

SOUTHWEST OPEN SCHOOL



STUDENT HANDBOOK

2017-18

WELCOME TO SOUTHWEST OPEN SCHOOL!

We at Southwest Open School (SWOS) are pleased that you have chosen to become a part of SWOS, and we hope that we can guide and foster your academic and personal growth. SWOS may be quite different from other schools you have attended. A positive and vibrant school climate is guided by a strong character education program, SWOSology, and the SWOS Design Principles. Our academic program, modeled on expeditionary and experiential practices, provides rich and exciting learning opportunities. Staff and students are on a first name basis. We treat students as responsible citizens who are interested in directing their own learning. We encourage student, parent, and community involvement and input.

This handbook is a general snapshot of SWOS. It doesn't cover all the norms and expectations that will be introduced by your advisors, teachers, and staff during the course of the school year. It is always a good idea to ask questions if you are not sure about something.

"SWOS is a very welcoming community in which you can always feel accepted and understood. The skills that we learn here are the same skills the world leaders need to exercise." SWOS Student

School Organization

Southwest Open School is a charter school governed by its own charter board. Montezuma-Cortez RE-1 School District is the authorizing agent for SWOS.

School Staff

Charlotte Wolf – Director

Matthew Keefauver – Assistant Director

Glenda Alexander – Custodial Services/Food Services

Aubrie Cook-Carnahan – STEM Teacher/Student Advisor

Rebecca Gostlin – Behavioral Health Provider; Clinic

Teri Gregory – ESS Paraprofessional

Julie Hite – Registered Nurse; School-Based Health Clinic

Rick Morris- STEM Teacher/Student Advisor

Nate Osgood – Art Coordinator

Matt Robinson – STEM Teacher/Student Advisor

Casey Simpson – Humanities Teacher/Student Advisor

Stormie Syra – Registrar/Student Services Coordinator

Scott Spear – Humanities Teacher/Student Advisor

Melissa Watters – ESS & ACE Coordinator/Student Advisor

Shannon Wells – LPN/School Based Health Clinic Coordinator

Chad Wheelus – Humanities Teacher/Student Advisor

Bonny White – Business Manager

Edward Whritner – Humanities Teacher/Student Advisor

Mark Wing – Native American Youth Advocate

Southwest Open School	Physical Address:	Phone: (970) 565-1150
P.O. Box DD	401 N Dolores Road	Fax: (970) 565-8770
Cortez, CO 81321	Cortez, CO 81321	

Days of Operation: Monday through Thursday (except during the Fall, Winter, and Spring Intensives when we operate Monday through Friday)

Hours of Operation: 8:20 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

"This school saved my life." SWOS Student at his graduation

School Philosophy & Charter Mission

Mission Statement:

The mission of Southwest Open School is to create a community of learners who utilize experiential education in developing and nurturing high academic, character, and health standards while honoring diversity and fostering self-directed lifelong learning.

The SWOS educational program is based on the following:

- ❖ A learning program built upon a student's academic abilities, interests, goals and personal strengths.
- ❖ An advisor-advisee relationship between staff and students.
- ❖ A flexible schedule of courses and field experiences designed to meet the needs of the student.
- ❖ Community-based service learning.
- ❖ Curriculum is based on the Colorado and National Model Content Standards employing an expeditionary and experiential approach as the vehicle for delivery.
- ❖ Character Education Curriculum (SWOSology) guides students in becoming socially responsible adults.

Through the use of these components, SWOS creates a meaningful and positive experience for students. Fundamental to success at SWOS is the sense of belonging a student feels with the school, the staff, the various classes, and other students. SWOS is a place where diverse students respect and support each other.

