**2014-2015 FAMILY**

**HANDBOOK**



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**

### Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint you with the policies and procedures that support the day-to-day operations of Syringa Mountain School. These policies are designed to support a healthy academic, artistic, and social environment in our school. Please take time to become familiar with the policies in this handbook including the dress code, behavior and other areas that will help keep your school experiences positive and enriching. If you have questions about any of the information presented please contact the office or your child’s teacher. Through clear communication and understanding we will together achieve the very best education for your child.

**School Hours:**

Kindergarten 8:00 AM-12:30 PM

Grades 8:00 AM-2:30 PM

Office: 7:30 AM-3:30 PM

**After School Programs: -**

Kindergarten 12:30-2:30 and 2:30-5:30

Grades 2:30-5:30

**Contact information:**

Office: 208-806-2880

[www.syringamountainschool.org](http://www.syringamountainschool.org)

sgrover@syringamountainschool.org

**The Syringa Mountain School Leadership Team**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Position** | **First Name** | **Last Name** | **Phone** | **Email** |
| **SMS BOARD** |  |  |  |  |
| Board Member | Paul | Bates | 720-3136 | [peeceebeemee@cox.net](mailto:peeceebeemee@cox.net) |
| Board Chair | Greg | Bloomfield | 720-0250 | [gregb@woodriverinsurance.com](mailto:gregb@woodriverinsurance.com) |
| Board Member | Dr. Scott | McLean | 720-7638 | [scottmclean457@msn.com](mailto:scottmclean457@msn.com) |
| Board Member | Phoebe | Pilaro | *309-0255* | [pipilaro@earthlink.net](mailto:pipilaro@earthlink.net) |
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| Spanish Language | Julia | Wilson | 503-593-1976 | [bumblebgarden@gmail.com](mailto:bumblebgarden@gmail.com) |
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**Welcome to Syringa Mountain School**

The purpose of this handbook is both to deepen your understanding of the educational environment you have chosen for your child and to acquaint you with the policies and procedures that support the day-to-day work and play at Syringa Mountain School (SMS).

Waldorf Education was developed by Rudolf Steiner in 1919. Waldorf education seeks to foster and develop a creative, educated, and healthful interest in life. People who develop skills of sensitivity and fortitude in childhood have the ability to contribute positively to all aspects of adult life as responsible individuals. The structure is based on a profound understanding of human development that addresses the needs of the growing child. Waldorf teachers strive to transform education into an art that educates the whole child—the heart and the hands, as well as the head.

Teachers in Waldorf schools are dedicated to generating an inner enthusiasm for learning within every child. They achieve this in a variety of ways. Subjects are presented in a pictorial and dynamic manner. It allows motivation to arise from within and helps children have the capacity to live a life of joyful learning.

The Waldorf curriculum is broad and comprehensive. The Waldorf-Method is structured on developmentally appropriate curriculum that integrates the arts and music with academic subjects. There are three developmental phases of childhood: from birth to approximately 7 years, from 7 to 14 years and from 14 to 21 years. Rudolf Steiner stressed to teachers that the best way to provide meaningful support for the child is to comprehend these phases fully and to bring "age appropriate" content to the children that nourishes healthy growth. This unique approach touches and develops the feeling life of the child while enhancing the development of effort and will to participate. It enlivens the thinking capacities necessary for strong academic challenges in the world today. Syringa Mountain School (SMS) provides a nurturing learning community that honors and respects the wonder of childhood. In this age of pervasive media and technological influences Syringa Mountain School offers a healthy, balanced alternative that draws upon both age-old traditions and cutting edge research to determine how to best teach children and meet their needs.

The Waldorf approach of “head, heart and hands” helps children to integrate and retain what they learn through experiential, multi-sensory and emotionally engaged learning experiences. Our educational methods and curriculum are designed to invigorate the mind intellectually, engage the heart through experiences with creativity, beauty and wonder and to work actively with the hands and body throughout the day.

As a public charter school, we meet Idaho State Standards and testing requirements and comply with health and safety regulations, and educational laws applicable to Idaho Charter Schools. Our SMS Waldorf-Methods curriculum meets and, in many instances, exceeds the state standards in timing and content. Some specific aspects of our curriculum come in a grade before or later than is recommended by state standards. We consistently work through these challenges while striving to bring forth a Waldorf-Methods curriculum that supports joy with educational excellence. Our goal is to inspire and empower students to reach their full academic and creative potential so they may lead fulfilling, purposeful lives and make positive contributions to the multi-cultural society and world community in which they live.

**Our Mission: Cultivating the Head, Heart and Hand**

Syringa Mountain School offers Waldorf-inspired, arts-integrated education, incorporating sustainable living practices and experiential learning in a K- 8 public school setting. Each child will impart meaning and direction to their lives, through cultivating their intellectual, physical, emotional, social and creative capacities in natural learning environments. Through a supportive community of peers, parents and teachers, each child will become a confident, self-directed and engaged learner, invested in his/her own education.

**Our Vision:**

Syringa Mountain School provides a rigorous integrated educational program through a whole- child approach to learning. By integrating traditional Waldorf methods and curriculum with the Idaho State Standards, children will emerge from Syringa Mountain School with a life-long passion for learning, well prepared for the transition into other academic programs, as creative thinkers, engaged citizens with a strong work ethic, and prepared to become stewards of the earth and its many diverse communities.

Syringa Mountain School embraces the key aspects of the local sustainability movement, providing students and their families with an increased connection to their local environment. By utilizing the rich community resources of Blaine County, and through ongoing cultivation and development of the school’s garden and farm, all children will be enabled to deepen their connection with the earth, self and community.

## Our Educational Philosophy

Syringa Mountain School’s curriculum places equal emphasis on a strong academic foundation, artistic expression, social development, and attention to the needs of each child. According to William Butler Yeats, “Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.” Waldorf education engages a child’s intellect, imagination, will and sense of aesthetics. How a subject is taught is equally important as what is taught, hence the use of movement and arts in the curriculum. The research‐based, time‐tested pedagogical methods designed by Dr. Rudolf Steiner are at the heart of this mode of education. Waldorf methods inspire student volition, inquisition, and creativity because classroom activities involve three key areas—the head (thinking), the heart (feeling) and the hands (willing). A study conducted by Dr. Carrie Norlund found students who were educated with Waldorf‐based arts integration reported numerous benefits, including divergent thinking, internalized knowledge through on‐going visual stimuli, emotional intelligence, balance, self‐perception, creativity and strength of will.

The Waldorf-inspired approach to education recognizes that certain capacities emerge in students at fairly predictable stages, while also allowing for individual rates of maturation and uniqueness. This recognition of child development underlies both the organization of the curriculum and the methods of teaching. Classrooms, materials used and curriculum cultivate a sense of beauty, wonder and deep respect for the natural world, affirming that the intelligence and imagination of the young child is best developed with a minimum use of technology; up to grade six computer technology is used only as a practical necessity for computer based testing, library and research purposes. Learning a second language begins in first grade. The joy of music enhances cognitive development throughout all of the grades including flute and violin. Cooperation and self-advancement is encouraged rather than outwardly directed competition.

