

# Middle School Handbook



**Country Day School  
2011-2012**



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## From the Middle School Principal's Desk

The middle school years are possibly the most challenging and exciting educational years. Children experience so many changes between the ages of 10 and 15. They shift from a self-contained elementary class to a schedule with various teachers in different locations, including elective classes. They are assigned their first locker, must use an agenda, and become proficient at planning and organizing time. They also learn to interact with their teachers in a more mature fashion. These are also years of tremendous physical, social, and emotional changes.

In addition to providing challenging academic instruction, our teachers also have the very special responsibility of guiding students through these changes as part of our advisory program. Each full-time middle school teacher is also the advisor to 12 to 15 students who meet four days a week after lunch for team-building activities, intramurals, problem-solving, discussions, and just plain fun. During advisory, students gain confidence, develop leadership qualities, learn study and organizational skills, and inculcate the values of our middle school community.

One of the values of our community that we plan to explore this year is that of stewardship, of taking care of ourselves, each other, and the planet. This year, throughout Country Day School, teachers and students will reflect on the theme “Healthy People, Healthy Planet” and use it as the catalyst for lessons, discussions, and projects. This theme was selected by our CDS Director and Principals as one that embodies a philosophy of stewardship, of caring about our personal health as well as that of the planet we share.

In many ways, a school handbook helps to clarify the values that are important to a school. It helps parents and students understand the school culture as well as establish behavioral expectations. Hopefully, it also helps to ease the transition to middle school for our sixth graders as well as seventh and eighth grade students who are new to Country Day School. Returning parents and students will notice some changes in content since last year. Revision is an ongoing process. Should changes be made over the course of the school year, I will notify you and request that students comply with revisions.

Please read through this handbook and be aware of the information it contains. You will find policies and directions about how to handle situations that may arise during the year. Teachers and I will be discussing aspects of the handbook with students as the year starts. Parents may also want to go over it with your child at home.

I wish you all an engaging and beneficial school year.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kerri Nolan  
Middle School Principal  
Country Day School

## Middle School Calendar 2011-12

Mon. – Fri., Aug. 8 – 12	Teachers' in-service week
Fri., Aug. 12	New student orientation
Mon., Aug. 15	Holiday – Mothers' Day (CR)
Tues., Aug. 16	First day of school – All school assembly in gym (8:30)
Wed., Aug. 31	Middle school open house (5:30 – 8:00)
Wed., Sept. 14	Middle school Independence Day celebration
Thurs., Sept. 15	Holiday – Independence Day (CR)
Wed., Sept. 21	Professional development half-day
Sat., Sept. 24	Family picnic (10:00 – 1:00)
Fri., Oct. 14	End of first quarter (43 days)
Mon., Oct. 17	Holiday – Columbus Day (CR)
Fri., Oct. 21	First quarter report cards sent home
Wed., Oct. 26	Parent-teacher conferences half-day
Fri., Oct. 28	Middle school Halloween dance (7:00 – 9:00)
Fri., Nov. 4	Middle school Olympic Festival
Wed., Nov. 16	Professional development half-day
Wed., Nov. 23	Thanksgiving lunch
Thurs. – Fri., Nov. 24 – 25	Holiday – Thanksgiving (USA)
Thurs., Dec. 15	End of second quarter (41 days) half-day
Thurs., Dec. 15	Second quarter report cards sent home
Wed., Jan. 11	Administrators return
Mon., Jan. 16	Teachers' in-service day
Tues., Jan. 17	Classes resume for second semester
Mon., Feb. 20	Holiday – Presidents' Day (USA)
Sun., Feb. 26	CDS 5K Fun Run
Fri., March 23	End of third quarter (48 days)
Wed., March 28	Parent-teacher conferences half-day
Fri., March 30	Third quarter report cards sent home
Mon. – Fri., April 2 – 6	Holiday – Spring Break (CR)
Wed., April 11	Holiday – Juan Santamaria Day (CR)
Wed., April 25	Professional development half-day
Sat., April 28	Arts Festival (10:00 – 1:00)
Tues., May 1	Holiday – Labor Day (CR)
Wed., May 9	Middle School Celebration of Learning (5:30 – 7:30)
Thurs., May 17	Middle School Cultural Fair (6:00 – 9:00)
Wed., May 23	Professional development half-day
Thurs., May 24	National Junior Honor Society Induction (8:15 – 9:00)
Wed., June 6	Middle School Awards Ceremony (1:30 – 2:45)
Wed., June 13	Middle School Moving Up Ceremony (8:15 – 9:45)
Thurs., June 14	End of fourth quarter (52 days) half-day
Fri., June 15	Last day for teachers
Mon., June 18	Report cards go home

## Middle School Contact Information

### Office Numbers

Country Day School telephone	2289-0919
Country Day School fax	2228-2076
Middle School Extension	2231 or 2280

### Administrative Team

Director: Mr. Greg MacGilpin	greg_macgilpin@cds.ed.cr
High School Principal: Christopher Brown	christopher_brown@cds.ed.cr
Middle School Principal: Kerri Nolan	kerri_nolan@cds.ed.cr
Elementary School Principal: William Large	william_large@cds.ed.cr
Early Childhood Principal: Anabelle Jervis	anabelle_jervis@cds.ed.cr
Admissions Director: María F. Cardona	mafernanda_cardona@cds.ed.cr
Business Manager: Dora Sevilla	dora_sevilla@cds.ed.cr
Transportation Coordinator: Alvaro Zamora	Alvaro_Zamora @cds.ed.cr

### Office Staff Email Information

Fernández, Karen (receptionist)	karen_fernandez@cds.ed.cr
Prendas, Vanessa (secretary)	vanessa_prendas@cds.ed.cr
Urrutia, Isabel (counselor)	isabel_urrutia@cds.ed.cr

### Teacher Email Information

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McCray, Angela (math)	angela_mccray@cds.ed.cr
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Porter, Margie (social studies)	Margie_Porter@cds.ed.cr
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Ruiz, Ana (Spanish)	ana_ruiz@cds.ed.cr
Sáenz-Grimm, Vicky (English)	victoria_saenz@cds.ed.cr
Villafranca, Xavier (art)	Xavier_Villafranca@cds.ed.cr
Zamora, Alvaro (PE)	Alvaro_Zamora@cds.ed.cr

## Country Day School Mission

It is the mission of Country Day School, a private, non-sectarian, English-language school serving students from early childhood through high school, to provide its students with a traditional college preparatory education committed to high academic standards and achievement through a balanced program structured primarily on United States curricula.

## Objectives

In keeping with this mission, Country Day School

- Provides for the development of intellectual, social, aesthetic, and moral values that satisfy the needs of our students.
- Serves students from the expatriate and local communities.
- Maintains high academic standards and fosters a love of learning.
- Provides a program that focuses on the basics: English, literature, science, social studies, Spanish, physical education and the arts (drama, art, and music).
- Maintains a structured curriculum plan for learning
- Evaluates student learning frequently with a variety of assessment tools to ensure that each child is progressing appropriately.
- Helps students prepare for a world of rapid change in which critical thinking, creativity, technology, and teamwork are essential.
- Values and teaches cultural understanding and knowledge of the complexities of our world.
- Teaches and models virtues such as honesty, compassion, diligence, kindness, fairness, and loyalty.
- Prepares students for admission to universities in North America, Costa Rica, and around the world.

