

Monteverde Friends School Student & Family Handbook



Welcome to the MFS Community. We are students, teachers, parents, brothers and sisters, administrators, committee members, members of the Friends Meeting and the broader community. We come originally from Costa Rica, North America, and several other countries. We speak several languages and we have many different occupations. We all have a common goal, which is to prepare our children, the children of Monteverde, to be informed, responsible, creative and capable participants in this community or whatever community they may live in, and to help them develop intellectually, spiritually, physically and morally to their full potential. Every child and adult, bring something special to this community. Using each of our skills, insights, experiences and talents, we can give our children a rich and unique educational experience. We are happy to be working with you.

-The Administration and School Committee of Monteverde Friends School

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GUIDANCE AND GOVERNANCE

(This section is written and approved by the Meeting and the School Committee.)

Vision and Mission

Surrounded by nature, supported by love, we work and grow in community that our lives may contribute to a more just, peace-filled and hopeful world.

Under the care of the Monteverde Friends Meeting, the school primarily serves local communities by educating children of families who value a Quaker education. Our small rural bilingual school welcomes diversity. We educate the whole person, nurturing each student's spiritual, intellectual, physical and creative potential. We endeavor to transform the lives of young people, that they may seek truth with curiosity and awe, and care for and honor all people and the earth.

Philosophy Statement

Grounded in the values of integrity, truth, community, and peace, the Monteverde Friends School provides a challenging academic environment in an atmosphere of love and respect for our students, staff, and community. The school strives to lay a foundation of solid intellect, the pursuit of truth, and the values necessary to contribute to a peaceful and just society.

About us

Nestled high in the cloud forest environment of Costa Rica, the Monteverde Friends School (MFS) was founded in 1951 by Quaker families who left the United States in search of a non-militaristic society. Due to its strong ethics, curriculum, and dedication of the community, the school has successfully grown to its present size of 120 students who represent Quaker, Costa Rican, and international communities. The School has evolved and thrived in this multicultural environment, rich in biodiversity for over 60 years.

Our school, under the care of the Monteverde Friends Meeting¹ and accredited by the Costa Rican Ministry of Education, provides rigorous academic instruction for students in pre-kinder through 12th grade. The MFS curriculum addresses a well-rounded education, preparing students for continuing education or their chosen vocations. Students are admitted regardless of race, creed², socio-economic status, or sexual orientation. Once a student has been accepted, applications for financial assistance are reviewed. In case of demonstrated need, we offer assistance within the ability of the school. The school exists to educate children of members of the Monteverde Friends Meeting and other local families who value Quaker education. We also appreciate the richness of perspectives international students bring.

¹ "Under the care of the Monteverde Friends Meeting" means the school is subject to the guidance offered by the Monteverde Friends Meeting. The Meeting's identity and philosophy is outlined in its governing document, *Discipline of Monteverde Monthly Meeting of Friends*. The Meeting approves the mission and philosophy of the school, and names the members of the School Committee. The School Committee acts as the governing body of the school and reports to the Meeting, which is legally responsible for the property and activities of the school.

² Admissions criteria include preference for members of the Monteverde Friends Meeting and other Quakers.

The school's ability to integrate members of the community and staff with our student population creates a unique environment where parents, teachers, students, and community members of all generations work and learn together. By tapping into the broad knowledge base of our diverse community, we are able to provide educational, creative, and real world experiences that enrich our students' lives.

The physical location of the school enhances the education of our students through the incorporation of the bio-diverse tropical environment into our studies. The school promotes an appreciation of nature and the wise use of resources. Access to many protected areas and to people doing scientific research creates a strong environmental understanding and ethic.

We are an English-predominant bilingual school. Two-thirds of the curriculum is taught in English and one third in Spanish. Students learn from each other, and from their teachers and other adults in the school, in authentic interactions in the two languages. Students who are not Spanish-dominant begin with Spanish as a Second Language before entering the full immersion Spanish program. English as a Second Language is required for non-English speakers who enter at first or second grade. Students admitted to the school after second grade must be appropriately proficient in English. The school strives for its graduates to be fully bilingual, bi-literate, and prepared to enter systems of higher education or pursue vocational interests in Costa Rica and abroad.

Our small multi-grade classes provide an excellent opportunity to accommodate a range of learning styles. Teachers employ a variety of teaching methodologies to address these diverse learning styles and allow individual students to strive toward their potential. Teachers promote sharing, and creative and cooperative learning, and the pursuit of independent learning goals. Students are encouraged to develop critical thinking skills that will allow them to identify problems and create strategies to find solutions.

Our teachers are key to the vibrant life of our school. These dedicated professionals, from Costa Rica and beyond, bring their knowledge and enthusiasm to our school community. Drawn by their appreciation of the values and academic excellence of our school, they share with the students their passion for learning and commitment to the search for truth. The school seeks and hires employees regardless of race, creed, socio-economic status, or sexual orientation.³

Education at MFS is holistic, reflecting the values of the Quaker community. In addition to our academic pursuits, we search for the spiritual meaning in day-to-day life. We encourage reflection, questioning, and appreciation for the life of the Spirit in our daily interactions and during our Wednesday Meeting for Worship, which all students and teachers attend. Students, teachers, staff, and their families are also invited to participate in the Sunday Quaker silent Meeting for Worship, if they so choose, further strengthening our ties to the community in which we live and work.

³ Hiring criteria include preference for members of the Monteverde Friends Meeting and other Quakers.
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Education at Monteverde Friends School

We believe that seeking truth and pursuing a fuller understanding of the world in which we live is a lifelong process. We endeavor to give students the practical and academic foundation they will need to continue to learn and grow. We cultivate open minds, critical thinking, and curiosity, seeking to make inquiry and involvement a way of life. Our commitment to truth encompasses deep listening, honest intellectual investigation, and waiting patiently for the guidance of the Spirit. We hope to heighten awareness and an active sense of awe and wonder.

Students learn about themselves and explore their own roles in the world. They learn to care for others and for themselves as a foundation for healthy engagement with the challenges and gifts of life.

Students come to understand how their personal choices can produce change in a larger, interdependent world. As they grapple with ethical issues, solve real problems, and actively serve their neighbors, they discover how to build and extend a sense of community amongst themselves and others. They also learn to participate responsibly in the larger community and in the world at large.

Within the school as well as in the larger community, we seek to live in ways that eliminate the causes of war, injustice, and violence. Learning to resolve conflicts in just and creative ways that promote an understanding of the needs of others is standard practice at the Monteverde Friends School.

Quaker Values

We are drawn together by a common commitment to cherished Quaker values

Love and respect

Listening deeply to the Divine Spirit in ourselves and others has great power to transform lives. In our quest to contribute to a more just, peace-filled, and hopeful world, we begin close to home, by trying to love our neighbors and ourselves.

Simplicity

We seek to focus our lives on that which sustains us, both physically and spiritually, avoiding excesses that may strain our balance.

Peace

Building alternatives to violence and war is a long held Quaker testimony. The founders of the Monteverde Quaker community, in their search for a non-militaristic society in which to make a new life, chose Costa Rica for the importance it placed on peace. They valued being part of a culture whose economic development was not dependent on waging or preparing for war. Within the school, we too seek to live in ways that eliminate the causes of war, injustice, and violence.

Community

We collectively aspire to build community with those around us wherever we may live, creating an environment where people of different ages and cultures unite together in worship, work, and play. Enabling our students to communicate effectively in both Spanish and English and to function respectfully in two cultures is one manifestation of

this commitment. We encourage and facilitate useful service, in the greater Monteverde community as well as in our school environment. Students participate in bi-weekly Town Meetings, in which they address, as a group, issues that affect the school.

Equality

We wish to honor and respect that of God in everyone, striving against prejudice. Each child, woman, and man has the right to be heard, and we teach mutual appreciation and respect for all ages. As a consequence, students serve as full members of both the School Committee and a discipline committee.

Consensus

We believe that when we combine deep listening with spiritual guidance, we are better able to discern our right path. We aim to seek unity in our group decision-making at school, at meeting, and in the community at large. Insight and wisdom may come from persons of any age. Using a consensus approach to decision making builds our capacity to listen, to be flexible and creative in our thinking, and to support decisions once they are made.

Stewardship

The school promotes an appreciation of and connection to the natural world. By increasing our awareness of our interdependence with all life on earth, we strive to use water, land, and other resources mindfully and wisely. Our resolve is enhanced by the natural beauty and biodiversity that surrounds us. Classroom walks through the woods, gardening, recycling, and daily clean up chores are a few of the ways we instill stewardship.

Integrity

We believe in speaking truthfully, keeping our word, and striving to be a living testimony to the values we teach our students. We try to inspire individual responsibility by working to let our lives speak more than our words. Living our values asks of us the courage to meet challenges with discernment and love.

Values and Spirituality at MFS

A school is more than its academic program or its policies. At least as important are the values taught and modeled at the school, and how the members of the school community treat each other. The values emphasized at Monteverde Friends School are drawn primarily from the Quaker religion and way of life. Monteverde Monthly Meeting of Friends (Quakers) founded the school in order to educate its children, and that remains an important part of its mission.

Most Quaker values are universal to all of the major religions and cultures. Others may be more unique. Here is a summary of some of the values that we promote and attempt to put into practice in our school:

Living one's beliefs. While we recognize that our actions will often fall short of our goals, we feel it is important that our ideals give direction to our lives.

Truth. We are all responsible for both seeking and living the Truth, and for being honest with ourselves and others.

That of God in everyone. Each person has a divine spark, an inner light that is essentially good. Therefore, we must treat each student and teacher with respect, and encourage that core of goodness to grow and develop.

Non-Violence and the Peace Testimony. We work to develop an inner peace that is demonstrated in non-violent actions and words. We avoid physical punishment, abusive language, and conversation that would damage the reputations of others. We also do not support any military system or glorification of war, and try to avoid violence toward our land and environment.

Cooperation. We encourage our students to measure their achievements by their own progress rather than through comparison with others. In sports and games, we emphasize sportsmanship and cooperation over winning and losing. We learn to make decisions by consensus instead of majority vote.

