

Promontory School of Expeditionary Learning

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Dear Families,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and staff, we would like to welcome you to Promontory School of Expeditionary Learning. Promontory offers a different kind of educational program for students, one that is less structured and requires children to do a great deal of independent, in-depth project work. We are delighted and honored that you have chosen our school to play a central role in educating your child.

We strongly believe that parents must make informed choices about their children's education, and we are pleased you have decided that Promontory will provide the best learning environment and instructional program for your child. We know this is a decision you have made with great care and reflection about your child's educational strengths and needs.

At Promontory we believe children learn best when schools and families work in partnership with each other. An important element of that partnership is ongoing communication. The Family Handbook will inform you of policies and procedures which contribute to the smooth operation of our school. If you have questions or comments, please feel free to speak with the Director or your child's classroom teacher.

Once again, thank you for making the decision to share your child with us. We are committed to achieving the highest academic and character standards with our students, and we look forward to working with you to ensure each child's success.

Sincerely,

Promontory School Administration and Teachers

Who We Are

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Promontory School of Expeditionary Learning is:

To provide a rich educational environment that views learning as an Expedition and uses the study of Great Thinkers to cultivate the value of excellence and the love of knowledge. Using investigation and discovery to make connections to ideas and our community, we empower children to embrace challenge, act with humanity, and become the Great Thinkers of the 21st century.

PURPOSE/VISION

Promontory provides a rich and active, yet fundamental, educational program to children in grades kindergarten through eight. We believe that all children can and want to learn, and we prepare our students to become knowing inquirers and participants in their own learning. In meeting our mission, we set high expectations for student achievement and provide the necessary support to enable each and every student to achieve these expectations.

Promontory School of Expeditionary Learning emphasizes active learning, literacy, character growth, and teamwork through:

- Learning Expeditions - in-depth investigations of important subjects that mirror real life challenges, and
- Studying Great Thinkers - significant experts, both living and historical.

Learning Expeditions

At Promontory, students trade in rows of desks and fill-in-the blank worksheets for hands-on activity guided by meaningful, project-based instruction. Expeditionary Learning is a nationally recognized education reform model that emphasizes high academic achievement through active learning, character growth, and teamwork. By using in-depth investigations, fieldwork, and hands-on projects, Expeditionary Learning gives students real-world experience and takes education far beyond textbooks.

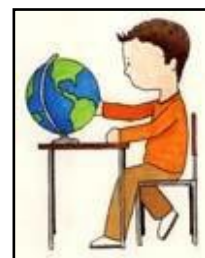


Lessons and experiences are planned so every student is an engaged, active learner. Staff will develop and implement Learning Expeditions, highly focused curriculum units that address required grade-level content and skills. These semester-long, project-based learning expeditions engage students in interdisciplinary, in-depth studies of compelling topics in groups and in their community. Social studies, science, mathematics, literacy, language arts, and fine arts are integrated through each Learning Expedition.

Students also learn from fieldwork, local experts, and service opportunities in addition to learning from classroom activities. Local communities are used as sites for purposeful fieldwork that is connected to academic work. Community experts are often brought into the classroom to enhance expedition topics. These experiences maximize students' motivation to learn. High-quality projects assess student learning and provide authentic opportunities for student work to be shared with the community. Assessment comes through a combination of standardized tests, cumulative products, public presentations, and portfolios.

Studying Great Thinkers

At Promontory, we are committed to the idea that each of our students has within them the seeds of a Great Thinker. It is our goal to give them opportunities that will spark their imaginations to fantasize, meditate, create, and to expand their minds in order to communicate their ideas and knowledge. By doing this, each child will give themselves permission to think outside the box and to become the Great Thinkers of the 21st century. Students will study significant "experts" of both today and the past in a manner which will stimulate active thinking. With this foundation, they will have a greater capacity to understand current happenings and be better prepared to evaluate and address future problems. We will engage students in an educational journey that familiarizes them with significant individuals and events, identifies patterns of change over time, assesses the



relevance of evidence, and analyzes the relationships of the past to the present and future. Such engagement encourages each student to take responsibility for learning, providing students with the skills for a smooth transition into high school as well as the motivation for life-long learning and responsible citizenship.

"A great thinker includes exceptional men and women who are inventors, scientists, statesmen, poets, artists, musicians, philosophers and saints who contribute to human civilization and culture with their technology, wisdom, artistry and decency.