## History of Country Day School

Country Day School was founded in 1963 as a private coeducational school, similar to U.S. college preparatory schools. The school grew from an initial 18 students to its present combined enrollment of more than 850 students, representing over forty nationalities from four continents. We are located on a ten-acre campus in the town of Escazú about seven kilometers west of the center of San José. Country Day School is owned by Woodson C. Brown.

Country Day School is recognized throughout Costa Rica and Central America for its level of consistent excellence in academics. At the middle school level, Country Day students consistently outscore and outperform their peers from the United States, and are generally well prepared academically for the next grade level if they return to the United States.

Country Day School is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools of the United States, and the Ministerio de Educación Pública (MEP) of Costa Rica. We are also a member of the Association of American Schools of Central America (AASCA). For more information, you may access our web site at <http://www.cds.ed.cr/>

## Parent Association

All parents of CDS students are members of the Parent Association. The purpose and mission of the CDS Parent Association is

- To foster communication, participation, and a feeling of community among parents in support of the programs and activities of CDS.
- To provide support and assistance for school activities, such as student led community service, recognition of faculty and staff members, and spirit building activities.
- To provide parent input to the PA Executive Committee, the administration and the faculty on matters of importance to the parents and students.

Meetings are held several times a year and are open to any parent who wants to come to be updated on school wide activities, or to voice ideas as to how parents can better support the school, faculty and children.

In an effort to support CDS in its goals, parents provide leadership, promote school spirit, and provide a channel for parent's voices to be heard by the school administration.

All parents are encouraged to become active in the Parent Association by attending divisional meetings and volunteering to help with parent sponsored activities. This year's President is Talia Murphy. For more information, you may access the Parent Association web site at <http://parents.cds.ed.cr/>

## The *Hogares Seguros* Covenant

The *Hogares Seguros* Covenant is a promise offered to parents through a partnership between the Parent Association and Country Day School. The parents who have signed the pledge below vow to supervise youths in their homes and to not knowingly serve or allow alcohol to be consumed by anyone under the legal drinking age or to allow the use of drugs or any other illegal substances by anyone. Our school pledges to facilitate regular gatherings in the name of substance awareness and developing strong decision making skills. The names of families who have signed this covenant are published in the school directory.

- I, as a parent/legal guardian, will SUPERVISE youth gatherings in my home.
- I will not KNOWINGLY ALLOW parties or gatherings in my home when I am not home.
- I will not KNOWINGLY SERVE or ALLOW alcohol to be CONSUMED by under-age guests, and I will not ALLOW drugs or any other illegal substances to be CONSUMED by anyone.
- I will be present with frequency at parties or gatherings at my home.
- I will have an appropriate amount of food and drinks available for under-age guests during gatherings.
- I have DISCUSSED this pledge with my/our child/children.

## Admissions

Admission to Country Day School requires review of grades for the two previous years, an entrance examination, and an interview with the Principal. Original school transcripts, standardized test scores, recommendations from the applicant's current English and mathematics teachers, health records, and a photograph must be attached to the completed application form. In international situations, a student with strong supporting documentation may be admitted provisionally, and the entrance or placement tests may be given when the student arrives in Costa Rica.

In order to reserve a space, it is important to apply before April for the following August as there are sometimes waiting lists for some grades. Priority is given to students with strong English language skills. The CDS Admissions Officer is Maria Fernanda Cardona.

## Behavioral Expectations

Country Day is a community of individuals working, playing, and growing together. We support and respect each other in order to function well as a community.

There are standards of behavior for all members of our community. Students should always behave in a manner that reflects honesty, trust, concern for the rights and property of others, and openness to ideas, feelings, and cultures that may differ from their own. Our community will not tolerate actions that are rude, disrespectful, or dishonest.

Students earn a conduct grade in each class each quarter based on their behavior in that class. These subject conduct grades are then averaged to determine the conduct grade that appears on the report card. The citizenship grade each quarter is determined by taking the conduct grade average and subtracting any points for referrals.

The CDS middle school community is in the process of developing its own honor code. The code will serve as an expression of the values and basic rights that are shared and practiced by the students, faculty, and staff. It will represent our commitment to teaching and promoting honor and trust within our community. Until the honor code is discussed, written, evaluated, debated, modified, and eventually accepted, we will rely on the disciplinary system that has been in place for several years in the middle school, with some minor modifications. Once the honor code is in place, we will review the discipline policy to assure that it is aligned with the honor code.

CDS Middle School is committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind, including online or through texting, is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff. If any child or adult witnesses aggressive or bullying behavior, they are expected to immediately inform the Counselor or Principal. Teachers who hear reports of bullying from children are also expected to share this information. We do not

have a great deal of bullying in the middle school, but we do have shunning, incidents of bad language and name calling, and tempers that flare up during recess and lunch time sports activities. Children who become angry during physical activity may be required to withdraw from the activity.

### **Bus Behavior**

Students must follow these rules when riding the school buses for their safety and the safety of others:

- All passengers must be seated quietly.
- Those passengers seated where there are seat belts must buckle up.
- There is no walking around or changing seats on the bus when in motion.
- There is no eating or drinking while on the bus.
- There should be no walking behind or around the buses. Students should board their buses and wait.
- There is no littering inside or outside the bus.
- All hands, arms, heads and must be kept inside the bus. Large windows should be opened only half way.
- Loud noise, vulgar language, and fighting are not allowed on the bus.
- Students must bring a note from their parents or guardians if they wish to leave school on a bus other than their designated one. Notes should be in the Middle School office no later than 1:30 PM. The school will NOT accept changes over the phone.
- Those students having parties or other get-togethers at their homes must provide other transportation for their guests.
- In case of any delay, all passengers must remain seated quietly and listen to the instructions of the bus monitor and/or teacher in charge.
- Any misbehavior will be reported and could lead to suspension or expulsion from the bus.
- The bus driver must not be distracted, and if any misbehavior interferes with the safety of the bus or its passengers, the driver has the right and obligation to stop the bus until the misbehavior stops.
- The bus driver will make every designated stop, even if the passenger is absent. However, the driver is not obligated to wait. Students must be waiting for him.
- The bus driver will not make any unscheduled stops to pick up friends, whether they are friends of a student or the driver.
- Any change of bus route must be approved by Alvaro Zamora, Transportation Coordinator.

## Conduct and Misconduct

Students are responsible for knowing and following suitable guidelines for conduct in the Middle School. Generally, minor errors in judgment or disruptions within classrooms will be corrected by the teachers who establish and reinforce their own classroom management policies. Such behavior is considered by teachers when determining conduct grades for individual subjects. Repeated misconduct in the classroom or misconduct that takes place outside of the classroom may result in a referral and a reduction in the citizenship grade as well as other logical consequences to be determined by the principal and teachers.

If teachers observe that a student is developing a pattern of unacceptable behavior, i.e. frequent tardiness, numerous late or missing assignments, regular talking without permission, disruptive behavior, or frequent off-task behavior, they are expected to bring this to the Principal's attention. Although teachers are expected to deal with the occasional disruptive behavior and maintain a positive learning environment, repeated disruptive behaviors may require a team effort to manage. Getting parents and the school administration involved is often a solution.

We currently have four levels of misconduct in the middle school that may result in points off an individual subject grade and/or the citizenship grade.

