

Community School

Family Handbook



Community School's golden rule is "The Big One":

Treat yourself, others, and the environment with care.

This overarching principle applies equally to the students, faculty, staff, parents, and visitors of our community. Everyone should do his or her part to speak and act in a manner that promotes and models this principle.

7815 Williamson Road, Roanoke, VA 24019

Family Handbook

Accidents and Injuries:

- ❖ Serious accidents will be reported to parents immediately in accordance with the instructions on the Emergency Information Form and an accident/incident report will be completed.
- ❖ Less serious accidents, such as minor scrapes, insect stings, etc. will be treated with first aid by a staff member and reported to the parents at the end of the school day.
- ❖ There is a staff member on duty, at all times, who has certification in standard first aid.
- ❖ See the Administrative or Executive Director for more information.

After School Program (ASP):

- ❖ Community School's licensed After School Program provides supervised play, activities, and snacks for students from 3:45 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- ❖ ***There is a separate fee for this service, billed monthly.***
- ❖ ***All*** students at school after 3:45 p.m. will be charged for ASP unless they are participating in an extra-curricular club or activity.
- ❖ ***Students should be picked up no later than 6:00 p.m.***
- ❖ If parents are unavoidably delayed, please telephone the school cell #540-400-1922.
- ❖ ASP is available for use as needed. Advance signup is not required.
- ❖ This service may be discontinued if payment falls two months in arrears or if a child's behavior in ASP is determined to be disruptive or dangerous.
- ❖ ***A reminder for working parents: The cost of this childcare program may be tax deductible. Please consult your tax advisor.***

Annual Fund and Gifts:

Community School parents, teachers, administrative staff, trustees, alumni, grandparents, and many local corporations are asked to support our school with contributions to the **Annual Fund Appeal**. Along with the Strawberry Festival (see page 13), the **Annual Fund Appeal** is one of our most critical fundraisers and has a significant impact on the school budget.

Annual Fund Appeal participation from trustees and parents is important not only to our success as a private school, but also as a percentage to report when applying for grant and foundation funding. Even a token monetary gift translates into a significant statistic in terms of "percentage of involvement." A high participation percentage demonstrates to grantors that we believe in our school and support it whole-heartedly and this, in turn, encourages them to support us, too.

Other ways to help Community School include:

Kroger card purchases, Box Tops for Education, Labels for Education, Target Charge credits, book fair orders, Amazon purchases via the CS website, classroom gifts, employer support and matching gifts, donations of equipment and supplies, etc.

For more details, please contact the Director of Development & Marketing.

Arts Festival:

Held in May, Arts Festival is a school-wide collaboration of art, music, and drama based on the school-wide theme. See the school calendar for dates.

Family Handbook

Assessment:

Assessment is an on-going, everyday process. Accordingly, tests are not the driving force at Community School. We do not consider them a consistently accurate measure of a student's ability. The middle school students will be exposed to more "testing" than will students in other classes, in conjunction with instruction on study skills. In order to ease the transition into more traditional high school programs, standardized tests will be given in the final year of middle school and scores will be available for placement considerations. See "Conferences and Progress Reports" for additional information.

Attendance:

We encourage you to start the new school year with strong attendance habits for your child. Consistent, daily attendance is very important in the educational life of a child; if your child is not here, he/she will miss out on many important educational and social opportunities. Being absent or chronically tardy disrupts classrooms, creates family tension, and can produce anxiety in children.

- ❖ Students need to arrive to school on time each day. **School begins at 8:45 a.m.**
- ❖ If a student arrives at school after the 8:45 bell, his/her caregiver must walk the child to the main office and have a class admit slip completed by an office staff member. If the child is six years old or younger, the parent or guardian will need to accompany the child to the classroom. Caregivers of children seven years old or older (including middle school students) are required to visually monitor the child's entrance into the classroom. Without disrupting classroom activities, the student will need to give the class admit slip to the teacher.
- ❖ Attendance is taken every day and monitored by the classroom and enrichment teachers.
- ❖ Excessive tardiness and/or absences may impact a student's placement in the upcoming school year or may force a child's withdrawal from Community School. ***See "Tardy Policy" for additional information.***
- ❖ If a student needs to be picked up during the school day, please notify the teacher in advance. Caregivers are required to sign their child in and out of the main office whenever a child is leaving or arriving outside of scheduled school starting and dismissal times.