SMS offers Kindergarten through Grade 5, with grades 6,7, and 8 being added with each subsequent year. At the heart our education model is the conviction that education is an art. Whether the subject is arithmetic, history, or physics, the presentation must live--it must speak to the child's experience and observation of the world. First, in this method, comes the encounter, then encounter becomes experience and out of the experience the concept crystallizes. Encounter/experience, concept/ perception, feeling/idea: these are the three steps in every genuine learning process. As such, the education at SMS stresses the natural developmental rhythms of the child.

Teachers often lead the same group of children through the grades from 1-6, or 1-8 loops, fostering mutual respect and enhancing the teacher's ability to meet each child's needs as they unfold. The academic curriculum integrates the arts, drama, painting, and music, drawing and modeling. This model of education through the arts awakens imagination and creative powers, bringing vitality and wholeness to learning.

Each day begins with a two-hour main lesson. The main lesson is taught for a three or four- week block, and is often continued later in the term. Textbooks are not typically used in the elementary grades, but rather, the teacher creates a presentation and the children make their own books for each subject taught. These beautiful main lesson books are an important way in which art is integrated into everyday learning. Specialty subjects make up the remainder of the day. These subjects, often taught by specialty teachers, include foreign languages, music, eurhythmy, and artistic and practical activities. For a complete description of the curriculum, please refer to the “SMS Curriculum Guide” available in the office or communicate with your child's teacher.

### School Organization

Syringa Mountain School is authorized by the State Charter School Commission. The authorizer has provided the authority for the SMS to operate as a charter school within the district boundaries. The authorizer provides oversight ensuring the tenets of the charter are adhered to. The day to day operational oversight is provided by SMS Board of Directors who oversee the budget, policies and evaluation of the school director.

A collaborative model governs SMS where the Board, Administration, Staff Council and Parent Council work together on policy and procedural issues. Within the charter school, the SMS Board of Directors is the final decision making body.

## Board of Directors

## The Board of Directors is responsible for ensuring that the school's practices are consistent with the vision and mission of the school. It approves all personnel, financial/budget, curriculum, instruction, calendar and policy and procedures for the school. They ratify the annual budget. A copy of the Board of Directors Bylaws, meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the school website: www.syringamountainschool.org.

### The Staff Council

The Staff Council delivers the educational program. The Staff Council meets regularly to discuss important instructional issues. The Staff Council also assumes a wide range of roles to support school and student success. Whether these roles are assigned formally or shared informally, they build the entire school’s capacity to improve. The Staff Council work closely with all constituents to ensure the quality of educational programs and maintain the highest possible standards for teaching and learning. They act as an influential advisory body on education, policy, and program matters and are facilitated by the School Administrator. Other instructional staff may also be asked to contribute to the support of the school through meetings, committees, etc.

## Parent Involvement

Research conducted on the effects of parental involvement in the education of their children is clear--children and schools thrive when parents get involved. One of the unique features of Syringa Mountain School is the high level of parental involvement. Parents/guardians who choose Syringa Mountain School for their children agree to give an average of forty hours over the course of the school year towards various volunteer opportunities that may include: playground supervision, assisting in the classroom, site maintenance, fundraising, hospitality, room parenting, serving on a committee, attending parent education evenings, or donating a specific skill or area of expertise. This high level of parental involvement enables parents/guardians to become integrally involved in shaping SMS and ensuring it fulfills its overall mission. In order to provide all parents/guardians with the opportunity to be informed about and participate in school level decision-making, information about the SMS Board meetings, agendas and activities is readily available to all families.

## Parent Council

The Syringa Mountain School Parent Council serves as an essential support group formed by SMS parents. The Parent Council upholds the mission and vision of SMS, promotes the school's educational program, advises governance, contributes to the physical maintenance of the school, conducts fundraising efforts, coordinates volunteers for festivals and events, and generally provides appropriate support to parents. All parents are encouraged to attend and participate in Parent Council Meetings. Parent Council Members are called upon to advise the Board, Administrator and Staff Council in decision making, goal setting through strategic planning, parent surveys, parent education meetings and parent conferences. The Parent Council Handbook is available on the school website.

## Class Organization

Each class has at least one Room Parent. They provide support and facilitate communication at all levels for the classroom teacher and families. They provide direct teacher and classroom support; such as organizing field trips, room volunteers, class meetings, play performances, and class projects. They create and maintain a classroom contact list. They coordinate the class parents to assist the teacher on class projects, plays, field trips, festivals. They assist the teacher in keeping the class parents apprised of news and events. They inspire and encourage participation in community and school-wide events, such as community work days, celebrations, fundraisers, parent education, and social events. We hope you will consider serving as a Room Parent.

### 

### Absenteeism

When a child does not attend school on any school day, he or she is considered absent. Parents must notify the office in person, by phone, email or text within 1 hour of the start of that school day. We strongly encourage families to arrange for vacations and trips during non-school periods. Please be aware that the continuity of your child’s class study is interrupted when he/she is absent. Additionally, as a public charter school, your child’s attendance effects our school funding. It is imperative to be conscientious in this regard.

### After School Program

After school Kindergarten Care and after school grades programs are a self-funded after-school program designed to serve SMS families who need child care after normal school hours. For information regarding this program, go to the school website or contact Hannah Beane. hbeane@syringamountainschool.org

### Animals on Campus

When visiting the school campus, please leave your animals at home. Dogs and other animals are not allowed on campus to ensure security for our students. Exceptions must be approved by your child’s teacher and the school director.

### 

### Arriving Late - Tardies

Because there is a rhythm to the day, with an opening and a closing activity, it is important that your child arrive at school on time to benefit from the entire class day. If a child is late, the child must first get a late pass from the school office before the child goes to class. It is imperative to knock and please wait for a teacher to respond. This may take a few minutes if the class is in the middle of an activity that would be diminished for everyone if it were interrupted. Parents must notify the attendance office the same day as the tardy the reason for the tardy. The parent may come to the attendance office, email, text or phone.

### Early Pick Up of a Student

When a parent or guardian plans to pick a child up early, they need to send a notice at the beginning of the school day to the teacher. Students may go on walking field trips and the student may not be on campus unless the teacher is notified prior to leaving. Parents must go to the school office and sign out the student prior to going to the classroom to get the student.

**Car-pooling and public transportation**

SMS supports car-pooling and public transportation options for our families. Our goal is to reduce the number of cars coming onto our campus as much as possible. The benefits of doing this are tremendous: less stress for families; stronger community connections; less pollution; and improved relations with our neighbors. We ask that everyone make a concerted effort to car pool or bus pool as much as possible.

### Emergency School Closure and Snow Days

Announcements regarding school closure due to weather conditions, lack of electricity, etc., will be made on KECH and KSKI in the mornings as soon as conditions have been checked. SMS follows the same snow day protocol as the Blaine County School District. When the BCSD schools are closed, SMS is closed as well. Once the children are at school, School Closures that occur during the school day will be announced on the radio. Every family will receive a phone notice via our emergency phone system when there is a school closure.

### Lunch, Snacks and Food Allergies

Please make sure your child has an adequate breakfast at home.

Kindergarten students only need to bring a hearty snack on Fridays (hike day). We will provide a hearty, organic mid-morning snack Monday –Thursday. Kindergarten children participating in the aftercare program must also bring a lunch.

All grade students need to bring a mid-morning snack and lunch. Send wholesome ingredients, fruits and vegetables, and as little sugar as possible. No gum, candy, soda, unhealthy foods. Foods such as vegetable sticks, fresh fruit, nuts, and wholesome yogurts make wonderful snack time meals. Healthful sandwiches, warm pasta or rice, legume dishes, or any wholesome, healthful carbohydrate-rich fare is a boon for your child’s developing body at lunchtime. The young child, especially, benefits greatly from a lunch kept warm in a Thermos. It is good to note that steady blood sugar level is desirable to support the children’s activities of the day.