A great thinker is a man who is both great and good."

-- Will Durant, *The Greatest Minds and Ideas of all Time*



VALUES-RISE FAR

The values that govern our board, administration, staff, students, and school community are as follows:

Respect:

Respect is an awareness of another person's feelings, possessions, time, space, and rights, and an ability to adjust our own responses accordingly - in a way which protects and esteems both ourselves and others.

*Respect for ourselves guides our morals;
respect for others guides our manners.
-- Laurence Sterne*

Integrity:

Integrity means being true to what we know is right and good. Integrity is at the core of all our values. Without integrity, the other values can never be fully realized.

*Have the courage to say no. Have the courage to face the truth.
Do the right thing because it is right.
These are the magic keys to living your life with integrity.
--W. Clement Stone*

Service:

Service means seeing beyond ourselves as we immerse ourselves in giving something of value to someone else, and is vital to the development of good leaders and citizens.

*I know of no great men except those
who have rendered great service to the human race.
-- Voltaire*

Excellence:

We believe students and teachers should be challenged, will naturally rise to the high standards expected of them, and will then set their own high expectations.

*We are what we repeatedly do.
Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.
-- Aristotle*

Family:

We believe that the greatest influences in shaping a child's future are the experiences and teachings that happen in the home. As a school, we strive to help the family succeed.

*As the family goes, so goes the nation
and so goes the whole world in which we live.
-- Pope John Paul II*

Adventure:

Learning through adventure creates an environment where students are required to rise to the challenge, achieving more than they thought possible. Adventure encourages teamwork, courage, craftsmanship, imagination, creativity, perseverance, compassion and respect for nature.

*We should come from adventures, and perils,
and discoveries every day with new experience and character.
-- Henry David Thoreau*

Responsibility:

Responsibility means doing what needs to be done to take care of ourselves, our families, our friends, and the greater community. Being responsible means that others can rely on us, we follow through on our promises, and we accept the consequences of our actions.

*In the long run, we shape our lives, and we shape
ourselves. The process never ends until we die. And the
choices we make are ultimately our own responsibility.
-- Eleanor Roosevelt*

Organizational Structure

Promontory School of Expeditionary Learning was established by a volunteer Founding Board. Once the school began operation, the Founding Board transferred authority over all school matters to a Governing Board. Under the direction of the Governing Board, the school Director oversees the school.

[Staff Directory](#)

The Parent Adviser Crew (PAC) oversees all parent volunteer activities.

[Parent Crew Information](#)

Admissions & Withdrawals

Promontory School will fill its student enrollment based on open enrollment and lottery selection. Students can only be enrolled in one public (district or charter) school at a time per state law.

Each child at Promontory is a valued member of our school community and we will do our best to meet their individual needs. If you feel that Promontory is not a fit for your child and you would like to transfer to another school, or if you are moving, the transfer and withdrawal policy must be followed. The form that must be filed to complete a transfer or withdrawal can be obtained at the front office.

[Admissions Policy](#)

[Transfer and Withdrawal Policy](#)

[Intent to Withdraw Form](#)

Arrival and Dismissal

- It is each parent's/guardian's responsibility to provide transportation for their children. Carpooling is encouraged; we have no school provided transportation.
- Please **no left hand turns** into the parking lot during drop-off/pick-up.
- **No parking** in the drop-off/ pick-up lanes during drop-off/ pick-up.
- **No parking on 2700 South or 1050 West during school hours.**
- Keep the parking lot entrance **open** while waiting so others can make the turn in if needed.
- When parking in the park and wait, if you arrive early and if it is safe to do so, please back into the parking stalls.
- Families living **North** of **Forest Street** drop off and pick up on the **West** side of the school.
- Families living **South** of **Forest Street** drop off and pick up on the **North** side of the school.

By following these guidelines, you can help ease the flow of traffic and speed up our drop- off/ pick-up process. We also ask that you remind your students of the importance of using the crosswalks and sidewalks provided around the school.