At SWOS we encourage parent and community involvement. During the year, parents will receive information about upcoming events, early release days, changes in the calendar, gallery days, etc. The Southwest Open School Charter Board, consisting of community members, provides guidance to ensure the mission of SWOS is met. We always welcome volunteers at SWOS and have been enriched by their infusion of talents and energies. To keep up to date of upcoming events or opportunities please visit our website: www.southwestopenschool.org or, like our Facebook page at: facebook.com/southwestopenschool

"I feel that SWOS is very good at helping young men and women with feeling more comfortable with themselves and each other and helping young women and men decide what goals they want to reach and help us reach them." SWOS Student



ACADEMICS

Expeditionary and Experiential Learning

SWOS uses expeditionary and experiential approaches to engage students in learning. These learning models promote critical thinking skills, academic achievement, and personal development through the use of in-depth investigations that engage students in community, travel, projects, and service by bringing experts into the classroom, taking students into the field, and engaging students in real-world learning experiences. For example, a class might combine art, math, history and reading and writing in a study of the Mayan culture, which then

may travel to Mexico to study the culture first hand. Students work independently and in groups, taking responsibility for and reflecting on their learning. Students at SWOS are encouraged to ***Discover their Potential***, which is one of our six Design Principles that guide our program.

DISCOVERING POTENTIAL

Discovering potential means opening up to possibility. At SWOS, students participate in unique learning experiences, expeditionary opportunities, and are provided with the requisite support to discover potential. The SWOS community supports all members in realizing their potential by helping them take risks, overcome challenges, and achieve their best.

SWOSology: Character Education Program

A fundamental component of SWOS's educational program is a character education class, SWOSology, which **every** student entering SWOS is required to pass. SWOSology, which was modeled after the Discovery Curriculum, was added to the school's schedule of classes in 1999. This class helps students to be better prepared to be in the classroom and experience school success by teaching skills such as team work, effective communication, problem solving, mood management, and conflict resolution. Our regular academic classes then allow students to practice of these skills while learning about core subject matter.

Three House System and Portfolios

SWOS instituted a three house system in 2016-2017: Lower Houses I & II and Upper House. In the Lower Houses students learn about SWOS culture and expectations and build basic knowledge and skills through multi-disciplinary expeditions. These expeditions involve group activities, hands-on experience, travel and service projects. When a student has earned at least 7 credits, the student is then in Lower House II (LH II) and coursework continues to build knowledge and skills through expeditionary, experiential and project-based learning experiences. While a student is in LH II, they work to develop their Lower House portfolio which documents student growth in both academics and character, and includes reflection on that learning and growth. LH II students present a Lower House Portfolio, typically when they have earned 13 credits, or about half of the 26 credits required to graduate. Students present their Lower House Portfolio to a panel of peers and staff to demonstrate readiness to move into Upper House. After a successful Lower House portfolio presentation, students move on to the Upper House where they will focus on application of skills, individual interests and future plans. At this point students work more independently to prepare for their future beyond SWOS. An Upper House student may be in a classroom, mentoring students in the Lower Houses expeditions, job shadowing in a business, attending classes at Southwest Community College or working on a Senior project. An important part of a student's work in the Upper House is the SWOSfolio. In the year the student will have sufficient credits to graduate, Upper House students will document their readiness to graduate and their growth and achievement in both academics and character. Students must successfully present and defend their SWOSfolio before a panel of staff, peer, and community members in order to graduate from SWOS.

Academic Credits & Graduation Requirements

Southwest Open School requires the completion of 26 high school credits to graduate. The students at SWOS work on a self-paced basis to complete the necessary credits. The credit requirements are as follows:

4	English	1	PE
1/2	Speech	3	Math
1/2	Health	1	Geography

2	Science	1/2	Senior Seminar
2	History	8	Elective
1	Government	1/2	Service Learning
1/2	SWOSology/Health	1 ½	Community

TOTAL OF 26 Credits

“My portfolio is a reflection of who I am.” SWOS Student

H.E.A.R Requirements

If you are a planning to attend a four year college or university, there are additional graduation requirements that you must meet. These are called the Higher Education Academic Requirements. Your advisors can help you plan your schedule to be sure you earn these additional credits.

- *4 Math *(This fourth credit must be a higher level math class, i.e. Algebra II, Trigonometry, Calculus, Geometry II)*
- * 3 Science *(Two of these credits must be lab-based)*
- * 1 Foreign Language
- * 2 Academic Elective *(Two of your elective credits must be academic electives)*

Grades

No grades are given at SWOS due to the use of alternative forms of assessment. In each class students complete a learning agreement and must meet the terms of that agreement in order to earn credit. Students must attend class 80% of the time and complete at least 80% of the work to earn full credit. A student must also successfully defend his or her SWOSfolio in order to graduate from SWOS. (see “The Three House System and Portfolios” above.)