Simplicity. We value usefulness over appearance, and distinguish between needs and wants.

Service. It is important for students to learn concern for the needs of others. We provide opportunities for service in the school and in the community. In the classroom we encourage students to think about issues of justice and human need.

Equality. Woman, man, rich, poor, young, old – each is equally important in the sight of God. Where inequality or prejudice exists in our society, we try to identify and counteract it. We do not use titles that set individuals apart, so everyone is called by their first name.

The body is the temple of the spirit. We encourage good physical, mental and spiritual health practices, devote time to physical exercise and nutritional education, and make students aware of the dangers of the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.

Reflection and meditation. In weekly Meeting for Worship, Pre-Meeting and daily assemblies, we practice quieting our minds and bodies in order to act more thoughtfully and to better perceive Divine guidance and inspiration. We do not attempt to spread the Quaker religion, but rather encourage each to explore and to take more seriously his or her own beliefs. Our goal is that each student become aware and appreciative of the spiritual dimension of life.

Quaker Faith

Quakerism, officially known as the Religious Society of Friends, is a religion of Christian origin founded in England in the 17th century. It now has members in most parts of the world.

Briefly, the Quaker movement grew out of its founders' disillusionment with the established Church, which appeared to them superficial, overly rigid, and hypocritical. The Quakers created a form of spontaneous open worship, which eliminated clergy and

placed the focus on the direct religious experience and insight of each person. Each individual is believed to have the ability to interpret Scripture with the help of the Christ within, without a human priest or pastor. The Bible as written is not considered to be infallible by all Quakers. Direct messages, or leadings, from the Divine Spirit are also looked to for guidance. As Paul said, “the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life”.

Instead of a written doctrine to which all must adhere, Quakers have a set of Testimonies and Queries. The Testimonies are basic practices, which Quakers use for guidance, which are constantly tested against experience and further insight. Some of the basic Friends Testimonies are: equality, integrity, simplicity, harmony (peace), and community. Queries are a set of questions which individuals or the group as a whole ask themselves and each other to hold themselves accountable for living up to their beliefs. These queries are revised periodically.

A well-known characteristic of Quakers is pacifism, which leads to the refusal of condoning violence of any kind or to participate in any military system. It was this testimony that originally brought Quakers to Monteverde, soon after Costa Rica had abolished its army. Quakers in many countries have been imprisoned over the centuries for refusing to serve in the military, including some of the founders of the Quaker community in Monteverde. Quakers are also known for their role in abolishing slavery in the United States, and for their work in promoting women’s rights and prison reform.

The Monteverde Friends Meeting has about 45 active adult members, and many others of diverse religious backgrounds regularly attend our worship. Not by any means are all North Americans in Monteverde Quaker, nor does one need to be North American to be Quaker. Anyone is welcome to attend our Meetings for Worship, on Sundays at 10:30 or Wednesdays at 9:00. Translation is always provided. We especially encourage those who are unfamiliar with Quaker worship to attend, as we feel it will give you a more complete understanding of the school.

Queries for Young People

As explained above, Queries are the Quaker method of reflecting on our daily living to see whether it is consistent with our beliefs. In 1992 the Meeting, with participation from the students in the School, developed the following set of Queries for Young People.

1. Do we think often of God during the day and do we try to hear and understand what the Spirit says to us?
2. When we disagree with others, do we try to imagine ourselves in their place? Do we forgive people who hurt us by word or act? Do we try to see that of God in each person? Are we careful to speak well of others, avoiding gossip and name-calling? When our friends quarrel, do we try to help them work it out?
3. Do we try to be honest and truthful in what we say and do? Do we stand firmly against harmful acts and consult with an adult if we are aware of serious wrong-doings? Do we ask for help to make our community a good place to be? Do we

realize that we get greater enjoyment from the things for which we work, than from trying to get something for nothing?

4. Do we encourage fair and honest games? Do we choose recreation that is healthy for our body, mind and spirit? Do we do what we believe to be right regardless of what others are doing, or may think about us?
5. Knowing that each of our bodies is a gift in which the Spirit of God lives, do we make the effort to keep our bodies and minds strong and healthy? Do we use moderation in all that we do, and do we avoid those things that we know can be harmful?
6. Do we realize how it would be to live as others who live less comfortably than us, and do we try to make their lives happier? Do we have the will to help others when they need it? When we have difficulties do we accept the help that others offer us? Do we let others know our needs, avoiding false pride and keeping them to ourselves? Do we ask God's help?
7. Do we meditate as often as we can and do we make an effort to prepare our minds and open our hearts to God during the meditation? While we meditate do we seek God's help about how to be and what to do?
8. Do we make an effort to get to know and learn from people from other nations and cultures, since we are all children of God? Are we friendly with all the people around us? Do we actively welcome new people and try to make them feel at home?
9. Do we try to get to know the joy that comes from God? Do we let that joy be shared by others? Are we cheerful, unselfish, and cooperative at home, at school, or wherever we go? Do we put Jesus's teachings into practice daily?

---approved 1992, minor revisions 2/1996

Queries for Parents

The following set of queries was developed some years ago for the parents of children in the school:

1. Do we set an example for our children of the way in which we would like them to behave? Do we attend mid-week Meetings with our children when we are able, thus demonstrating to them its importance? Do we worship regularly in our own tradition and make efforts to include our children in this worship as well? Do we put our faith into practice in our daily routine? Do we take time to explain to our children how we make our choices and the part that our faith plays in these decisions?
2. Do we offer of ourselves to make the school the best possible? Do we offer our skills and gifts as volunteers for the school? Do we offer to help with fundraising activities? Do we attend conferences, programs and meetings?
3. When we feel that there is a problem with the school, do we offer our criticism in a positive, constructive way? Are we open to listen to all sides of the issue? Do we try to discern divine guidance for the school, rather than trying to impose our own will? Do we offer of our time and skills to look for a solution and then to implement it?
4. Do we demonstrate respect for the school and all the people involved in it, in what we do and say around our children and others in the community? Do we reinforce our

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children's learning at home, encouraging them with their homework as well as encouraging social and spiritual growth?

5. Do we help the school financially to the extent possible? Do we put a priority on our children's education in our family budget? Do we ask for financial aid when we truly need it, so that, without undue hardship, our children may have the education we wish for them, without making it too difficult for the family?

An MFS Approach to potentially controversial topics

Religious differences

Quaker theology states that any subject looked at through the Divine Light is a proper focus for reflection. Because of our priority of seeking truth, many Quakers have been early leaders in scientific research. Friends never joined the schism between evolutionists and biblical creationists. Logically, then, any subject no matter how controversial it may be, is potentially appropriate provided it is dealt with in a holistic, spiritually-based way and directed at the developmental level of students. If you have questions, ask the administration or teachers who have been here for a longer time, or put it on the agenda of the teacher meeting.

This does not mean that everyone in the community will have an enlightened response or progressive point of view. Even permanent residents are sometimes surprised by the negative responses that some issues may cause in some parents. We can't deny the existence of something just because some people feel uncomfortable with it. We can't accommodate the preferences of some parents to change the curriculum. You never know when a parent can come with a very big concern about something you think is harmless. Some cases have been solved by allowing a student to go to the library to do homework or study while the class continues. Some parents have asked for alternative reading when there were books they did not agree with. You have to ask the parents to talk and say their concerns and work together to accept how to reach the learning goals. Please try to understand the emotions involved before trying to convince or argue with parents about the merits, logic or truth of a different point of view. Once you know what the concerns are, it is easier to come up with a solution.

Human sexuality curriculum

Dealing maturely with human sexuality can be difficult in schools. The school approaches human sexuality education through the context of family relationships and interpersonal commitment. The school believes that pregnancy control, disease protection, abstinence or sexual activity can be addressed through this context.

Talking and dealing maturely with sex is always difficult in schools. The most effective way to talk about sex, where taboos can be very different between Latinos and Anglos is by the way of family relationships and interpersonal commitments. Within this context, issues such as pregnancy control, disease protection, abstinence or sexual activity can be discussed with many groups. The Meeting has affirmed a policy of non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

Teaching Costa Rican or U.S. nationalism

As Quakers and people committed to finding peaceful solutions to conflicts between nations in order to avoid the tragedy of war, we are concerned about the historic connection between nationalism and militarism. We do not want to teach our students blind obedience or the love of country that is susceptible to viewing the people of other nations as enemies. Instead, we want to teach a mature love of country that cherishes the people and natural environment and works for positive change. In this context we intend to teach students about the history, politics, economics and cultures of their country in the context of its relations with other nations and international organizations and be able to understand the perspectives of citizens and governments of other countries. We encourage them to read about Costa Rica before or during their time here so that they can learn through daily news or small talks.

Meeting for Worship

Every Wednesday at 9:00 A.M., the school participates in the regular mid-week worship of the Monteverde Monthly Meeting of Friends. Our worship has no minister or pre-determined program. It is based in silent group meditation. Each person uses the silence to “center” spiritually. The time can be used for prayer or for reflection on one’s own life or on more general concerns. The goal is to achieve direct communion with God. If, in the silence, a thought or a message comes to someone which they feel internally compelled to share with the group, they stand and speak. Anyone, child or adult, is welcome to share in this manner.

During one hour preceding meeting for worship, each class has “pre-meeting” in which they do some activity which helps lead into worship. Pre-meeting can include a discussion or a story which gives us something to think about during meeting, it can involve relaxation or exercises which help prepare our minds and bodies for meditation, a quiet walk, or a variety of other activities which are aimed at helping children to explore moral and spiritual values and appreciate and understand meeting for worship.

We include worship as part of our school curriculum because we feel that it is important to recognize that God provides the strength, the inspiration and the intelligence that we need for our learning. To seek guidance, to give thanks, to ask forgiveness, to appreciate – all of these are skills that can be developed through practice, and are as important to modern living as reading, calculating, and researching. In the unprogrammed format of Quaker worship, no particular doctrine is promoted, but each is given opportunity to seek one’s own spiritual experience and discover and develop one’s own beliefs.

