



CORNERSTONE
LEARNING COMMUNITY

Community
Handbook
2015/2016

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WE BELIEVE academic and social goals should be treated and discussed in relationship to each other, not separately, so we work to develop both competence and confidence in children. We want our students to be well trained in academic disciplines, to fulfill their creative potential, and to gain satisfaction in their physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development. We want students to love learning and to value knowledge, creativity, and humor. Our goals are for students to be open-minded and compassionate, to gain a sense of themselves and others, and to understand and appreciate the diversity of the human condition. We encourage children to become aware of their academic and social responsibilities and to enjoy the sense of pride that comes from fulfilling them. We value students' questions and respect their struggles to achieve an inner discipline. Finally, we want students to recognize that they have the power and resources to effect change.

OUR MISSION

Inspire and empower compassionate, global learners.

OUR COMMUNITY

The learning community at Cornerstone values the contributions of all – the students, their families, the teachers, and the administrative staff. We all work together to accomplish our school's mission in our individual day-to-day work as well as through representation on the school's Board of Trustees.

Students

From the three-year-olds in the preschool to the young adults in eighth grade, Cornerstone students bring a variety of gifts to our learning community. The students collaborate to explore big concepts, master valuable skills, and develop strong character. They actively participate in guiding the curriculum by expressing their curiosity and helping determine responsible ways to experiment, learn, and grow. After years of inspired learning, our graduates are:

- Academically adept
- Supportive of a diverse community
- Socially and environmentally responsible
- Flexible, open-minded problem solvers
- Curious, creative, engaged learners throughout their lives

Faculty

The faculty at CLC consists of 38 full and part-time employees with both professional and personal dedication to the school. Teachers actively engage with students daily and know them well as individuals. Teachers have regular meetings after school to discuss issues related to curriculum and teaching practices, in addition to individual meetings with school director and colleagues. Throughout the year teachers participate in staff development opportunities such as workshops, postgraduate courses, and professional conferences. Additionally, lead teachers meet monthly with their respective houses or teams to discuss professional readings and teaching approaches related to their common goals.

Families

Our students' families are partners in the school's success in many ways. Families support their students at home by establishing routines for being prepared for school. Family members enrich our community by sharing their talents in the classroom, helping host school-wide events, serving on school committees, and sharing their perspectives in conversations and conferences. The Cornerstone Service Community

(CSC) organizes the efforts of volunteers and works to ensure that families are well-informed, involved, and active in their partnership with the school's faculty, administration, trustees, and each other. The CSC communicates regularly through meetings and email to make all community members aware of the many opportunities for family members to serve, support, and lead at Cornerstone.

Administration

Administrators at Cornerstone are the leaders of the school. They are the lead learners, the school spokespersons, and the guardians of the school's founding principles and practices. The Director is supported by a team of administrative staff including the Office Manager, Business Office Director, Admissions Director, Support Services and Academic Director, and the Operations Director. There is considerable overlap between "faculty" and "staff." A wider view of the administration includes teachers who accept administrative roles in addition to their teaching duties. Teachers serve as mentors to new teachers, act as facilitators for their team of teachers or curriculum areas, and serve on the school's Board of Trustees. All administrative staff have specific areas of responsibility that support the daily operation of the school. See the appendix for a list of staff, faculty, CSC Coordinator, Room Parents and Board Members.

The financial operations of CLC are the responsibility of the Director, who receives assistance from the Business Director and reports directly to the Board of Trustees. A financial review is performed annually, with a full audit completed every three years.

Board of Trustees

The CLC Board of Trustees is the legal governing body of the school. The purpose of the Board, on behalf of the families of Cornerstone Learning Community, is to see to it that CLC achieves its mission. The composition of the Board is intended to be representative of the whole school community. Representatives include two faculty members (nominated by their peers), up to two parents of children currently enrolled (nominated by the CSC), two non-parent, non-faculty community representatives (nominated by any active board member), the School Director, founding board members, and up to five at-large members (also nominated by any active board member). A current list of trustees is maintained on the school's website (www.cornerstonelc.com) under the Community tab.

Trustees attend Board meetings to discuss updates from its committees, the director, and event coordinators. Trustees also may discuss other school issues that arise and vote on matters that require Board vote. In 2015-16, meetings will generally be held on the second Tuesday, 6:00-7:30 p.m., of most months, beginning in August and going through June. Anyone may bring an issue for consideration to the board through their appropriate representative or by directly contacting any board member. Specific meeting dates can be found on the CLC website calendar (on the home page under CLC Links).

THE SCHOOL YEAR

Calendar

The school year consists of approximately 180 days, including teacher planning and parent conference days. The school calendar is created at the end of each school year and published in the summer prior to the beginning of the new school year. A team of CSC members, teachers, and administrators work together to develop a calendar that respects our diverse community and allows families to plan in

advance for school events and vacations.

Each week's events are highlighted in the classroom *Friday News*, in the weekly communications from room parents, and the school's website includes the most up-to-date calendar for the year. Any updates to the school calendar should be submitted to the Office Managers.

Emergency Closing

In the event of severe weather conditions, CLC follows the decision of the Leon County School Board regarding closings. When public schools are closed due to the weather, CLC will be closed. These announcements are made over the radio and on television. CLC makes every effort to send the information about a school closing via email and on the school's voice mail system by 7 a.m.