Thank you!
Promontory Safety Crew

[Map of Carpool Drop Off and Pick Up](#)

Attendance

[Promontory School Attendance Policy](#)

Calendar

Please see the following links for the updated Promontory school calendar and important dates:

[School Year Overview Calendar](#)

[Monthly Events Calendar](#)

Code of Conduct

Promontory focuses on developing a caring, supportive school community in which students participate fully in solving problems, including problems of behavior. We believe that students' growth toward kindness, respect and critical problem solving depends on becoming active members of a caring community. We further believe that it is the experience with decision-making and problem solving that enables children to handle conflicts that arise.

When students become engaged in learning expeditions, behavior disruptions decrease. When they are stimulated, challenged, and held to the school community's norms of behavior, students are less likely to disturb the class. The following compact explains Promontory's code of conduct and addresses students', parents' and Promontory School's responsibilities.

[School-Student-Family Compact](#)

[Suspension and Expulsion Policy](#)

Communications

School-home dialogue is facilitated by notes home and/or e-mails from teachers and provides parents with a regular snapshot of their child's activities at school. Newsletters, menus, student work and announcements will also be emailed home and posted on the school website. Please check your email and child's folders regularly. Families may also contact teachers and the school director through e-mail and phone calls. It is the responsibility of each parent /guardian to keep the school informed of any changes that need to be made to student information.

Family Engagement

[School – Title 1 Parent and Family Engagement Policy](#)

Fieldwork and Extra-Curricular Activities

FIELDWORK

Fieldwork is an integral part of the educational program at Promontory. Fieldwork is carefully structured to address the learning goals of the expedition, and afford students rich opportunities to

“learn on location.” Students interview experts, examine artifacts, conduct research, make observations, and gather data through note-taking, sketching, and photography. Fieldwork deepens and extends students’ understanding of the content and nurtures their skills as life- long learners. In line with our Expeditionary Learning Curriculum, during fieldwork students are challenged to work to the limits of their stamina and academic ability while collaborating with one another. Quality work is the expectation during field study activities, just as it is during in- school activities.

Most fieldwork takes place at local museums, parks, nature centers, businesses, and historic sites, and lasts from one to five hours. At times, overnight fieldwork is planned when distant resources are needed to enhance the education of our students.

[Fieldwork and Overnight Policy](#)

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Promontory School of Expeditionary Learning may have some after school extra-curricular activities as budget allows. All extra-curricular activities must be board approved, curriculum related and support the mission and values of the school.

Health and Safety

[Health and Safety Policy](#)

[Emergency Response Plan Policy](#)

[Emergency Plan](#)

[Wellness Policy](#)

Holidays and Birthdays

We understand that children and families observe a variety of holidays and family celebrations. To be sensitive to all families and to devote more time to our learning expeditions, we do not have holiday-themed parties in our classrooms. We encourage families wishing to observe birthdays to purchase a book that can be inscribed with a note honoring their child and donated either to the classroom or to the library. When possible we would encourage parents to come to their child's class and read the book to the other students. Please contact your child's teacher to discuss arrangements.

Lost and Found

The school's lost and found is in the hall by the library. Parents are urged to label children's clothing, backpacks, lunch boxes and other personal belongings for easy return. Items not claimed within a month are donated to charitable organizations. Children or a parent/guardian will be asked to give a unique description or identifier for larger or more expensive items to help reduce the possibility of another student claiming personal property. If you are afraid of losing an item, please do not bring it school.

Library & Computer Use

At Promontory School it is our desire for all of our students to have a passion for reading. Being a "Great Thinker" student at Promontory comes with "Great Responsibility" regarding our Library and computer use.

Library Use

Each student is responsible for all material he/she checks out of the library, including late, lost, or damaged books. Student yearbooks may be withheld if fines or fees are not taken care of.

Computer Use

Computers will be available to qualifying students at Promontory. Along with computer use also includes access to the internet. Our goal is to provide these services to students to promote "Great Thinkers" by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication. Students will be trained in appropriate online behavior, cyber bullying awareness and response, social networking sites, and chat rooms. The use of the computers and internet is a privilege, not a right. Improper

use of computers or violation of Computer Use Policy may result in disciplinary action. Computer damage of various degrees may have fees charged to student and parent/guardian.

Please read completely the Library and Computer Use Policy. Students and parents/guardians are required to sign it each year.