“I think that SWOS makes you push yourself to succeed and makes you control yourself and learn how to schedule your time. You’re given the chance to learn on your own.” SWOS Student

Work Experience

Students who work may earn up to two elective credits. Proof of working hours must be turned in to his or her advisor(s) for a student to earn the credit. Every 60 hours of work equals ¼ (0.25) credit. Two hours of credit (2.0) may be earned through work experience.

Advisors

One of the things that make SWOS unique is that every student is known well by at least one or two adults who are assigned to be their advisors. Every student feels comfortable knowing that there is always someone to whom they can go to ask questions, get help with a class or schedule, make plans for after high school or just to talk. Students develop strong relationships with each other as well as the teachers.

Parents are another important part of making SWOS work for a student. Parents should expect regular contact with their daughter or son’s advisor. Always feel free to call or come by the school.

“Teachers are like friends who aid us in our learning.” SWOS Student

Continuing Education and Career Planning – Post-Secondary & Workforce Readiness

SWOS students are encouraged to plan for their future throughout their educational journey at SWOS. Through interest inventories, specific career planning classes, and SWOSfolio, students determine what type of schooling and/or training is required for them to fulfill their dreams/goals. The Academic Advisor/Counselor, Advisors, and Teachers support the student in making the right decisions so they are prepared for the path they choose. Senior Seminar class assists the students in the final preparation of their SWOSfolio, as well as filling out applications and financial aid forms and visiting colleges.

“I want to go to college and I know SWOS will help me get there. I quit school before here.”
SWOS Student

SWOS offers additional options that will assist students in planning for their future and allow them to participate in job shadows and internships.

SWOS ACE Program

A new program, **Alternative Cooperative Education** (ACE) is presented at SWOS through Career and Technical Education (CTE). ACE is state-approved and sponsored and optimally prepares young adults to be occupationally effective, socially responsible and functionally independent.

The ACE program is a CTE program with the ultimate goals being to develop: self-knowledge, human relation skills, employability skills, career awareness, independent living skills, transition planning and leadership skills. ACE provides positive experiences which will enable students to achieve success in school as well as preparing them for the world of work.

The ACE program is designed to enhance employment-related skills for students. At SWOS, LH2 and UH students will have the opportunity to enroll in the SWOS ACE program.

Units of study include:

SWOSology, Career Pathways/Trades, Career Math, Credit Recovery, Entrepreneurship, Consumer Math, Workplace Reading for Information, ACE Work

Students can complete a maximum of 690 hours; a minimum of 400 hours: 400 (SWOSology, Consumer Math, Career Pathways/Trades, Entrepreneurship, ACE Work) is required. Employers look favorably upon students who complete an ACE program because of the high employability skills.

Academic Progress Procedure & Student (Re-)Engagement

Academic progress and communication with teachers and advisors is key to success at SWOS. As a student, you will need to tell your teachers and advisors about absences and work schedules. Students will need to work with their teachers to make up work due to absences. While advisors and/or teachers do not call parents on a daily basis to report absences (unless requested to do so), they will have regular contact with parents to let them know about a student's attendance and general progress. Students who are ill or need to be absent for other reasons need to call the SWOS office to report their absence.

SWOS Academic Re-engagement procedures guide the student and parent in helping them understand the academic and attendance requirements. In order to be eligible for full credit in

classes, students must maintain at least 80% attendance and produce quality work to the best of their ability.

SWOS Academic Re-Engagement through Reflection and Goal Setting (AR)

This newly implemented, tiered, and comprehensive Behavior Education approach to student attendance, production, and discipline is not only optimally aligned with the SWOS educational philosophy that focuses on social-emotional wellness, but also with the SWOS instructional model. It is also in compliance with Colorado state law (particularly C.R.S. 22-33-101 et seq. with respect to truancy matters; C.R.S. 22-33-104; C.R.S. 22-33-107; C.R.S. 22-33-107.1 and C.R.S. 22-33-108) and Montezuma-Cortez Re-1 School District policies regarding attendance and truancy.

