

MOUNTAIN YOUTH SCHOOL

As a new student at Mountain Youth School, what can you expect?

During a back-to-school orientation in August 2013, Mountain Youth School students were asked to describe some of their preconceived notions and expectations of the school, its students, faculty, and education/behavior standards. Returning students were then asked what the realities of attending Mountain Youth School really were in their experience. Because the community perception and preconceived notions of the school as having a reputation for being a disciplinary school for “bad kids” differed so much from how the students perceived the experience of a caring, calm, and fun learning environment, the students took it upon themselves to brainstorm ways they could help change the school’s image this year. Please read on for their actual thoughts and ideas. We invite you as a new student to share your own ideas, and to join with us in achieving these goals.

ATTENDING MOUNTAIN YOUTH SCHOOL	
Pre-Concepted Ideas	Realities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did something “wrong” to come here • The “jail” school • Other schools threaten to send students here as a punishment • Bad thing to be sent here • School is strict, students are always watched, considered not trustworthy • Teachers are mean • Stereotypes of male and female students include bad attitudes, pregnant/parenting teens, violence; students characterized as the “bad kids”: troublemakers, lazy, and unwilling/unable to learn • Fights and drugs rampant • The place for “stupid kids,” or students with mental or developmental disabilities and learning disorders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calm learning environment • One-on-one attention by teachers • More like a privilege, not a punishment • No homework, lots of help from teachers with classwork • Fun events: cookouts, baseball/basketball/football, Pacesetters, greenhouse, folk school, field trips, etc. • Challenging classes are not boring or “dumbed down” • No drug busts/drug use at school

How Can We Change Our Perception?

- Make copies of our good points or make a brochure
- Student promotion of the school
- Sorry to leave/happy to be here
- Being ambassadors at other schools and in the community
- Change the way people define “alternative”
- Make it a privilege to come here, not a punishment. Take applications and recruit.
- The only way you can fail is not to try! Take a risk!

Theme of the Year: Teamwork

Teamwork means working in a group; listening, paying attention, taking and giving advice; everyone does the work; cooperating and considering other people’s feelings; synchronization; and everyone working together toward a common goal. Go Mustangs!



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