When there is a city wide emergency, CLC again follows the decisions of the Leon County School Board. If CLC has its own emergency, staff and parent volunteers will contact all parents/caregivers by telephone.

In all emergencies, CLC requires that a family member come to pick up children at the school or call to give the name of another authorized adult who will do so.

THE SCHOOL DAY

Every class has its own space. In classrooms, children may work at tables and desks but, just as likely, may be having a meeting while sitting in a circle on a rug or working on a project on the floor. They use a wide range of materials, not all of which can be associated with neatness. A typical day includes leaving the building to spend time in our beautiful green spaces. Students should be dressed comfortably in clothing that allows for the flexibility that is part of a regular school day. (See Clothing).

Hours

Preschool: 9:00 a.m. (arrival), 12:15 (half-day dismissal) 3:00 p.m.(full-day dismissal).

Kindergarten: 9:00 a.m. (arrival) 9:05 (late) 3:00 p.m. (dismissal).

1st through 5th grade: 8:30 a.m. (arrival) 8:35 (late) 3:00 p.m. (dismissal).

6th through 8th grade: 8:30 a.m. (arrival) 8:35 (late) 3:05 p.m. (dismissal)

Arrival

All elementary students are admitted to the school building beginning at 8:30 a.m., middle school students at 8:30 a.m., but they may be dropped off as early as 7:30 for an additional fee. The fee schedule is included in the summer mailer to parents and updated on the CLC website each year. PLEASE NOTE that dropping off any time before 8:15am for Elementary, 8:10am for Middle School, or 8:45 am for Preschool/Kindergarten, will incur Before-school Care charges, i.e. dropping off at 8:14 am for elementary students will incur a charge. A CLC staff member will be supervising 2nd – 8th grade students on the upper playground. Additional staff members will be on the lower playground supervising preschool through 1st grade students. Arrival and dismissal are busy times in classrooms and in public areas like the front office and parking lot. Should parents wish to speak with a teacher, this *is not* a good time to have a lengthy conversation but it *is* a time to share important information about changes in a schedule. It is also a good time to settle on a time for a phone call or an appointment to discuss something in more detail.

Late Arrival

Students who arrive late (After 8:35 a.m. for grades 1-8, after 8:35 and after 9:05 a.m. for Kindergarten) must receive a “tardy slip” from the front office, and their parents must sign them in before the students enter class. This is a necessary part of our system to keep children closely accounted for at all times. This process also keeps children from being marked “absent.”

The start of day sets the tone for the rest of the day and often includes important student duties and class planning. Students miss out on valuable activities when they arrive late. Please note “Tardy and Absence Policy for Middle School students” under the **Attendance** section on page 12. The Director will contact parents if students develop a pattern of late arrival. **Please make every effort to get your student to school on time.**

Dismissal

The school day ends at 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday for full-day preschool and Kindergarten through 5th grade. The day ends for 6th-8th graders at 3:05 p.m. Teachers and staff supervise students during dismissal until 3:15. Students who have not been picked up by 3:15 will be transferred to after school care and billed accordingly. (Middle School at 3:20.)

Dismissal Locations

Preschool, Kindergarten, and 1st : Pickup from the child’s classroom.

2nd- 8th grade: Drive through pick-up at the gazebo. If you choose to park and walk your child to your car, please use sidewalks. Do not cross the parking lot.

During inclement weather, all students will need to be picked up from the classroom porches.

Safety & Dismissal

At the end of any given day, CLC students go off to many destinations and use many different modes of transportation to get there. Some children are consistently picked up by the same person; others are picked up by multiple family members, care givers or friends. Transitions are not always easy for children, especially at the beginning of the year or when changes are taking place in their normal routines. Parents can help make children feel safe and secure by establishing their own routine of discussing children’s after school plans every morning before school. Preschool teachers note any changes in normal after school plans upon the child’s arrival. If you change dismissal arrangements, please notify the office.

Preschool Full-Day Program

This program runs from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. Students should bring lunch and a drink. They will eat lunch and then settle in for a story and quiet rest time. Their afternoon will include snack and enrichment activities.

School Trips

Education at CLC benefits greatly from the extensive use of local places as resources for curriculum. Teachers regularly plan field trips that enrich children’s academic experiences and provide service learning opportunities. Teachers will communicate the goals and details of field trips in advance and reserve the school’s bus, or the class parents will help coordinate drivers. By assisting with transportation and supervision, parents are invaluable partners in field trip experiences. Many field trips include costs for admission or transportation. The materials/activities fee covers the cost of all day trips. Older students also take over-night field trips. Teachers will announce these trips early in the year to allow parents to budget for out of town trips and plan fundraising. Every effort is made to keep these trips affordable to all families. We want all students to be able to participate fully in

overnight school trips, so financial assistance is available to help with those costs. Please see the Business Liaison for information on assistance for overnight school trips.

Field Trip Policy

At the beginning of all field trips, parents and other volunteers who have agreed to chaperone and transport students will be given a copy of the following guidelines:

Research indicates that phone calling, texting, or emailing using a cell phone or a personal data device while driving is dangerous, and may even approach the equivalent danger of driving while drunk. We recognize that other distractions occur while driving, however, curbing the use of cell phones, and personal data devices during driving, is one way to minimize the risk of accidents.