Decision Making at MFS

Spirit-led Decision-making

Spirit-led decision-making is experienced intuitively as a sensed unity within the group on a specific issue. The advantage it has over the voting process is that each person owns the decision so no resentment need happen. The best thinking of all members of the group is included in the decision. Spirit-led decision-making works when all participate with a desire to seek the best solution for all guided by the Inner Light. If members of the group are advocating for their own interests, it does not work.

Questions that are difficult to decide should be carefully considered and the group is encouraged to share moments of silent worship to look for guidance.

Please refer to the pamphlet *“The Quaker Decision-Making Process: What Is It? How Can We Use It in a Friends School?”*.

Meeting

1. The Meeting approves changes to the vision, mission, and philosophy statements. Approving minor changes should be straightforward, and major changes should have Meeting approval anyhow. (8 May 2011)
2. Meeting determines investment policy.
3. Meeting approves nominations to the school committee. Students put forth the name of a student to be considered by the nominating committee. Nominating committee presents all nominations to the Meeting for approval.
4. The Meeting determines the composition of school committee, (the total number of members, number of Quakers, and whether or not there are students and staff, etc.)
5. The Meeting determines the maximum school enrollment. (April 2012)
6. The Meeting is responsible for developing and maintaining a master plan for Meeting properties including school facilities or providing clear parameters for specific development projects in the absence of a relevant master plan. It also approves substantial changes in buildings and grounds, including specific project designs. (April 2012)
7. The School Committee and the Legal Affairs Committee transparently comply with the Meeting’s legal obligations. Legal Affairs Committee ensures that the school is fulfilling its legal obligations. (Dec 2009)
8. The Meeting makes decisions on issues that the School Committee chooses to bring to it when the School Committee is not able to reach unity.
9. The Meeting treasurer creates one budget based on all the Association's Committees' budgets, including the budget approved by the School Committee, and presents it to the Legal Affairs Committee for review and assurance that the Association's legal obligations are being met. After the Meeting has approved the budget it should be legalized by an Association vote. (Created by the Legal Affairs Committee in 2011 to satisfy the requirements for Utilidad Pública.)
10. The Meeting must approve decisions about borrowing money. (Nov 2011)
11. Decisions concerning liability and building insurance require final approval by the Meeting. (Nov 2011)
12. The Meeting approves the Cresson Fund Guidelines and names a representative to the Cresson Fund Committee. The committee reports to the Meeting in September. (Dec 2008)

School Committee

1. Oversee direction and maintenance of school
2. Hires and evaluates director
3. Makes policy decisions (admissions, hiring, financial aid, personnel, financial management, investment, insurance, sexual harassment, drug and alcohol, crisis management)
4. Approves the annual budget

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5. Is responsible for financial stability of school
6. Appoints members to the subcommittees
7. School Committee manages the Endowment Fund. The school committee includes details on how endowment funds are invested in financial reports to the meeting for business. (9 June 2013)

Administration

1. The Head implements board policies
2. The Head oversees Personnel Committee for hiring (made up of staff and administration) and is responsible for final hiring decisions
3. The Head makes admissions decisions with teacher input
4. The Head oversees disciplinary process with staff and student participation
5. The Head clerks the Standards Committee
6. With parent clerk, sets meeting for Parent Organization meeting agenda
7. The Head with input from the administrative team creates daily operational systems
8. The Head oversees curriculum and instruction.
9. The Head obtains educational materials
10. The Business Manager:
 - a) serves on the Financial Aid Subcommittee, and
 - b) serves on the Finance Subcommittee

Staff

1. Implements board policies
2. Makes admissions decisions (with Admissions Committee and Head)
3. Participates on Personnel Committee
4. Nominates 2 staff to Standards Committee
5. Implements, reviews and revises curriculum with Head of school
6. May suggest an item to the Head for the School Committee agenda
7. They are invited to the School Committee meetings to share their experiences.

Parents

1. Organize fundraising and extra-curricular activities
2. They discuss parent concerns and propose solutions.
3. They appoint a facilitator and secretary for family and teacher meetings.
4. Parent Organization Clerk plans agenda with director
5. Participate on committees
6. Suggest to Finance Subcommittee what to spend parents' surplus on and allocate money toward these items at the Parent Organization meeting
7. May join Fundraising Committee and other ad hoc committees
8. May attend School Committee meetings as an observer
9. May suggest an item to the Head for the School Committee agenda

Students

1. Nominate student to School Committee each year
2. Appoint student to serve on the Staff Committee.
3. Discuss student concerns, propose solutions and activities
4. Nominate 2 students to Standards Committee
5. Participate on committees

6. May attend School Committee meetings as an observer
7. May suggest an item to the Head for the School Committee agenda

Resolution of problems and conflicts at MFS

Differences are generally healthy. Our goal is to live in harmony with our differences, rather than in conflict, even though conflict is a part of life. Conflicts that are ignored can fester and erupt; hence it is important to deal with them in a timely fashion. At Monteverde Friends School we seek to resolve conflicts in constructive ways, where people are not hurt, but grow and learn through the process.

Open communication between individuals in conflict is essential to a positive experience. When you find yourself in conflict with another, talk directly with the person with whom you have the problem. Listen intently. Try to speak with the person in a safe, private environment, rather than public. Avoid talking about the problem with others behind the person's back. This can erode trust.

If you cannot resolve the problem on your own, seek mediation with a mutually chosen individual or individuals. In many cases, a mediator can help. The rules of mediation also work outside of mediation:

- Be committed to finding a mutually satisfactory solution
- No put-downs
- Express Truth as you know it
- No interrupting
- Keep the issue confidential

The guidelines for negotiation as outlined in the book *Getting to Yes* are also helpful:

- Separate the people from the problem.
- Insist on objective criteria.
- Focus on interests, not positions
- Invent options for mutual gain.

Conflicts are extremely difficult to resolve when either party enters the discussion with an inflexible position. Openness to new ideas and to alternative solutions makes a big difference. When one person is willing to change his/her mind, the other may also become more flexible. Letting go of control and the desire to change others is essential.

Conflicts often bring out strong emotions. Acknowledge and respect the feelings of each individual involved. At the same time, be careful to express emotions in a way that does not hurt or attempt to manipulate others.

Group situations can make the odd-person-out feel unsafe. If it is essential to deal with a conflict between a single individual and a group, then the individual may choose to have a support person present.

Please refer to the list of responsibilities in the previous section Decision Making at MFS. Remember that each entity in the school has different roles and that those roles must be respected.

When students have conflicts with other students, peer mediation is recommended. If a student has broken a school rule, then their teacher, the director or the Standards Committee will process that problem.

When a parent has a problem with a staff member, they should first try to resolve the problem directly with the staff member. If they are unable to come to a satisfactory solution, the next step is to seek the help of the administration. If the problem is not resolved with the help of an administrator, the third step is to seek the help of the School Committee or a different mutually agreed upon person. The School Committee will not override the decision of the administration, as long as the administration is working within accepted policy. The role of the Committee would be to try to help the individuals involved find a solution both can accept.

If conflicts arise in the School Committee, it is usually the role of the facilitator or president to help resolve the conflict. If the facilitator is not able to help adequately, or if he / she is involved in the conflict, once again it is convenient to seek the help of a third-party mutually chosen person. The Overseers of the Monthly Meeting is a group that can provide spiritual support and meditation.

School Administration

Monteverde Monthly Meeting

The school was founded by the Monteverde Friends Meeting, and the Meeting has the ultimate responsibility for its continued existence and functioning. Major decisions concerning the school's mission and philosophy, or any major change in the school, as well as any questions on which the School Committee is not able to reach consensus, are decided in the Monthly Meeting for Business. The school reports regularly to the Monteverde Meeting on the state of the school.

Administrative Staff

The school has a director a financial administrator and other administrative employees. The director is responsible for enforcing the school's mission, supporting the teachers, and serving as the liaison between the teachers, the school committee, and other groups. He / she and the administrative staff coordinate the administrative activities and implement the policies. The administrative staff supervises the curriculum and ensures the maintenance of school facilities and educational materials. The accountant functions as treasurer of the school, keeps the accounting books, works with the Finance Committee of the School Committee and manages the legal work of migration and payroll.

School Committee

The School Committee creates sub-committees as needed for example: Human Resources, Financial Aid, Finance, etc.

The Meeting decides on the composition of the School Committee. The School Committee comprises eight members all appointed by the Monteverde Monthly Meeting. At least two of these members must be members of the Religious Society of Friends. One member is a high school student (grade 9-12) who will be nominated in a collaborative effort between the student body and the Nominating Committee. In addition to the duties common to all School Committee members, that person is responsible to provide the School Committee with a student perspective, and to report School Committee decisions on a regular basis to the student body. If there is no student member nominated, the number of School Committee members will be seven. Staff members have traditionally not served on the School Committee, but may serve if appointed by the Monthly Meeting.

School Committee members are appointed for two years, except the student representative who is appointed yearly. The School Committee appoints its Clerk and Secretary from among its members. The School Committee normally meets once a month, or more frequently as needed. Members are expected to help foster ongoing communication and positive relationships between the School, the Monthly Meeting, and the broader community. Members should participate to the best of their ability and time constraints in representation of the School Committee in various roles and activities throughout the year. School Committee members and the Head of School are encouraged to participate in Monthly Meetings, especially when school related items are scheduled for discussion.

All School Committee members should be persons who are interested in the school and willing to work in the manner of Friends, under the guidance of the Meeting, to support and further the school's mission, vision, and philosophy. Each member is responsible to work toward unity and a sense of the meeting looking for the best decisions for the institution as a whole, rather than advocating for specific constituencies.

Finance Subcommittee

Meets monthly to discuss the finances of the school. This subcommittee drafts and recommends the budget for the coming school year and analyzes any budgetary concerns.

Fundraising Subcommittee

Writes and sends out the annual fundraising letter. Arranges and coordinates the sale of school T-shirts and calendars. Upon request the school committee writes grant proposals for special projects and may plan additional fundraisers during the year.