While we encourage families to spend time outside of Roanoke, and we require families to keep their children out of school if they are sick, we also recognize that actually being in school is the only way that children can benefit from the experiential education that we provide. Please attempt to plan your family trips during times when Community School is already closed. If that is not possible, please notify your child's classroom teacher as soon as you can. While teachers may send work home with your child, they will not be able to replicate everything that is covered in the classroom.

If a teacher feels that a student's chronic absences are infringing on the child's progress, a meeting will be called between the parents/caregivers, teacher, and director.

Family Handbook

Before School Program (BSP):

The Before School Program is available from 7:00 - 8:15 a.m. and is held in room 101. Parents are required to walk their students to Before School. **Failure to do so may result in the loss of Before School Program privileges.** No staff will be on duty outside between 7:00 and 8:15 a.m., and children are not allowed to be outside prior to 8:15 a.m. BSP is available for use as needed. Advance sign-up is not required. *There is a separate fee for this service, billed monthly.*

Big One:

Community School's golden rule: *Treat yourself, others, and the environment with care.*

Birthday Celebrations and Invitations:

Birthdays are special times in a child's life. **Contact your child's teacher if you wish to celebrate your child's birthday at school.** They can make suggestions about nutritious treats or fun activities to honor a child's birthday. Birthday party invitations will only be distributed at school if an entire class/level is invited. Otherwise, parents/caregivers should mail birthday party invitations to their guests.

Board of Trustees:

A Board of Trustees governs Community School. The members of the Board generally meet monthly with members of the administrative staff. Board meetings are open for anyone to attend. A *Board of Trustees* notebook is located in the office. It contains a list of meeting dates and times, meeting minutes, a Board member directory, etc. Meeting dates and times are also listed in the *Quick Notes* calendar.

Bolivian Exchange Program:

Since 1987, several students from Santa Cruz, Bolivia have come to Roanoke annually to live and attend school with our Community School families and students. They generally stay for six to eight weeks. In the spring, a group of our middle school students generally travels to Santa Cruz, Bolivia, for 4 weeks with our Spanish teacher to complete the cultural exchange.

Book Fair:

A fundraising event held prior to winter break. Proceeds go to teachers for classroom or program use. See the school calendar and *Quick Notes* for details.

Bricks, Benches, and Bushes Campaign:

Community School's Bricks, Benches, and Bushes (BB&B) campaign benefits our ongoing building and landscaping initiatives. Supporters can purchase an engraved brick, a Community School park bench with plaque, or a bush or tree for the campus. For more information, please contact our Director of Development and Marketing.

Bus/Van Safety:

See Appendix II: Community School Bus Safety Requirements & Procedures

Celebration:

An event held on the last day of school to "celebrate" the school year.

Family Handbook

Cell Phones:

Parents may choose to provide a cell phone for their child. All cell phones must be turned OFF during the school day, during the Before School Program, and during the After School Program.

Child Abuse and Neglect:

Teachers and persons associated with or employed by any private organization responsible for the care, custody, and control of children are required by law to report suspected child abuse and neglect.

Class Name Skits:

Every class secretly creates a "class name" based on the school-wide theme. Name skits are created to reveal class names and are presented on a Friday morning during the beginning of the school year. Parents are invited to attend. See school calendar for dates.

Class Placement/Looping:

Community School uses multi-age groupings instead of grade levels. It takes time for teachers and students to develop meaningful relationships. When a child is in the same teacher's class for two or three years, the teacher has more of an opportunity to determine what "works" for that child and to foster the best learning situation. We refer to this as "looping." Class placement is based on the social, emotional, physical, and academic needs of the individual student and on benefits of group composition within each class.

Competition:

Competition can cause anxiety, selfishness, self-doubt, and poor communication. We do not encourage any kind of competition among students that leads one student to compare grades, grade levels, or test scores with those of another.

We want students to gain confidence by progressing academically, and we strive for each student to be challenged. We generally do not assign letter grades to a student's work unless they will receive high school credit for the work at another school requiring grades. Community School emphasizes noncompetitive/cooperative games and activities that require teamwork and develop a feeling of camaraderie.