### Level One (2 points off citizenship grade)

- 3 unexcused tardies
- Chewing gum
- Improper uniform
- Inappropriate displays of affection
- Eating or drinking in the basketball court or soccer field
- Littering or not cleaning up after eating
- Use of bad language
- Misbehavior on school buses

### Level Two (4 points off citizenship grade)

- Rude or disrespectful behavior to anyone
- Disruptive behavior that interrupts the learning process
- Skipping part or all of a class
- Unauthorized or inappropriate use of computers
- Unauthorized use of electronic devices during school hours
- Minor vandalism or defacement of school property

### Level Three (6 points off citizenship grade)

- Verbal aggression toward anyone
- Cheating or plagiarism
- Lying to any staff member
- Repeated disruptive behavior that interrupts the learning process
- Hiding property of others

Level Four (10 points off citizenship grade)

- Vandalism or destruction of school property
- Stealing
- Bullying, including cyberbullying
- Cheating or plagiarism second time
- Lying to any staff member second time
- Fighting or physical aggression toward anyone

A student's first incident of misconduct in or outside of class will often lead to a conversation with the adult who observed the behavior and a verbal warning. Repeated offenses may lead to the issuing of a referral, parental contact, and additional logical consequences as determined by the principal. These consequences will be timely, appropriate, and designed to teach students how to make better decisions about conduct. These may include apologies, restitution, detention, suspension, and an additional task such as

- Writing a letter of apology
- Writing a reflection
- Writing an essay or research paper on a topic related to the misconduct
- Working in teachers' classrooms or labs
- Cleaning the campus
- Restoring or replacing damaged property

There are some types of misconduct that are so serious that the discipline policy described above is not used. Instead, the Principal immediately contacts CDS Director and the student's parents and makes an evaluation of the misconduct as well as consequences that might include suspension, expulsion, or professional counseling. These types of misconduct include the following:

- Calling in a false fire alarm or bomb threat
- Possession of knives, guns or other weapons, or the intent to use an instrument as a weapon at school or at school-related activities
- Use or possession of alcohol or illegal substances at any school related event
- Performing an extreme action that endangers self or others

In the case of serious and/or chronic misbehavior, a student may be placed on behavioral probation at any time during the school year. Also, students who fail the citizenship grade for a quarter (grade below 65) will be placed on probation. Conditions of probation will be set in writing at the discretion of the school administration, in the form of a contract between the student, his or her parents, and the school. The contract may include mandatory counseling as one of the conditions. Serious misconduct, or failure to fulfill the contract terms of behavioral probation within the specified time, is considered grounds for indefinite suspension. In such cases, the student is suspended until the end of the academic year, and may not be readmitted for the following academic year.

## Daily Rules

- Gum is not allowed to be chewed on campus, including before and after classes.
- Students will be given a discipline referral after three tardies to school.
- Students must use a lock on their locker.
- Snack and lunch items will not be sold before or after the assigned time.
- Students may eat in designated middle school campus areas as long as litter is not left in the area.
- Any valuable item or money may be left with a member of the Middle School office for safekeeping during the day.
- The pool is off-limits to students unless they are taking after school swimming classes.
- Eating in class is prohibited except for the occasional situation permitted by the teacher.
- When changing clothes for P.E., students should leave clothes in their lockers, not the restrooms.
- Students staying after school should remain in proper uniform.
- Textbooks are not to be written on or in, or defaced.
- Students are responsible for checking edline on a daily basis.
- Students are not allowed to use cell phones during school hours unless they do so in the office with permission.
- Laptops and tablets are for school work only and cannot be used during breaks for listening to music, playing games, or other non-school related activities.

## Personal Possessions

It is highly advised to label each item of school clothing with the owner's name. Numerous jackets, shirts, pants, shoes, notebooks, lunchboxes, reusable bottles, and food containers are misplaced each year and never claimed from the lost and found. Although we encourage students to search the lost and found for their missing articles, they often do not bother, assuming parents will buy more. Parents should feel free to also check the lost and found for their child's missing items.

Each middle school student is assigned a locker. The locker is intended as a secure and private place to keep belongings and should be well-maintained. The most effective means of preventing the loss of valuable books, clothing, athletic shoes, or other personal property from a locker is to keep the locker locked and to not share the key or combination. The possibility of recovering lost property is greater when items are marked with the student's name. Advisors make periodic locker checks to make sure that students are keeping them orderly and clean.

The only valuable piece of equipment that students are encouraged to bring to school is a laptop or a tablet for school work. This item must be at all times in the student's possession or must be locked up in the locker or left for safekeeping in the Middle School office. Some teachers are also willing to lock up students' computers in classroom closets, but that arrangement should be made by the student with the individual teacher. **WE STRONGLY DISCOURAGE STUDENTS FROM BRINGING VALUABLE ITEMS TO SCHOOL THAT ARE NOT REQUIRED FOR CLASSWORK, INCLUDING IPODS, CELL PHONES, AND GAMEBOYS.** None of these items may be used from 8:00 AM to 2:52 PM. Although Country

Day provides on-campus security, the school is not responsible for personal property brought to school by its students. If a theft occurs, our security personnel will make every effort to recover the stolen items; however, CDS is not responsible for the theft of these types of items that are not necessary for school work.

Students who need to call their parents on their cell phones must bring the phone to the office and ask for permission to make the call.

Skateboards are not allowed on campus, unless specifically requested by a teacher for a class assignment.

### **Emergency, Security, and Safety Procedures**

Parents and all staff members are issued school identification cards and should be prepared to show them to security personnel each time they enter the CDS campus. Visitors must sign in at the entrance.

Because the school is responsible for student safety and well-being, Country Day School students must remain on campus during the school day, including after-school activities. If, however, the student must leave the campus for an appointment or other valid reason, the student may do so with written permission from a parent or other designated adult, and with a pass from the Middle School office.

Visitors to classrooms must have the permission of the Principal. Friends or relatives of students are not normally allowed to visit classes. Out of town guests, or former students of CDS from out of town, are the only guests allowed to attend classes. If the visitor's presence causes a disruption to learning, the visit will be terminated.

Emergency preparedness is our most important ally, and at school we run regular drills so that students will know exactly what to do in case of an emergency. The signal for an emergency drill is a continuous bell or siren. Middle school students and teachers evacuate the buildings and proceed directly to the center of the soccer field where they regroup into advisory groups. The advisor takes roll immediately in order to account for any missing students.

At home, parents should talk to their children beforehand about what to expect should an emergency occur. Reassure them that they are doing their part by following the instructions of their teachers. In the event of a school-wide evacuation, a parent or a designated alternate will pick them up as soon as possible. Should evacuation of the school be deemed necessary, students will be placed in groups according to the first letter of their last names and will cross the street to join their siblings and await parent or guardian pick-up. Parents must pick up their children since bus transport will not be available. In order to reduce traffic jams, only one-way traffic will be allowed on the road inside the gates.

At the beginning of each school year, the CDS Director sends detailed emergency information to each family. Families are also asked to update emergency telephone numbers for our phone tree.

Each year each school family is asked to complete an emergency consent form. This form is kept on file and in the case of emergency is used to determine who should be called, who is allowed to pick up the children in case the parents cannot be located, and where the home is located. It is imperative that each family complete and return this form to the school as soon as possible after it is distributed to homes.

