to exit the vehicle as soon as you arrive on campus (backpack in hand, shoes on, etc.). For pick up, have your sign on your dash, tell your child where to watch for you (in Hug & Go Lanes or Standing in front of the office) and use the correct lane to exit the lot. Please make sure your child is able to recognize your vehicle, so when they see you, they can inform the Teacher or Para who is supervising them.

### **Can I park to walk my child in/out of school?**

Yes, you may always do this if your child needs your extra help. This is common for our younger students and for parents who arrive early for dismissal. Please park in the spots along the exterior of our lot perimeter and use the crosswalks. Do not park and exit your vehicle in the Hug & Go lane.

### **Can I park anywhere in the lot or on the side road?**

No, Please park in designated spaces only (along the outside perimeter - refer to the map). Please do not use any of the curb spaces at any time. Also, you cannot park on the side road. That is for police access only and must remain cleared for emergency vehicles to exit the police department parking area.

### **Visitors During the School Day**

All visitors must park in the designated parking areas on the outside perimeter of the parking lot and use the crosswalks. Visitors MUST sign in at the front office and wear a visitor badge at all times while they are on school grounds.

### **Late Arrival or Early Pick Up**

Parent or Guardian must park in a designated parking space and come into the school to sign their child in or check them out. Tardies, as with absences, must be pre-arranged whenever possible.

### **Staff Parking**

Staff will be required to park in the designated areas of the parking lot.

## **Student Expectations**

### **Student Usage of School Electronic Devices**

Students will be expected to sign an acceptable use agreement indicating their commitment to use the school's electronic devices appropriately. This will include (but is not limited to) the following:

- using only their own accounts and not sharing access credentials
- use the system for educational and instructional purposes only
- follow the law, district policy, and school rules (no inappropriate content or bullying)
- respecting the security of the device and system by not attempting to damage devices or bypass security systems and monitoring software.

### **Personal Electronic Devices**

Cell phones (and other personal electronic devices) will be turned off and placed in backpacks during school hours. If a student is caught using his/her cell phone during school hours, it will be confiscated and a parent may retrieve it at the end of the day. Personal laptops will not be allowed to be used at school.

### **Honesty, Integrity, and Artificial Intelligence**

We encourage students to use AI as a learning tool, but to do so responsibly and ethically. The goal of education is not just about completing assignments; more importantly, it's about learning, growing, and preparing for the future. The responsible use of AI will help make better learners and future leaders. However, while using AI, it's essential to ensure that your actions remain within the framework of academic integrity.

- **Understand the Difference Between Assistance and Cheating**  
AI should never be used to complete assignments, tests, or any form of graded work entirely on the student's behalf. This would be equivalent to cheating.
- **Cite AI-Sourced Information**  
When using AI for research or gathering information, ensure that you properly cite the sources provided. Not doing so could result in plagiarism.
- **Do not Use AI to Circumvent Learning**  
AI is here to complement learning, not replace it. Using AI to bypass understanding concepts or doing the work defeats the purpose of education, which is to develop knowledge, skills, and competencies.
- **Understand the Limitations of AI**  
While AI is not infallible and shouldn't be wholly relied upon for accuracy. Always cross-verify information from multiple sources and don't hesitate to ask your teachers if you're unsure about something.
- **The misuse of AI, such as using it to cheat, plagiarize work, or misrepresent one's understanding, will be treated as a serious violation of our school's academic integrity policy. Consequences can range from grade penalties, failing the course, or even suspension or expulsion.**

## **Attendance**

Consistent attendance is one of the greatest predictors of a student's ability to be successful in school and beyond. As a school of choice, we know you will want your child to reach the rigorous academic goals that have been set. We have worked together with parents and the board, and we have decided to follow the state requirements for attendance and make it a condition of continued enrollment.

We are also working hard to change the mindset of our families, staff and community from one of a punitive nature, based on truancy and the minutia of whether or not an absence is excused, to one that is more positive and solution oriented for those who have trouble with chronic absenteeism, no matter the reason.