Financial Aid Subcommittee

This committee has three members named by the school committee for staggered three-year terms, each year one member is appointed, in March. At least one member of the Financial Aid Subcommittee needs to be a member of the SC. The finance director is not part of the subcommittee, but has the obligation to give advice. Members of this committee cannot receive financial aid. (SC Jan 2012)

Human Resources Sub-Committee

This committee is composed of three people that serve for two years, and are named by the School Committee.

This subcommittee advises the School Committee on matters of policy and procedures pertaining to the school's human resources. Interprets and recommends policies and procedures related to recruitment, hiring, guidance, assemblies, compensation, evaluations, sanctions, and staff layoffs that are consistent with the values and practices of Quakers and national laws.

The committee receives and hears appeals, depending on the type of grievance as identified in the stated grievance procedures in the Teacher Handbook.

The committee recommends to the School Committee the process for evaluating the Head. It conducts the Head's annual evaluation and exit interview as specified in the Head Evaluation procedure in the Administrative Manual. It will annually review these procedures, and recommend possible improvements in them.

The committee will consider human resource concerns as part of 5-year planning. It will annually review and update the staff handbook and similar documents to include the human resources policies and procedures as amended by the School Committee.

Approved SC 8th of May 2015

Participation in the School Subcommittees

All members of the School Committee, except the President of the School Committee, must be part of at least one and not more than two of the permanent subcommittees. The president of the School Committee will be ex-officio member of all subcommittees. This means that the president is informed and will be able to attend all meetings of the subcommittees. The president can't serve on a subcommittee in any other capacity. Each subcommittee will contain at least one member of the School Committee, not counting the president of the School Committee. The members of the subcommittees and their conveners are appointed by the School Committee. The subcommittees will provide reports to the School Committee according to a scheduled schedule.

Parent Association

Upon registering their children at MFS the parents are automatically members of the Parent/Teacher Association. This association will meet at least every six weeks during the school year or when convened by the administration. The Parent/Teacher Association will name a parent as a clerk for a two-year term, who will work with the director to form an agenda each month and to facilitate the meetings. Among the responsibilities of the Parent/Teacher Association are the Parent Fundraising program, the coordination of Family of the Month, and organizing extra-curricular activities. The Parent/Teacher Association will also serve as support to the school staff and serve as a channel to inform parents about school policy. To achieve their goals they may meet with the school administration and/or school committee, as well as independently. The Parent/Teacher Association is an opportunity to provide support for parents in the form of workshops, talks and discussion groups in areas of interest for parents. Individual parent-teacher concerns are most appropriately dealt with in one-on-one meetings with the person involved.

Academic Program

Class structure

At MFS, children entering in the Pre-Kindergarten program must be 3 years. A student must be at least 6 years in age to enter first grade. Primary school classes, grades 1-6, are structured so there are two grades in each classroom. First and second grade study together, as do 3rd and 4th grade, as well as 5th and 6th grades. The high school has three groups, 7th and 8th grade, 9th and 10th grade, and 11th and 12th grades.

Our kindergarten program is based on Montessori principles and emphasizes bilingual skills, self-directed activities and children-to-children learning. Our kinder staff consists of one native Spanish speakers and two bilingual English-Spanish speaker. All kindergarten children spend mornings at school and the Prepa students continue three days a week until 1:30. Younger children come three days a week, while the older ones come every day. We recognize the need for physical and social development through lots of play, stories and music.

Elementary school at MFS is lively and hands-on. Children begin reading and writing in their native language and then are encouraged to use their second language in these areas. Two-thirds of curriculum is offered in English and one third in Spanish. Music, art, and physical education enrich instruction regularly. The school's commitment to helping people find peaceful solutions to conflict begins with our youngest children in practice, class meetings and town meetings.

The classes, starting in the 7th year, are taught by teachers according to the area of study. Science, history and language are taught in English with reinforcement of the same vocabulary in Spanish. Costa Rican Social Studies, Math, Spanish are taught in Spanish. The school prepares students to take the national exams. The academic studies are complemented with community work, occupational learning, participation in local investigation projects and class trips. We teach classes in Physical Education, Music and Art. The presence of international students enriches the student body. Colegio students name a representative from 9th thru 12th to serve on the School Committee. Students in the lower grades benefit from students in the upper grades through tutoring, co-learning and mentoring.

Student Evaluation

There are four student evaluations a year, two written and two verbal during conferences. We encourage teachers and parents to have additional discussions whenever one party feels it important.

1. Conferences with parents

During the last week of the first and third quarter, we set aside two days with twenty-minute periods with every family to discuss progress, challenges and plans for improvement. This is a time to give parents a realistic perspective on the status of their child's academic performance so they can team with you at home. Many teachers have samples of student work ready to show parents at this time.

Teachers may use planned student-led conferences.

Translators are available during conference times.

2. *Written reports*

Teachers write narrative reports at the end of each semester (December and June) for each student.

The first part of the report consists of a brief paragraph for each subject area, describing what the class covered over the semester—topics, projects, trips, resources, etc.

The second part of the report is a description of each student’s academic work, skills, accomplishments, strengths and weaknesses over the semester. This information should be specific and individualized.

The third part is a social development/work habits page. It may include independence, motivation, cooperation, responsibility, respect for teachers and peers, effort, and behavior.

We include a percentage grade for each subject area in grades 5-12. Passing at MFS is considered to be 70% and above. Note: in grades 5 and 6 this percentage grade remains on file but does not go home with report cards.

Beginning in the 2019-2020 academic year, students from 3rd grade and up will all receive a behavior grade. These grades will be reported on each semester’s report card. This grade will be based upon the collective evaluation of all the students’ teachers. The behavior grades will be based on the following criteria derived from both MEP Guidelines and the MFS Family Handbook.

School and interpersonal skills

- Relates well with classmates.
- Shows respect for others.
- Contributes positively to the group.
- Demonstrate self-control.
- Responds appropriately to difficult situations.
- Uses technology appropriately.
- Respects personal and school materials.
- Participates in a responsible, cooperative and effective way during the end of day cleaning.
- Complies with classroom and school rules.
- Demonstrates honesty during the collection of mobile phones.
- Actively participates in planning fundraisers.
- Contributes positively throughout the fundraising event.
- Demonstrates proper behavior during Meeting.
- Is a positive role model for their younger siblings.

- Demonstrates appropriate behavior during transitions, snack, and lunch.
- Arrives to classes on time.

It may be useful to have students write a summary of their activities and evaluate their own effort, performance and participation. This may be included in the report home. Such self-reflection can lead to improvement.

During April, teachers make recommendations to the Head concerning the placement of students for the following year. These recommendations will be discussed with parents and written in the records. Also, we notify students and parents as soon it appears the student is in danger of failing. Clear steps to help students improve their grades will be suggested.

Academic Failure at MFS and Its Consequences

When a primaria teacher has determined a student does not have the skills to progress to the next level, the team will meet with the Head to discuss how to convey this to the family. The family may decide to not have the student repeat the grade even with the recommendation from the school. A letter must be signed by the parents recognizing their decision not to follow the recommendation of the school.

A colegio student is failing a course if he or she receives below 70%. MFS teachers, parents, the student and administration work together to identify do their best to help find out why a student may be doing poorly. If a student has academic difficulties, a teacher along with the student will decide how best to approach making schoolwork more successful. Some ideas may be extra time before or after school with the teacher. A volunteer may be available to help, as well. Sometimes a student's curriculum is modified, and teachers, student and parents agree upon different academic expectations. Study hall is designed to offer students extra help. If a student is in trouble academically for whatever reason, MFS will involve parents and student in the form of conferences.

Students who fail four or more courses fail the grade. Students who fail three or less courses have the right to take an exam or other work to pass the course. There is a second opportunity to pass the exam for each course. In order to pass the grade the student must pass the failed courses.

A colegio student may not pass from one grade to the next until he or she has passed every subject.

Bilingualism

The school aims to teach its students to be fully bilingual so that they will be able to attend a university or take a job in either English or Spanish.

Entering Kindergarten students do not need to be bilingual. Kindergarten teachers use Spanish and English as appropriate to the learning situation. In 1st/2nd grades, English classroom teachers occasionally use Spanish. We want students to learn to read first in their native language and then in their second language when they are ready.

As students' language skills grow, they will be asked to understand and respond in the language of the teacher. Classmates may be excellent resources to children with second-language challenges.

If the school determines that a student entering MFS in first grade or above is not sufficiently fluent in both English and Spanish to participate in all classes at their grade level, it may require the student to attend classes in his or her second language, either individually or in small groups. The school may arrange for second language classes during school hours. Parents may incur an additional cost for these classes. Limited financial aid funds may be available for this purpose. Students are expected to be proficient in English before entering third grade. A student may repeat second grade in order to better attain this proficiency.

Special Education

The special education program will do the following:

- 1) Give support to children who need special attention because of learning problems, or a deficit in social, organizational, or academic areas.
- 2) Provide early intervention, especially for beginning readers.

A Support Committee (Comité de Apoyo) consisting of the Head of School and the special education teacher, guides the special education program at the school. This Committee provides support to teachers to address special learning challenges in the classroom. The Special Education teacher may work in or outside of the classroom with students with special needs.

Sometimes a student's curriculum is modified and different academic expectations are established. In addition, it may be necessary for parents to supplement their child's learning with additional Special Education. The school is limited in resources and staff to meet all the needs of a child with these needs.

Study Hall

Students who aren't current with class work or homework on any given day may go to study hall Monday, Wednesday or Thursday after school for forty-five minutes. Students are offered a quiet environment in which to complete homework assignments and to get extra help from their teachers.

