



## Understanding the Mustang Code

The **MUSTANG CODE** is a way to formalize the values that we as members of the Mission Montessori community believe are important to visualize, conceptualize and incorporate into daily action. We are hoping that by building this foundation of core values, our students will be able to apply this knowledge in their higher education, career and life. Teaching values is an important part of education because it contributes to the welfare of humankind.

“Education is, quite simply,  
peace-building by another name.”  
Kofi Annan, 7th Secretary-General of the United Nations.

### COMPASSION:

**Compassion** is to recognize when others are suffering or in need and entails a desire to alleviate their suffering. In today’s world, suffering of so many is so great. With people on every continent struggling from poverty, health issues, emotional issues and lack of human rights, showing compassion for others is vital to creating a more equitable world. Sympathy is not compassion. Sympathy is about words. Compassion requires action.

### COMMUNITY:

A **community** is a group of people who have an interest, goal, passion, attitude or purpose that they share in common. Belonging to a community gives members a sense of security, safety and belonging. As the global world becomes more complex and people feel more isolated, it is important for people to have a place where they feel a connection to others and where they receive emotional, social and intellectual support. Feeling welcome and part of a community is akin to receiving a big group hug.

### KINDNESS:

**Kindness** is a behavior that is exhibited by generosity, concern and consideration for others without expecting anything in return. Kindness can take the form of a word, a smile or an action that is not expected. Kindness can uplift a soul, change an attitude, a day or a life and create peace. No one is perfect, people make mistakes. One should accept imperfection in others, be understanding and demonstrate unexpected acts of kindness. It has been said that unexpected kindness is the most powerful, least costly, and underrated agent of human change.

### RESPECT:

**Respect** requires an acceptance of other peoples’ opinions, points of view or actions even if you do not agree. Every individual has the right to their own values, thoughts and opinions. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” This infers that we must teach children to be accepting of others. Often, people want to be respected but they do not act in a respectful way. Showing respect and receiving respect are partners. One must give to receive.

### COURAGE:

**Courage** can take many forms. It encompasses moral courage and physical courage. Nelson Mandela said that “Courage is not the absence of fear but the triumph over it.” Courage can be exemplified in taking a risk or taking a first step even if you cannot predict the outcome. To be courageous is also to find the inner strength to stand up for your beliefs, values and morals even when others try to influence you to change. Each person has an inner voice but often peers and outside influences like social media dim our inner voice. The best advice is to be the individual you choose to be, follow your own path, complete your own journey, overcome a fear and act in ways that support your values, morals and virtues. In doing so, you will be displaying courage.

### CITIZENSHIP:

**Citizenship** refers to the specific relationship between an individual and a State or community and includes specific legal rights, duties and responsibilities. Citizenship by its nature implies that by virtue of being a citizen the State or community has certain obligations towards the individual but equally important are the obligations and responsibilities that each individual has toward the State. These responsibilities can include voting, leading, volunteering in one’s community or being stewards of the environment. John Adams, the 2nd president of the United States felt that Citizenship was our greatest value.

### INTEGRITY:

**Integrity** is to uphold your personal standards, values and virtues. It is to be honest and show moral strength even in the face of adversity. In order to show integrity, an individual needs to know who they are and what they stand for. Integrity means to do the right thing, make the right choices and act in a way that preserves your personal moral standards. According to historians, integrity is a necessity for effective leadership. It has been said of Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the United States, “His greatness consisted in the integrity of his character and the moral fiber of his being.”