Help us in our effort to reduce waste by sending snacks and lunches in reusable containers with reusable utensils in lunch boxes void of media or commercial images. Our students typically eat in their classrooms. Some of our students have food allergies therefore we discourage sharing of foods. Your child’s teacher will notify you if there are any food restrictions in the classroom to ensure all of our students are safe while at school.

### Walking Field Trips

### Class may go for a walking field trip as part of their daily activity at the school. Parents sign an acknowledgement when enrolling a student giving permission for students to go on walking trips. Parents will be notified when these are scheduled. If a parent knows they need to take a student out early on any day, they need to send a notice to the class teacher so arrangements can be made to pick up the child early.

## Festivals & Ceremonies

## The festivals serve as an opportunity for the entire school community to join together in seasonal celebrations. Planning and working together in anticipation of the festival and celebrating during the festival creates bonds among the entire community. The festivals serve as an important bridge between home life and school life. This is a listing of possible festivals, but specific events will be decided each year in conjunction with the Staff and Parent Council and the SMS Board. Before each festival is celebrated, information about it will be included in the newsletter and school website. These festivals would not be possible without the participation of the children and their families.

### Opening Ceremony

Traditionally, the opening ceremony is held on campus the morning of the first day of school for all grade students. Friends and family (including kindergarten families) are invited to attend. Amid speeches and stories, the community is welcomed back to school. As the children file back to their classrooms to meet their first day’s work, parents are invited to stay and visit, enjoying refreshments provided by the Parent Council.

### 

### Michaelmas-the Festival of Courage, celebrated in September, is the autumn festival of courage as we say good-bye to the warm days of summer and prepare for the cold, dark months of winter. We gather our courage and strength to face the inner and outer darkness with a renewed will and purpose in our lives. The archetypical image of the battle with the dragon symbolizes this courage and strength.

**Lantern Walk** This festival represents how we must prepare the vessel and then ignite our inner light in order o meet the darkness of winter. The children make beautiful lanterns at school. One crisp fall evening in mid-November, we light our lanterns, walk and sing in the dark evening and gather for hot cider and refreshments.

**Winter Spiral** Winter Solstice celebrates a turning point when darker and shorter days become illuminated by candlelight, and we experience a mood of anticipation and preparation for the return of light. Each student walks the pine-bough spiral, receiving in reverence a light for their candles, which symbolizes the awakening of their own inner light. All of the candles together light up the darkness as we sing songs with full hearts.

**May Faire** As the days get longer, the sun brightens not only the outer world, but lightens our inner selves too. Spring bursts forth and new life appears all around us. The butterfly emerging from its chrysalis is a symbol of renewal. We celebrate with a traditional Maypole around which the children and parents dance to lively music and celebrate the rebirth of spring and the earth.

### Closing Ceremony

As the school grows, the school will have a closing ceremony held mid-morning on the last day of school. The children go home at the ceremony’s end. Family and friends are invited to attend. The faculty and some classes make artistic presentations.

### Children with Special Needs

SMS will make significant effort to respond to the personal and academic needs of each child, and to identify and serve students based on their identified needs. The school’s small size, student-staff ratios, and looping model allow educators to develop special sensitivity towards individual student needs and backgrounds. This translates into a nurturing learning environment with low-stress levels and maximized success. However, some students will invariably need additional individual support. Our goal is to meet the needs of all our students through the use of a three-tiered system of support.

### 

### Tier I: Prevention

### Tier I includes high quality classroom instruction delivered by qualified teachers and regular assessments of all students to monitor their progress toward reaching grade level benchmarks. Teachers are trained to address different learning styles of their students and the classroom teachers work closely with the specials teachers to ensure a unified, supportive learning approach for all of our students.

### Tier II: Identification and Selected Interventions

*Identification*: Beyond academic performance, teachers look for other signals of need as we recognize that there are many factors that affect a student's performance.

*Selected Interventions:*Selected interventions are implemented by teachers for students who are not experiencing success in any of SMS’s offerings. Interventions may include, but are not limited to, any of the following: utilizing other teachers for collaborative, individual or small group instruction; utilizing parent volunteers for individual or small group instruction; peer support with older students, e.g. “reading buddies;” individualized or differentiated math, writing, reading, and spelling approaches; increased movement/sensory integration activities; modified class work, extra lessons, or extended learning opportunities. The Student Support Coordinator will work closely with staff, parents and the child to intervene on their behalf.

### 

### Tier III: Student Study Team Intensive Interventions

### If there is minimal or limited success or no improvement during the first two tiers of support, the student will likely be referred to the Student Study Team (SST), for further assessment. The school will follow the state SST processes with appropriate documentation and referral to special education assessment for services when indicated. Assistance will be requested/contracted when needed.

***Care Team*:** To ensure that no student “falls through the cracks” a standing committee known as the *Care Team—*comprised of staff members, the Student Support Coordinator and the Director meet regularly to monitor all students’ progress and to advocate for students. The Care Team uses a systematic problem-solving approach to assist students with any concerns that are interfering with success. Parent input may be solicited for the Care Team process. The Care Team provides additional support, coordination of interventions and services, and mentoring for the staff when students are identified as Tier II.

The Care Team clarifies problems and concerns, develops strategies and organizes resources, provides a system for accountability, and serves to assist, counsel and support the parent, teacher, and student. *The Care Team is a general education function.* All students can benefit from the Care Team, including but not limited to, those students achieving below grade level, those who are achieving above grade level and require greater challenge, and students who have experienced emotional trauma, behavioral issues, or language issues. Instructional staff that have concerns for a student can refer that student to the Care Team for consideration.

### Communication

A regular electronic newsletter provides curriculum and school activity updates. Hard copies of the newsletter are available upon request from the office. Submissions for the newsletter may be given to the office and are due one week prior to publication. Any information originating from outside sources needs to be approved by the office in advance.

### Donation of Property

When you make a donation of property to the school you need to request a tax donation receipt from the office. If you plan to lend an item to the school or classroom for temporary use you need to notify the office for inventory purposes. Any proper ty left at or donated to the school will be considered school property unless it has been registered as a temporary/lent item.

### Expectations of Parent Participation

Parents are involved at all levels of the school to ensure their children’s education is as rich as possible. Assisting their child’s teacher both in the classroom and with class and home activities including home visits, and working on various committees and tasks utilizing their expertise, parents are essential to student success. Parents of SMS students are expected to be active participants in their student’s education and the life of the school as much as possible. It is essential that parents wanting to join the SMS community understand fully their responsibilities. To that end, a parent agreement is part of the registration packet, and is signed and filed for each SMS family.

**Homework**

Homework can be an integral part of a grades curriculum at SMS. It is framed by the philosophical ideal that we wish our children to be excited about learning and confident in their abilities as students. Our curriculum teaches to the head, heart, and hand of the child and homework should be balanced in the same way. Finally, rhythm between activity and quiet, in-breath and out-breath, is important in all that we do at school. It is our intent that homework will fit into a similar rhythm at home.