In the event of injury to a student, the school will render first aid as necessary, and will notify the parents immediately. Should the student be seriously injured, requiring immediate transport to a hospital or clinic, the school will arrange for such transport by car or ambulance and notify the parents to proceed to the hospital. In such a case, a student is never sent alone; he or she is always accompanied by the nurse, a teacher, or an administrator.

All students enrolled at Country Day School are insured against accident and injury 24 hours per day, year round. Claim forms for reimbursement of expenses incurred for medical treatment, as well as further information, are available in the Business Office.

## **Communication**

There are different people in the Middle School that parents may contact for different reasons. If they have a question or concern about something directly related to a class, they should contact the teacher. If they are interested in course schedules, child development, adjustments to middle school, a social issue affecting their son or daughter, speaking with someone about their child's learning disability, or would like to share with a school staff member any special situation that may affect their child's behavior or academic progress, they should contact our middle school counselor, Isabel Urrutia. If parents are interested in inquiring about standardized tests taken by our middle school students, mathematics placement, language placement, the school curriculum, school policies, or our advisory program, they may contact the middle school principal, Kerri Nolan. If parents would like to volunteer in the middle school, please contact their child's advisor, or a representative of the Parent Association. To request Justification of Absences forms, notify the school that a child is absent due to illness, request work to be prepared to be picked up for an absent child, or to make appointments, parents should contact Vanessa Prendas or Karen Fernandez in the Middle School office.

Communication with parents in regards to school events and student progress is achieved through several means including the use of edline, the weekly *In the Middle* newsletter that is emailed to parents, teacher and middle school office emails, parent/teacher conferences, and a middle school blog.

Every family is assigned an edline account. Edline is an educational website that teachers use to post information, update grades, and send e-mails. To receive e-mails through edline, the parent's e-mail option has to be selected. Students must not use their parents' account, but their own because there are some interactive features, such as homework hand-in and quizzes that do not function in the parent's edline account. Through edline, parents and students access the following information posted by teachers: course syllabi; class rules; homework; project or major assignment instructions and due dates; evaluation criteria; grade updates at least four

times per quarter; test and quiz dates; links to other websites (when applicable); and study guides.

Teachers may contact parents of those students who have conduct problems, are missing work, or appear to be underachieving. Parents should take very seriously any correspondence from their child's teacher as these letters are designed to draw attention to a problem that needs to be solved. Often, teachers and parents working together are able to help a child improve his level of success by encouraging better planning and organizational skills.

Parents are welcome to call the Middle School office for a conference with their children's teachers. Vanessa Prendas, the secretary, and Karen Fernandez, the receptionist, can help you schedule the appointments, or you may do it yourself directly with the teacher through email.

The daily bulletin is emailed to teachers before 8:00 AM and read to students at the beginning of the school day. It is very important that students are not tardy to school as they will miss the reading of this bulletin. If a parent is interested in placing an announcement in the bulletin (it must be relevant to Middle School), they should inform the office staff no later than 3:00 so it can be included in the next morning's bulletin.

### **Open House**

The Middle School Open House is scheduled for Tuesday, August 31, from 5:30 to 8:00. The open house provides teachers with a wonderful opportunity to communicate their educational programs to parents and for parents to ask questions and sign up to be advisory parent representatives. All staff and parents meet in the assembly hall at 5:30 with a brief welcome by the Principal and parent representative, and introductions of teachers. Parents then follow a shortened version of their child's schedule and visit all classrooms.

### **Celebration of Student Learning**

Parents are invited to celebrate the accomplishments of their middle school children on Wednesday, May 9, from 5:30 to 7:30. On this day, parents and students will circulate among the classrooms enjoying activities, exhibits, and presentations all created by our students during the school year.

### **Services: Counseling, Food, Health, Library, and Bus**

Country Day School provides a variety of services related to counseling, food, health, library, and transportation.

#### **Counseling**

Our guidance counselor, Isabel Urrutia, is available to talk with students about personal and academic issues. She also provides orientation to new students, teaches life skills courses, shares with teachers information about students with learning difficulties or problems that may affect them while at school, meets with parents to discuss ways to help their child succeed, and

provides parent education presentations and information on topics relevant to middle school children. Please feel free to call for an appointment.

### **Food Services**

Hot and cold lunches, including a variety of drinks and snacks are available each day from the school cafeteria.

Lunch items are also available from the Middle School kiosk located in the recreation area. Most middle school students elect to bring their lunch or purchase from the kiosk.

Students are strongly encouraged to purchase a reusable plastic or aluminum bottle and to bring it from home filled with water or another liquid each day. As part of a school-wide effort to reduce trash, there are designated days on which no drinks in disposable bottles will be sold anywhere on campus.

Sixth graders are required to eat lunch during the first 15 minutes of the lunch period and must clean up their trash before being allowed on the basketball court or soccer field. No food or drink containers are allowed on the playing fields.

### **Health Services**

Country Day offers the full-time services of a registered nurse. Her office is located in the elementary office area. The nurse will not administer medicine to any student unless and until permission is given by the parents.

If your child develops a fever or otherwise becomes ill at school, you will be called immediately to come and pick up your child. Also, if your child has had a fever within the previous 24 hours, please do not send your him or her to school.

### **Library Services**

Middle school students use the high school library which is open from 7:45 AM to 4:30 PM each school day. Students and parents may check out books. If parents wish to check out books over a school break, they may do so providing their child has no outstanding library fines or unpaid lost books.

Books are checked out for two weeks (ten school days) and may be renewed at the library or at [cdslibrary@cds.ed.cr](mailto:cdslibrary@cds.ed.cr) Fines of 25 *colones* a day will be charged for a late book although there is a three day grace period after the due date when no fines are charged. On the fourth day a book is late, the fine totals 100 *colones* and increases 25 *colones* a day until the maximum of 2000 *colones* is reached. The charge for lost books or other materials will be the cost of replacement in addition to any fines. Students may have the option of replacing lost materials with other materials of equal value to the library.

Students who have not returned books, who have lost books and have not paid for them, or who have outstanding library fines, will not receive report cards or yearbooks until all such matters have been cleared.

Back issues of periodicals circulate for two weeks, just like books. Current news magazines and current newspapers do not leave the library. Other current magazines may be checked out on an overnight basis. Ask at the library or email at [cdslibrary@cds.ed.cr](mailto:cdslibrary@cds.ed.cr) for password information.

Materials are returned by placing them in the drop box at the library or the Middle School office in the library return box. Leaving materials anywhere outside of these drop boxes means they have not been returned.

The copy machine in the library is to facilitate use of library materials. Some materials, such as encyclopedias, may not be checked out, but copies of an article can be made for 10 *colones* a page. If a student does not have the money to pay, a charge slip can be signed. The student is to pay for any charges within the month. Students will be fined for any additional notices after the first.

### **Bus Service**

CDS hires local buses to provide transportation for our students. Buses drop off and pick up students at the main entrance to the school. Bus routes are available for most locations in the greater metropolitan area of San José. New families should consult Alvaro Zamora, Transportation Coordinator, about routes and schedules. As a courtesy service, an after-school bus service at 4:40 PM operates for students participating in extracurricular activities. These are express routes only, not the regular routes.

### **Advisory Program**

Each student is assigned an advisory teacher. The purpose of this program is to help students feel more connected to one particular peer group and one teacher who students can turn to throughout the year for advice, support, and guidance.