Therefore, CLC prohibits employees and parent volunteers from using cell phones or personal data devices to text, email or surf the internet while driving a CLC owned vehicle, CLC rented vehicle or personal vehicle for school purposes. Cell phone voice calls while driving a CLC owned vehicle, CLC rented vehicle or personal vehicle are allowed only when made using hands-free mode.

During school-related activities, all staff, volunteers and parent chaperones are considered agents of the school and as such, are required to abide by the following policies during school-related activities:

- Before driving, make sure that all children are properly buckled in seat belts or secured in properly installed car seats.

- Children weighing less than 80 pounds must ride in the rear seat of your vehicle if it is equipped with a passenger-side airbag.

- Obey all speed limits and other laws.

- Only use your cell phone when your vehicle is parked safely off the roadway. The only exception to this policy is for voice calls made using hands-free mode.

- Provide current drivers license and insurance information prior to trip.

We appreciate our parents' realization that the safety and well-being of our students is of the utmost importance, so thank you for following these guidelines when driving students in your vehicle.

AFTER SCHOOL

After Care for Preschool-8th Graders

After school care is available from 3 until 6 p.m. for preschool through 8th grade students. Children in preschool through 1st grade have afterschool care in the Kelso House and on the lower playground, and students in 2nd - 8th grade meet in the special area portable building and upper playground. The children enjoy supervised play, snack time, and a variety of planned activities. A supervised study hall is available to students in 2nd -8th grade from 3:30-4:30 (M, T, Th, F). Other classes, such as art and music, are sometimes available but carry an additional charge.

Children in after school care must be picked up by 6:00 p.m. (Late fee for parents picking up past 6:00 pm.: \$1.00/min.) All billing for after school is done at the end of each month and will show up on the following month's statement.

Play Dates

All arrangements must be made in advance and CLC recommends that they be reconfirmed the day before to make sure the plans still stand. Children are not permitted to phone parents during the school day to make play dates.

Emergency Childcare

CLC is usually able to accommodate requests from parents for emergency child care by incorporating students into the after school program. Call the office to let us know that your child needs to stay on campus after school.

ATTENDANCE

The school keeps attendance records for all students. These records are placed in each student's file and are sent to other schools when records are requested.

Parents are asked to schedule routine physical or dental appointments after school hours. CLC also asks families to coordinate holidays with school vacations.

If students will be on a family trip when school is in session, parents need to fill out an **Arranged Absence Form** and speak to the classroom teacher about any academic implications and make-up work (see **Homework** section). CLC respects absences for religious observances.

Any extended, anticipated absences must be approved at least a week in advance by the Director (2 weeks in advance for Middle School students) using an **Arranged Absence form**. Middle school students with excessive absences may have consequences that affect grades or course credits.

Middle School Absence and Tardy Policy

Absences and tardies can have serious effects on academic progress in middle school. In an effort to help middle school students stay on track and to prepare for transition into high school, middle school absences and tardies are classified as "excused" or "unexcused," and will appear on your middle school student's report card.

Middle School Excused Tardies and Absences

- Illness
- Religious Reasons
- Pre-arranged absences (Pre-Arranged Absence forms can be picked up in the office)
- Doctor's appointments
- Family emergencies

Middle School Unexcused Tardies and Absences

- Any absence that does not have documentation supporting an excused absence, including:
 - Oversleeping
 - Family trip that is not pre-arranged
 - Illness without a parent note or email

-Traffic beyond 10 minutes (8:40am)

CELEBRATIONS

Cornerstone's Board of Trustees and the school's administration monitors CLC's curriculum and school-wide activities to ensure that they reflect the school's commitment to honoring and learning about differences in religious and cultural backgrounds. Curriculum and school-wide activities will not endorse any single religious or cultural perspective, but will promote sharing of cultural differences.

The school does not sponsor or initiate any celebrations that are exclusive to any single religion. For instance, we do not, as a school, have plays or musical performances to celebrate any religious tradition, and we do not promote the teachings of any religion. However, to promote the sharing of cultural differences, we invite families to share from their traditions. So, a parent might approach a teacher or teachers and offer to talk to a class about how his or her family celebrates a particular religious holiday. Those talks or activities must be approved by the teacher, and the purpose will always be to help students learn about the rich diversity of religious or cultural celebrations.

Cornerstone is, as our covenant states, a **Celebrative Place**, so we greatly value opportunities to celebrate together. Our Fall Festival and Spring Fish Fry are school-wide events meant to celebrate the beauty and joy of the seasons and to strengthen the bonds of our school community. We also enjoy recognizing students on their birthdays. If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday at school, please coordinate these plans with his or her teacher. In some cases there are students in the class who have allergies to certain foods or additives, so special arrangements may be necessary to insure that everyone can participate safely. There may also be students in the class who do not celebrate birthdays. In those cases, the teacher can help to plan the celebration in a way that is sensitive to those children's feelings.