Graduation Requirements

In order to graduate from the Monteverde Friends School, students must pass their classes in both semesters of the 12th grade. The student must be present at MFS during the two semesters of the 12th grade, unless they have prior permission from the school or are participating in a school approved exchange program. Their presence in the school community during their last entire school year is particularly important, as these students are seen as leaders in the community and their link in that capacity is necessary. Each student will take a full academic load that includes the following types of courses: English, History, Mathematics, Science, Spanish and Social Studies of Costa Rica and Civic Education. Students who do not have the appropriate level of Spanish to attend the studies of Spanish, Social Studies and Civic Education will take Spanish as a foreign language class for the same amount of time per week. To graduate from MFS, students

must also participate in pre-Worship discussions to learn the principles of Quakerism. Students must pass other classes such as Physical Education, Art, Music or Drama. Students must also complete thirty hours of community service before they can graduate.

Adjustments can be made for students with special needs and for foreign students.

Alternative 12th Year Program

Rationale:

The Monteverde Friends School has a 65+ year history of educating the “whole person,” from kindergarten, until their 12th grade graduation and beyond. This has taken shape in a multitude of different forms and is ever evolving.

It is clearly stated in the manual that high school students, “are given the option of choosing an internship during mini-course time,” and there is an entire appendix (F) devoted to the topic of longer apprenticeships. Appendix F states,

”Apprenticeships are an acknowledgement that learning and growing can take place away from school. They are an exciting chance to try new skills that complement school learning. They include an academic component that may strengthen a student’s weak area and/or give them a chance to excel in something they’re already proficient in. They may last a quarter or semester.”

A cornerstone of students’ final years at the MFS are their 11/12 senior projects (taking place in 11th or 12th grade). They provide the framework for students to dive into something they are passionate about and enrich themselves in the world outside the classroom. Often students have reported that they wish they lasted longer, an alternative 12 grade year would provide exactly that.

Sometimes there is a conflict between the Costa Rican and United States’ structure of high school education. Traditionally Costa Rican students graduate after the 11th grade while MFS students graduate after the 12th grade. There are technical schools that go through the 12th grade in CR, but that last year is focused on preparing students for the “real world,” typically containing a plethora of scientific or technical courses. Here at the MFS we too focus on the growth of students and preparation for their future, but there is a lack of direct opportunities for students to pursue their dreams outside the confines of a classroom. The MFS is also limited in resources and therefore cannot provide the quantity and/or variety of classes that would be ideal for a typical 12th grade student.

An alternative 12th year option gives the opportunity for a student to tailor their last year of school based on their needs (what they need if they are matriculating into a USA/Canada university system versus working in CR or going to a CR university). This program would be especially beneficial for students who already know what they want “to do.”

The MFS kindergarten class has a strong connection with Montessori principles and our alternative 12 year option would be bringing students full circle. Our program will provide students the opportunity for self reflection and a supportive guiding community to test the waters and explore what life has to offer.

Objectives:

- General
 - Prepare students for life outside of the MFS
 - Independent living skills
 - Instill Critical Thinking Skills
 - Coach students on self-directed learning
 - Resume Writing
 - Interview skills
 - Career exploration
- International University Preparation
 - To provide students the opportunities and resources to study and take the standardized exams that are required for entrance into Universities and Colleges outside of Costa Rica including, but not limited to: SAT, ACT, and TOEFEL
 - To prepare students to successfully search for potential colleges and Universities outside of CR by: connecting students to a College Admissions Advisory, teaching navigation of the College Board and other web site search engines, by connecting students to MFS alumni who have attended colleges and Universities outside of CR, etc.
 - To assist students in preparing their applications for colleges and Universities outside of CR including, but not limited to: creating a College Board account, creating a “Common App”, writing a successful college essay, securing letters of recommendation, creating a resume of non-academic activities, etc.
 - To assist students in understanding the financial implications and opportunities including: computer based scholarship search engines, connections with Quaker Universities in other countries, help with the FAFSA for US citizens, etc.
 - To assist students in demonstrating their competence and reducing their need for general education classes by offering preparation and opportunities to take Advanced Placement exams (these translate into real credits at the college and University level in the US, Canada, some European countries, Costa Rica and other places.)
- Costa Rican Universities
 - To prepare students to successfully pass the Bachi exam (11th or 12th grade) or equivalent
 - To adequately prepare students to score well on the entrance exams for Costa Rican schools by providing, practice tests, skills building for logic exams, etc.
 - To educate and expose students to the Costa Rican options that are available for higher education, this would include: attending college fairs

- o in SJO, tours of college campuses, connections with alumni who are currently enrolled or graduates of Costa Rican Universities
 - o To assist students in discerning possible university fields of study (required by CR universities when matriculating) by utilizing career exploration software and books, offering internships and apprenticeships for exploration of possible career choices, connections to alumni who are currently studying or working the fields they are interested in
- High school to work
 - o To prepare students to successfully pass the Bachi exam (11th or 12th grade) or equivalent
 - o To offer opportunities hands on career exploration utilizing multiple Internships/apprenticeships
 - o To introduce students to experts in the fields they are interested in as potential mentors and teachers
 - o To give students basic experiences that can be used on their resumes in order to assist them in securing employment after graduation
 - o To offer opportunities to become certified or licensed (or start the process) in the fields they are interested in. For example: English language proficiency certification, First Aid and CPR, Guide modules, etc.

Program Design:

Each student who would like the opportunity for an alternative 12th grade year will be required to create an extremely detailed individual education plan. This plan will consist of the following components:

- Rationale that explains exactly why they want to participate in an alternative 12th grade year and how specifically it will help them grow and prepare them for the next step in their life
- Learning objectives that are detailed and concrete (broken into knowledge and skills)
- Evaluations tools (to measure progress and assess what the student is doing)
- How standard classes may or may not fit with plan
- Potential challenges they will meet along the way
 - o Potential solutions for those challenges
- Daily schedule that includes specific times, locations, etc.
- Supervisor that is willing to mentor the student during the process and help hold them accountable
- Budget of any and all potential costs
- Final project that includes the following:
 - o Presentation about what the student learned and gained from the program
 - o One concrete way in which they will use their new knowledge/skills in order to help the community
 - o Reflective essay that goes into analytical detail about their experience

Preparation for the Bachillerato exams (This section will be updated as soon as we have official communication from MEP)

The school's curriculum is structured, from the 5th grade, to prepare students for high school. The preparation by the 12th grade students should be a review of this compilation of work. Students are encouraged to start a portfolio of materials at home that they pick up during their school classes that are useful for this review.

The math teacher will provide high school questions at the beginning of each class on 11/12. Math and Science school teachers will include a complementary list of vocabulary in Spanish in their lessons. Students should keep this vocabulary in a notebook that they can review in the revision process for high school. Mathematics and Science will also allow the last two weeks of the school year for the 12th graders to study during the class period in the classroom. Minicourses will be offered every two months to help with the review. The mini-courses will include Mathematics, Biology, Spanish, Civics and Social Studies. Students need to take responsibility for mastery of the subject and are encouraged to talk with teachers after school to increase their understanding of the concepts at the time they have been taught. The 12th grade students need to schedule their time with the help and support of their parents to study a little each weekend to avoid stress as the test date approaches. The school's curriculum will not be changed to accommodate student stress.

Field and Class Trips

A field-trip is one that is within the school day or is part of the normal activities that complements the immediate curriculum and for which no fundraising occurs. There may be required bus fare or an entry fee.

A class trip is one that requires fundraising.

Learning outside the classroom is a vital part of education at MFS. Students learn from traveling together, experiencing new places and doing exchanges with students at other schools. We ask that parents support this. Field trips and class trips are intended for a class to work together toward a common goal, to have fun together, to see a place/community and make a connection with it. The fundamental objectives are to learn, to build community and/or to provide service.

Teachers are responsible for establishing trip objectives and deciding where to travel. Teachers are the ultimate decision makers; however, they are expected to seek input from the administration, parents and students.

Parents may be asked to help with driving or supervision. Generally, each class is responsible to raise most of the money for its class trip through school-approved fund raising activities. Families may be asked to supplement these efforts.

Class level	Suggested topics	Maximum Duration	\$ max per student
1/2		no overnight	\$20

3/4		1 non-camping night, within 15 km of school	\$35
5/6	odd years: ancient civilizations – medicinal plants, symbolism in art even years: indigenous group, celestial bodies	1 night	\$60
7/8	odd years: Middle East and Africa – water usage even years: China and Russia – food production	2 nights	\$110
9/10	odd years: Ancient history; earth science even years: modern world history, rise of Europe; biology	3 nights	\$150
11/12	odd years: 20 th century history – globalization, colonialism, sustainability, Quaker testimonies around simplicity, international development. even years: projects and Art Festival in San Jose, university orientation	Less than 9 nights	\$500

Service and Work Days

We hope to encourage in our students the attitude that, along with the privilege of education, comes a responsibility to help others. Therefore, we include a community service aspect in our school program. We have one day of service each semester school, in which groups of students spend half a day helping the elderly, disabled, or with some type of need, or doing jobs that benefit the community as a whole. Each class is also encouraged to adopt an ongoing class service project.

Skipping grades

Students who are significantly gifted in all areas of the academic program, as identified by teachers, may be considered for grade advancement any time before 8th grade. Because of the importance of our liberal arts curriculum, students after 8th grade will not be given the option of skipping a grade. These colegio students need to cover the curriculum of the last four years in preparation for the bachillerato, in preparation for university studies and to prepare them to be analytical and aware adults.

Honors program

Students of grades 9 through 12 have the opportunity to take their classes for honors credit. The classes include English, Spanish, Math, Social Studies and Science for the school year.

To enroll as an honors student in any or all of these five subjects, the student will submit an essay to apply for admittance. In the essay, the student will present an argument for why he or she should be allowed to take the class(es) for honors credit. The student needs to address how he/she will address the time management and self-motivation that is needed. Evidence of critical thinking and expression will be expected, as well as correct grammar and sentence and paragraph construction. The teacher(s) of this request will review the essay with the Academic Head of School to consider if this student would be able to be successful with this status.