Advisory groups hold a variety of activities including organizational days, intramurals, town meetings each month, grade level meetings each month, and opportunities to participate in Middle School events and projects. Advisories also work on service and team building projects of their own selection. Each year, advisories also organize an Olympic Festival. It will take place on Nov. 4 this year. Parents are welcome to attend.

For sixth graders, an important part of the program is to help them transition to middle school. Advisors are responsible for teaching and reinforcing study and organizational skills such as the proper use of a locker and backpack, time management, and study skills.

### **Vision Statement**

Our middle school advisory program creates small, supportive communities in which members learn responsibility, build positive relationships, and enhance personal growth through team building, service, and fun.

### **Academic Program**

The core courses in middle school are English, literature, Spanish, mathematics, social studies, and science. Sixth graders take earth science and ancient civilizations. Seventh graders take life science and geography of the Eastern Hemisphere. Eighth graders take physical science and United States history. English as a Second Language is available for students needing intense language development. A variety of Spanish courses are available ranging from beginning Spanish for our non-Spanish speaking students newly arrived in Costa Rica, up to Spanish for native speakers. We also offer daily electives and physical education twice a week.

There are curriculum standards and benchmarks available for each subject area. Parents may request copies from the office if they wish.

Teachers are expected to incorporate 21<sup>st</sup> century skills as much as possible into their lessons. These include the development and enhancement of creativity, innovation, critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and collaboration. For more information, please see the website of Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills at [http://www.p21.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=254&Itemid=119](http://www.p21.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=254&Itemid=119)

### **Block Schedule**

Students take six classes plus their electives and advisory period. The block schedule has short periods on Mondays so that every student attends every class for 40 to 45 minutes. These classes are called, A, B, C, D, E, and F. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, students and teachers have only the A, B, and C classes which are in blocks of 82 to 94 minutes. The D, E, and F classes are on Wednesdays and Fridays.

### **English as a Second Language**

Instead of taking English and literature, students who exhibit deficiencies in English language development may be assigned to English as a Second Language. Placement is determined through teacher recommendations, standardized test scores, and language proficiency.

### **Mathematics Placement**

In order to improve the success of our students in mathematics classes both in middle school and high school, CDS has established the following placement procedures in grades five to nine.

For placement into the advanced math class in sixth grade, we review a combination of indicators about the students that help predict success in the course: recommendations from fifth grade teachers, recent standardized math test scores, recent report cards, and a math placement test. Fifth graders take this test in May.

Placement in math classes in the middle school are also evaluated each year based on grades, placement tests, and recommendations. Students currently in Middle School take a placement test in May. Students that are already in an advanced math class in grades six or seven remain in advanced math if they have maintained at least an 85% average, are recommended by the teacher to stay in advanced math, and have standardized test math scores two years above the average student at their grade level. Those students who do not meet these criteria are reviewed for proper placement.

Seventh and eighth graders in algebra honors take a placement test in May prepared by high school teachers. This test is a factor determining if they should be placed in regular geometry or honors geometry classes in ninth grade.

This shift in focus in math placement is a result of several years of observations. Teachers have found that students have been placed in advanced math courses because they are hard workers and responsible, but do not necessarily possess the advanced math skills to be successful in these challenging courses. Past students have needed tutors to keep up and others have had to move out of honors classes during the school year. Here at CDS, both in the middle school and high school, we are taking the necessary measures to ensure that students are placed in the math class that is most appropriate for their skill level.

Students who come to the middle school from other schools must meet these criteria to be placed in advanced math courses:

- The student earned an A average in mathematics during the previous course.
- The mathematics teacher's recommendation is very positive and there are no reservations about the ability to succeed in advanced math.
- The student has a reasonable grade on a mathematics placement test.

To remain in the program, students must meet the following requirements:

- Maintain at least an 85 average every quarter.
- Students with an average between 80 and 85 in the first quarter will be in probation for one quarter and may be moved to regular math at the end of the first semester.
- Students who earn below 80 in the first quarter may be moved to regular math in the second quarter.
- Students unable to maintain an 85 average after the probation period might be moved to the regular math course.

## **Spanish Placement**

Costa Rican students and others who are native Spanish speakers take the advanced Spanish level courses approved by the Costa Rican Ministry of Education. These courses are required in order to earn a Costa Rican high school diploma in addition to the United States diploma awarded at Country Day School. Other students take a test to determine the Spanish as a Second Language course that will best meet their needs.

## **General Middle School Policies**

Over the years, we have developed a number of policies that have helped to clarify expectations as well as establish procedures about what to do in specific situations. Parents should be familiar with all of these policies. Middle school teachers and administrators go over all of these policies with students at the beginning of each school year, but it is also helpful for parents to do the same with their children.

## **Academic Failure and Probation**

A student failing the year in one to three courses may redeem each grade by taking an extraordinary examination. A student who fails the year in four or more subjects fails the year. Near the end of the school year, notification is given to the parents advising that the student is in danger of failing a course for the year, and may have to take an extraordinary exam. Parents are responsible for contacting the school at the end of the year to secure a study guide and to confirm the day and time of the exams. Exams are held in August. The student must pass the exam with a 65 or above to pass the school year. The final recorded grade in a subject a student has failed is the grade he/she got on the extraordinary exam. Students are given two opportunities to take an extraordinary exam in each failed subject.

We recommend that the student receive additional instruction in the course material during the vacation period prior to the exam. Textbooks may be checked out over the vacation by requesting the book from the student's teacher and paying a deposit in the CDS Business Office.

If a student passes the course with at least 65% for the school year, but fails the final quarter of the year, he/she will be required to complete a study packet while on vacation in order to be accepted into the following grade.

A student will be placed on academic probation at any time during the school year if failing two or more required courses, or if showing poor performance in three or more courses, or if presenting problems in conduct or attendance. The probation status is designed to assist the student in improving his/her academic standing. To reach that goal, parental attention and involvement are necessary. The conditions and requirements of a student's probation are determined by the Principal and teachers and may require that the student receive additional instruction outside of school hours. If improvement as set out in the contract does not occur within the time given, the student may be retained in the same grade or may be refused admission for the following school year.

## After School Presence on Campus

All students remaining on campus after 3:15 p.m. must be engaged in a supervised activity or studying in the library or multimedia center. Sports practices occur between 3:05 and 4:30. All students who stay after school must remain on campus and must sign-up in the middle school office so that we know their whereabouts. Tutors and after school activity leaders oversee student activity and behavior after school. Students who remain after school with no supervised activity will be asked to study near the office.

## Attendance and Tardy Policies

Parents are responsible for making sure that students arrive at school on time. It is highly recommended that students be at school by 7:45. The first bell rings at 7:55 and class begins promptly at 8:00. Arriving a few minutes early allows the students to unload their backpacks, organize materials for their first class, greet friends, and ask teachers for help without being rushed. Tardiness not only decreases the amount of time on task for the late arriving student, but it also interrupts the flow of activities for all students in the classroom. It increases the level of stress for the child who arrives late as well. Late students must sign in with the secretary to obtain a late slip before proceeding to class. Three tardies to school in one quarter will result in a discipline referral as will three tardies to a class.

A medical excuse is required in cases of prolonged absence or nonparticipation in P.E. class.