[Internet Safety Policy](#)

[Library & Computer Use Policy](#)

[Library Procedures](#)

Progress Reports & Assessments

REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

As an active participant in your child's education, you want to know how your child is learning and growing both academically and socially. Many tools are used to share student academic and social performance, including, but not limited to, progress reports, portfolios, work samples, checklists, video, standardized test data, and anecdotal records. Our teachers assess student progress in a variety of ways and are able to provide you with ongoing, comprehensive information.

SCHOOL-HOME COMMUNICATION

School-home dialogue is facilitated by notes home and/or e-mails from teachers and provides parents with a regular snapshot of their child's activities at school. Newsletters, menus, student work and announcements will also be sent home and/or emailed home. Please check your email and child's folders regularly. Additionally, information will be posted on the school web site and individual teacher web pages. Families may also contact teachers through e-mail and voice mail (telephone calls will be forwarded to voice mailboxes during times of instruction, unless it is an emergency). Please contact your student's teacher to find the best way to contact them.

HOMEWORK

It is our belief that homework should be meaningful and connected to the students' learning experience. To that end, teachers may send home assignments such as playing a math game, revising and completing a writing assignment, or conducting a science experiment. Additionally, families are expected to read daily with their children.

FORMAL ASSESSMENTS

At Promontory, we follow all mandated State Testing Regulations. Formal state mandated exams will be administered to all students and will provide individual and collective progress data that will be used to assess the needs of the students and provide comprehensive information necessary to improve their overall learning experience.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Promontory uses a grading system to describe students' progress toward a set of long-term learning targets. Grades reflect a student's current level of proficiency with skills and content rather than an average. Progress reports are completed at the end of each trimester.

PORTFOLIOS

It is our belief that student growth and achievement should be measured in a variety of formats. In order to showcase this progress, each student archives and organizes their work across subject areas. Students then select specific work for their working portfolio. Students' portfolios demonstrate proficiency of content and skills over time as well as growth and proficiency regarding habits of scholarship. Portfolios include rubrics linked to learning targets for major projects and assignments. Students' portfolios include multiple drafts, self-reflections, and feedback from teachers that show how their work has improved and how they have met the learning targets. Portfolios also include a working plan where students evaluate perceived areas of strengths and weaknesses and devise an individualized plan for improvement.

STUDENT LED CONFERENCES

Two student led conferences are held during the year, and provide an opportunity for students to share their progress toward both academic learning and habits of scholarship. See the school calendar for scheduled conference dates. The teacher or the parent may request additional conferences.

CELEBRATIONS OF LEARNING

At Promontory, students participate in service learning projects, produce high quality work, and often articulate what they have learned through public presentations. Such public presentations are referred to as Celebrations of Learning and may be presented through a variety of formats that include, but are not limited to: oral and video presentations, art exhibitions, portfolio presentations, exhibitions of student work and discovery findings, fine arts presentations, and student-led events, activities,

or forums that bring the community together for collaboration, teaching, and learning. Families, community members and school partners are invited to participate in these celebrations to learn about the work of the students and honor student learning.

PASSAGES

Students in grades 2, 4, 6, and 8 will prepare for a presentation of learning, called a passage. They will present their polished portfolios to a board that may consist of parents, teachers, a member of the community, as well as a student advocate. The student portfolios will provide evidence that the student will be successful in the upcoming grade, and will contain concrete proof of the important skills and habits developed throughout the previous years. The passage will showcase this learning, and will be required to advance to the next grade. In passages and public exhibitions, students articulate what they have learned and why it is important. Students will be responsible to present work samples from their portfolios as well as be able to:

- Identify learning targets and their level of mastery.
- Demonstrate their level of mastery on each learning target through defense of the ideas set forth in their written pieces.
- Identify specific revisions for each piece to increase level of mastery.
- Reflect on character and themselves as learners and speak extensively to this.
- Re-teach the learning targets presented to panelists.

Special Needs

[Special Education Policy](#)

[Special Education Procedure Manual](#)

Student Fees & Fee Waivers

Promontory will follow all State Rules related to charging school fees as outlined in R277-407. No Fees will be charged students in grades K-6. In grades 7-9 minimal fees may be charged subject to prior board approval and State Rule limits. Fees may include lockers, towels, yearbooks, clubs, travel, extracurricular activities, certain materials and supplies, textbook rental, musical instrument rental, calculator rental, etc. Charges related to the National School Lunch Program are not considered fees.