Daily Operations and Procedures

School Day

Daily Schedule

The schedule for a typical Monday, Tuesday, Thursday or Friday is:

7:45	Staff arrive at school by this hour. Students are to arrive after this hour.
8:00	Assembly and Homeroom. Each homeroom teacher takes attendance at its beginning.
8:25	1 st Period
9:10	2 nd Period
9:55	Recess
10:20	3 rd Period
11:05	4 th Period
11:50	Pre-Kinder and Kinder dismissed, Prepa dismissed Tuesdays & Thursdays. Lunch recess
12:30	5 th Period
1:15	6 th Period
1:30	Prepa dismissed Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays
2:00	7 th Period
2:45	Clean up
3:10	Classes dismissed

Wednesday's schedule is different, as all students attend Meeting for Worship. The first two periods are affected. The rest of the schedule is the same.

8:00	School starts with Class meetings and/or pre Meeting
9:00	Meeting for Worship
9:55	Recess

On Thursdays mini-courses are from 1:15 – 2:45.

On Fridays clean up begins at 1:30, and students are dismissed at 2:00. The first Friday of each month the classes end at 12 md.

Arrival Time

Teachers arrive by 7:45. Students are not to be on school grounds before then. Students may enter the classrooms with the permission of the individual teachers.

Homeroom

The homeroom classes will usually meet ten minutes after the Assembly in the morning and another 10 minutes after the afternoon cleaning. Attendance will be taken at this time and sent to the administrative assistant. On Wednesdays, in preparation for worship, it is used for pre-worship discussion and never for classroom business. Teachers limit or prohibit class time for classroom business.

Assemblies

Generally, the school begins with an assembly with all students and staff. During the assembly there is a reading, a song or a story, presentations of the classes, recognition of a birthday, or an activity that will help us to get to know each other better. Twice a month, elementary and middle school students meet separately for Town Meeting. Town Meeting gives students the opportunity to participate in the mission or vision of the school. The staff takes turns leading the assembly, they encourage the students to hold an assembly as well. Parents are welcome to attend the assemblies.

Recess

There are at least four staff members on duty at all times.

Lunch time

We ask elementary students to spend the first 10 minutes of lunch eating quietly in the front of the school. Students 7th grade and older may choose to eat behind the school on the soccer field. Teachers are free to determine whether to allow students to spend their recesses and lunches in the classroom, though we encourage students to be active as much as possible.

Please help your child eat well. Send children to school after a nutritious breakfast and healthy, non-sugar, non-stimulant foods in their snacks and lunches. If a child brings candy, it will be held until the end of the school day and the parent notified.

Clean Up

The Monteverde Friends School has limited custodial staff. Teachers and students work together to do a daily cleaning that includes sweeping the floor, disposing of trash properly, watering plants, cleaning the bathrooms, cleaning and straightening the library, and picking up trash.

After cleanup students will return to their homerooms to be out of the way while they wait for the dismissal bell. The 11-12 Hallway Captain will ring the bell after checking with the office for permission.

The School Week

Homeroom

Each week, during Homeroom, classes take a separate time to meet as a community. Skills such as giving and accepting compliments, discussing classroom rules, reinforcing attentive listening and problem-solving, as well as addressing things like the next class trip or bake sale are discussed. Proposals that impact or problems that involve other grades may then be brought up at the Town Meeting.

Town Meeting

All students gather twice a month in the morning to discuss issues raised in class meetings that may impact other students. They discuss problems, make proposals, and find solutions using consensus decision-making. Fifth and sixth graders assume the duty of clerking primaria Town Meetings, and also take minutes.

Colegio students also meet in another location and clerk their own meetings, and are aided by staff to set the agenda and practice good facilitation skills. The Town Meetings strive for intentional listening and concrete action.

Pre-Meeting

Pre-Meeting is the half hour to one hour immediately preceding Wednesday Meeting for Worship. In Pre-Meeting we try to prepare young minds and bodies for un-programmed Quaker worship. Parents, Meeting members and other staff can be wonderful resources for this time.

Meeting for Worship

Every Wednesday at 9:00 A.M., the school participates in the mid-week worship of the Monteverde Monthly Meeting of Friends. Our worship has no minister or pre-determined program. It is based on reflective silence. Each person uses the silence to “center” spiritually. The time can be used for prayer or for reflection on one’s own life or on more general concerns. The goal is to achieve direct communion with God. If, in the silence, a thought or a message comes to someone which is felt internally compelled to share, the person stands and speaks. Anyone, child or adult, is welcome to share in this manner.

Mini-courses

One day of the week during the afternoon is the designated time for the mini-courses, to expand and deepen our curriculum. These courses can combine students of different ages and are offered in the following categories: first bimester, practical skills; second bimester, arts and crafts; third bimester, sports and physical education; quarter bimester, varied. It is possible that some mini-courses are compulsory, depending on the needs of the students.

School Standards and Principles

Monteverde Friends School seeks to create a community in which all are respected. We aim to find the best in each one of ourselves and explore ways we can all contribute towards making the world better. Therefore, we believe that all students should be able to adhere to the following principles:

- Learn in a supportive and safe atmosphere
- Respect School property and common spaces
- Be free from disrespect by others

Enforcement of School Principles

We create a supportive learning community when each of us puts forth best efforts to uphold these principles. In most instances a faculty member who observes a student violating any of these principles will talk to him/her about the behavior, and inform the student’s classroom teacher or director about the incident. A student who repeatedly or

flagrantly demonstrates an inability to observe these principles could lead to any of the following:

- Loss of privileges;
- Work duty;
- A conference involving the student, his/her parents, the student's teacher(s), and/or the director;
- Probation;
- Suspension;
- The student may be asked to withdraw from the School or not return the following quarter, semester or year;
- Immediate expulsion from the School.

Major School Rules

In addition to the principles explained above, the MFS community also relies on school rules to function effectively. A single violation of any of the following rules may subject a student to suspension or expulsion from the School.

Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco

Our goal to help students choose a healthy life and our need to comply with the law make these substances completely unacceptable at school. Possession, use, sale or being under the influence of tobacco, alcohol, inappropriate use of medications or substances or illegal drugs is forbidden. Possession or use of any of these while on school property or while participating in a school function or in any way under the school's jurisdiction is forbidden. Law enforcement may be contacted.

A safe atmosphere

Violence, physical or verbal, destroys trust and peace and denies everyone the respect and care they deserve. A single serious instance of physical or verbal violence against another student may lead to suspension or dismissal from the School.

Physical and verbal violence includes, but is not limited to, the following types of behavior:

- Hurting or threatening to use physical force on another student
- Swearing at another person
- Using slang names or labels that others find offensive
- Making derogatory or discriminatory remarks or gestures
- Making obscene or suggestive gestures, remarks, or jokes
- Sexually harassing another person.

Honesty

Honesty is essential to trust. Lying to any member of the School faculty, staff or administration is unacceptable.

Academic Honesty

While the school encourages cooperation among students, cheating or copying from the work of another student or from another written source is unacceptable. Violations normally fall into one of these two categories:

- *Cheating* is giving or receiving help in any form on any test, exam, or assignment for which the teacher has not specifically permitted collaboration.
- *Plagiarism* is presenting the work, words, or ideas of another as one's own, without specific acknowledgment of their source.

Care of school property

We are all responsible for the maintenance and good use of what belongs to the school. Theft or vandalism of School property or property of a member of the school affects the whole school.

Asking permission to leave

Students are encouraged to negotiate their needs with the adults at school. Unless a student is with a teacher on a school-sponsored errand or activity, a student may leave campus during the school day only with the permission of the director.

Cooperation

Cooperation is essential in the smooth running of the school and to an atmosphere of kindness. Uncooperative behavior includes walking away from a discussion with a teacher about a discipline issue, ignoring repeated requests to stop a behavior, or otherwise blocking the discipline process.

Discipline Procedures for Violation of a Major School Rule

Under normal circumstances if a student is suspected of having broken a major school rule, the student will meet with the teacher involved in the incident and the student's homeroom teacher to discuss the incident. (If a teacher is on recess duty, he/she will find a replacement.) A longer conference may be called later that day. During the meeting the student will be told the possible consequences for his/her actions. The teacher, or the principal, with the recommendation of the teachers, will determine an appropriate consequence.

As early in the process as possible, the director will inform the parents of the incident. The Standards Committee will meet at the earliest possible time to review and address major issues. The director may suspend a student until the Committee meets if it seems warranted. If the Standards Committee cannot reach clarity or cannot be convened in a timely fashion, the final decision lies with the Head.

Disciplinary probation

A student who violates a major school rule, who cannot live according to school principles, or who is guilty of numerous violations of other school guidelines may be placed on Disciplinary Probation for a semester or a school year. Disciplinary Probation is a formal notice that with further disciplinary violations may lead to not be invited back for the quarter, semester or following year, or to immediate suspension or expulsion from the school. The director in consultation with the Standards Committee makes the final decision on probationary status.

Daily Rules and Discipline Procedures

Attendance

If a student accumulates ten or more absences (excused or unexcused) during one semester, the student and parent need to meet with the teachers and Head of School to

determine whether academic credit can be awarded, and to determine if the best school environment for the student is at MFS.

Excused absences

Parents are to write a note or call the school each time their child is absent. The note should be turned into the office.

Students are responsible for learning what subjects or skills were studied in their absences and for making up homework assigned while they were away or sick. For every day they have an excused absence, they have one day to make up the work. For example, if a student is absent three days, the student has three school days to turn in all homework. After that, it is treated as late, and the teacher is not required to accept it.

Unexcused absences

Vacations during school days without prior arrangements, absences not due to illness or medical reasons, absences without permission from parents, and skipping classes are all unexcused absences. Teachers are not required to accept homework or give makeup tests for unexcused absences. Unexcused absences are recorded in the system. After 10 absences the principal sends a letter to the family.

Tardiness

If a primaria student has habitual tardy issues, the teacher is to notify the Head of School who will have a discussion with the parent.

For Colegio students, see below:

- The first bell for the start of school rings at 8:00. If a colegio student is not in assembly, the student will be counted tardy. Tardies and absences are recorded in the system.
- After 3 tardies the student will receive 20 min of community service.
- After ten tardies the Head of School sends a letter to the student's family.
- If the behavior continues, the Head can determine a firmer consequence that could include suspension.
- Students are expected to be on time to class.