There may be times when students will be absent for legitimate reasons such as illness, participation in athletic or interscholastic competition, or other reasons important to an individual family. However, any absence for any reason that is not illness or an emergency must be justified in advance in order to be excused. If a student plans to be absent from school, a parent and the student must complete the Justification for Absence form, turn it in to the Principal at least two days before the absence, and abide by the conditions outlined below.

- The form must be filled out on both sides. Students must personally inform each teacher **in advance** of the pending absence, make arrangements to make up work, and have all teachers' signatures **at least 2 days** before the absence.
- Dr. Nolan will not excuse the absence unless the back of the page is complete.
- The student will be responsible for the work missed during his/her absence including homework, projects, assignments, quizzes and tests. Whenever possible, the student should take **tests and quizzes before the absence** rather than after.
- Students will be provided handouts, activities, assignments, and worksheets missed which they will complete on their own or with the help of classmates or tutors. Teachers will not be required to reteach material covered during the absence.
- The student will have the same number of school days to make up work as the number of school days missed.

In the case of a death in the family or other unforeseeable emergency, a phone call to the office will suffice for the Justification of Absence form. In the event that an absence is not excused,

all work missed is due the day the student returns to school. At the teacher's discretion, a zero may be awarded for any tests, quizzes, or other work missed during the absence.

CDS recommends that parents make medical and dental appointments for their children after school hours or during lunch. If such appointments must be made during the school day, the student must present a note signed by a parent to the secretary. Before departing school grounds, the student must present a pass to the campus guard signed by the Principal or office representative.

Should a student miss up to 19 days at the beginning of a quarter, the student is allowed to make up the missing work, providing a Justification for Absence form was filled out in advance and/or the parent has met with the Principal to discuss the reasons for this prolonged absence. Should the student miss 20 or more school days at the beginning of a quarter, no credit will be awarded for that grading period.

### **Field Trips**

Every year, each grade experiences an outdoor science challenge trip. These trips are organized by *Adventures Under the Sun*, a company that has collaborated with CDS for several years. Each trip has a particular emphasis, depending on the grade level. Teachers help organize and go on these trips, although *Adventures Under the Sun* is responsible for the logistics, i.e. transportation, guides, and lodging. Sixth graders always go to Rincon de la Vieja National Park and eighth graders go to Manuel Antonio National Park. The seventh grade trip is variable. An informational letter, packing list, and description of rules are provided to parents two months before each trip. Parents must complete and return to the Business Office along with payment, a permission slip and medical form for their child going on the trip one month before the trip.

Occasionally, field trips are scheduled by faculty members for the purpose of educational enrichment and/or community awareness. Each student must present a signed permission slip from his/her parent or guardian prior to leaving the campus. Students must wear the regulation uniform on the field trip, unless the Principal has given prior approval for other attire. If the field trip is optional, and the student has a test scheduled in another subject that day, the student should remain on campus for the scheduled test.

### **Food Sales**

Food sales on campus are allowed as fundraising activities for student groups such as Student Council, Roots & Shoots and National Junior Honor Society. Food sales promoted for individual projects will not be authorized. The food sale request form must be turned in to the Middle School office one week before the sale. Food sales must be on Fridays only and may not include any candy.

## Report Cards and Grading Policy

CDS Middle School issues report cards four times each year in core subjects and in art and electives. These grade reports are published online and we do not send home paper copies. We ask that parents review the report card carefully with their child.

At least three major assessments per quarter are given in core courses. These assessments evaluate the students' understanding of the course curriculum and development of required skills. Written tests, essays, multimedia projects, portfolios, and performances are all appropriate student assessments. In addition, teachers may choose to assign grades for homework, classwork, class participation, quizzes, responsibility, teamwork, and discussions.

Teachers are required to keep careful records of each student's work. The current grading system in the Middle School breaks down in the following manner:

100 – 93	A	= Excellent
92 – 85	B	= Good
84 – 75	C	= Satisfactory
74 – 65	D	= Needs Improvement
Below 64%	F	= Unsatisfactory

In addition to academic grades, teachers also assign each student a conduct grade in each course using the rubric below.

<b>E: 93 – 100%</b> <b>Excellent</b>	Models school and classroom rules for other students	Mature in work habits	Attentive and on task all the time in class	Consistently contributes to the learning process and the smooth running of the class	Exhibits exemplary care for others and property
<b>G: 92 - 85%</b> <b>Good</b>	Consistently follows the school and classroom rules	Prepared for the class all the time	Attentive and on task a majority of the time	Does not inhibit the learning process for any student	Respectful and considerate toward staff, peers and property
<b>S: 84 – 75%</b> <b>Satisfactory</b>	Follows the school and classroom rules a majority of the time	Prepared for class a majority of the time	Generally attentive, usually after reminders	Generally does not disrupt the class or distract other students	Respectful to staff, peers and property
<b>NI: 74-65%</b> <b>Needs Improvement</b>	Needs to follow school and classroom rules more often	Needs to be prepared for class more often	Needs to be more attentive in class	Sometimes disrupts the class or other students	Borderline attitude of respect to staff, peers and property
<b>64% or below</b> <b>Unsatisfactory</b>	Lack of compliance with school rules	Unprepared for class more than a few times a quarter	Inattentive in class and/or frequently tardy	Disrupts the class or other students frequently	Disrespectful to staff, peers and property

## **Homework Policy**

Homework is defined as any assignment to be completed independently outside of class for the purposes of study, reinforcement, and/or practice of concepts. Recognizing that our goal is to contribute to the development of the whole student, we also believe it is important to allow time for participation in extra-curricular activities. Therefore, time in the classroom should be maximized in order to minimize the amount of homework. The recommended amount of homework each day is 60 minutes for sixth graders, 70 minutes for seventh graders, and 80 minutes for eighth graders. In addition to homework, Spanish and English language arts teachers may each assign 20 to 30 minutes per day of reading. This is not calculated as part of the homework minutes.

## **Language Policy**

In order to help fulfill the mission of the school, students speak only Spanish in Spanish classes and only English in English classes (including science, math, and social studies).

Students delay the process of English language acquisition when they insist on speaking Spanish in English classes. In addition, when they speak Spanish in English classes they influence classmates and distract others from the goal of language acquisition. It is imperative that CDS students recognize and remember the appropriate place and time for using the languages they know.

CDS is respectful of all languages and cultures, but in keeping with our mission, we strive to provide an environment where all students can become bilingual and multicultural citizens.

## **Make-Up Policy**

All assignments, including exams, must be completed within a reasonable period of time as determined by the teacher. Full credit is given to exams, quizzes and assignments completed on time.

Students are expected to turn in assignments on the date they are due. Teachers may accept work that is up to one week late, but with a grade penalty. Assignments that are more than one week late earn no credit.

## **Materials, Textbooks, and Supplies**

Students are issued textbooks at the beginning of the school year for most subjects studied. Each student's name is recorded with the corresponding number of the textbook. At the end of the first semester, the textbooks are collected, with each student credited for the return of the book.

Students know they must not write on or deface their textbooks. If a student loses or seriously damages a book, he/she is responsible for the full cost of replacing it. The replacement cost will be the price of a new textbook, regardless of the condition of the textbook lost or damaged. Any lost

or damaged books must be paid for in the Business Office before yearbooks, report cards, or transcripts are provided to students or parents at the end of the school year.

Students may check out textbooks during school vacations, provided the Principal has given approval and the rental fee has been paid in advance to the CDS Business Office.