We value homework for it can also strengthen the bridge between school and home by providing parents with a glimpse of the work being done at school. However, homework should include only work that a student can do by himself or herself. Once students begin our strings and flute program, it is important that they practice their instrument at home regularly.

### Reports

Student reports are mailed or emailed home in the fall, winter, and spring for grades 1-5 and in spring for kindergarten students who meet the school’s age cut-off for first grade in the fall. Student reports contain attendance records (grades 1-5) and a narrative evaluation.

**Parent Concerns**

SMS staff want to know your concerns. Please contact your child’s teacher or the school Director whenever questions arise. We all have an obligation not to create an atmosphere of gossip and complaint at SMS. Parents are encouraged to speak directly to the person they might have a concern with as a matter of course. If the concern cannot be resolved, parents may address the Director.

**Parent Involvement-It Takes a Village**

Here at Syringa Mountain School, we adults are united in our love and care for the children. When families enroll at child at SMS, part of the process includes filling out information about particular skills you have and areas in which you would like to contribute. This information is collated and given to pertinent Committee Chairs and staff members, so don’t be surprised when you get a call asking you if you would like to paint a wall or bake a pie or whatever it is that

you do well. The other ways you are most likely to find out about needs at the school are:

Read email updates from the office as well as our school newsletter

Attend a parent evening hosted by your child’s teacher;

Attend a Parent Council meeting.

Become involved in directly supporting your child and your child’s teacher

The most essential form of parent participation starts with supporting your child to be a successful student. This includes making sure he or she gets plenty of sleep, arrives to school regularly and on time, comes with a healthful lunch and completes homework (where age appropriate). It is also important that you stay in close communication with your child’s teacher. This involves attending parent meetings, reading all communication sent, mailed or emailed home, coming to parent/teacher conferences and bringing any questions that you have directly to teachers in a timely manner. Do not underestimate the transformative power of these simple acts. In addition, you can support your child and your child’s teachers by doing things like driving for field trips, carpooling or bus pooling, and helping as needed with class plays or activities. Finally, your financial support is needed. As a charter school, the funds we receive per student from the state are not sufficient to cover the cost of the programs we offer. We need your activity fees as well as your whole-hearted participation in our fundraising events.

The most satisfied parents at SMS are the ones who, in addition to daily support of their child and child’s teacher, find a way to contribute to the school as a whole that stimulates their own inner development. The possibilities are endless: work in the garden; care for the garden/farm; join the Handwork Group; join a study group; participate in a work day; take on a special project in the office… As you take on volunteer responsibilities, we ask that you keep track of your hours. We are asking parents to contribute 40 hours toward the success of the school, in whatever way you are able (As a non -profit, we are required to account for volunteer contributions.)

### 

### Redress Procedures

Disagreement may arise in any community; such differences are a common consequence of human interaction. In a majority of these situations, the parties involved resolve the problems directly. At SMS, we strive to resolve all issues in a supportive environment, which honors all parties. Please note that our ultimate focus at SMS is educating our students. Parents need to work to resolve their differences with an open heart and a willingness to heal and move on.

### Dress Code

Children are expected to dress neatly, cleanly, warmly and modestly. Clothing is to fit well: no sleeves dangling over the hands or pants that drag on the ground. Students work and play hard, and clothing may become soiled so keep this in mind when dressing your child for school. In order to keep maintenance chores to a minimum, students are asked to bring indoor shoes that stay at school. Extreme faddish clothing and hairstyles have a distracting effect on students and should be avoided. We wish to discourage focus on superficial, outward differences and protect students from influences that tend to prematurely push them into the world of adolescence before they are out of grade school. We also ask that you limit finger nail polish. Modest clothing includes tops that cover the mid section, and shorts/skirts that are just above the knee. Jewelry should be modest. If it becomes distracting, the child will be asked to remove it and not wear again.

Shoes:

Students change into their **indoor shoes** when they arrive at school and wear them while inside the school building. Both indoor shoes and outdoor footwear should support the foot and fit snuggly so they do not fall off during active movement. Loose sandals and flip-flops are not permitted. Please have your children wear socks every day.

Hats:

Students are not permitted to wear hats or hoods in the classrooms unless approved by the teacher. They are allowed outside for sun protection and warmth in the winter.

Weather:

**Students go outside every day** so prepare your child for changing weather including rain and snow. Please dress children in layers, as we can experience many different types of weather in one school day – for example, a good undershirt and long underwear (during cold months), a long sleeve, light sweatshirt or sweater and a coat. Please have your children wear socks every day.

Logos:

SMS strives to be a model of quality and beauty in the educational process and to create an atmosphere of care and respect in all that fills the lives of students at our school. **To that end we ask that all clothing, shoes, school bags and lunch containers be free of any logos, corporate advertising, and media images or characters.**

**Please Note:** Parents are asked to send and leave at school one long sleeve and one short sleeve shirt, a pair of undergarments, a pair of pants, and a sweatshirt. If a student is dressed inappropriately, or needs a change of clothes for any reason, he or she will be asked to change into one of these items. **Please provide a cloth bag with the child’s name, for these items to be contained within in the child’s classroom.** Questions about our dress policy can be directed to your child’s teacher.

### Shared Discipline

When a parent is on site with their child, they are responsible for their child’s safety. Thank you!

**Standardized Testing**

As a charter school, SMS is required to administer standardized tests annually. Currently, K-3 grade students are individually interviewed in the fall and the spring to assess their pre-reading and reading skills using the Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI). Students in grades 3 through 8 are tested in the spring in English Language Arts and Mathematics using a computerized test. Additionally, 5th grade students are also tested in Science, again using a computerized test.

In addition to meeting state requirements, these tests can be a valuable tool to the school, when viewed in light of our multi-faceted approach to assessment. The message being conveyed to students in our classrooms is that the purpose of the testing is to help the teacher know what the class needs to work on. The students simply need to relax and do their best. Our expectation is that the students will approach their experience of standardized testing in the same joyful, confident way that they approach any other aspect of their school life. As a parent, we ask that you foster this attitude as well. If you have any questions about your child’s standardized test scores, please speak with his or her class teacher.

SMS may conduct annual hearing and vision testing. In addition, SMS participates in the federally mandated Child Find program, designed to identify children who may be in need of special education services. SMS’s commitment to Child Find includes the following:

Providing information to parents regarding early intervention services for children ages birth through 2 years;

Providing information to parents regarding preschool special education services for children between the age of 3 years and the required age for starting kindergarten;

Screening all kindergarten students and all newly enrolled grades students who do not have records of screening, evaluation, and progress in school.

Initiating referrals for students who may need evaluation for possible special education services;

Notices of times for standardized tests, hearing and vision tests, and any other screenings will be given in the school newsletter.

### Parent and Community Education

### SMS uses the following methods to communicate with and to strengthen our community.

### Home visits: To build a bridge between the child's school and home life, teachers value the opportunity to visit your home as part of the enrollment process. Children often forge a special connection with the teacher who comes into their environment--the home. The teacher is able to experience the child in the home setting and thereby gain a deeper understanding of the child. This helps to expand the teacher's ability to appreciate the child's way of being and behavior in the classroom. Home visits are most often used in Early Childhood and in the lower grades, but may be suggested at any grade level.

### Parent/teacher conferences and conversations: We have regularly scheduled dates throughout the school year for parent-teacher conferences. Please see the calendar for specific dates. There may be other times that teacher or parent would like to share observations with respect to a child's participation in our program. At such times, a parent-teacher conversation may be arranged by appointment. All teachers have regularly scheduled office hours during the week and will let families know when they are available outside school hours. When there are attendance or discipline problems, additional parent/teacher conferences may be required.