The Academic Re-Engagement through Reflection and Goal Setting (AR) procedure includes the identification of “dropout” students by proactively and regularly providing for tiered interventions with the ultimate purpose being “dropout” prevention.

The procedure outlined below is in two parts.

- **Part A addresses “Stepping into the Circle”** which is a phrase used at SWOS that represents the actions a student takes to become part of the SWOS community or “Circle.” These can be students that start at SWOS in the Fall Intensive, Fall Semester, and Winter Intensive (also known as mid-year transfers).
- **Part B addresses “Staying in the Circle,”** which refers to the actions a student takes to remain a member of the SWOS community by participating, producing, and earning credits toward graduation.

Each part has tiered levels of intervention intended to facilitate reflection, goal setting, and student re-engagement in the academic opportunities at SWOS. Both “Stepping into the Circle” and “Staying in the Circle” begin with a Tier 0 which represents the procedures and programming in place to help students transition into the academic and social-emotional growth mindset at SWOS.

A. STEPPING INTO THE CIRCLE

Tier 0 - prospective students only

SWOS Application process

- Students must choose and complete **one** item from the list of options below:
 - Attend Information Session and complete an Information Session Reflection
 - Attend a guided tour and complete SWOS Tour Reflection.
 - Shadow a student for at least half a day and complete Student Shadow Reflection
 - Attend a Gallery night and complete a Gallery Night Reflection
 - Submit a paragraph and/or slideshow that addresses “What SWOS can do for Me and What I can do for SWOS” OR “Why I want to go to SWOS”
- Complete a Transition Meeting with previous school stakeholders (Students with IEP/504/in RTI process/Expelled).
- Complete enrollment packet including the SWOS Creed
- Intake Interview with Student, Parent, Director, Assistant Director (and House Lead/ESS as applicable).

All students start at SWOS in SWOSology class. The following Tiered Interventions occur during SWOSology class.

Tier 1 - new students only

- 1st week, each block, Responsibility for Learning rubric (see Attachment a), extend to 2nd week if student averaged below 3 on the rubric. If student average remains below 3 on the rubric through the 2nd week, student is referred to Tier 2 interventions.
- SWOSology teachers have the authority to implement the Responsibility for Learning Rubric on a daily or weekly basis or refer students to Tier 2 interventions at any time during SWOSology per teacher discretion.

Tier 2 - new students only

- Plan for Success meeting held with student, parent, AD, and Director, BHP, ESS, EARSS as applicable (includes identification of barriers, behavior planning, and goal setting) and team creates a Plan for Success utilizing the SWOS Creed.
- SWOSology teacher monitors Plan for Success for rest of term.

If Tier 2 Plan for Success goals were not met during SWOSology, student referred to Tier 3 Interventions

Tier 3 - new students only

- Student does not pass SWOSology and must retake SWOSology in Fall Semester or Winter Intensive.

Mid-Year Transfers: If student takes SWOSology for the first time in the Winter Intensive and they do not pass (Tier 2 Plan for Success goals are not met), students in this situation automatically move to Tier 4 Interventions.

Tier 4 - new students only

If student has not passed SWOSology in previous terms and then does not pass Winter SWOSology (or is a mid-year transfer that did not pass Winter SWOSology)

- Individual Learning Plan developed in a meeting with the student's team to include Student, Parent, AD, Director, Community Advisor, and EARSS, BHP, ESS, and/or Social Worker/other, as applicable.
- The Individual Learning Plan will include flexible scheduling options such as partial-day scheduling, online classes, independent study, check-ins, and after school/before school options.
- Students will have to retake SWOSology in the Fall Intensive.

B. STAYING IN THE CIRCLE

Tier 0 - all students

Existing structures that provide support

- Design Principles
- 6P's
- Expeditionary, experiential, and project-based learning
- 3 House System and House-specific norming
- Community advisory
- School Based Health Clinic
- Social and Emotional Intelligence as part of school-wide PBIS
- Mediations and restorative justice practices

- Peer Mentoring Program (including support groups for struggling students)
- House Transition meetings
- SWOS Creed

Tier 1 - all students

For academic, behavioral, and/or attendance issues within first 2 weeks of semester

- 3 Re-direct Procedure - implemented with fidelity
- House level Mediations/Conferences – done with house team teachers only, support of AD or Director and others as needed.