Individual classes may have celebrations for Halloween and Valentine's Day. If children choose to dress up for Halloween, their costumes must be appropriate and not frightening. If Valentines are given out, they should be given to everyone in the class. Please **DO NOT** send any candy for either celebration.

If you have any questions about our school's policy on celebrations, please speak to your child's teacher or to the director.

DRESS CODE

CLC chooses not to have a formal dress code, though we do have certain expectations regarding the clothing children wear to school. Shoes are optional in the classroom, but if students remove their shoes, they must wear socks or slippers. Students should wear clothing that is suited to their physical activities outside and that is appropriate in a school setting that includes children as young as preschoolers. We expect families to assist the school by helping children exercise good judgment in their selection of clothing each morning, on trips, and at school events.

Lost and Found

Students often leave jackets and other articles of clothing on the playground or on the porches. These can be claimed in the lost and found bin in the gazebo. Unclaimed clothes and other articles in lost and found will be donated to Goodwill when the bin becomes full. *Please make sure that you have written your child's name in all clothing.*

VALUABLES AND PERSONAL PROPERTY

Children are urged to leave valuables at home, as the school cannot assume responsibility for loss or damage. We discourage parents from sending cell phones, laptops, tablets, ipods, etc. with students. (See our Personal Tech Policy.)

Middle School students may be allowed to listen to music through headphones while having individual work periods. Music players must remain in the backpacks or lockers for all other parts of the day.

If money or other small valuables must be brought to school on a given day, they should be given to the teacher for safekeeping until dismissal time. There are no accommodations in the building for student skateboards or scooters. Bicycle racks are provided.

While the school recognizes children's desire to share things from home, there are ample opportunities to do so within the curriculum. The nature of the CLC community encompasses a broad economic range. Parents are asked not to send toys or other items to school. This does not apply when teachers make special requests of parents in connection with school plays, etc.

PERSONAL TECH POLICY

Students are encouraged to not bring any personal devices (cell phones, tablets, laptops, ipods or the like) to school. In the event they need them for a class, a project, or for coordination communication, they are to be out only during supervised times established by their teachers and/or school policy, and in use for those specific purposes.

For the safety of everyone, *parents who need to communicate with their child during the day are asked do so through the front office*. Parents who need to communicate with their child during Afterschool can do so through Emily Backes ([850.524.1599](tel:850.524.1599)) if the office is already closed for the day (after 4 pm).

Students may use their devices for coordination purposes between 3:00 and 3:20 each afternoon, but devices should be put away for safekeeping otherwise. Students who struggle to put them away (and keep them away) will be asked to turn them over to teachers and/or Afterschool staff until the devices can be handed off to the parents/guardians when the students are picked up. Students who habitually struggle with this will be asked to not bring devices to school for a time period or permanently.

In keeping with this policy, *parents are asked to not text students during Afterschool requesting the student to come down for pickup*. In the event of an extenuating circumstance in which you cannot come up the boardwalk and make eye contact with an Afterschool staff member, you can text Emily requesting your student be sent down. This will help ensure the Afterschool team is well aware of which students are on campus at any particular moment.

HEALTH, SAFETY & NUTRITION

CLC wants to have the healthiest possible environment. The school undergoes regular inspections by the Leon County Health Department and complies with all their regulations. These are constantly undergoing refinement and improvement. To ensure that our school facilities and playgrounds are safe, we conduct routine safety checks and perform necessary maintenance as soon as unsafe conditions are identified. We also conduct monthly fire drills, have a yearly test of alarm equipment, and schedule

periodic safety inspections by the fire department and police department.

Medical Records

CLC requires a well check form and immunization record be on file for each student. New preschool students, upcoming kindergarteners and 7th graders need a new certificate of immunization before starting school. **Your child may not attend class the first day without this information.** Emergency information forms are provided at the beginning of each school year. It is important that each child's file include current health and contact information *each year*. The Health Department makes periodic inspections of school medical records. Any child found to have an inadequate medical exam or immunization status will not be permitted to attend school until the required certificates have been provided. If a medical or religious reason prevents the administering of any required immunization, a statement must be on file at the school that complies with city and state guidelines. You may be asked to provide or update medical information during the year if your child's class takes an overnight trip out of town.

Accidents

The Administrative Staff and classroom teachers are trained to administer general first-aid for minor injuries. All injuries that occur at school which require serious first aid or medical treatment will be documented in Renweb and the report emailed to parents or guardians. In case of serious injury requiring a physician's attention, CLC makes every effort to reach a parent by telephone. If the parent cannot be reached, a teacher or other responsible adult will take the child to the medical center chosen on the student's health card.

The school carries Student Accident Insurance for all students. This insurance provides limited coverage for accidents incurred during the school year. Claims may be made only after a family's primary insurance coverage is exhausted. For students with no private insurance, the school's policy serves as primary coverage. Parents are responsible for filing claims, through the school office, within 10 days of any accident.

Illness

Children should not be sent to school if they are not feeling well or are unable to participate fully in the daily program, which includes time outdoors. A child who is not well cannot benefit from the program and jeopardizes the health of others. *Specifically, a child who is coughing, sneezing or has a sore throat, fever, running nose, headache, earache or upset stomach should remain out of school until these symptoms have cleared. If there is fever, the child should not return to school until his/her temperature has remained normal for a full 24 hours without fever-reducing medication.* Children who are throwing up must also remain at home for 24 hours after symptoms have cleared. If a child is ill in school, parents will be notified to come and take him/her home.