Communication:

- ❖ If parents or students have questions or concerns about experiences at Community School, we want to know as soon as possible. Questions and concerns regarding the classroom should be shared with your child's teacher. Other questions should be directed as follows:
 - Tuition payments, billing, and account information: Business Manager
 - Donations, fundraising events and activities, and marketing: Director of Development & Marketing
 - Student records, enrollment, financial aid, and tuition contracts: Director of Admissions
 - Facilities, Before and After School programs, financial aid, and licensing: Administrative Director
 - General curriculum and school policies and employment: Executive Director

Family Handbook

- ❖ **Quick Notes:** Community School's newsletter, **Quick Notes**, is sent to the friends and families of Community School, via e-mail, every Tuesday. It can also be found on our website. Calendar reminders and announcements are included. Read **Quick Notes (QN)** regularly in order to be fully informed about activities at the school.
- ❖ **FYI's and Classroom Facebook Pages:** In order to update families on information relating to the classroom, teachers either regularly send home an FYI (For Your Information) newsletter, or they have created a classroom Facebook page that is updated regularly. See your child's teacher for more information about his/her method of communication.
- ❖ Our website is www.communityschool.net. It is filled with school related information: QN, school calendar, news and events, e-mail addresses for all staff members, student and parent resources pages, school closing/delays, etc.

Computer Use:

At Community School, students have access to many valuable instructional technology tools. Students and parents are required to read, sign and return the "Student's Rights & Responsibilities for Using Computers & Internet" form that is disseminated at the beginning of each school year.

Conferences & Progress Reports:

Mandatory parent/student/teacher conferences are scheduled four times a year to identify progress and set new goals. **Students are expected to attend these conferences** in order for them to indicate how they feel about their work and to help them focus on their individual strengths and on areas that need more attention. If additional conferences with a teacher or with the Director are desired, the parent, student, or teacher may request one at any time. A comprehensive written profile is sent home to the parent(s) at the end of each academic year. A copy of this profile becomes a part of the student's permanent file.

Discipline:

A primary goal of Community School is for all students to develop a caring attitude toward others and the world, to develop a sense of responsibility, and to learn self-discipline and effective decision-making. To assist students in their choices, we have one rule, known as "**The Big One**," which serves as a guiding principle:

Treat yourself, others, and the environment with care.

Teachers and students discuss this principle throughout the year, and we appreciate support from parents at home in reinforcing the same caring attitude. Problems that do occur will be handled with guidance techniques that help students maintain self-respect and inner control. Setting limits, helping students understand the reasons for them, and using sincere praise as a reward for making good choices are the primary guidance techniques used. We expect students to understand that lying, cheating, and stealing are not acceptable. Engaging in behaviors that could or do harm another student, physically or emotionally, are not acceptable. Damaging or mistreating the property of others or the school is another example

Family Handbook

of behavior that is clearly in conflict with "The Big One." Students and/or parents are responsible for replacing damaged or lost school property. A student's opinions and ideas will be encouraged in carrying out "The Big One" and in establishing consequences. Our goal is for discipline to be fair and consistent. *See Appendix I: Discipline Policy*

Dress Code:

- ❖ Students should dress in comfortable and appropriate clothes for an active school day.
- ❖ Sturdy shoes are needed for running and playing.
- ❖ Students should not wear clothing that is distracting, as deemed by the classroom teacher, to themselves or other students.
- ❖ Students will be outdoors in all seasons, except in extreme weather conditions. Our general guideline is to go outside for play whenever the temperature is deemed acceptable by the teaching faculty and administration.
- ❖ Students will go outside in light drizzle or snow and should dress accordingly.

Drop Off and Pickup:

- ❖ School begins at 8:45 a.m. Students may begin to arrive at 8:15 a.m. If a staff member is not present on the playground or driveway, **do not** drop your child off.
- ❖ School ends at 3:10 p.m.
- ❖ Drivers should be in line to drop off and pickup students at the end of the driveway close to school. Staff members will assist students to and from their vehicles.
- ❖ If you need to rearrange items in your car, talk with another parent, remove or add car seats, or simply wish to park and pick up your child, please use the parking area to the left of the driveway. Blocking traffic flow or blocking the fire lane is strictly prohibited. Please walk along the edge of the parking lot, not through the middle of the lot, during drop off and pickup times. If you have younger children, please hold their hands in the parking lot.
- ❖ Cell phone usage (including hands-free models) is prohibited in the drop-off and pick-up line.

*If there is a change in who is picking up your child, you must notify the office in advance.
We will not release your child unless we have heard directly from a parent. Proper
identification will be required of the person picking up your child.*

ALWAYS DRIVE SLOWLY AND WATCH OUT FOR CHILDREN!

Electronic Devices:

Community School does not allow personal electronic devices at school without the permission of the teacher. These items distract students and teachers and can be damaged or lost.