We will still require absences to be excused in an effort to motivate both students and parents to remember their commitment and the importance of being present at school for both academic and social and emotional learning. We will be meeting and exceeding the requirements set by the Colorado State Board of Education for excusing a child from school. Please [read those requirements as well as our own](#) before the temptation or need to excuse your child occurs. The main points to consider are:

- 10 absences or less for the year will meet our goal of 95% attendance.
- 3 late arrivals/early dismissals add up to the missed content of one school day and will be counted as 1 absence.
- Absences will need to be pre-arranged whenever possible.
- After 5 absences a letter will be sent home reminding parents of our goal and their commitment to it.
- After 7 absences we will need to meet together in an *exigency meeting*. (Parents, the student and either the head of school and/or the school counselor will meet to create a plan to address any extenuating circumstances or barriers to accessing the services and resources necessary to ensure the student's continued enrollment and success).

## **Dress Code**

We want every Kiva stakeholder to feel comfortable and welcome in our building; however, we do have to abide by public school dress codes for appropriate decency, safety, and to avoid situations that distract from the learning environment. We appreciate the cooperation of parents in supervising their children's attire by making sure that students are clean and appropriately dressed before coming to school. The decision as to the safety or unsuitability of attire are at the discretion of teachers and/or the head of school. Any perceived issue will be addressed discretely and respectfully, and students will be offered alternate clothing if available or parents will be contacted to bring a change of clothes.

The following are required expectations

- Faces must be visible inside the building
- Clothing, jewelry, or any apparel must be deemed suitable and safe for an elementary school environment (i.e. no distracting or shocking images, or anything that could potentially cause harm)
- all clothing must cover, with or without movement, any view of any portion of midriff (stomach or back), buttocks, breasts, genitals, and/or undergarments.

### **Additional Information on Weather Appropriate Clothing:**

Students will always go outside for fresh air and exercise if the temperature is above 20 degrees and it is not raining. Please assume your child will go outside every day and provide all necessary clothing appropriate for the weather – boots, gloves, snow pants, hat, and/or coat.

### **Public Displays of Affection**

Displays of intimate touching, such as kissing, are distractions to the learning environment and not allowed in our elementary setting.

### **Safe School Violations**

Certain school rules are more serious than others and breaking them is also considered to be a crime by the police. These behaviors will be listed as major offenses and result in automatic office referrals and oftentimes consultation with the police. Consequences for our students could be severe. In general, safe school violations are negative behaviors like the following:

- causes or threatens physical harm
- causes or threatens property damage
- are sexual in nature
- are proven to be bullying. (Bullying is any cruel or unwanted behavior that happens over time and where there is an imbalance of power. Please read our new anti-bullying policy and reporting procedures [here](#).)
- false reporting of emergencies. These have always been against the law, but due to an alarming increase across the state this year, Colorado has passed a bill making false reporting of a mass shooting or active shooter a class 6 felony.

### **Extracurricular activities**

Due to staffing limitations, we do not offer after school extracurricular clubs; however students who need academic support may be invited to join our current after school academic classes including our Math/Reading Intervention, Social Emotional Learning (SEL), and Spanish classes. We encourage students to access the many opportunities in our area provided by the Pinon Project, local library, and other community organizations.

## **Communicating Progress with Parents**

**Weekly Work Plans:** Students grades 1-8<sup>th</sup> will organize their lessons, assignments, and school work using a weekly work plan. These teacher-designed work plans allow teachers to assign specific lessons and learning activities based on CO Academic Standards. Depending on the time of year, skill level and responsibility of the student, students may have some role in structuring their weekly work plans. Students are responsible for completing work plans during the school week. Freedom and choice are important elements of a Montessori education and are privileges earned by completing required assignments in a timely manner.

Weekly work plans will go home with students every Friday and must be returned, signed by a parent, on Monday morning. Incomplete work will be sent home with the work plan for students to complete with parent support over the weekend. Cooperative family-school partnerships are essential in a Montessori based school. Families who consistently fail to return signed; completed work plans to school on Monday will receive help from the MTSS team, including the head of school to strategize ways to overcome the barriers to success.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

At least twice a year, in November and March, and additionally as requested, parent-teacher-child conferences will be held. These important conversations allow students to share their work, reflect upon progress, set goals, and identify areas they need to strengthen.

### **Special Conferences and Support**

Our teachers extend to parents a standing invitation to conferences as needed. Please contact your child's teacher with any questions regarding your child's development and education. Our teachers will gladly meet with you. If you have a specific challenge or concern and would like to request a more formal MTSS meeting, contact your student's Lead Teacher.

### **Elementary Progress Reports**

Student Progress Reports are sent home twice a year, in January and June. Progress reports outline the student's achievement and skill development in areas based on standards for their grade level.