Tier 2 - all students

For students that continue to struggle with attendance and/or behavior after Tier 1 Interventions, e.g., excessive absences, multiple 3-redirects, 2 or more House level mediations/conferences.

For Attendance/Production in class:

- Red flag warnings -- students with 6 or more absences and/or minimal to no production in first 2 weeks of semester will have meeting with student, parent, House team teacher, AD, and Director, ESS, BHP, EARSS, as applicable, to identify barriers by reflection and goal setting and create a Plan for Success.
- Progress reports -- students with 3 or more blocks at Level 1 or 2 on progress report will have meeting with student, parent, House team teacher, AD, and Director, ESS, BHP, EARSS, as applicable to identify barriers by reflection and goal setting and create a Plan for Success.

For Behavior:

- Incident reports -- Students whose behavior results in multiple 3 redirects and/or incident reports will have a meeting with student, parent, AD, House Lead, and others as applicable to identify restorative practices and engage in reflection and goal setting. Team will create a Plan for Success.

For both attendance/production and Behavior:

- House Leads monitor Plans for Success through weeks 3-6 of semester.

Tier 3 - all students

If Tier 2 Plan for Success goals are not met and/or student does not follow through on restorative practice and reflection

- Individual Learning Plan developed in a meeting with the student's team to include Student, Parent, AD, Director, House Lead or Community Advisor, and EARSS, BHP, ESS, and/or Social Worker/other, as applicable.
- The Individual Learning Plan will include flexible scheduling options such as partial-day scheduling, online classes, independent study, and after school/before school options.

The AR procedure is further delineated in the attached flow chart (see Attachment b).

C. STEPPING OUT OF THE CIRCLE - students leaving SWOS

Conducting expulsions (in compliance with Federal law and Colorado state law--see above--and Montezuma-Cortez Re-1 District policies); see Tier 3 in "Staying in the Circle" for behavior or production (for students identified as habitually disruptive).

“SWOS is a place where I can be myself and learn the way that is easiest for me and not worry about the people I don't get along with.” SWOS Student

Credit Recovery

Credit Recovery is a class offered as part of the academic schedule where students can work more independently with a credit recovery instructor to make up credits that they have not earned for any variety of reasons. Credit Recovery classes also allow students to finish incomplete work in previous classes or to work on their Sophomore Portfolio or Senior SWOSfolio. In some cases, credit recovery offers students opportunities to brush up on academic skills that they may be lacking.

Field Trips

School sponsored field study is an important part of the school curriculum. One-day trips are considered part of the regular school schedule. Parents are notified of the details of trips that last more than one day. Because of insurance and safety issues, students may not drive to class functions off campus, but must go with the class in school vehicles.

Service Learning

Service learning is incorporated into many SWOS classes and is a requirement for graduation. A service learning project helps students develop compassion and empathy and experience the joy of helping others. Students also learn the skills and concepts necessary to complete the project. Students reflect on both their academic learning and their personal growth. SWOS students have built a flight cage for injured raptors, tutored elementary school students, assisted in Hurricane Katrina relief efforts in Mississippi, repaired bikes and given them to needy children, built sidewalks on the SWOS campus, and much more.

Gallery Day/Night

At the end of each semester, classes present what they have learned at an all-school gathering called Gallery Day/Night. Posters, stories, artwork, and models are displayed. Students reflect on their learning through project presentation and formal presentations. This celebration of learning is attended by the entire school community and is open to parents, friends and members of the outside community.

“Gallery day is really great because it lets us put together all the information we’ve learned throughout the class. It’s a window into our minds.” SWOS Student

GENERAL INFORMATION

Student Admissions & Enrollment Policy

Students come to SWOS because they want to, their parents want them to, or through the recommendation from principals, teachers, or counselors. Applications are available in the school office. An applicant will meet with a staff member who will explain things in the enrollment packet and answer questions. If you are a student who has been expelled from another school or are involved with the legal system or have other special considerations, you will need to meet with the SWOS Director as well. All the staff wants to support you in becoming a successful student at SWOS and in life after SWOS.