If a child will be absent from school, a parent should call or email the office by 8:30 am. When students are absent for 3 or more days because of an illness, a doctor's note is required. Any communicable disease or other infectious condition must be reported so we may advise families of other children in the class about the exposure.

Medications

CLC requires that prescription medication be sent to school in the original bottle accompanied by clear, written instructions from the doctor. A medication release form needs to be filled out in the front office, signed and dated by a parent. Copies will be sent to the teacher if needed. All medications are stored in the front office and refrigeration is available. Parents are sometimes able to monitor administration of prescriptions themselves by asking a doctor to prescribe ones that can be given outside school hours (with breakfast, at bedtime, etc.). Should medication need to be administered at school, school staff will dispense it in the front office. Students should not have over the counter or prescribed medications in their backpacks, lockers or classroom.

Nutrition

We urge parents to provide their children with a healthy breakfast before school begins. CLC does not have a cafeteria; all meals are eaten outside, on the porches, or in their classrooms. Preschool and Kindergarten students are served a mid-morning snack daily. Lunches are brought in from local suppliers and *orders are to be placed for the month by returning the form sent home with students. This is the responsibility of the student/parent.* All students may bring bag lunches if not ordering. Please do not send soda or caffeinated beverages for your child. Please limit high sugar items in lunches, as this can cause a "sugar low" later in the school day. Students should bring refillable water bottles for use at school. Students are required to take these bottles to all P.E. classes.

Lunches for School Trips

CLC requests that lunches on these occasions be packed in travel ready containers and labeled with a student's name. If these are placed in a small plastic shopping bag they are easier to transport.

Allergies, Religious and Dietary Restrictions

Enjoying food together is a frequent classroom activity, particularly in the Lower School. Parents should speak with teachers about dietary or religious restrictions (which are not the same as preferences).

HOMEWORK

Purpose of Homework

We believe that homework should be a natural extension of the assigned, ongoing work in all classes. Meaningful homework is introduced at the youngest ages and becomes more challenging as students move into middle school. It is through these meaningful assignments that children put ideas together, make connections, and gradually define their own intellectual perspective on a wide variety of themes. We are aware that our students make a transition to high school where they often encounter quite different expectations.

While this accounts for a gradual introduction of different kinds of assignments and an increased exposure to testing, the best preparation for high school remains the meaningful assignments that represent the bulk of CLC homework. In the early years, homework starts with simple requests for children to bring information or material to school. It may extend to occasional requests to record things students are doing outside school, from observations on trips to vacation reading.

Most children rely on parents to provide needed materials, to be helpful in structuring their use of time and to establish a quiet place to work on homework that is free of distractions. While we hope, and sometimes ask, that parents take an interest in the substance of the homework, in most cases parents

eventually need not involve themselves in all the details of their children's work. It is not helpful to a student or a teacher for parents to complete a child's homework.

Parents can also accompany their children to the public library to locate references or research materials for school projects. In an era of wide access to information through the Internet, CLC advises parents to be mindful of children's use of the Worldwide Web and to engage their children in conversations about the dilemmas that children face in view of the uncensored nature of the information available there.

Difficulty with Homework

The school is sensitive to individual student abilities and styles in approaching homework. It is valuable for teachers to be kept abreast of students who are having difficulty with homework assignments. In the event that parents notice a child having difficulty with homework, they should help the student identify the problem and encourage the child to speak with the teacher directly. CLC requests that parents then send an email or note to the teacher the following day that explains the student's questions or problems with the assignment.

Homework During School Absence

Middle School students who are absent but are able to do homework should 1) check Edmodo.com groups AND 2) Email their teachers for missed classwork and homework assignments. Upon returning to school, s/he should get a **Missed-Work** sheet from his or her 1st period teacher and take it around to teachers to fill out. The work to be made up may also include missed classwork where applicable as well as assigned homework. Parents planning an absence need to fill out an **Arranged Absence form** at least **two weeks** ahead of time (forms can be picked up in the office or printed from CLC's website at cornerstonelc.com) and turned into the office for teacher and Director approval. This gives teachers time to prepare assignments for students to complete during their time away from school. However, we encourage families to plan trips when school is on break rather than during the school year, as students miss valuable classroom instruction and collaboration with classmates - many forms of class work simply cannot be duplicated away from school!

Summer Reading

Talking to children, sharing stories, and reading books reinforces the importance of language for information and for pleasure. Some classes require reading and response journals to be completed over the summer.