### **Middle School Progress Reports**

Progress reports are issued at the end of each six week thematic cycle with a report card issued at the end of each semester (January and June). Progress Reports and Report Cards use the traditional A – F grading scale. Additionally, a minimum of two student-parent teacher conferences are held each year to foster a partnership in supporting each student's achievement.

### **Newsletters**

School and classroom newsletters will be sent home on a regular basis.

### **Parent Initiated Concerns**

If you have further concerns regarding any problem in school, please see our formal Parent Initiated Concerns Protocol [here](#).

### **Parent Involvement Hours**

A charter school's success is largely based on parent involvement. Kiva Montessori strongly encourages parents to complete a minimum of 20 parent involvement hours each school year. Sign ups will be available at back to school orientation. This allows parents to plan well in advance to make their commitments work with their schedules.

Some options for fulfilling this requirement:

- Classroom volunteers
- Assistance with Arrival and Dismissal
- School special events
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Fundraising projects
- Serving on Leadership Committees
  - Board of Directors
  - School Accountability Committee
  - PTO

More detailed information on these volunteer opportunities can be found [here](#).

### **Recording Hours:**

- Parents need to record their parent involvement hours in the office.

- 20 hours is the minimum expectation, but most families contribute far more than the minimum.
- Please continue logging hours after you meet our target as this helps us to document our community support and increases grant opportunities.
- Only volunteer efforts that take place at or that directly benefit our school count toward the parent involvement hours.
- Families who are unable to volunteer are welcome to make a tax-deductible financial contribution to the school.

## **Nutrition**

### **Food Allergies**

- It is critical that any food allergies are written down on your child's Emergency Card.
- All children with food allergies should have a Student Health Plan in place with our nurse.

### **Breakfast & Lunch**

Students have the option to purchase breakfast and/or lunch through our RE-1 school lunch program.

### **Snacks**

- Snacks are not provided
- Classrooms may allow snacks brought from home
- When available, healthy snacks may be provided for those without

### **Birthday Celebrations:**

- Celebrations cannot disturb the regular structure and flow of the school day without teacher prior approval.
- Parents must consult with their child's teacher in advance
- Instead of treats, we encourage you and your child to consider a small token or an activity instead
  - Montessori birthday celebration
  - Share their favorite storybook
  - Spotlight Poster
  - Spark PE time
  - Extra Recess
  - Colorful pencils or erasers
  - Donation to our garden

## **Health and Wellness**

**COVID-19:** Kiva Montessori has updated last year's [Return to Learn Plan](#), which can also be found on the school's website at [kivacharter.org](http://kivacharter.org). We have also adopted the policies and procedures of the Montezuma Cortez RE-1 School District regarding health and safety to meet the lingering required guidelines that must be left in place for future COVID-19 outbreaks or any other pandemic.

### **Leaving school due to illness**

If your child gets sick at school, we will contact you to decide whether or not to pick them up. Any student having a fever above 100.4, vomiting, or testing positive for Covid will need to go home right away.

### **Returning to School Following an Illness**

We are still required to have protocols in place for communicable diseases. Please consult our [guidelines](#) of when to keep your student home and when to bring your child back to school following an illness. Our attendance policy allows for a meeting to discuss problems and get creative with solutions should your child reach too many absences due to illness.

### **Medications at School**

- Prescription medications can only be dispensed with written permission from your child's doctor. Over the counter medications can be dispensed with written permission from parents.
- All medications must be turned in to office staff. **Under no circumstances should ANY medication (including vitamins, cough drops, and herbal supplements) be sent with students in pockets, backpacks, or lunch boxes!**
- **Prescription medication** must remain in the original container bearing the original label that shows the prescription number, name of medication, date filled, physician's name, student's name, and directions for dosage.
- **Over the counter medication** must remain in its original package with label, uses, dosage instructions, and expiration date intact and clearly labeled with the student's name.
- An adult must pick up the medication directly from the school as it cannot be sent home with the student.
- All medication will be locked at school. The only exception to this rule is when all conditions outlined in the Colorado School Children's Asthma and Anaphylaxis Health Management Act of 2005 are met.