### Weekly email updates: Weekly notices and updates about upcoming events, classroom activities, and committee/faculty/board business are included in the

### SMS newsletter, a weekly bulletin emailed to parents by the administration office usually on Fridays. Should you not receive the newsletter one week, contact the office to get a copy and verify your email address. Should you not have an email address, have your name placed on the “hardcopy list,” so you can pick one up at the office at your convenience, or it can be sent home with your child.

### Our website: [www.syringamountainschool.org](http://www.syringamountainschool.org) Our website brings many new families to our school. Not only is it a great resource for potential new families, but it provides another way for current SMS families to stay up-to-date with what is going on in our school community. We are working to update

### our website regularly, posting a monthly calendar, current job openings and other timely information.

### School office: Sometimes what you need is to talk to a real person. The school office hours are listed at the front of this handbook. We

### welcome your questions and look forward to getting to know you.

### Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct

### SMS’s primary focus is to provide the best possible learning environment for the children in our care. In order to do this, we believe it is necessary to pay close attention to our interactions with each other as adults. If we are hurried, unkind or unfeeling to each other as we busily work “for the sake of the children”, we miss a tremendous opportunity to contribute meaningfully to our children’s education. We believe that it is what we do on a day-to-day basis that speaks most loudly to our children. All adults in the community–teachers, staff members and parents – should consider themselves at all times to be role models. The benefit to the children is immense when we speak respectfully to each other, avoid gossip, take concerns to their source, forgive readily, observe school policies and courtesies, and follow through with what we say we are going to do. Our goal is to develop a culture where we work together to hold ourselves accountable to these ideals. Any person on the school’s campus is expected to uphold the school-wide code of conduct outlined in the Culture of Caring Program.

### In addition parents must follow these guidelines when interacting with students on campus or during any school sponsored activity:

### We are a drug and smoke free campus. Drugs, alcohol and tobacco may not be consumed on campus or in the presence of students.

### It is expected that everyone interacting with students use appropriate language at all times. Profanity is not permitted.

### We all come from different backgrounds and have differing views and tolerance levels. A comment intended innocently may be interpreted differently. The best policy is to avoid “joking” and “teasing” and focus on constructive communication.

### Any person chaperoning a field trip or school activity must follow the school’s Discipline Policy. Make sure you have a clear understanding of this policy and the teacher’s expectation of you in this role. If you are not functioning in an official chaperone or supervision capacity, do not take it upon yourself to discipline any student. If you observe any inappropriate behavior, report it directly to the responsible teacher so that it can be handled in a timely manner.

### Be aware of the types of conversations you are engaging in. For example, it is not helpful to discuss a concern about a staff member, parent or student in the presence of students, whether at school or in your home. This also includes negative “parking lot” talk.

### Teachers are on campus to teach our students. Please respect their work. Parents are encouraged to visit and participate in classroom activities, however these visits must be pre-scheduled with the teacher and or office. Parents are not permitted to enter a classroom unannounced. Each teacher has office hours when they can be contacted to discuss any questions or issues you may have. If you have an issue that requires immediate attention, it must be brought to the office.

### Field Trips and Class Trips

### Students may travel off campus for some of their activities. These experiences may take the following forms:

### Walking Field Trips: These are walks within a mile radius of the school. You will be notified of any walking field trips by your child’s teacher. Teachers taking classes on walks check in at the office before leaving and upon returning and always have a cell phone with them in case of emergency.

### Day Trips by Car or Public Transportation

### Parents must sign a field trip permission form every time a class goes on a field trip. One copy of this form stays in the office and one copy goes with the teacher. These permission slips detail where the class is going, the cost of the trip, and what the children need to bring with them. The form also contains the parents’ signatures and emergency contact information for parents. Unless public transportation is being used, we most commonly rely (with much gratitude) on parent drivers. These are the requirements for parent volunteers who drive on field trips:

### 1) Every driver on a field trip, whether parent or teacher, must photocopy his or her driver’s license and proof of car insurance, and leave it with the office before embarking on the field trip.

### 2) Teachers are responsible to ensure that all parent drivers have completed requirement number one before departing campus. The office will keep this information with the copies of field trip permission forms. This requirement pertains both to day field trips and extended class trips.

### 3) All parent drivers should have with them directions to the field trip location and the contact information of the teacher leading the field trip.

### Development and Fundraising

### SMS receives approximately $4500 per student funding from the State of Idaho for all students enrolled on our charter school. Unlike Blaine County district schools, however, SMS does not receive any funds generated by Blaine County property taxes, such that our funding comes out to approximately $9,000 less per student than district schools receive. The result is that we need to fundraise every year in order to be able to offer our full Waldorf program! The following are the different kinds of fundraising in which we engage:

### Grants: SMS continues to seek appropriate grants and find that this is an area where parent volunteers with grant writing experience can make a significant

### contribution.

### Annual Giving: SMS is in the process of establishing our Annual Giving program. Annual Giving provides board, staff and community members to make a gift to the school at whatever level they are able, with an emphasize on 100% participation. Funds typically support our students directly, by going toward areas that have been identified as priorities by the staff. Gifts made through the Annual Giving program can either be made as a pledge paid out monthly over the year or as a one-time donation. At its best, Annual Giving serves as a powerful reminder that what happens between teachers and students and among us all as members of this community is neither a commodity that can be purchased, nor a public service that is owed to us, but instead a gift that is given freely and with love.

### Capital Campaign contributions: SMS will be launching a capital campaign to support of significant campus improvements.

### Event-based fundraising: The Parent Council organizes event-based fundraisers. In addition to bringing in funds, these events are designed to promote outreach and build community.

### Class level curriculum-based fundraising: As a rule we discourage student participation in fundraising. In some instances, involvement in certain money -making activities will occur if it is aligned with grade level pedagogy. Money made by class-based fundraising activities is typically used for class trips, which are also supported by fees paid by parents.

### Syringa Mountain School’s Environmental Ethic

### The 6th guiding principle in our Culture of Caring Program (below) instills and nurtures respect for the stewardship of the natural environment. At SMS, we actively practice:

### 1. Composting. Classrooms have a compost bucket for food scraps. The composting area in the garden is set up to teach everyone how to layer food scraps with other materials for effective composting.

### 2. Recycling. We recycle those materials allowed by the City of Hailey. There are recycling containers in the common area. Please use them when possible and take care to put in only accepted items.

### 3. Organics/Bio dynamics. We are striving to become an organic--and eventually a biodynamic--campus. This means in part that we refrain from using pesticides, herbicides or chemical fertilizers if at all possible. In Culture and Horticulture, Wolf D. Strol says, "Bio dynamics is a human service to the earth and its creatures, not just a method for increasing production or for providing healthy food. Bio dynamics can be summed up as putting one's energies into supporting the good rather than fighting the bad.” Parents and outside community members are encouraged to participate in the garden workdays and special guest lectures and demonstrations.

### Community Days: Our goal is to develop a shared sense of responsibility for the care of our campus. This involves cleaning up after ourselves and others and working to make every corner of our campus beautiful. Several times a year we gather as a community to work, play and break bread together. Work projects vary from general campus maintenance, spring cleaning, to campus improvements to neighborhood service activities. Depending on the season, there are opportunities to sing, dance or play simple games together. The meal is potluck and everyone is welcome. Community days are based on the knowledge that many hands make light work and that the best way to get to know each other is to work side by side.