All school fees will be set annually by the governing board in an open public meeting. Fees will be set at or below levels as approved in Utah statute. The fee schedule will be posted and distributed to all parents or guardians annually.

Students may apply for a waiver of any school fees. Fees will be waived for the following students:

- Students eligible for free school lunch.
- Students who are in state custody or foster care.
- Students whose families are receiving public assistance through the Family Employment Program (FEP) from the Utah Department of Workforce Services.
- Students who are receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI).
- Students whose families are financially unable to pay because of exceptional financial burdens beyond the family's control; these determinations are made on a case-by-case basis by school administrators.

[School Fee Policy](#)

Toys and Electronic Devices

Please help your child remember that toys, electronic games, and similar devices need to be left at home. Each classroom is equipped with age-appropriate games and materials for learning. Toys and electronics from home are not permitted in school. Items that are brought to school may be kept in the office and returned to the parents.

[Electronic Device Policy](#)

Uniforms

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

Students at Promontory are required to wear a school uniform. Uniforms improve classroom learning, build citizenship, instill a sense of community and create a safe learning environment. Please read the complete Uniform Policy (link below), this is a brief summary:

Colors: Must be a solid color of white, or any shade of blue, brown, grey, or green.

Tops: Must have a collar and be a polo or button-down, plain, with no printing or graphics.

Bottoms: Must **not** be traditional wash blue jeans, sweats, knit or sweater-like fabric, workout clothing, basketball-style or athletic pant/shorts.

[Uniform Policy](#)

[Uniform Cheat Sheet](#)

BACKPACKS

We respectfully request that parents NOT purchase a backpack with wheels. We have found that these backpacks pose several problems. They often don't fit in cubbies/lockers and they cause safety concerns as children drag them through hallways, communities and outdoors. Children regularly trip over one another's wheeled backpacks and frequently ram them into one another's shins. Please provide your child with a modestly-sized over-the-shoulder backpack for carrying schoolwork and communications to and from school.

OUTDOORS YEAR ROUND!

We believe strongly that students, just like adults, need to be outdoors. We have outdoor learning, breaks and fieldwork outdoors throughout the year. Please provide your child with climate appropriate apparel, including snow pants, boots, gloves, hats, sweaters, jackets and scarves during the winter months; sunscreen, hats, and water bottles as needed in the summer months.

Use of Student Directory Information

Promontory has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Parent's name
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Grade level
- Student photographs
- Telephone listing and email (used to plan fieldwork transportation or for an emergency phone tree and is not used in school publications.)

The primary purpose of directory information is to allow school districts to include student information or school work in certain school publications. No individually identified photograph of a student, or group photo in which students are individually identified, will be published on the Internet.

The complete list of this information, FERPA (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act), can be read on the link below. [Written notification](#) to the director is required if a student's information is not to be released.

[Use of Student Directory Information](#)

Volunteers and Visitors

Promontory believes that parent involvement is vital to a successful school and optimal student achievement. Parents who enroll their children in Promontory should do so with the understanding that their involvement is crucial to the success of their child's education and of the school.

[Volunteers and Visitor Policy](#)

Withdrawal and Transfer

See Admissions

Terms to Know

PROMONTORY TERMS TO KNOW:

Celebration of Learning- where students can show parent/family what they have learned about for the last expedition.

Community- the Crews that are the same age, i.e., the 5/6 Community. As for location, it is the area outside the class room shared by the same grades.

Crew- A class. "We are not passengers, we are crew."

Expedition- The subject of what a class is intently studying about for the semester. There are two expeditions a year.

Great Thinkers- Significant "experts" of both today and the past that students study. More about this listed in Family Handbook under 'Purpose/Vision'.

Kiva- Room next to the lunch room/gym, used for orchestra and music. It has the stage that Mega Crew and Celebrations of Learning are performed on.

Mega Crew- When more than one crew gets together to show each other what they have been learning. Somewhat like an assembly.

Norms- Rules that are expected for students to follow.

PSEL- abbreviation for Promontory School of Expeditionary Learning

Specials- music classes, art, PE, computer class.

Student Led Conferences- Where the student shares their progress with parents and teachers. Two are held a year. More is listed in the Family Handbook under 'Student Led Conferences'.

Values- The values govern our board, administration, staff, students, and school community. They are listed in the Family Handbook under 'Values - Rise Far'.