Emergency and Evacuation Plans and Policies:

CS has emergency and evacuation plans and policies to ensure the safety of students and staff. CS staff members are updated with procedures to ensure everyone's safety. Contact the Administrative Director for more information.

Family Handbook

Enrichment Classes/Specials:

Spanish, art, music, drama, and technology classes. (“specialists or enrichment teachers” = instructors of those subjects)

Enrollment:

A student’s enrollment in Community School can be terminated at the discretion of the Administrative or Executive Director. Reasons can include, but are not limited to: failure to comply with the tuition contract, student misconduct, or parent misconduct.

FYI’s:

Teachers may choose to use FYI’s (“For Your Information” paper newsletters) as their form of regular communication with parents about events, activities, and information about the classroom. Many teachers are now using classroom Facebook pages instead.

Fall Festival:

Fall Festival is a time-honored outdoor camping tradition that all students participate in during the month of October. It allows teaching faculty to get to know their students, and it allows students to engage in educational, team-building and problem-solving activities. See school calendar for dates.

Field Trips:

- ❖ Parents sign a "***Field Trip Permission Form***" as part of the Emergency Information Form at the beginning of each school year. Most classes take routine trips to the library, museums, and areas around town.
- ❖ Parents agree to pick up their child, at the field trip site, if it is deemed necessary by the school’s staff due to student misconduct while on the field trip.
- ❖ Teachers will keep parents informed about special trips via classroom *F.Y.I.’s*, Facebook pages, and/or *Quick Notes*. Teachers often need parents to drive on field trips.
- ❖ Taking a group of students on a field trip requires that the teacher(s) and parent drivers accept an extra burden of responsibility for the students' safety.
- ❖ ***Parent drivers must provide the school with proof of automobile insurance and a valid driver’s license.***
- ❖ ***Seat belts must be worn and securely fastened at all times.***
- ❖ ***Students seven (7) years and under MUST ride in a booster car seat.***

Financial Aid:

Community School offers need-based financial aid and uses the services provided by School and Student Service for Financial Aid, also referred to as SSS. Details about our financial program are available on the school website. Contact the Administrative Director or Director of Admissions for more information.

Family Handbook

Food Guidelines:

- ❖ "Fruit Break" (Snack) and Lunch: Students have two opportunities to eat daily, during fruit break (snack) and lunch. We want students to develop good eating habits. Students should bring a healthy snack such as fresh fruit or vegetables, crackers, yogurt, unsweetened cereal, cheese, etc. Students will be asked to save chips and cookies for part of their lunch.
 - Lunchboxes and containers should be labeled with the student's name.
 - Students are not allowed to share food.
 - All unused portions shall be discarded or returned home at the end of the day.
 - Food should be ready to eat. Teachers cannot cook or heat lunches.
 - If a student forgets to bring lunch, the teacher will provide something from the school kitchen.
- ❖ Candy and soft drinks are not to be brought to school.

Friday Groups:

Friday Groups are hands-on, exploratory electives for middle school students. These classes usually extend all day, each Friday, for five- to eight-week sessions. This allows time for field trips, guest speakers, internships, community service projects, and productions.

Fruit Break:

A morning break that allows students to have a healthy snack and play outside from 10:00-10:30 (Early Learner and Elementary) and 10:55-11:10 (Middle School).

Gatherings:

Community School's version of "Back to School Night." This is a parent-only event. Childcare is not provided. See school calendar for dates.

Grandparents & Special Friends:

We invite grandparents and/or special friends to visit with us and celebrate our students' success. See our school calendar for information on specific events.

HIV, AIDS, & Other Disabilities:

We are happy to accept students who have tested positive for HIV, who have AIDS, and/or who have other disabilities as long as we think we can provide for their needs as well as for the other students in their class. The school vigorously implements universal precautions.

Homework:

Homework can be an important part of children's learning time management skills and responsibility for their own work. Developmentally-appropriate homework will be assigned as determined by the classroom teachers. It is expected that homework will be completed in the time allotted in order for it to be beneficial. It is not intended that homework be a source of anxiety, frustration, or stress within the family. If questions arise about homework, students may want to call a classmate or check with their teacher the next morning.