An Upper House student may attend post-secondary classes at the Southwest Colorado Community College as part of their schedule at SWOS. Students interested in this should talk to their advisor or to the Assistant Director/Director in advance of the beginning of the semester to arrange this.

Sports

SWOS offers many classes that involve physical activity. Often there are teacher led activities outside of class such as day hikes, cross country skiing, bike riding, rafting, mountain climbing, etc.

In addition, if a student meets the eligibility requirements of M-CHS or another high school in the area, he or she may participate in sports at that school.

Insurance

We ask that students and parents provide health insurance information. If you are a student who doesn't have health insurance, contact the school nurse and she can help you apply for Medicaid/CHP+ insurance. SWOS is reimbursed by Medicaid for some services so PLEASE make sure to fill out all parts of the enrollment packet.

School Based Health Clinic

SWOS has its own health clinic. The SWOS SBHC is staffed with a full-time clinic coordinator, and part-time nurse practitioner, registered nurse, and a licensed behavioral health provider. You can be seen at the clinic for anything you would see a regular doctor for: mental health, reproductive health, acute care (sore throat, sprained ankle, etc.) and dental referrals and immunizations. The clinic is open Monday through Friday during school hours. Parents sign a form in the enrollment packet giving permission for their child to be seen at the clinic where services are confidential for students 15 and older as per state law.

School Breakfast & Lunch

School breakfast and lunch are available at SWOS. Students may qualify for free or reduced lunch by filling out the form included in the application packet. Even if you do not plan to eat at SWOS, it is important that we get this information. Much of our funding, especially grants and Federal Title money, is based on the number of students we have who are eligible for free and reduced lunch. (We never use names, just the number of students eligible.)

If you are wondering about the confidentiality of this information, here is what happens. The form is taken out of the enrollment packet. It is sent to Food Services at RE-1. No one else at SWOS sees the information. The Food Services Director tells us how many of our students qualify, so only the SWOS Director here knows who qualifies and who doesn't.

Breakfast is served everyday in the Student Center. Lunch is served in the Dolores Student Center every day.

Visitors

Students from other schools who are interested in enrolling at SWOS are welcome to visit for a day. The visiting student or the SWOS student who is sponsoring the visitor needs to get permission from their teachers and from the Director. Visitors also need to check in at the office before their visit to obtain a visitor pass. The best way to get a feel for SWOS is to spend a day with us so we encourage prospective students to do this.

Open Campus

SWOS is an open campus for students 16 years and older. If you are not 16, you need to stay on campus unless given written permission to go off-campus by your parent(s). Students are responsible for their actions off campus. If you behave inappropriately off-campus, your standing at SWOS may be affected.

Parking Area

The student parking area is behind the school. Students need to be respectful of their privilege to park there and are responsible to keep it clean and safe. Students park their cars in the student parking lot in the back of the school so that the spaces in front of the school are available to guests and staff. Always practice school zone driving behavior. Students may be in the parking area only during non-class time or with special permission. Any non-SWOS student must check in with the office before spending time in the parking area. Ignoring safety issues can result in an Incident Report being written up, disciplinary action, parent involvement, and loss of parking privilege.

Transportation & Bus Schedules

The RE-1 School District provides transportation to and from Southwest Open School. For bus schedules, call the district transportation office at 565-8130. Students may lose bus privileges if they violate SWOS or RE-1 behavior codes.

EXPECTATIONS/DISCIPLINE

SWOS Norms

You will learn more about the “norms” or expectations at SWOS in your SWOSology class. Norms are different from rules, but they help everyone in the SWOS community understand how to best work together and as individuals in the effort to have a positive school culture where all students can experience success. The 6 P’s are the most essential norms: Prepared, Participate, Prompt, Polite, Positive Mental Attitude, Produce. Also guiding our school philosophy, culture, practices, and programs are six SWOS Design Principles.