Individual Classroom standards

Classroom teachers may establish additional standards, or work with their classes to develop ground rules or codes of behavior for individual classes.

Play on School Grounds After Hours

The School is responsible for the children only during normal school hours (8:00 AM to 3:00 PM). Permission to play on the school grounds before and after school depends upon the students' being responsible and respectful. All school rules apply during these times. Students must use their own balls after school.

Several community groups make regular use of the facilities (Meeting Room, soccer field, etc.) after hours. These uses should be cleared with the director for weekday use and with the Monthly Meeting clerk for weekend use.

Motor vehicle, motorcycles, Bicycles and Skateboards

No student may bring or operate a motorcycle or other motor vehicle to or at school unless they have a license to drive and are wearing a helmet as appropriate. Students with a license may not give rides to other students unless the passenger has written permission from their parents, and is also wearing a helmet. Students disregarding this rule will be sent home. Students without licenses may not use vehicles during school hours or for school activities.

Riding bikes or skateboards around the school grounds can be dangerous to others and harmful to the grass, and is not allowed. It's always about promoting safety. If the activity is attacking security or is not at an appropriate time, you may be asked to stop.

Dress

Students should dress appropriately. While our code is informal, inappropriate messages on clothes (bad language, ads for cigarettes or alcohol, etc.) are not acceptable. The hems on tops should not be too high, very short shorts are considered disrespectful, and students need to wear shirts except for males when playing sports. Shoes are still optional. In Costa Rican culture being barefoot in school is not well regarded. For this reason, the government is required to provide shoes to students who do not have them. Students should bring boots and extra clothing on rainy days.

Gum Chewing

Students in primaria are not permitted to chew gum in school. Students in the 7th through 12th grades are permitted to chew gum at school, provided it does not distract themselves or others from classes and is properly disposed of in the non-burnable trash. We ask you to chew in an educated manner, without making large bubbles, exploding them or making a lot of noise when chewing or sharing chewing gum without prior permission from the teacher. Students should be particularly discreet about chewing gum when around the younger children, such as at recess. Students are asked not to chew gum in the following situations: during Meeting for Worship, when an outside guest is speaking to their class, while giving an oral presentation, during civic activities such as for Independence Day. Staff have the right to ask students not to chew gum in a specific class at their discretion.

If this policy is not respected (for example, if gum is found on a student's desk, or if a student blows a bubble) the following consequences will apply:

- First time: the student will receive a reminder and warning
- Second time: the student will lose the privilege to chew gum for the remainder of the quarter
- Third time: the student will lose the privilege to chew gum for the remainder of the year.

If gum is found where it doesn't belong, and is not claimed or cleaned up by any individual, the same consequences will apply to the entire class. When a staff member spies a piece of gum, (s)he will quietly give the nearest student a chance to clean it up before applying the consequence.

Visitors

Students wishing to bring visitors must check with the director and classroom teachers at least one day in advance. Teachers may determine the best hours or day for such a visit.

Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit the school. They should arrange this with the director or the classroom teacher ahead of time. To minimize classroom disruption, parents are to consult with the director before going to a class.

Dogs

For reasons of health (fleas, possible bites), because they eat lunches, and because they are a distraction, no dogs are allowed at school. They must be tied up near the parking lot during the school day if they represent a nuisance or threat. We recognize that pets are often comforting to many people and we recognize those relationships, although not at the expense of school safety.

Use of Technology

- **Primaria** – Must be given permission and direct supervision for use of ANY technology during the academic day.
- **Colegio** – May use laptops/tablets/computers during academic day for academic use or music without permission. Must be given permission and direct supervision for any other use or devices.

Chart of Technology Use Guidelines

	Smart/Cell phones	School/Personal computers and Tablets	Teachers' devices
During class (including Study Hall)	Cell phones will be delivered to the homeroom teacher at the beginning of the day, they will be locked in the address, and will be returned at the end of the day.	Academic use, with permission	- May use the teacher wireless but not the administrative wireless. - Be sensitive to the guidelines for students in public spaces.
Morning Recreo and Lunch		Colegio -Academic use and music only. No permission needed. Primaria - Academic use or music, with direct supervision by teacher who approved use.	- May use the teacher wireless but not the administrative wireless. - Be sensitive to the guidelines for students in public spaces.
Before 8:00am and After 3:00pm	Yes *	Yes *	- May use the teacher wireless but not the administrative wireless.

* Students should be aware that teachers or other adults may ask students to change activities if they feel the students' use is excessive or inappropriate.

Consequences:

If a **colegio** student misuses the technology according to these guidelines and the Chromebook agreement, they may lose the privilege of using school computers and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. The parents of the student will also be notified. To have his/her personal device returned or to re-gain access to the computers, the student must complete 20 minutes of community serviced under the supervision of Head of school.

An **primaria** student who misuses technology under these guidelines may lose the privilege of using school computers and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. The parents of the student will also be notified. To have his/her personal device returned or to re-gain access to the computers, the student's parents or guardians must come to the school to pick up the student's personal device and/or to have a discussion with the homeroom teacher regarding inappropriate use of technology at school.

Repeated offenses may result in the student being prohibited from bringing his/her device to school or using the school's computers for a week, or the remainder of the term. The student's parents will also be contacted if appropriate, to ask for their support in keeping the tempting technological device at home. Note that this does not preclude using school technology for academic purposes under the immediate supervision of a teacher.

Parents and Visitors:

Parents and visitors are asked to use the MFS community network.

Guidelines for Listening to Music:

Students playing music at school during Snack and Lunch must use speakers, not headphones (i.e. group, not individual listening), and following these guidelines:

- Students will be conscious of the content and volume of the music and respect other people's need to study, work, and hold conversation during these times.
- Students will comply if asked to change the song or reduce the volume.

Guidelines for Confrontations

The following procedure is the recommended practice by staff with primary students and for infractions of less serious rules for older students.

1. Give the child a verbal warning.
2. If the behavior continues, the staff and the student, and possibly the director, will have a conference. The child may be asked to have recess separated from peers, stay after school or be to a quiet place.
3. If the behavior persists, send a note to the parents about the problem, or the staff may have the student to write his/her own note. Parents must sign the note before the student returns to school. A conference at a time convenient for the staff person, parents and child, and possibly the director, will be arranged to discuss the consequences of the behavior.

4. A student may be sent home from school, depending on the severity of the situation and the history of the child's behavior. This is a decision of the director, so discuss the incident with the director. The Head will call parent to let them know their child is being sent home. If the parent is unavailable, the student may have an in-school suspension.
5. For cases of recurring problems, the older student will meet with the Standards Committee.

Family Responsibilities

Participation in School Life

Parent participation is vital to the school's success. A very active parent group assists the school in many ways.

These are the obligations of each family:

- Participate in the Cleaning Day before classes begin in August.
- Serve as a "Family of the Month" once during the school year (washing rags, doing maintenance, preparing snacks for Parent Meetings, etc.)
- Attend parent-teacher conferences in October and March.
- Be available to meet with school staff concerning your child as needed.
- Participate in one organizing committee for one of the three parent fundraising activities: Christmas Fair, Sports Day, and the Walkathon.
- Participate in each of the parent fundraising activities by preparing food and working on the day of the event.
- Attend Parent Meetings. There are six each school year.

Families are also invited and encouraged to participate in these ways:

- Participate in the Cleaning Day the last week of classes at the end of the school year.
- Serve on an administrative subcommittee, such as fundraising, finances, etc.
- Sponsor new teachers or new parents (inviting them to dinner, community events, etc.).
- Offer to serve as tutors, teaching assistants, or mini-course leaders.
- Do maintenance and repair work (mechanical, carpentry, electrical or plumbing), office work or translation.
- Help on field trips, class trips, service days, and special days (such as Children's Day, Independence Day, Culture Day, Abolition of the Army Day, etc.).

Parent Fundraising

Each year the School Committee asks the parents' organization to raise funds for the school budget. The money raised by the Parents' Organization is used by the school for costs that the parents felt were needed but were not budgeted for. The surplus from the raised funds are allocated in the following manner: suggestions are solicited from parents, teachers and the School Committee. On the basis of these suggestions and needs of the school, the Parent Organization then decides on the specific programs to which they want they want to allocate these funds. All money raised will be used the following academic school year. All parents are asked to help organize and carry out fundraising activities. Successful activities in the past have included the Arts and Services Auction,

the Christmas Fair, the Walkathon, Sports Day, and coffee houses. Besides helping to cover school expenses, fundraising events are enjoyable social activities and provide welcomed entertainment to the community. They are most enjoyable if all parents do their share of the work willingly.

Some forms of fundraising used by other groups are not done at MFS because they are inconsistent with Quaker philosophy. Quakers have a testimony against any sort of gambling, which we interpret to include also lotteries and raffles. The selling of alcohol is also not permitted. We prefer not to do fundraising events on Sundays.

In addition to the parent-organized events, the School Committee's fundraising sub-committee solicits funds from local and foreign donors which are put towards a large yearly financial aid fund as well as any capital campaign the school may have such as for renovating or building new facilities.

Additional fundraising ideas and participation are always welcome!

Family of the Month

At the beginning of the school year a list of Families of the Month will be sent home. Families participate once a year in the Family of the Month Cleanup. A parent coordinator each month is responsible for contacting and coordinating a 3-hour cleanup before the 15th of the month. Families of the month also bring refreshments to that month's parent meeting.

We hope that your whole family can participate, but we recognize that sometimes only one parent can arrive with the children. If you cannot come to the group cleanup you have several options: you can find another family and try to switch months; you may come at another time that month and work independently; or you may hire another person to substitute for you.

If, despite these alternatives, a family does not meet this obligation, the school may impose a fine.

Access to Personnel

Teachers in classrooms are not to be disturbed during school hours. If an item needs to be delivered to a student or teacher, please leave it with the office staff. Any parent wishing to meet with a teacher needs to arrange a time during the teacher's free period, before or after school.