**Culture of Caring & Discipline Procedures**

Mission Statement

The mission of the Culture of Caring Program at Syringa Mountain School is to be proactive in the creation and support of a school family. A Culture of Caring promotes and ensures the physical, emotional, and psychological health and safety of our students, families, faculty, staff and greater community.

Guiding Principles

1-A Culture of Caring nurtures a school family that recognizes the interconnectedness of us all. The essence of developing a school family is to recognize that we are all in this together. The interdependent relationships we encounter daily are the foundation of the school climate which creates the cradle for learning. By placing these relationships as a priority, we are providing our teachers and students the valuable opportunity to develop and work on the skills necessary to provide safety and security for our students and community members to express their feelings and needs.

2- A Culture of Caring views conflict as a learning opportunity. How we handle conflict affects our relationships with each other and feelings of trust and safety within our school. By embracing conflict as a positive opportunity, we develop self-awareness and inner strength thus creating a more powerful voice of the individual. Bullying, teasing and gossiping promote fear, blame and disrespect and cannot be tolerated in our Culture of Caring.

3-A Culture of Caring understands that contributing in a meaningful way develops individual self-worth. Contributing in a meaningful way develops the individual self-worth of all members of the SMS community. How we interact with each other and our environment affects our feelings of belonging in our community.

4-A Culture of Caring creates compassion for each member’s uniqueness. Each member of our community comes to our school family with their own uniqueness. As the cells of our bodies are interdependent, each cell has its own specific unique function to the organism as a whole. Diversity of our school family enriches everyone’s experience through celebration, compassion, tolerance, and pride.

5- A Culture of Caring understands and acknowledges that home/family life contributes to the learning environment. Home and family life are an integral part of the learning experience. The values, beliefs and assumptions that a child brings to the school environment directly affects each child’s educational experience. How we incorporate these family values impacts the educational and social environment of our school community.

6-A Culture of Caring instills and nurtures respect for the stewardship of the natural environment. We live on a planet that has natural rhythms. To deny those rhythms is to deny a part of oneself. Recognizing, respecting and honoring our natural environment and its cycles promotes harmony, balance, and unity within ourselves and the community.

7- A Culture of Caring recognizes that promoting individual health allows members to be fully present and achieving full potential. The concept of health encompasses an individual’s physical, emotional, and social self. A healthy individual is better able to participate and fully contribute to their community.

**Discipline Policy**

Philosophy

At Syringa Mountain School, we believe that children have a right to a quality education in a safe and caring environment. Our discipline policy starts with the adults of the school and our commitment to work on ourselves and to treat each other and the children in our care with respect. We want to provide children – and adults – with the opportunity to learn from our mistakes and to develop over time an inner-sense of what is right in the moment. Our goal is to create a healthy learning environment by fostering respect for self and others, by providing clear expectations and boundaries and by promoting problem-solving skills among our students.

School-wide Code of Conduct

Be kind;

Be safe;

Be respectful;

Be responsible.

The appropriateness or inappropriateness of any action will be determined based on how it holds up in light of these basic expectations.

Strategies to promote problem-solving when mistakes happen:

When conflict arises at school, our first action as adults is to provide calming, positive support to the students involved. This means attending to the needs of any student who was hurt and helping that student express his or her feelings, as well as guiding any student who did something hurtful to problem-solve and come up with solutions to the problem. In all cases our intent is to teach, that is, to help students feel, reflect and be responsible for their choices. Any time it is possible to go through the process described above in the immediate moment, in the classroom or play yard setting, teachers will do so.

However, there are circumstances when that is not possible or appropriate. In those cases, another adult – either teaching or administrative staff member – will go through a problem solving process with the student or students who need that support. In some instances it may not be appropriate to begin the problem solving process with a student until he or she is calmer. Appropriate and de-escalating activities may be initiated in the mean time until it is so deemed that the student (or students) are ready to respond to the problem solving process.

Consequences:

As much as possible, we work to make consequences grow logically from inappropriate choices. For example, a younger student who does not come in when the bell rings might be required to stay in by the teacher during the next recess. We also favor consequences that have a restorative aspect. For example, a student who breaks something would be involved in the process of fixing it.

Inappropriate behaviors may also be addressed at the classroom level by a change of pace or location, for example, having a student spend time in an adjacent classroom or engaging in some form of purposeful work before returning to his or her own class. Alongside the commitment to support the learning process is also a commitment to provide clear boundaries and guidance regarding those behaviors which are simply unacceptable at school. These are behaviors that jeopardize the following:

Physical safety of others (e.g. putting hands around another person’s neck, hitting someone in the stomach, throwing a sharp object)

Physical safety of self (e.g. hiding instead of coming in at recess or running out of the classroom)

Emotional safety of others (e.g. profanity, abusive language)

A healthy atmosphere for learning (e.g. repeated significant disruption during class)

Care of the physical environment (e.g. intentional damage to property such as tearing a book apart)

When a rule is broken, the consequence will depend on the situation. Any faculty or staff member may handle a minor disciplinary issue in a manner appropriate to the offense. Consequences may include a verbal warning, a written apology, a work assignment, detention or recommended suspension. With any serious infraction, there will usually be a meeting between the student and teacher or teachers involved.

If the situation cannot be resolved internally between the teacher(s) and student, or if the consequence is a detention or suspension, the parents will be notified. If a student is suspended for any reason, there must be a conversation between parent(s) and teacher(s) before the student can return to school. A student may be suspended for an amount of time to be determined by the Director and the Care Team (which will include, but will not be limited to the Class Teacher, the Administrative Director and the Student Support Director as needed).

Students will be made aware at the start of the year of the conditions under which such consequences such as suspension will be initiated. We acknowledge that interactions among students are often complex; for example, a second grader may say that he hit a classmate in the stomach because he or she said he had a girlfriend. In this instance there is clearly a problem with teasing that will need to be addressed. However, the fact that teasing occurred will not be considered a justification

that makes a punch in the stomach acceptable.

It is our practice as a Charter School inspired by Waldorf Education to take into deep consideration the stages of human development given to us according to Rudolf Steiner. Actions that occur in certain stages of development (example: A kindergarten student who hits a classmate as opposed to a middle school or high school student that hits a classmate will be looked at appropriately and dealt with according to the specific situation). As much as possible, it is our intention to see behavior issues as learning opportunities and to address them within the context of the school day, rather than through suspension.

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### Notice of Concern

Teachers may notify parents in writing or by phone call of behavioral or academic problems, chronic tardiness or absenteeism, and other concerns that may arise for a student. This **Notice of Concern** will be emailed or hand delivered to parents in order to inform them of a situation that requires their cooperation. Please speak directly with your child regarding this matter. Sign the form and return it to school the next day or email it to the teacher. This confirms that you are aware of the situation. If you need more information please contact the teacher by phone or schedule a meeting.

**Recurrent problems:**

Recurrent problems require involvement of parents in the problem-solving process. In these instances, a meeting will be set up with the class teacher (other teachers may be involved as well), the parents and other staff members as needed with the purpose of developing a plan of action together. Older students in Grades 4 – 8 may be requested to participate in a portion of this meeting as well.