PARENT/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

CLC communicates regularly with parents through a variety of means:

- Monthly School-wide newsletter and weekly teacher letters
- Notes and emails from classroom teachers
- The school's website (www.cornerstonelc.com)
- Renweb *parentsweb* for grades, class information, online directory, calendar and more
- Various mailings throughout the year
- Regularly scheduled conferences between teachers and parents

An equally important part of parent/school communication is the ongoing dialogue parents initiate with their children's teachers. It is vital for parents and teachers to develop relationships built on trust and

mutual respect. Open communication need not be limited to conference days and class meetings. For teachers to foster children's growth at school, it is helpful for them to be informed about significant changes in children's lives outside of school. Children react and respond in different ways to the changes that take place in their lives and it is not unusual for significant changes at home, in the family, or other factors to affect them. Examples of such change may include, but are not limited to changes in children's regular routines; family members who are absent or traveling; changes in family structure (including knowledge of impending changes) such as births, deaths, separation, divorce or remarriage; serious illness in a family including important members of the child's extended family; and loss or death of pets. Any change in individuals working with children such as sitters, tutors, therapists, or other professionals is also important information to share with a teacher. Furthermore, it can be helpful for teachers to know if parents become aware that children are experiencing difficulties at school, with homework, or other school-related matters.

In communicating with teachers it is also important to remember that children often save their most difficult feelings for sharing with parents and; as a result, teachers may not always be aware of things that a child identifies as difficult. Teachers may also see children responding and coping well with situations that arise in the classroom that parents do not hear about at home. Understanding both aspects of children's lives in school is an extremely important aspect of parent/teacher communication.

Certain times may be easier or harder for teachers to speak with parents, particularly about topics that require an extended discussion. Arrival and dismissal times are particularly busy times and it is difficult for teachers to give their full attention to discussing topics that are substantive. At these busy times of day, notes about changes in schedule or setting up a time to meet or talk by phone can be productive. Teachers do their best to return calls and respond to notes and email in a timely fashion. It can be helpful if parents suggest a series of times when they can be reached. Teachers have limited free time during the school day.

Emergency communications can be made through the front office.

Messages & Phone Calls

Teachers cannot be interrupted during class time to take phone calls. Students and teachers are not called to the telephone during the school day, except in the case of emergencies. If parents wish to reach teachers, they may leave a message with the office staff or e-mail the teacher. Written messages are placed in teachers' mailboxes and teachers get back in touch at their earliest convenience. Teachers check their mailboxes for messages and emails at the end of the school day.

Please do not expect the office staff to be responsible for delivering messages to other parents or providing other parents' telephone numbers at work. Lists of parents' home phone numbers and email addresses are in Renweb. **Please do not use these email addresses for purposes not related to school.** Messages for the CSC coordinator may be exchanged in the CSC mail box located in the Kelso office, or via email at csc@cornerstonelc.com.

Email Communication Guidelines

In our covenant of learning, teachers commit to **keep parents informed in a respectful, honest manner.** They will communicate important issues concerning their class activities and curriculum through weekly letters and open houses. Teachers will contact parents when they have concerns about academic

performance and behavior. Individual conferences will be scheduled when there are serious concerns about a student. Teachers will meet with all parents in progress conferences twice a year.

We believe timely, respectful communication between parents and teachers is vital to supporting the growth of students and productive relationships within the school community. Specifically related to email, we ask our teachers to check their email by the end of each day, but we do not require them to answer email after school hours. We also ask that teachers write concise, professional emails to parents for these purposes:

- to convey general information related to class activities or assignments, changes in the calendar, upcoming events or projects, or curriculum
- to set up a meeting or a phone conversation related to an issue related to a student's behavior or academic performance
- to respond to or follow up on a parent question

We ask that parents keep the following guidelines in mind when emailing teachers:

- Please do not use email for emergency communication or for communication that is time-sensitive, such as changes in whether a student is staying for after school. All communication that requires a quick response should be phoned in to the office. All communication about medical or health concerns should go through the front office.
- Concerns you have regarding your child's academic progress, social interactions, or behavior are best dealt with through a phone conversation or a scheduled meeting.
- Please keep all email communications respectful and professional. Jokes, amusing stories, or commercial solicitations are susceptible to being misunderstood; we encourage you to avoid them.
- Please respect teachers' time and understand that they serve many families. Keep email communication short and limit its use to quick information exchanges or for scheduling meetings or phone conversations.
- Group email conversations should be used to exchange information or to provide support to families, never to critique a child, teacher, or policies. We ask that concerns or complaints be addressed first to the person most able to respond (usually the teacher), and that if there is no satisfactory solution that the school director be asked to join the conversation.

CONFERENCES

Fall & Spring Conference Days

Fall and Spring conferences are held twice a year on specially designated conference days in November and May. Please arrive promptly and notify the school in advance if an appointment must be canceled. Additional conferences may take place during the year at the request of parents, teachers, staff or students. Conferences may involve students or be solely between adults.

Other Conferences and Conversations

Conversations with teachers may uncover topics that parents feel warrant further discussion. If there are classroom-related issues to resolve the parent/caregiver should always bring them to the teacher first. In general we request that families follow the communication chain described below:

General matters having to do with the classroom: classroom teacher or special area teacher.

General matters having to do with the content of curriculum or teaching methods: classroom teacher, special area teachers and director if needed.

Questions regarding a child's social or emotional development, including parenting challenges: classroom teacher and director if needed.

Questions about coordination of tutoring or testing: Academic Director if needed.

Questions about school policies or procedures: Director.