Family Handbook

Illness:

- ❖ If a student is absent due to illness, please notify the office first thing in the morning.
- ❖ If a student becomes ill while at school, we will notify the parent, guardian, or emergency contact person.
- ❖ Parents should make arrangements to pick up their child as soon as possible.
- ❖ ***If you are not sure whether your child should attend school, please refer to Appendix III: Recommendations Regarding Illness.***

Immunization Policy:

Community School follows state law requiring documentation of full immunization or a notarized religious exemption form for every student. In the event of a local outbreak of a communicable illness for which parents have chosen to exempt their children from immunization, Community School may require those students to remain out of school until all danger of transmission has passed, even if that requires an extended absence from school. In those circumstances, parents are responsible for providing alternative care for their children, and there will be no reduction in the tuition owed to Community School for the required absence.

Interdisciplinary Learning:

Interdisciplinary learning is an approach that consciously applies methodology and language from more than one discipline to examine a central theme, issue, problem, or topic. This approach addresses social, emotional, physical, and cognitive goals. Issues and topics that are meaningful to the teachers and the students are important. Students need to be able to make sense of what they are learning and to connect the experiences in ways that lead to conceptual and life-long understanding.

Local Hero Award:

An individual award presented to a person or organization in the greater Roanoke area nominated for their humanitarian efforts. This special award program is presented by members of our middle school. Each recipient receives an art piece especially created by Community School students. The award is presented on the Friday prior to Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. See school calendar.

Looping/Class Placement:

Community School uses multi-age groupings instead of grade levels. It takes time for teachers and students to develop meaningful relationships. When a child is in the same teacher's class for two or three years, the teacher has a better opportunity to determine what "works" for that child and to foster the best learning environment. We refer to this as "looping." Class placement is based on the social, emotional, physical, and academic needs of the individual student and on the benefits of group composition within each class.

Lost and Found:

- ❖ Lost and found items are put in the big plastic storage closet beside the main office.
- ❖ Unclaimed items left at the end of December and June are laundered and donated to a charitable organization.

Family Handbook

Lunch Time:

12:15 pm – 12:45 p.m. for early learners and elementary classes

12:05 pm – 12:45 p.m. for middle school classes

Parents are welcome to join their child for lunch.

Medication Policy:

Medication cannot be disseminated or administered by Community School teachers or administrators. Students **may not** bring, consume, or share prescription or over-the-counter medications while on school property. The only allowable exceptions:

- Middle school teachers may receive verbal or written permission to administer over-the-counter pain relievers to middle school students in accordance to package directions.
- Parents must complete a medical authorization form authorizing their child to self-administer a rescue inhaler for asthma or insulin treatment for diabetes.
- Community School has trained staff to administer an emergency injection of epinephrine using an auto-injector device (epipen) and/or apply prescription topical ointment or cream.

Milk:

Parents may order milk (2%, skim, or chocolate) for their child. It is delivered daily at lunchtime. Call the office for more information.

Mission Statement:

Please read the Mission and Philosophy statement on our website through the link on the homepage at <http://www.communityschool.net/>.

Peaceable School:

Community School is committed to guiding students to become responsible for their own behavior and to transform conflicts into solutions in a peaceful manner.

Pets:

- ❖ Animals and pets are fascinating to children. We request that you contact your child's teacher ***in advance*** if you want to make arrangements for any pet visits.
- ❖ Pets must be properly restrained (leashed or caged when appropriate) while on campus.
- ❖ Notify your child's teacher if your child is allergic to a particular animal.
- ❖ Classes may elect to have a classroom pet with teacher approval.
- ❖ Community School students are not allowed to touch any dead or wild animal.

Pizza Day:

A special lunch program served on specified Wednesdays each month. Students and parents may order pizza (cheese or pepperoni) at \$1 per slice. Orders may be made in advance or on the specified day. See *Quick Notes* for dates.

Portfolios:

Portfolios are collections of each student's work and have been used throughout the history of Community School. Samples of work reflect core subjects and/or related interests. Portfolios are shared with parents on conference days.

Family Handbook

Re-Enrollment:

Re-enrollment forms are sent out in the spring for the upcoming school year. A \$200 non-refundable deposit is required. This deposit is credited toward tuition.

Referral Credit:

Community School families are eligible for a \$250 tuition credit for referring a new student who enrolls full time at CS. To qualify for the credit, you must submit a completed referral form or e-mail the referral to the Director of Admissions **before** the family has submitted an admissions application. If multiple current families refer the same student, the \$250 credit is divided evenly between the referring families. The credit will show up on your account in the semester that the new student enrolls.

Referral credits are not given for siblings of current students or for talking to prospective parents who are visiting CS if you did not previously refer those parents. That includes talking to prospective parents while you are a substitute teacher, volunteering at CS, or just hanging out on campus. Please note: Your referral will remain active for only two years. After that time, you will need to resubmit the form. Referral forms are available in the main office, on the website, and from the Director of Admissions.