The plan developed may include strategies to better meet a student’s developmental needs, imposed consequences at home, pre-arranged agreements between teachers and parents, requests for supports outside of school, etc. It is the expectation of SMS that parents will be fully involved and supportive in these efforts, which may require frequent communication and meetings, as well as work at home.

**Suspension:**

Suspensions of increasing lengths of time will be administered when behaviors which are unacceptable at school persist, despite problem-solving support, in-school consequences, and parental involvement in addressing recurring behaviors. The Care Team may suspend a student for 10 days or less. This suspension may be either an in-school suspension or an out-of-school suspension. When the student’s actions cause a significant danger to self, others or property, whether a student has been sent home previously or not, a suspension may be immediate. In all disciplinary matters, whenever possible, the student’s Class Teacher shall be consulted prior to any recommendation or action taken.

**Expulsion:**

Expulsion means the permanent withdrawal of the privilege of attending SMS, unless the Board of Directors, upon the recommendation of the Administrative Director, reinstates that privilege. Only the Board of Directors can expel a student upon consideration of a recommendation from the Administrative Director. The student’s parents will be notified in writing that expulsion is recommended and the reasons for the recommended removal. The right to request a hearing will be explained in the same letter. Notification will include instructions regarding due process procedures. Expulsion does not become effective until due process procedures have been completed.

If a student’s behavior is so extreme that it threatens his or her immediate safety or the immediate safety of others, a parent or guardian will be called. SMS retains the right to call 911 if the parent is unable to or refuses to pick up the student, or under any circumstance where the wellbeing of the student or others is at risk.

Suspension from school for a period of time or permanent expulsion may result from the following behaviors:

* Blatant defiance and disrespect.
* Consistent, repetitive inappropriate behavior.
* Use of swear words or inappropriate language.
* Any action that endangers the safety or life of another person or oneself.
* Physical acts that deliberately hurt another person or oneself or deliberately destroy property.
* Use or possession of illegal substances.
* Bringing weapons to school.
* Theft or accessory to theft.
* Leaving school grounds during school hours without permission

•Sexual harassment. Defined by law as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature

* An accumulated record of general misconduct.

**Special Education Students:**

When a special education student engages in misconduct that could result in suspension or expulsion, SMS shall follow the State Board of Education rules governing suspension and expulsion of special education students. Pursuant to the rules, if the misconduct is not a manifestation of the student’s disability, standard school discipline procedures shall apply.

**Due Process for Expulsion:**

Relative to student discipline, due process means that school officials must follow certain notice and hearing procedures before a student can be expelled. In some situations, there are also procedures that students/parents may follow if they do not agree with the school’s actions. In the case of expulsion, written notice shall be sent to the student and parent that the Administrator has recommended that the student be expelled. The student and parent shall be given notice of applicable due process procedures, including the right to a hearing. A hearing officer appointed by the Board of Directors shall hear the evidence, prepare a record and bring a recommendation to the Board for action. The hearing shall be closed to protect the privacy of the student unless the parent requests that it be open to the public.

The parent and any student subject to expulsion shall be given written notice of the date, time and place for the hearing at least five (5) working days prior to the hearing.

**Please leave the following at home:**

* Pocketknives (unless approved by a teacher for a specific project) and other potentially dangerous items should be left at home.
* Chewing gum should be left at home.
* All music players and electronic games must stay at home. If a child must bring a cell phone to school, it must remain in their backpack and turned off during the school day. Parents needing to contact their child should call the office for any communication.

### Medical Procedures

Support for Children with Medical Needs:

Parents have the primary responsibility for their child’s health and should provide the school with information about their child’s medical condition. Parents should obtain details from their child’s General Practitioner (GP) or pediatrician, if needed. Parents should provide the teacher and administrator with full information about their child’s medical needs. Any medicines needed by the child must be accompanied by written directions from the child’s doctor.

### Non-Prescription Medicines:

Non-prescription medicines should not be brought to school. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child does not abuse, pass on or otherwise misuse the medication.

### Prescribed Medicines:

The School will only store, supervise and administer medicine that has been prescribed for an individual child. Medicines will be stored strictly in accordance with product instructions (paying particular note to temperature) and in the original container in which dispensed. Parents should ensure that the supplied container is clearly labeled with the name of the child, the name and dose of the medicine and the frequency of administration. Medicines must be in the original container as dispensed by a pharmacist in accordance with the prescriber’s instructions.

### Long-Term Medical Needs:

The school needs to know about any particular needs before a child is admitted, or when a child first develops a medical need. It is often helpful to develop a written health care plan for such children, involving the parents and relevant health professionals.

### Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency, procedures listed on your medical waiver will be consulted and every effort will be made to contact a parent so that they may accompany their child to hospital. If a parent is unable to get to school, a member of staff might accompany a child taken to hospital by ambulance. Health professionals are responsible for any decisions on medical treatment when parents are not available.

### Allergy Policy

### The SMS Board has implemented the following policy to protect our students who have life-threatening allergies. A life-threatening allergy is considered an allergy that can lead to anaphylaxis. Anaphylaxis is an immune system response that can cause the throat to swell shut or blood pressure to drop, leading to a heart attack. The only way to avoid an anaphylactic attack is to avoid the food that causes the reaction. Parents of children with life threatening allergies must meet with their child’s teacher, the school director in order to develop an emergency action plan. A 504 plan is strongly recommended. Children with severe allergies need to have epinephrine (EpiPen) available at all times. All staff will be trained to recognize the symptoms of anaphylaxis and to administer EpiPens. Although unusual, it is important to note that severe allergies can develop in anyone at any time and that a quarter of all anaphylactic attacks that occur in schools are in children with undiagnosed allergies.

### Classrooms at SMS that have students who have been identified with life-threatening allergies may maintain an allergen free zone. The school will inform you if there are any food restrictions in your child’s classroom. Children with severe allergies are also instructed not to trade food. Furthermore, all food brought to school for celebrations may need to be allergen free and clearly labeled as such. The most common allergenic foods are peanuts and tree nuts. If necessary, please read labels to see if your food is allergen free. Labels that state that the product ‘may contain traces of’ or ‘manufactured on the same equipment as’ are not considered safe.

### Please see the Blaine County School District allergy guidelines for parents for more information:

### <http://www.blaineschools.org/files/_qLLJu_/30b8e2d743760bae3745a49013852ec4/Allergy_Guidelines_For_Parents.pdf>

### Child Protection, Health, and Safety

The staff at SMS care deeply about the children within our community. We are committed to the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of every student. You will be informed of any illness or injury at school and of treatment given. If a student appears emotionally or mentally upset, we will seek to better understand what underlies this distress and share with you any discoveries which shed light on this behavior. In accordance with state law, we will also contact the appropriate authorities whenever we believe that a child is in serious physical, emotional, or mental danger. Syringa Mountain School is mandated by Idaho Code to report any actual or suspected abuse or neglect to Department of Social Services within 48 hours.

### Immunization & Health Records

The State of Idaho requires an immunization record (or exemption letter) for each child. Immunization records must be current. Children may not attend school without the proper medical information or signed exemption letters.

### Substance Use

Cigarettes and intoxicants of all kinds are strictly prohibited in the school building or on school grounds. Use of these substances is also prohibited during any off-campus school sponsored function involving children.