Tobacco Use

NO, NO, NO!!! There is no use of tobacco on school grounds or in school vehicles. We will help students in any way we can to quit or cut down on their use of tobacco.

Disciplinary Action and Restorative Practices

Discipline and Behavior Support are guided by our one of our SWOS Design Principles: **RESPECT.**

Respect is the mortar that binds our school together. Students and staff feel physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe. Respect is also demonstrated through empathy and advocacy within and outside of the SWOS community. Service projects illustrate these values and nurture empathetic leaders who have the attitudes and skills to learn from and be of service.

At SWOS we work to ensure that every member of our community feels physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe. Our norms and the character skills that are taught in SWOSology are our core expectations. When expectations are not met, SWOS looks at the needs of both the student and the SWOS community in dealing with the issue. We are not interested in just punishing the action. SWOS is a community and that means that every action has an effect on the rest of the community. We care for each other. We do not expect everyone to be friends, but we do expect everyone to act with **Respect!**

“SWOSology” is a class that teaches new students about all of this. If you don’t understand something or need more information, please ask! The skills learned in SWOSology include: effective communication, mood management, problem solving, conflict resolution, and team building.

SWOS must follow the RE-1 Code of Conduct and also Colorado state laws that govern schools. In general, however, we have a different philosophy when it comes to dealing with misconduct. Restorative Justice may be a new concept for you. It will be explained in much more detail once you are at school. In brief, though, Restorative Justice at SWOS means the following:

- We focus on the specific harm that was done rather than the rules that were broken.
- We have direct participation in the discipline process by all who were affected.
- We gear the discipline response to the needs of the individual students and the particular situation.
- The staff and students utilize positive, non-violent communication, mediation, and conflict transformation practices on a daily basis.

State Law says that you *may* be suspended or expelled for the following: (We've restated these in plain language. These are things we cannot and would not want to change.)

- Continuing to ignore rules or being habitually defiant or disruptive.
- Destroying or defacing school property.
- Behavior on or off campus that is harmful to someone's welfare or safety or threatens them.
- Any serious violation at school or school activity.
- Repeatedly interfering with others being able to learn.

At SWOS we would probably not expel you for any of these things the first time and not if you cooperate in trying to solve the conflict.

You *may*, by state law, be expelled for the following:

- Bringing, carrying, possessing or using a dangerous weapon.
- The sale of drugs or controlled substances.
- The commission of a first or second degree assault as defined in the state criminal code.
- The commission of robbery as defined in the state criminal code.

It is our goal to have students out of school for the least amount of time possible. We will work with you to have you repair whatever harm has been done and continue your education as soon as possible.

Conflict

We recognize that conflict is a normal part of life. If you, as a student, have a conflict with another person we ask that you take the following steps. If one doesn't work, go to the next level.

1. Solve the conflict non-violently yourself.
2. Solve the conflict with help of peer mediators.
3. Solve the conflict with the help of your advisor or another adult.
4. Take the conflict to the Director and try to problem solve.
5. Meet with a group from the SWOS community for a mediation, restorative justice conference, a Plan for Success, or other appropriate action.

"At SWOS a conflict is handled integrating the students, staff and outside community to ease tensions and overcome the stress of student to student conflict." SWOS Student

Fighting

We are proud of the fact that we keep our campus and students safe. To maintain this climate, fighting is not tolerated at SWOS and *may* result in expulsion.

Dress Code

Wear clothes that are appropriate to the situation. We are tolerant of students expressing themselves through their hairstyles and attire. We ask you to remember that you invite people to treat you according to how you appear. Also, if something you wear is offensive to someone (say to their religious beliefs), he or she may talk to you about this. In order to keep the campus safe, we also ask that you do not wear gang affiliated insignia or clothing.

Often we have guests from the community at school. Classes go off campus. Your teachers will talk to you about specific situations and may ask you to refrain from wearing certain clothing at certain times. Please respect the rights of others as you exercise your own.

The SWOS staff all work hard to ensure that you have a positive learning experience. Please help us in maintaining and promoting this positive school climate.

WE WELCOME YOU TO SOUTHWEST OPEN SCHOOL!