Room Parent:

Room parents are parents or caregivers who assist the classroom teacher or school by coordinating special activities, programs, or services.

Safety and Injury Prevention:

- ❖ Community School is committed to the safety of all students.
- ❖ When students are outside, they are under the supervision of school staff.
- ❖ Several staff members are trained and certified in standard first aid and CPR.
- ❖ To prevent injuries, the school grounds are inspected on a regular basis. Specific attention is given to the condition of the playground equipment and surface around them.
- ❖ We review the accident log and accident forms to locate where recurring injuries take place. Community School will make any changes and improvements deemed necessary to insure the safety of all students.

School Hours:

7:00 a.m. - 8:15 a.m. Before School Program
8:15 a.m. - 8:45 a.m. Morning Drop Off
8:45 a.m. - 3:10 p.m. School Day
8:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Partial Day Option for Early Learners
3:10 p.m. - 3:45 p.m. Dismissal
3:45 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. After School Program

*OFFICE HOURS: 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Sexual Harassment:

No form of sexual harassment will be tolerated at Community School.

Family Handbook

Specials/Enrichment:

Spanish, art, music, drama, and technology classes (“specialists or enrichment teachers” = instructors of those subjects)

Staff Appreciation Day:

A day dedicated to “thank” the Community School staff, coordinated by room parents.

Strawberry Festival:

Our **Annual Community School Strawberry Festival** is held on the first weekend in May, in Elmwood Park in downtown Roanoke. This is a parent-driven event coordinated with the school staff. The **Strawberry Festival**, held the first Friday and Saturday in May, is our *major* annual fundraising event and the way we keep from sending our kids out into the community selling miscellaneous products. We, the staff and parents, contribute our time on their behalf. Our volunteers include parents, students, staff, board members, grandparents, alumni, friends of Community School, and more. **Strawberry Festival** requires an enormous number of volunteer hours.

Each parent is expected to volunteer for at least 12 hours: 4 hours for Baking Days, 4 hours for Berry Cleaning, 4 hours for Festival.

We need everyone to volunteer for this time-honored event to be a success.

Would you like to co-chair one of the many individual committees that make-up the festival?
Would you like to serve on a committee?

Vendors	Sponsorship	Public Relations	Baking Days
Large Orders	Berry Cleaning	Set-Up/Take Down	
Drink Booth	Ticket Sales	Food Booth	
Kid’s Games	Entertainment	Chocolate Dipped Berries	

Contact the Director of Development and Marketing or the Administrative Director for more information.

Tardy Policy

If a student is tardy ten (10) times within a school calendar year, a reminder letter will be sent home. If a student is tardy fifteen (15) times within a school calendar year, parents/caregivers will need to meet with the Executive Director. If a student is tardy twenty (20) times within a school calendar year, the Executive Director has the discretion to forcefully withdraw a student from Community School. Parents/caregivers will be responsible for the remainder of their financial contract, and attendance information will be forwarded to the child’s next school.

Family Handbook

Thanksgiving Art Show & Reception:

This school-wide event is held on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. See the school calendar for dates.

Theme:

Each year the faculty selects a theme that allows for students and staff, across the curriculum, to learn and share throughout the school year. It is a time-honored and award-winning tradition at Community School.

Toys:

- ❖ Toys are important to children. We ask that they be brought to school for "***Show and Share***" only. Unfortunately, toys from home are sometimes lost or damaged and are a distraction at school.
- ❖ Please keep electronic toys and equipment at home due to their value.
- ❖ Toy guns and knives are not allowed at school.

Transcripts:

Community School will copy and mail up to two (2) transcripts per student without charge. After two transcript requests, the parent/caregiver is required to pay \$5 per transcript at the time each request is made. Parents must complete and sign an "Authorization for Release/Exchange of Record Information" form before any set of transcripts will be copied and mailed. These forms can be found in the main office and the office of the Director of Admissions.

Tuition Payments:

- ❖ Payment options: cash or check
 - Two (2) installments due on July 20 and January 20
 - Ten (10) monthly payments July - April. (on the 20th of each month)
- ❖ A 7% administrative fee is charged for the monthly payments.
- ❖ Late Fees: \$100 for installment plan and \$25 per month for monthly plan.
- ❖ NOTE: A student's records will not be released until account is current.
- ❖ **See Appendix IV: Tuition Payment Policy**

Volunteering and Parent Participation:

- ❖ Community School welcomes parent volunteers and their participation at school.
- ❖ You may choose to do any of the following: helping in the classroom, driving on field trips, maintenance, painting, cleaning, recruiting, contributing money, serving on the Board, running workshops, organizing and working on all aspects of the Strawberry Festival.
- ❖ Please contact our Director of Development and Marketing and your child's teacher to learn about our volunteer opportunities.