### Toys, electronics and cell phones

Students are asked to leave toys at home, as these frequently have a disruptive effect. Radios, CD players, and electronic toys and games are not allowed at school. We discourage students to carry cell phones. If it is absolutely necessary, the phone must stay secured in the child’s backpack at all times.

### Parent Lending Library

SMS has a small library of books for children, on parenting, child development, and Waldorf education. These books are available to all school families. All books must be checked out and borrowed for no more than two weeks at a time.

### Visitors

SMS staff welcome you to join us in our daily activities. All visits **must be approved in advan**ce by your child’s teacher, as some days work better with our rhythms than others. Here are a few guidelines that will make your visit harmonious with our rhythms and enable you to observe our classroom in its natural state.

The ringing of the first bell at 8:00 a.m. signifies that the school day has begun. If you will be volunteering in some capacity on campus, please sign in and get a visitor badge at the office. As school signage indicates, all visitors to the school must sign in at the school office.

Adult activity in the classroom **–** Your child’s teacher will ask you to engage in our daily purposeful work, such as preparing snack, setting the table, helping with creative activity, knitting, etc… rather than playing or talking with the children. This will allow the children the freedom to play and explore. Please remember you are a **quiet** observer while you are working.

Adult Conversation - When there is too much conversation among the adults two things become neglected that are immensely important for the children and us. The first is our modeling of a focused “work” ethic. Our adult tasks are our “work”; the children’s play or classroom tasks are their “work”. The more we maintain a quiet, steady, reverent focus (singing while we work is always lovely), upon our tasks, the greater the harmony there is in the room. The second significant loss is observations. You are here to observe and learn more about Waldorf Education. Your child’s teacher will be happy to answer your questions at the end of your visit or through a phone call later in the day.

**Media**

Exposure to violence, consumerism and passive entertainment do not support the wellbeing of children. The cumulative effect of repeated exposure to Television, video games, movies, radio and computers can negatively impact a child’s development. We strongly encourage parents to take full responsibility for determining the type and extent of screen viewing (video games, game-boy, x-box, computers, etc.), and media exposure (television and DVD) their children receive. Your child’s teachers will be providing information regarding media use and your child’s education and engaging you in a dialogue that we hope will be stimulating and rewarding. Our goal in doing so is to do our utmost to create a learning environment that is conducive to active, imaginative learning.

**Our recommended guidelines regarding media use are as follows:**

1. For children in preschool and kindergarten: None, or as little as possible.
2. For children in grades 1 – 3: No television, video games, computers or movies during the school week; minimal parent-directed media use on weekends and during vacations.
3. For students in grades 4 – 8: No television or video games or computers in the morning before school; minimal parent-directed media use during the school week; parental involvement in determining appropriate media and computer-use choices at all other times.

### Digital citizenship agreement

Technology may be used with upper elementary and middle SMS students as appropriate. This acceptable use agreement defines the responsibilities that each member of the SMS community must accept in order to use the School’s technology resources. All members of the SMS community agree to follow school rules and commit to the School’s values. Parent signatures are required each school year verifying they have read and comply with the student handbook requirements.

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## Acceptable Use Responsibilities for SMS Community

## I understand the following:

* + I continuously represent SMS whenever and wherever I use e-mail and Internet resources, even if I am using these resources away from or outside of the School’s network.
  + Any violation of the rules can result in loss of my privileges to use computers at SMS in addition to possible disciplinary action up to and including suspension and/or expulsion.
  + If I knowingly enable others to violate these rules, I may be held accountable as if I broke the rule myself.

## Use of School Virtual Resources

## I will:

* + Use SMS technology resources for academic and school-related purposes. Respect the work and privacy of others.
  + Use my applications, email accounts, and SMS Network space appropriately, for school-related activities.
  + Store my documents and files in places that are assigned to me.

## I will not:

* Save or install files and/or software on equipment without the authorization of a teacher.
* Use SMS technology resources for commercial activity or to seek monetary gain.
* Intentionally introduce a virus or other harmful code anywhere on the SMS Network, and I will make an effort to keep my home computer free from viruses and other destructive materials. I will report any virus detections to a member of the staff.
* I will not use technology to bully another person.

## Privacy

* I will not attempt to discover or use another user’s login name or password, nor will I share my passwords. If I become aware of another individual’s password, I will inform that person or a member of the staff.
* SMS respects the importance of online student-profile sites like MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, and others to students who use these sites as a means of communicating with friends. Students must understand the public nature of these sites and the risks, responsibility, and accountability that they, as site manager, must assume if they participate. They also must understand that their names and sites are linked with SMS, and as a result, the School may monitor the content of these sites because of the impact such sites can have on school accountability, public image and student safety. Anything posted on a website by a student constitutes public speech and will be held to all the standards and expectations expressed in the Parent/Student Handbook.

## Fair Use of Virtual Materials

* I will not copy or transfer any copyrighted software to or from computers on the SMS Network without the permission of the staff.
* I will attempt to avoid the misuses of virtual materials at school and at home.
* I will properly cite all online, web, wiki, and similar materials that I transfer and use in my work.

## Unacceptable Material and Activities

I will not use any of my e-mail or web page accounts to:

* Forward chain letters, joke collections, and other materials that clutter and slow down the SMS Network.
* Use SMS technology resources to store or to transfer software used primarily for hacking, eavesdropping, or network administration.
* Send personal political messages or represent SMS in any political arena.
* Annoy, hinder, or harass others with offensive, obscene, abusive, embarrassing, or threatening language or images, referred to as cyberbullying.
* Communicate with inappropriate or abusive language.
* Assume a fictitious identify or access, download, store, or print obscene or pornographic material.

**Annual Notification to Parents Regarding Confidentiality of Student Education Records**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students." Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school within 45 days of a request made to the school administrator. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records without copies. Schools may charge a fee for copies. Parents or eligible students have the right to request in writing that a school correct records that they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions:

-School officials with legitimate educational interest. A school official is a person employed or contracted by the school to serve as an administrator, supervisor, teacher, or support staff member (including health staff, law enforcement personnel, attorney, auditor, or other similar roles); a person serving

on the school board; or a parent or student serving on an official committee or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks; A legitimate educational interest means the review of records is necessary to fulfill a professional responsibility for the school;

-Other schools to which a student is seeking to enroll;

-Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;

-Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;

-Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;

- Accrediting organizations;

-To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;

-Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and

-State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, sports participation (including height and weight of athletes) and dates of attendance unless notified by the parents or eligible student that the school is not to disclose the information without consent.

**The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act** (IDEA) is a federal law that protects the rights of students with disabilities. In addition to standard school records, for children with disabilities education records could include evaluation and testing materials, medical and health information, Individualized Education Programs and related notices and consents, progress reports, materials related to disciplinary actions, and mediation agreements. Such information is gathered from a number of sources, including the student's parents and staff of the school of attendance. Also, with parental permission, information may be gathered from additional pertinent sources, such as doctors and other health care providers. This information is collected to assure the child is identified, evaluated, and provided a Free Appropriate Public Education in accordance with state and federal special education laws. Each agency participating under Part B of IDEA must assure that at all stages of gathering, storing, retaining and disclosing education records to third parties that it complies with the federal confidentiality laws. In addition, the destruction of any education records of a child with a disability must be in accordance with IDEA regulatory requirements.

For additional information or to file a complaint, you may call the federal government at (202) 260 -3887 (voice) or 1-800-877-8339

Or you may contact:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, SW

Washington, D.C. 20202-590