Children do best in settings where they enjoy the support of both educators and parents. There will undoubtedly be moments when children, parents, teachers or administrators question one another's decisions. These moments can be productive for all when everyone involved approaches the problem solving cooperatively. Children should know that we all work together. Parents are encouraged to communicate directly with teachers when they have questions. It is generally not productive to include a child in the discussion until the adults have agreed on a strategy for working together on a particular challenge. It is also generally difficult to proceed collaboratively when any advocate for a child does not take time to reflect on a broader picture before responding to a particular situation.

ASSESSMENTS

Progress Reports

Timely summative assessments are also used to document progress. CLC favors an approach that honors different paces of development in individual children, recognizing that development can be uneven across subject areas. We support the self-esteem of all learners through differentiated instruction.

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Every twelve weeks teachers prepare a written Progress Report for each child in 1st- 8th grade. This is a structured reflection of the child's overall progress during the term. Preschool and kindergarten children will receive a developmental assessment twice a year in the fall and spring. In both cases consideration is given to social, physical, and emotional growth, as well as cognitive and intellectual development.

Standardized Testing

The Iowa Test of Basic Skills is administered each fall to children in the 3rd through 8th grade. The results are helpful indicators of a child's progress from one year to the next in the areas tested: vocabulary development, reading comprehension, written conventions, math concepts, math computation and math applications. Parents may discuss a single year's results with a teacher during conferences. Patterns observed over a period of years or the wider implications of a child's scores may be discussed with the school's Academic Director and the director.

The interpretation of test scores must consider many factors relative to a given child, not the least of which is that learning rarely progresses at a steady, predictable pace. Test scores alone are insufficient

measurements of academic performance and are only one of many criteria used by the school in evaluating a student's progress.

Diagnostic Testing

Diagnostic testing by the school's Academic Director is administered as needed or upon request of a classroom teacher. These evaluations help teachers to provide each child with the most suitable educational approach. Parents are notified when a teacher feels additional assessments are indicated. Parents may initiate diagnostic testing by contacting the school's Academic Director. A fee is charged when assessments are conducted at the request of a parent. When diagnostic testing indicates the need for tutoring outside the classroom, parents will be advised of their alternatives and the costs. When evaluations indicate that further assessment or individual tutoring is needed, parents are asked to assist in making these arrangements

VISITING

Parent Visits to Classrooms

CLC appreciates parents' interest in sharing their children's educational experiences. Many parents have knowledge, hobbies, or professions that can add a dimension to a classroom study. It is important to us that visits to the classroom by parents be **well-planned and sufficiently prepared for** by the teacher and parent. **Please check in at the office before going on campus and pick up a volunteer/visitor badge.**

Admissions and Outreach Visitors

People visit CLC frequently. The range of visitors includes parents of prospective students or students and educators from area colleges working with CLC staff. The steady flow of visitors interested in seeing the school means that we must plan and coordinate carefully to avoid strain on teachers and children. All of these visitors are required to check in at the office to assure the safety of students and teachers.

WHAT'S WHERE?

2524 Hartsfield Road, Tallahassee 32303

(850)386-5550, fax: (850) 386-5421

East House - Kindergarten through 3rd grade.

West House - 4th grade, 5th grade, middle school science, math, foreign language.

Portables -Support services, middle school language arts, music, social studies, and afterschool homework room.

Kelso House- Administration, Preschool, & Art Room.

WHO'S WHO?

A complete list of Faculty, Staff and Trustees is in the Appendix, and also available on our website cornerstonelc.com under the **Community tab**.

TAX INFORMATION ABOUT CLC

Tax Identification Number: #59-3622879

Tax-Exempt Status: #85 – 8012604071C-4

501-C3: Outright and in-kind contributions are tax deductible

ADMISSIONS

General

The school begins processing applications in August for the following year. Admissions materials can be picked up in the Admissions office, downloaded from the website or mailed upon request. Parents with friends who are interested in the school should encourage them to contact the Admissions office and take full advantage of the information and visiting opportunities the school offers. The school conducts weekly tours by appointment. We have found it most helpful if a parent has read our admissions material before visiting. All admissions information is available on our website (cornerstone1c.com).

Sibling Admissions

Parents who want to apply for siblings should get their applications in as early in the year as possible. Although the Admissions Committee gives preference to sibling applicants, admissions cannot be guaranteed.

Exceptional Students Policy

Students with special needs--identified by Exceptional Student Education (ESE) placement or Individual Education Program (IEP)--are admitted when the staff and the student's parents believe that CLC's learning environment best fits the child's needs. We expect all students to make the academic and social progress that matches their abilities. If progress requires the use of additional resources such as tutors, therapists or specialized assessment and remediation, parents are responsible for the additional costs.

Teachers will provide reasonable accommodations which will be specified and agreed to through 504 Plans, IEP's and the accommodations that evolve naturally in the classroom. Teachers will work to build the strengths of each child while providing opportunities for students to strengthen areas where they need to grow.

Enrollment Contracts

According to the policy of CLC's Board of Trustees, Enrollment Contracts are sent in the spring upon your child's acceptance for the upcoming school year. Please read the Enrollment Contract carefully and return to the school signed, by the stated deadline. The pledge to treat every family's financial information confidentially extends from the Director to the Business Liaison for the purpose of issuing contracts, awarding financial assistance, monthly statements, and other fees. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the director.