Weapons:

Guns, knives, or other weapons are not allowed at school. Violation will result in student suspension. ***See Appendix I: "Discipline Policy"***

Family Handbook

Weather/School Delays & Closings:

- ❖ The Administrative and Executive Directors determine inclement weather days based on local weather information and the ability of our staff to get to school safely.
- ❖ We use *School Announcement*, a web-based program that allows you to receive an email, voice, and text message notification of our school closings and delays. These notifications are sent to the contact information we have on file for each parent. If you would like to update your contact information and choose which phone numbers and email addresses that you would like notified, please contact the Administrative Director (michi@communityschool.net).
- ❖ You can call the school number (563-5036) and listen to the recorded message for up-to-date information on weather-related delays and closings.
- ❖ We also notify WSLs-TV10 and WDBJ-7 of CS closing and delayed opening information.
- ❖ The weather can change over a short period of time. An early decision to delay school may result in a closing. Watch for alerts, call the school, or listen to the radio and TV for up-to-date information.
- ❖ When we delay the opening of school, there will be no Before School Program.

Withdrawal:

Parents are obligated to pay tuition for the semester or entire year and no refunds or deductions will be allowed for absence, withdrawal, or any other inability to attend.

Refer to Appendix IV: Tuition Payment Policy and your Community School Tuition Contract for details and withdrawal penalties.

**Community School
Family Handbook
Appendix**

- I. Community School Discipline Policy
- II. Community School Bus Safety Requirements & Procedures
- III. Community School Tuition Payment Policy
- IV. Community School Recommendations Regarding Illness
- V. Virginia Department of Health's Communicable Disease Reference Chart

Family Handbook

Community School Discipline Policy

(Effective 1/26/07)

The following lists provide examples of offenses and their consequences. They apply to on-campus, off-campus/school-related, and, in the case of Level Three offenses, off-campus/non-school related offenses. The lists are not necessarily all-inclusive and, therefore, teachers and the Executive Director are not limited in application because an item was not on the list. A student whose general attitude and conduct demonstrate an unwillingness to follow the principles that govern the school, as determined by school officials, may be dismissed from the Community.

Level One

Teacher Admonition

(Consequences include, but are not limited to: time out, letter of apology, peer mediation, study hall, loss of fruit break or recess, community service)

Cursing/Inappropriate Language
Failure to do Assignments
Minor Disruptions
Aggressive Behavior (including, but not limited to, slapping, hitting, punching, biting)
Excessive Tardiness/Absences
Teasing of Another Student
Pushing/Unwarranted Touching/Violation of a Community Member's Personal Space
Community School Parent/Family Handbook Violation
Insubordination
Cheating or Plagiarism

Level Two

Office Referral/Suspension

(Consequences include, but are not limited to: discipline report sent to parents & teachers, loss of field trip or other off-campus privileges, meeting with parents & teachers, suspension)

Repeated Level One Offenses
Bullying
Threatening a Community Member
Aggressive Behavior (including, but not limited to, slapping, hitting, punching, biting)
Defacing or Destroying School Property
Defacing or Destroying a Community Member's Property
Instigating a Conflict
Dismissed From Class/Major Disruption
Deliberate Disobedience/Insubordination/Disrespect

Family Handbook

Level Two/Three*

*Dependent Upon Age of Child and Severity of Offense

Office Referral/Suspension or Suspension/Expulsion

(Consequences include, but are not limited to: discipline report sent to parents & teachers, loss of field trip or other off-campus privileges, meeting with parents & teachers, suspension, expulsion)

Defacing/Destroying School Property
Defacing/Destroying a Community Member's Property
Stealing
Sexual Harassment

Level Three*

*On or off-campus offenses

Suspension/Expulsion

(Consequences may include, but are not limited to suspension or expulsion)

Repeated Level Two Offenses
Striking a Teacher
Distribution or Use of Drugs (over-the-counter, prescription, or illegal)/Tobacco/Alcohol
Coming to School Under the Influence of Drugs/Alcohol
Fighting
Bringing a Weapon/Incendiary Device to School
Tampering With a Fire Alarm/Extinguisher
Setting a False Fire Alarm
Conviction of a Felony

Family Handbook

Community School Bus Safety Requirements and Procedures

Please read and review the following bus safety requirements and procedures with your child. It is important that all riders understand and adhere to them.