### **Student Health Plans**

Parents of students with diagnosed, ongoing, or chronic health concerns requiring medication to be available and/or administered during school hours for more than fourteen (14) days, or any potentially life-threatening condition, such as severe food allergies, diabetes, asthma, or a history of anaphylaxis, shall work with the head of school and our consulting nurse to develop a Student Health Plan. The Student Health Plan shall outline specific procedures to address the student's ongoing health needs and guide Kiva Montessori staff in providing for those needs.

### **Immunization Disclosure**

The State of Colorado allows personal, religious, or medical exemptions for immunization requirements. Kiva Montessori, as required by state law, allows students who are exempt to attend school. This policy applies to all schools and care centers in the State of Colorado. A statement of "Exemption to Immunization Law" must be on file in the office and it is the parent's responsibility to provide documentation of the exemption requirements. In the event of an outbreak, exempted students may be subject to school exclusion and to quarantine.

**Animals at School:** Only classroom pets approved by the head of school may be present on school property. Personal pets should not be brought to school without pre-approval from both the classroom teacher and the head of school. For the safety of your pet and our students,



please do not bring pets to the carpool lane. Even the gentlest animal can become unpredictable during these busy, crowded parts of the day.

**Sun Protection:** Kiva Montessori joins the American Cancer Society and the Colorado Department of Human Services in recommending the use of sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher) by all students. Sunscreen should be applied 30 minutes prior to sun exposure as a method of sun protection. Parents are asked to apply sunscreen on their child prior to their arrival at school. During the day, all students will be provided the opportunity to reapply sunscreen at appropriate times during the day.

## **Emergency and Safety Plans**

Kiva Montessori follows the Re-1 School District policies for dealing with all emergencies and school closures. Staff is explicitly trained to handle emergency situations each year with clear lines of command to deal with hazardous or dangerous situations.

While your first inclination as a parent understandably might be to call or come to the school, it might interfere with emergency agencies that are dealing with the situation. Instead of calling or coming to the school, we ask that you get information from the following source:

Montezuma County Sheriff's "Nixle" Site: <https://local.nixle.com/register/>. You may sign up for free alerts in the event of Lockout or other advisory alerts that affect our county. You can choose to receive a text message or voice recording. This site has the latest information on when protocols go into effect and when they are lifted. Parents will be alerted immediately if the building must be evacuated. Parents will not be informed during drills.

As soon as it is safely possible, we will notify parents of pertinent information. **It is vital that you notify the school of any changes in your contact information so that you receive these important communications.**

**Entrance and Security:** When school is in session, parents and visitors must enter using the main entrance and sign in at the front office with the Administrative Assistant or Head of School. All visitors and parents entering the school during school hours must wear a visitor badge. These will be available when you sign in. To assure safety and security, we have closed campuses.

### **Fire and/or Emergency Evacuation Plan**

In the event of a fire or needed evacuation:

- the building alarm system will sound
- Students will be escorted to designated areas out of harm's way.
- Lead staff will have cell phones and emergency cards to contact parents and guide them in retrieving their children.
- Students will walk to the Cortez Recreation Center.
- Staff will stay with their students until all have been picked up and we ask that parents come within one hour of contact time.
- Identification will be required from parents and must be presented to staff members in charge of each group.
- No student will be released without such identification.

- Note: if an emergency contact person picked up your child, it is that person's responsibility to contact parents.
- We ask that parents check the radio or television for updated information.
- Briefing parents about a situation will be shared on a systematic basis which does not allow staff to field incoming calls from parents during a time of crisis. Safety for students is of utmost importance during these times.

**In-School Emergencies:** Kiva Montessori has five different types of in-building emergency response protocols depending on the situation:

- **Hold** is the protocol used when hallways need to be kept clear of occupants.
- **Secure** is the protocol used to safeguard people within the building. This means there is danger outside of the school and all students/staff/visitors must stay inside the building and no person may enter or leave the building. Activities resume as normal within the school.
- **Lockdown** is the protocol used to secure individual rooms and keep occupants quiet and in place. This means that there is danger inside of the school and all students/staff/visitors are required to stay within their classrooms, out of sight, silent, and away from windows.
- **Shelter in Place** means there is a danger requiring students/staff/visitors to follow specific directions in taking shelter. In the event of a tornado warning, all students will be escorted to the central hallways where we will play quiet games while awaiting an all clear sign from the radio or police.
- **Evacuate** is used to move people from one location to a different location in or out of the building.