Paying Bills

All students are enrolled for the entire academic year, unless expressly agreed to the contrary. Tuition for the academic year is owed to the school upon your child's acceptance. Parents/guardians may elect to pay, and the School may accept regular monthly or quarterly payments in lieu of the total tuition prior to the beginning of the academic year. If a parent/guardian chooses to make regular monthly or quarterly payments, each payment is due the 1st of each month or quarter according to the following payment schedule:

- First **monthly** payment is due July 1st.
- Subsequent **monthly** payments are due the 1st of each month (August - June).
- Subsequent **quarterly** payments are due July 1, October 1, January 1, and April 1.

Payments received after the 10th of each month are considered late, and a **\$20.00 late fee** will be charged.

If payments are more than 45 days late, you will be considered in breach of the Contract, and the school will discontinue serving the student unless a payment schedule is agreed upon by the parents and the school. Payments can be made by cash, check, money order, electronic check via Intuit online payment or cashier's check. Returned checks will be assessed a **\$25.00 processing fee**. If necessary, credit card payment can be processed by coming to the Business office during school hours – we cannot process over the phone.

SUPPORTING CORNERSTONE

Promoting CLC

There are many exciting opportunities to promote CLC in our larger community and to create greater awareness of our students' achievements. Through our development efforts we continue to cultivate long-term relationships and increase resources, including the Annual Fund Campaign and the Silent Auction. Share the good news about Cornerstone with your family, friends and co-workers; identify partnership opportunities, prospective donors and investors, and in-kind gifts to our school. There will be energetic and passionate teams established to implement our development initiatives. The rewards and outcomes are amazing – enhanced professional development; greater student learning opportunities and increased civic engagement!

APPENDIX

Administration

Director:	Jason Flom
Business Director:	Carole Robards
Admissions Director:	Patty Backes
Office Managers:	Dee Scarlett & Melanie Hicks
IB Coordinator :	Karen Metcalf
Operations Director:	Keith Krivit

Early Childhood Faculty

Preschool Leads:	Jessica Spurlock & Tricia Bowden
Pre-K Assistants:	Meg Fulford & Stephanie McCray
Kindergarten Leads:	Patty Alfred & Tara Bagnall
Kindergarten Assistants:	Elizabeth Wolcott & Jackie Michaels

Elementary Faculty

1st Grade Lead: Elizabeth Fravel	Assistant: Jennifer Haskins
2nd Grade Lead: Jennifer Edgar	Assistant: Kristin Hagaman
3rd Grade Lead: Nathan Hagaman	Assistant: Jenn Schellinger
4th Grade Lead: Annmarie Small	Assistant: Kristy Butgereit
5th Grade Lead: Ellen Jorgenson	Assistants: Kristy Butgereit & Jackie Michaels

Middle School Faculty

MS Social Studies:	Jessica Kimelman
MS Math:	Julie Carres
MS Language Arts:	Laura Young
MS Science:	Karen Metcalf
MS Design:	Laura Young & Jenn Schellinger

Specialists – All School

Academic Director:	Kary Kublin
Art:	Jana Kiwala
Music:	Patty Callender
Physical Education:	Chris Gosier
Spanish:	Darien Buford
Library & Media Specialist:	Elizabeth Wolcott
1st-3rd Science Specialist:	Sky Feller
4th-5th Science Specialist:	Kristy Butgereit
Tutoring Support:	Gretchen Hein
Custodial & Grounds Maintenance:	Wellington & Sam Dzikunu

Before & After School Staff

Before & After School Coordinator:	Emily Backes
Before & Afterschool Staff:	Sidney Nicholson
	Meg Fulford
	Jennifer Haskins
	Raz White
Homework Room Coordinator:	Julie Carres
Athletic Coach:	Chris Gosier
Athletic Director:	Annmarie Small

Cornerstone Service Community

2015-16 CSC Coordinators:

Celeste Bracey
Amy McMillan

Room Parents

Pre-K: Summer Calder (Mary Jane Calders's mom)
Kindergarten: Ingrine Lyle (Romell & Rachael Lyle's mom)
1st Grade: Kristin Hagaman (Emmett & Rory Hagaman's mom)
2nd Grade: Celeste Bracey (Rick Bracey's mom)
3rd Grade: Molly Clore (Thomas Clore's mom)
4th Grade: Sarah Mulcahey (Dominic Mulcahey's mom)
5th Grade: Julie Collins (Sean Collins' mom)
6th Grade: Cindy Zorio (Sofia & Marcos Zorio's mom)
7th Grade: Jeanice Caskey (Hannah & Jenna Caskey's mom)
8th Grade: Sally Barrios & Kary Kublin (Maya Barrios's parents)

Board of Trustees

Chair: Elizabeth Tarbert
Vice Chair: Mose Bracey
Treasurer: Maria Liao
Secretary: Breeze Howard
Lower School Teacher Representative: Nathan Hagaman
Upper School Teacher Representative: Julie Carres
Parent Representatives: Mario Encinosa
Meredith Trammell
Mark Winger
Members at Large: James Cheatham
Kali Iseman
Sam Kimelman

Community Representatives:

Wendell Johnson
Jelaine Palmer-Janvier-Lewis

Founding Members (ex officio):

Betsy Brown
Tony Brown

School Director (ex officio):

Jason Flom