1. All riders must wear **a seat belt at all times** and they must be worn properly. State law requires that every rider be buckled before the bus can move. Failure to wear a seat belt can result in loss of field trip privileges.
2. All riders seven (7) and under must ride in a booster seat. The school will provide them.
3. Riders must stay in their seats at all times. The only time that a rider can change seats is when the bus is parked and the driver has given permission.
4. If there is a problem with another rider on the bus, it needs to be settled quietly. If this is not possible, the rider must ask for assistance from the driver.
 - Shouting and hitting will not be tolerated as ways to solve differences.
5. The noise level cannot be so loud that it distracts the driver. The driver has the authority to ask for quiet and, if necessary, the bus may be stopped until the rider or noise settles down.
7. For safety purposes, students may not always sit where they want.
 - Weight distribution is very important when riding the bus.

All riders need to understand that riding the bus is a privilege. Bus safety is paramount. Initially, problems will be handled between the driver and rider(s). If problems continue to occur, the rider(s) will be referred to the school administrator and/or the director and parents may be contacted. It may be necessary to temporarily revoke bus privileges to a rider in the interest of safety.

Community School Tuition Payment Policy

Tuition may be paid in several ways; one payment, two payments, and monthly payments. We accept cash or check payments. Tuition payments are due on the 20th of each month. Refer to the “*Terms of Contract*” on your tuition contract. If you have questions regarding your account, contact the school’s Business Manager.

Here are basic guidelines established with regard to delinquent accounts.

1. Any payment received after the last day of the month will be charged a late fee: \$25 monthly payment plan or \$100 semester payment plan.
2. If you are two (2) months in arrears, you will be contacted by the Business Manager and/or Administrative Director. You will be asked to bring your account current or submit an alternative payment plan. The alternative payment plan must be in writing and be approved by the Administrative Director. The alternative payment plan is covered by the same “*Terms of Contract*” of the original tuition contract.
3. If the account remains delinquent and no solution to the problem is possible within the current semester, the student will not be allowed to continue attending Community School. You will be contacted by the Administrative Director. **The account will be turned over to our collection attorney. You will be responsible for the attorney fee of an additional 25% of the outstanding balance due on the date the account is turned over for collection.**
4. In the event that a student is withdrawn from Community School, the parent or guardian (who signed the tuition contract) continues to be responsible for unpaid tuition and fees.
The **penalties** for withdrawal:
 - a. Withdrawal up to the first day of school = fee of \$600.00
 - b. Withdrawal from the first day of school up to the start of second semester = full payment of first semester plus a withdrawal fee of \$1,200.00
 - c. Withdrawal from the start of the second semester through the last day of school = full payment of annual tuition

Family Handbook

Community School Recommendations Regarding Illness

Community School follows the guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that recommend that children with the following conditions or symptoms not attend school:

- Persistent abdominal pain (more than two hours) or intermittent pain with other signs and symptoms.
- Fever within a 24-hour period, when accompanied by behavior changes or other symptoms such as a sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, etc. Fever means a temperature of 100 degrees F or higher.
 - Diarrhea-frequent, runny, watery stools within a 24-hour period.
 - Vomiting. Child should remain at home 24 hours after last episode of vomiting.
 - Body rash with fever or a rash that might be deemed as contagious.
 - Sore throat with fever and swollen glands or mouth sores with drooling.
 - Eye discharge-thick mucus or pus draining from the eye.
 - Severe coughing with the child getting red or blue in the face or making a high-pitched whooping sound after coughing.
 - Scabies or head lice when apparently not being treated.
- Signs of possible severe illness such as irritability, unusual tiredness, or neediness that compromises a teacher's ability to care for other children.
- Uncontrolled coughing or wheezing, continuous crying, or difficulty breathing.
 - Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
 - Chickenpox until all sores have dried and crusted (usually six days).
 - Mumps, until nine days after an onset of parotid gland swelling.
 - Measles, until four days after an onset of rash.
 - Rubella, until six days after an onset of rash.
 - Tuberculosis, until an appropriate health care provider or health official certifies that the child is in appropriate therapy and can attend care.

Sources: *Caring for Other Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards*. Second Edition, 2002.