#### **Injured Student:**

- **Minor injury or accident:** In the case of a minor scrape, cut, or bruising, the wound will be cleaned, iced (if necessary), bandaged, and of course given tender, loving care. If the student incurs an injury that requires further assistance, parents will be called to pick up their child. An Incident Report will be completed describing the accident and care given and parents are required to sign receipt of such form when picking up their child from school.
- **Major injury or accident:** Emergency first aid is given and advice of emergency personnel is followed. As soon as possible someone will be directed and all efforts will be made to reach parents. If parents cannot be reached, then your emergency contacts will be called. It is imperative that your child's Emergency Card is updated regularly to reflect any changes.

#### **Supervision of Students**

- All classrooms take daily attendance.
- Parents picking up students during the school day must sign them out through the front office.
- After-School staff will take attendance and track attendance throughout the after-school hours.
- Students not picked up and whose parent has not contacted the school will stay with a staff member and emergency contacts will be called. After 4:15 PM, the police will be consulted.

#### **Safety and Recess**

Student safety is of utmost concern to all Kiva Montessori staff. In an effort to support this, Kiva Montessori has specific toys and activities permitted during the recess period.

- **No personal toys are permitted on the school grounds.**

- This includes, but is not limited to skateboards, rollerblades, hockey sticks, electronic games, and cell phones.
- Kiva Montessori offers a variety of individual and group activities that promote fun, creativity, strength, agility, and endurance.

### **Fire, Weapons, Alcohol, Illegal Substances, and Tobacco**

Possession or the use of knives, firearms, weapons of any kind, illegal substances, liquor, vape or tobacco products within the school building, on school grounds, at school events, or on school buses is prohibited at all times.

## **Weather Guidelines**

### **Outdoor Play and Work**

Recess and playground time is built into the daily schedule for all students. If the actual temperature is 20 °F or higher, students will go outdoors unless it is raining, or we are experiencing a significant snowstorm or other extreme weather conditions. Please dress your child appropriately.

**School Closure:** All Kiva Montessori programs will be closed when deemed necessary by our head of school and executive committee members due to safety or weather conditions. We will follow-suit if Re-1 schools close for weather or other emergency situations, as well. If the District determines that the weather has deteriorated to the point that requires mid-day closure, we will do the same. In the event of a mid-day closure, parents will be notified by telephone of the early dismissal time and procedure.

## **Additional Items**

**Telephones:** Parents and guardians cannot call students during school hours, and students are not permitted to have cell phones in the classroom or on the playground. In the event of a family emergency, parents may contact the office and a message will be delivered to their student. Kiva Montessori's phones are not intended for personal use. Students are not permitted to use classroom telephones. Students may only use the front office phone under the supervision of school administration.

### **Parent Cell Phones**

In addition, we request that all adults refrain from using cell phones within the school. Please end all cell phone calls before dropping off or picking up your child(ren).

### **Holidays and Celebrations**

Kiva Montessori is fortunate to have students of diverse racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds. We consider our school and community diversity an asset that provides valuable learning experiences. We encourage parents to please make arrangements with their child's teacher to share their family's cultural traditions.

**Personal Party Invitations**

In order to avoid hurt feelings and lost invitations, party invitations may not be brought or distributed at school. Teachers cannot distribute invitations or provide contact information for students in the classroom. You are welcome to use the School Directory to help facilitate party plans.

**Items from Home**

No toys are allowed at school, even for sharing. This includes iPods, iPads, cell phones, and all other personal media devices. Their presence is distracting to our classroom environments and items are subject to confiscation until the end of the school day. If students would like to share an object of nature, something educational, or something created with their classmates, please check with the student's teacher first to ensure items are appropriate.

**Lost and Found**

It is important that valuable items be kept at home. We encourage students to be responsible for themselves, their outdoor clothing, and any other item they might bring to school. We ask parents to check the lost and found weekly for items that belong to their child(ren). Please claim only those items belonging to your family. Upon the last day of each month, all remaining items are donated to families in need. The lost and found is located in the Front Lobby

**Grievance Communication Pathway**

We encourage the usage of the Communication Pathway; however, employees and parents are always welcome to address concerns with the board directly at any time. The Communication Pathways can be accessed on our website at [kivacharter.org](http://kivacharter.org) or by clicking on the following link: [Communication Pathways](#). After reviewing the Communication Pathways, please reference the appropriate grievance procedure.