Tardy Policy For Pickup For Kinder/Prepa And Grades ½

The time after school is needed for the teachers that work with your students to get together and plan and prepare lessons. While we love your children, when teachers are taking care of students after school while waiting for parents, they have less time to clean up the results of the day's activities and to plan with each other about future lessons.

If students are not picked up by 12:06, the following fee schedule is used:

12:06 12:10 €2000

Last revision, May 14, 2019

12:11 12:15 ¢4000

12:16 12:20 ¢6000

etc.

If students are not picked up by 3:16, the following fee schedule is used:

3:16 3:20 ¢2000

3:21 3:25 ¢4000

3:26 3:30 ¢6000

etc.

On Fridays, the following fee schedule will be used:

2:06 2:10 ¢2000

2:11 2:15 ¢4000

2:16 2:19 ¢6000

etc.

Graduation dinner

12th graders are allowed to have immediate family to attend the graduation dinner for free. Grandparents, cousins, friends and other people are required to pay for dinner. A maximum of 120 guests will attend the graduation dinner. After the members of the immediate family have been counted, the remaining seats will be divided equally among the graduates. Special guests from the community and staff are not included in this account.

School Finances

Tuition

As a private religious school, Monteverde Friends School receives no government funds. All school expenses are covered by student tuition, fundraising and donations. Tuition covers the cost of most textbooks and teaching materials. Students are expected to provide their own classroom materials such as notebooks, pencils, pens, erasers and calculators. Workbooks that can only be used once are usually bought by the student. Class trips are paid for by the students and their families, and by funds raised by the class for that specific purpose.

The school covers financial aid and other expenses through foreign and local donations solicited by the School Committee, a donation from the Monteverde Monthly Meeting, fund-raising activities organized by the parents' group, and donations from other local institutions.

Parents normally pay tuition in ten monthly payments from July through April, in addition to the registration fee paid at the beginning of May. Tuition should be paid during the first five working days of each month. If payments are a month late, 2% interest will be charged each month until it is paid. Families who are not from Monteverde are expected to pay a full semester in advance.

The school depends on prompt payment in order to cover its regular expenses. If parents foresee difficulty in paying on time, they should submit a written proposal for payment to or talk with the Business Manager. If the proposal is approved ahead of the normal payment date, and the plan is followed, then late payments may not be penalized.

Registration fees and tuition paid is non-refundable. In the event that the student leaves the school because the parent(s) or guardian(s) withdraw the student, or the school asks the student to leave for academic or behavioral reasons, the family is responsible for paying through the end of the last month in which the student attended classes.

If at the end of a quarter a family has not finished paying that quarter's tuition, their child(ren) will not be admitted for the following quarter. Under no circumstances will a student be accepted for the next school year until all tuition has been paid for the previous year.

Financial Aid

Despite our efforts to keep expenses as low as possible, we recognize that the cost is still beyond the reach of many local families. In order to make a Quaker education available to these families, the school maintains a financial aid fund. Families that cannot pay full tuition should indicate on the application form that they need financial assistance and request a financial aid application form.

For a financial aid application to be considered all information must be provided and the form completed. The Financial Aid Committee may require an interview with the family. The Financial Aid Committee informs families if they qualify for financial aid, and how much they will be expected to pay. If a family wishes to appeal the decision of the Financial Aid Committee, they must meet in person with the committee. Financial aid is awarded on the basis of family income, taking into account the size of the family. The school does not give full financial aid.

Budget and Financial Reporting

The Finance Subcommittee of the School Committee develops an annual school budget, which is approved by the School Committee. The Head of School, with the help of the Business Manager, is accountable for adhering to the budget. The Business Manager accounts for all expenses and income and reports monthly to the Head of School. Quarterly reports are made to the School Committee. The Head of School together with the School Committee reports semi-annually to the Meeting. The school's financial books are audited internally once a year by a committee of the Meeting and are periodically audited by an outside auditor.

Admissions

An admissions committee is made up of the Head of School and classroom teacher(s) who consider each student who applies to the school. The procedure for applying or re-applying to the school is described below, as are the criteria used by the admissions committee to make its decisions.

Application Procedure

- School tour by family where they learn about family responsibilities
- Complete application
- School visit by student

Enrollment Procedure

- Signed statement that all bills have been paid at the child's former school

- Registration fee is paid

Re-enrollment Procedure

Each year a student and their family will evaluate whether they wish to continue at the school. Likewise, the school decides, according to the following guidelines, whether to offer re-enrollment to each of its students:

- Student is making acceptable progress at school.
- Parents are fulfilling work commitments to the school.
- Parents sign a statement expressing intention to continue.
- Parents may request conference with the director or vice versa to clarify expectation (April-May).
- Parents complete a new registration form and pay the next year's registration fee.
- All bills are paid before registration for next school year.

Criteria for admissions

Student applications will be reviewed by the MFS Admissions Committee, which is made up of the director and the classroom teacher(s) using the following criteria:

I. Major Factors:

The following issues are the most important in making a decision on whether or not to admit a student.

1. Does the potential student have a completed application?
2. Has the applicant submitted the required documents to be considered for admission at their grade level (transcript, recommendations, etc.)?
3. Does the applicant's family have any outstanding debts to the school or any other school in the zone?
4. Are there fewer than 18 students in the class best suited for the applicant?
5. Based on the nature of the existing class and the recommendation of the classroom teacher(s), can another member successfully be added to the class?
6. Is the applicant the child of a staff member at MFS?
7. Is the applicant the child of a family who has been active in the Monteverde Monthly Meeting for at least one year?
8. Is the applicant the child of a Quaker family who is a member of the Monteverde Monthly Meeting?
9. If the student is beyond grade 3, can he/she do most of his work in English as determined by a committee of teachers who know the child?
10. Does the applicant have the minimum academic skills necessary to work at the grade most suitable for them?
11. Can MFS provide the assistance a student might need to do his/her academic work given the School's existing and expected resources?
12. Can the applicant meet the minimum behavioral requirements for his/her class level?
13. Can MFS provide assistance so that a student might be able to modify behavior that is overly disruptive given the current resources of the School?
14. Will the applicant receive the support needed from his/her family or guardian to succeed at school?

15. (For local students) Will the applicant be living with his or her immediate family or guardian in the Monteverde area?
16. Do both the family and the student understand and endorse the principles and obligations required of everyone in the school community?
17. Is the applicant a sibling of someone currently enrolled at MFS?
18. Will the applicant be a short-term or a long-term student at MFS? Building community is important and is done most by long-term students.

II. Secondary Factors:

These factors significantly contribute in determining whether to admit a student.

1. Is the applicant about the same age as the other students of the class to which s/he is applying?
2. Would the applicant have a positive academic influence on the other students?
3. Can the applicant complete academic work in their second language without difficulty?
 - for SSL students: If not, does the school have a tutor in place for students of SSL? Is the family willing to pay for a tutor?
 - for ESL students: If not, is the family willing to have their son or daughter held back a semester or year in order to strengthen his/her English? Is the family willing to pay for a tutor?

III. Contributing Factors:

Contributing factors are those that the school deems valuable, but which are considered only after the first two categories.

1. Is the applicant a member of a family that has resided in Monteverde for a significant length of time?
2. Does the applicant or his/her family have any connection to a Friends Meeting or Quaker school elsewhere?
3. If the applicant is from outside Monteverde, does he or she come recommended by a current or former member of the School community?

The school keeps a file of completed applications in the order of when they were first submitted. All factors being equal, a student who has applied earlier will be accepted first.

Applications are accepted throughout the year. We encourage prospective families to submit applications early.

Medical and Emergency Procedures

All communication between the school and parents related to managing a child's medicine will be documented in writing, and placed in the student's permanent file.

Prescription Medicine

Students who take prescription medication during the school day must leave their medicine in the office with an adult member of the administration. It is the student's responsibility to come to the office at the appropriate time to take the medicine. In the

case of elementary students, the student's teacher should remind the student of the correct time to take medicine. Parents are responsible for supplying additional medicine to an administrator before the previous prescription runs out. Parents must inform the school of the intended effects of the medicine and possible side effects. This policy is in place for all school activities, whether on campus or away.

Over-the-counter Medicine

If your child needs over-the-counter medicine during the school day, please consider if your child is healthy enough to attend school. Students may not take any medicine during the course of the school day without adult supervision and permission. Any medicine, including over-the-counter medicine such as cough syrup, acetaminophen, or ibuprofen, among others, should be left in the office with an adult. This medicine must be accompanied with a written explanation of the times and reasons that the student should take the medicine. This policy is in place for all school activities, whether on campus or away.

Injuries at School

When a child is injured at school where a major scar, bruise or other result could be a consequence, parents will be contacted as soon as the child's first aid is completed. The event that led to the injury and all subsequent actions and communications will be documented.

Injuries that may require professional medical attention

If the school administration considers that a child who has suffered an injury may require medical attention, the school will immediately notify the parents who are then responsible to seek appropriate medical care. If the parents cannot be located immediately, a school official will accompany the child to the nearest medical center of the Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social, or other medical center at the school's discretion.

Basic First Aid kit

There is a basic first aid kit located in the office. If a child does not feel well or has been physically hurt, an adult who is supervising the child at school can give permission for the student to receive first aid in the office. The child will be treated to the best of the ability of those attending in the office. If there is parental written permission on file in the office, acetaminophen or ibuprofen may be given to address appropriate symptoms. Parents will be called if a student's symptoms persist or are severe enough that the child cannot continue at school. A child with a fever or with symptoms that appear contagious should not be at school. The child must be without a fever, and not on medication, for 24 hours before returning to school. This policy is in place for all school activities, whether on campus or away.

A litter for transporting someone with a possible spinal injury is stored in the office behind the door. A list of those students with special medical concerns is kept near the first aid supplies, as is an emergency contact number for each student. Staff should discuss who has the training to take the lead in medical alerts and review basic first-aid techniques.

The school has periodic fire and earthquake drills. Unpredictable emergencies may require the school to be closed. In such an event, the school will communicate with families.