Teachers will tell students on the first day of the school year which materials to purchase for their class. As a general rule, middle school students are expected to have the following: geometry set (protractor), pens, scissors, calculator, glue sticks, USB drive, colored markers, highlighters, Spanish dictionary, a reusable water bottle, and a variety of notebooks.

### **Student Drop Off and Pick Up**

The primary drop-off and pick-up area for middle school students is the rotunda behind the Middle School. Drivers are asked to remain in their cars at all times, and observe the orderly flow of traffic. All students are required to wait for their rides in the rotunda area; however, if a vehicle is waiting before the child appears, the driver is asked to minimize obstructing the flow of traffic by parking in one of the nearby visitor parking spaces. If no parking spaces are available, pull up to the CEDA sign. Drivers should NOT leave their vehicles.

Parents are asked to park in the main parking lot north of the middle school and to not park on the sides of the road where vehicles may obstruct traffic. During evening events such as concerts, parents may park in front of the high school inside the school gates.

### **Technology Policies**

CDS students bringing their laptops to school must abide by the guidelines contained in the *CDS Technology Use Agreement* at <http://www.cds.ed.cr/technology/technology-use-agreement/56-technology-use-agreement>

Middle School students are encouraged to bring their laptops to school. Teachers will determine the tasks for which laptops will be used. The following guidelines will be followed by the students:

- Students must establish and maintain secure pass-phrases to protect the privacy of their information and these should not be shared with other students.
- Students are responsible for all activity on their computers.
- Students are responsible for inappropriate use of their laptops if they lend them.
- Students must follow the teacher's directions on the use of the laptops at all times.
- Students must access only the Internet sites indicated by the teacher.
- Students must not chat or play video games.
- Students who use computers not in accordance to their teachers' instructions or school policies will be restricted from future computer use.
- Laptops are for school work only and cannot be used during breaks for listening to music, playing games or other non-school related activities.
- Laptops may not be left unattended in hallways, classrooms, or other school spaces. This practice applies to after school during sports practices, music rehearsals, or other activities.

- During the school day, students must have their laptops with them or in their lockers if not being used.
- Laptops must always be transported in either a book bag or computer case.

Violation of these guidelines will result in suspension of the students' right to bring their laptops to school for a time agreed upon by the teachers and the Principal.

### **Telephone Use**

Messages from parents to students may be delivered as soon as possible after they are received. Phones in the school office are not generally available for personal student calls, except in the cases of emergency or illness. Students who choose to bring cell phones to school may not use them during school hours unless they do so from the Middle School office with permission. Students who are found using cell phones during class may have them confiscated. They may retrieve them at the end of the school day in the office. Repeated misuse of one's cell phone may lead to disciplinary action.

### **Social Networks**

Social networks are part of each individual's personal private life. As a general rule, CDS does not approve of staff members sharing social networks with students. Students are not permitted to access any social networks while on campus. In the event that a student uses social networking for the purpose of bullying, teasing, or misrepresenting another student, a staff member, or Country Day School, and this behavior comes to the attention of CDS personnel, the student involved may be required to desist from further inappropriate behavior and receive a logical consequence. Depending on the gravity of the situation, parents may also be asked to attend a conference with the Principal and Counselor.

### **Uniform Dress Code**

Students are required to wear the Country Day School uniform. All students wear the appropriate polo shirt with school emblem.

Boys and girls wear navy blue pants. Cargo pants are acceptable, but jeans are not allowed. Pants must be neither over-sized nor extremely tight. Boys should wear a black belt. Under no circumstances should pants sag or show underwear.

Shoes are black. They may have a minimal amount (up to 10%) of another color such as a logo or white sole; however, designs are not acceptable. Socks can be white, black, dark blue, or gray.

Students may wear sweaters or jackets that are solid dark blue or black. Large or inappropriate logos are not allowed and neither are stripes and designs. Any t-shirt worn under the shirt should be white or blue or an official school t-shirt. The t-shirt should not protrude from underneath the polo shirt.

In addition, students are required to have a physical education uniform consisting of red or black shorts and a white T-shirt with the school logo. T-shirts purchased for the annual 5K Fun Run or other CDS t-shirts may be substituted for the school t-shirt. None of these shirts may be worn during lunch or recess time except for special events.

Boys and girls should have neat hairstyles. Boys with shoulder-length hair or longer must keep it pulled back in a ponytail. Hair must be in tones that would be considered natural hair color. Moderate jewelry and cosmetics are allowed. Visible body piercing is not allowed other than earrings.

Only students leaving at the end of the school year will be allowed to have their shirts signed by their peers and teachers.

Appropriate uniforms are required to attend classes. Students who are out of uniform or whose appearance is deemed unacceptable will not be admitted to class at the discretion of the classroom teacher and will be required to sit in the office until appropriate clothing is available. Disciplinary action may be taken for repeated uniform infractions.

### **Yearbooks and Photographs**

Each student at Country Day School receives a copy of the yearbook, free of charge. The yearbook is distributed near the end of the school year to all students who have no outstanding library fines or unpaid lost books.

Generally taken during the first semester, school photos are made of each student by a professional photographer. Students will be notified in advance of the school photo schedule.

Once all the photos are taken, a packet of prints will be sent home with the student, and must be paid for in the CDS Business Office. Should the student be absent on the scheduled photo-taking day, another day for photo retakes is usually set for early in the second semester.

### **Awards and Honor Roll**

The Honor Roll is composed of students who have an academic average of 93 or higher during a quarter with no single subject grade below 85.

Our outstanding students earn awards at the end of the year during our Middle School Awards Ceremony on June 6 and the eighth grade Moving Up Ceremony on June 13. Among the most exceptional of these awards are those provided by the Parent Association based on staff recommendations. These awards are granted to students who have distinguished themselves for their dedication and excellence in the areas of Leadership, Service, Spirit, Journalism, Creative Writing, Art, Band, and Drama.

**Ruth Fendell Art Award**

This award was instituted in the memory of Mrs. Ruth Fendell, who cherished art in all of its forms. It is awarded to a middle school student who has demonstrated superior artistic talent and skill and who has dedicated effort to improve those skills.

**The Drama Award**

This special student has appeared on stage in both middle and high school productions, and made creative contributions to the CDS Drama Department.

**The Creative Writing Award**

This award is presented to the graduating eighth grader who has shown unusual passion and commitment for writing both as required for regular coursework and outside of class. His or her writing exhibits superior quality and is an integral part of life.

**Linda Frazier Journalism Award**

This award was instituted several years ago in honor of the memory of Mrs. Linda Frazier, a former CDS parent. The deserving student has distinguished him or herself as a journalist and has been a valuable contributor to the Broadcast Media program throughout the year.

**The Director's Award for Band**

This award is presented to students who have exhibited exceptional qualities of leadership, service, and advancement in musical skill. These students have also demonstrated an incredible ability to be team players and to work well with the rest of the group.

**The Leadership Award**

These students have shown the ability to initiate, organize, lead, and control projects and activities. As leaders they have shown composure, decisiveness, responsibility, and exemplary participation in the classroom.

**The Service Award**

The recipients of the service award have shown themselves dedicated to helping others with no expectation of reward or recognition. They have encouraged others to contribute and to serve in and out of the classroom.

**The Spirit Award**

These students have shown consistently positive spirits in attitude and cooperation toward middle school activities, student council events and school policies. They have demonstrated contagious enthusiasm for being middle school students.

In addition to these important awards by the Parent Association, students also earn awards for outstanding academic achievement and improvement in every subject. In order to win an academic award, the student must have been enrolled at CDS the entire year. This does not apply to honor roll. They also earn awards for physical fitness and sports team participation.

### **Sports Programs and Policies**

Physical education is an important part of the curriculum. All middle school students take PE twice a week. We also include some physical activity in the advisory program and during team sports. We have separate boys and girls teams. The 2011-12 sports seasons will be basketball from August 24 to November 11, soccer from November 16 to March 9, and volleyball from March 14 to June 8. We also offer a coed swimming program beginning in February.

Each Middle School team member and his/her parent must sign a consent form when games are played off-campus on a school day. This way we ensure that all parents know where their child is and when he or she will be returning to campus.

### **Athletic Eligibility**

All middle school boys and girls are eligible for participation on our sports teams. We are very proud of our middle school athletes who must adhere to a code of behavior that includes maintaining a strong academic record. This is especially important because team members sometimes miss part of an afternoon class in order to travel to another school for away games. We have established a policy that students who are suffering academically (average grades below 75% in any class) may not miss any class time in order to represent Country Day School at the away games. Students who have any average failing grades (below 65%) may not represent CDS at home games either. In addition, players must check with teachers in advance to find out if they are going to miss a test, test review, or pre-scheduled presentation. If so, they need the teacher's authorization to miss the class. Players, regardless of academic standing, are encouraged to attend all practices. All team members must read and sign the sports agreement below at the beginning of each sports season.

### **Team Sports Agreement**

Good sportsmanship means abiding by the rules of the practice or the game, and accepting victory or defeat graciously. It includes showing effort, discipline, responsibility, cooperation, respect, and school spirit. Team members must demonstrate good sportsmanship throughout the year, on and off the field or court.

Although an athlete must make a commitment to his or her sport, a CDS student's first priority is academics. Students who fail to maintain appropriate academic standards or to follow team rules may be restricted from playing in games.

All team players are expected to do the following:

- Maintain a reasonable academic record.
- Be present and on time for required games and practices.
- Keep him or herself in the finest physical condition by eating properly; abstaining from alcohol, drugs, and tobacco products; and following a healthy training program.
- Behave in a manner that reflects well upon him or herself, teammates, and school.
- Strive at all times to be the best that he or she can be.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the information above and understand that in order to participate in any middle school sports team competition I must be passing all of my classes with at least 65%. In addition, I understand that in order to miss any class or part of a class to participate in a sports competition, I must have at least 75% in all of my classes. I recognize that sports are important, but that my first priority as a student of Country Day School is to maintain a reasonable academic record. I also agree to be present and on time for required games and practices; keep myself in fine physical condition; always behave in a manner that reflects well on myself, my team, and my school; and strive to be the best I can be.

### **Middle School Organizations**

We have three formal organizations in the middle school. These are the National Junior Honor Society, Student Council, and Roots and Shoots.

#### **National Junior Honor Society**

The NJHS is a U.S. based student organization that provides a way for already outstanding students to develop leadership skills as they work on service projects and serve as positive role models. This year's advisor for the NJHS is Elgin Morales. Members of the Faculty Council are Margie Porter, Joanne Hansen, and Ana Ruiz.

Selection to the National Junior Honor Society is a privilege. The Faculty Council selects for membership only those students who demonstrate outstanding performance in five criteria: scholarship, leadership, service, citizenship, and character.

While outstanding academic achievement is an important prerequisite, membership is never considered on the basis of grades alone. The selection process begins by identifying students with GPA's of 93% or during each quarter of the school year, with no grades in conduct or subjects below 85%. Then the faculty considers citizenship by examining conduct grades and interviewing the student's teachers. Next, the faculty examines character using the Six Pillars of Character, as recommended by the National Junior Honor Society. A person of character demonstrates the following six qualities: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. A student of character willingly accepts criticism and recommendations graciously, cooperates by complying with school regulations, demonstrates the highest standards of honesty and reliability, shows courtesy and respect for others, and actively helps rid the school of negative influences or environment.

Students who meet these criteria are asked to submit documentation about leadership and service. The information included should reveal a history of activities that are not simply

designed to benefit the student, but are often done in order to benefit other individuals or institutions without rewards or recognition.

Leadership may be demonstrated through participation in student government, being athletic team captains, being section leaders in band and chorus, chairing committees in student groups, and involvement in the community and school. The student who exercises leadership is resourceful in proposing problems and solutions, in promoting school activities, in upholding school ideals and spirit, is dependable in the classroom, exemplifies a positive attitude, inspires positive behavior in others, and demonstrates initiative.

Service consists of those actions done on the behalf of others without any direct financial or material benefit to oneself. In considering service, the Faculty Council examines the contributions a candidate has made to school, classmates, and the community as well as the student's attitude toward service. The student who serves provides dependable and well-organized assistance, volunteers, is willing to make sacrifices to help others, works well with others, is willing to take on difficult or inconspicuous responsibilities, cheerfully renders any requested service to the school, is willing to represent the school, does committee work, participates in activities outside of school, and shows courtesy by assisting teachers, visitors, and other students.

If new information comes to light that reflects negatively on the leadership, character, or citizenship of a candidate during the review process, this may be considered when the Faculty Council votes on membership.

A student is offered membership if he or she receives a majority vote by the Faculty Council (at least three out of five favorable votes) and is inducted at a formal ceremony that involves the entire middle school and the inductees parents. This year's ceremony will be on May 24 at 8:15 AM in the cafeteria.

## Student Council

The Student Council advisor is Isabel Urrutia. Officers consist of the President, Vice-president, Treasurer, and Secretary. In addition, one representative is elected per grade to attend all Student Council meetings. The Middle School Student Council is responsible for planning and carrying out a variety of activities such as a Halloween dance, spirit days, and a service project.

Students who would like to run for a Student Council position or be a grade representative must meet the following requirements:

- Minimum academic grade average of 85% per quarter, per subject, based on last year's grades.
- Minimum citizenship grade average of 85% per quarter, based on last year's grades.
- No referrals earned for **major misconduct** during the past year.
- Two letters of recommendation from current or past teachers.
- Demonstrable leadership qualities characteristic of a student council officer.
- Willingness to build school spirit and have fun.

- Students must run individually, not as political groups.
- Only eighth graders may run for President.

### **Roots and Shoots**

The middle school has offered a very successful service elective called Roots & Shoots for several years. This elective allows students to develop strong organizational and leadership skills while making positive change happen for people, animals, and the environment. The Roots & Shoots network was created by Dr. Jane Goodall to connect youth of all ages around the globe who share a desire to create a better world. Young people identify problems in their communities and take action. Past projects initiated by our middle school students have included a dog shelter created by students who also organized spaying and neutering campaigns in several Costa Rican towns; the collection of food, personal hygiene items, and educational supplies for an orphanage, as well as regular visits to play with the children; disaster relief for Haiti, Pakistan, Costa Rica, and Japan; educational scholarships for indigenous children in Talamanca; and feeding the homeless in San Jose and poor families in La Carpio. The Roots & Shoots advisor this school year is Scott DeBoer. For more information about Roots & Shoots, you may want to consult the website at <http://www.rootsandshoots.org/aboutus/>