



COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Family Handbook

Updated 08/24

7815 Williamson Road

Roanoke, VA 24019

540-563-5036

CommunitySchool.net

Accidents and Injuries:

- Serious accidents will be reported to parents/caregivers 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/caregivers 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 Care (ASC):

- Community School's licensed After School Care provides supervised play, activities, and snacks for students from 3:45 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. M-Th and 3:45 p.m. -5:30 p.m. on Fridays.
- ***There is a separate fee for this service, billed monthly.***
- ***All*** students at school after 3:45 p.m. will be charged for ASC unless they are participating in an extra-curricular club or activity.
- ***Students should be picked up no later than 6:00 p.m. (5:30 p.m. on Fridays).***
- If parents/caregivers are unavoidably delayed, please telephone the school cell #540-400-1922.
- This service may be discontinued if payment falls two months in arrears or if a child's behavior in ASC is determined to be disruptive or dangerous.
- To ensure adequate staffing, we are limiting the number of students in Before School and After School programs. **Families are required to register in advance to reserve a spot for each child.** Please register on our [Current Families page](#). Contact [Patrick Critzer](#) at patrickc@communityschool.net with questions about our Before School Care or After School Care programs.
- ***A reminder for working parents/caregivers: The cost of this childcare program may be tax deductible. Please consult your tax advisor.***

Annual Fund and Gifts:

- Community School asks parents/caregivers, teachers, administrative staff, trustees, alumni, grandparents, and local businesses to support our school through 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.
- Like all independent schools, tuition does not fully cover the cost of a child's education. **Annual Fund Appeal** participation from trustees and families 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 Community Rewards program](#), [Box Tops for Education](#), classroom gifts, employer support and matching gifts, donations of equipment and supplies, etc. [Learn more about ways to give on our website](#). (Communityschool.net/give)

Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy:

- Community School strives to create an environment that is safe and welcoming to all students, staff, and community members. Community School prohibits discrimination or harassment against students, staff or others on the basis of race, culture, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or any other characteristics protected under applicable federal or state law on campus or at school sponsored events.
- Community School takes very seriously incidents involving disparaging remarks (slurs) against other students, families, staff, or community members. A slur is derogatory speech, threats, verbal abuse or profanity that makes reference to real or perceived characteristics of others including but not limited to the ones listed in the above paragraph. A slur can also take the form of rumors, jokes, notes, stories, drawings, pictures or gestures.

Arts Festival:

- Held in Spring, Arts Festival is a school-wide collaboration of art, music, and drama based on the school-wide theme. All students participate in some way. See the school calendar for dates.

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 years 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, they 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 at school on time each day. **School begins at 8:45 a.m.**
- If a student arrives at school after the 8:45 bell, parents/caregivers should walk their student up the driveway and check in with the main office. If the child is six years old or younger, the parent or guardian will need to accompany the child to their 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.
- 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 respect families' decisions to travel, 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.

Before School Care (BSC):

- Before School Care is available from 7:00 - 8:15 a.m. and is held in room 103. Parents/caregivers are required to walk their students to Before School. **Failure to do so may result in the loss of Before School Care 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. BSC is available for use as needed. Advance signup is requested. ***There is a separate fee for this service, billed monthly.***

(The) Big One:

- Our guiding and central rule is called the Big One: ***Treat yourself, others, and the environment with care.***
 - From it, we learn to take personal responsibility and to become accountable for our actions.
 - Students learn that diversity strengthens our community and that differences enrich our perspective. We learn to respect others' differences and not discriminate based on race, culture, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, physical appearance or disability.
 - We are committed to multicultural, nonsexist education that promotes understanding and acceptance.

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 appropriate 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.

Bricks, Benches, and Boxwoods Campaign:

- Community School's Bricks, Benches, and Boxwoods (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 at development@communityschool.net.

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 and to honor our graduating Seminarian students. All families are encouraged to attend.

Cell Phone/electronic devices to include tablets or laptops:

- Students must keep their cell phone OFF and in a backpack during the school day, unless a teacher or administrator has given the student permission for its use.
- Students can connect only one electronic device to the school network.
- Cell phones, electronic devices, tablets or laptops may not be used to transfer or record the voice of anyone but the user. Images may also not be transferred or recorded.
- Communication from parents/caregivers to the school (i.e. change in pick-up or schedule) should be sent to a Community School email address or phoned in to the main office.
- Students should not use their phones, electronic devices, tablets or laptops *without permission from a teacher* to text or email parents/caregivers.
- Community School and its employees shall not be financially or legally responsible for lost, stolen or damaged phones. Community School shall not be responsible for the illegal or improper use of cell phones if parents/caregivers choose to have their child possess a cell phone at school. **The responsibility for cell phone, electronic device, tablet or laptop possession at school rests entirely with the parent/guardian and the student.** Violations of these rules may result in loss of the device until a parent can pick it up, loss of privilege to have a device at school and/or a more severe consequence (refer to Discipline Policy in the Family Handbook). Illegal use of electronic devices may be referred to law enforcement.

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 Reveal:

- Every class collaborates to secretly create a "class name" based on the school-wide theme. The name is revealed during the beginning of the school year. Check Quick Notes for your child's class name.

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.

Communication:

- If parents/caregivers 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: [Director of Development](#)
 - Marketing, website, social media: [Director of 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](#)
- **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 Sycamore under "Headline News." Calendar reminders and announcements are included. Read **Quick Notes (QN)** regularly in order to be fully informed about activities at the school.
- **FYI's, Google Classroom, and email:** In order to update families on information relating to the classroom, teachers either regularly send home communication to families. See your child's teacher for more information about his/her method of communication.
- Our website is [CommunitySchool.net](#). It is filled with school related information: QN, school calendar, news and events, e-mail addresses for all staff members. Visit the [Current Families](#) page for links to important information, student and parent resources pages, school closing/delays, etc.
- **Sycamore Schools Family Portal:** Sycamore is the student information system used by Community School staff and parents/caregivers. See [Sycamore](#) section for more information.

Computer Use:

- At Community School, students have access to many valuable instructional technology tools. Middle school students and parents/caregivers 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 three 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. Written rubrics are completed twice a year (mid-year and at the end of each academic year)

and shared with parents/caregivers. A copy of this student profile becomes a part of the student's permanent file.

The Coop:

- The Coop is Community School's cooperative partnership between family members and the school designed to support the teachers and staff. Parents/caregivers are able to get involved in many ways including offering their time, talent or by making donations. If you would like to join or learn more about it please contact our parent organizer Jessica Hilbish at jlh24018@gmail.com.

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 [See \(The\) Big One section for more](#)
- We believe that discipline is most effective when aligned with the appropriate developmental stage of children. We understand that children grow and learn at different rates, and our approach to discipline reflects this understanding. While we have established guidelines to promote a safe and positive environment, we also recognize that flexibility is sometimes necessary. Every child is unique, and situations may arise that require us to adapt our approach to best meet the needs of the individual child.
- While we maintain consistent expectations for behavior, we also take into account each child's developmental level and the context of the situation. By doing so, we aim to help each child grow in a manner that is respectful of their individual journey.
- We appreciate support from parents/caregivers in reinforcing our expectations at home. We expect students to understand that:
 - Engaging in behaviors that could or do harm to another student, physically or emotionally, are not acceptable. Discrimination, harassment or slurs based on an individual's characteristics or differences will not be tolerated. [See Anti-Discrimination and Harassment section for more](#)
 - Lying, cheating, and stealing are not acceptable.
 - Damaging or mistreating the property of others or the school is not acceptable. Students and/or parents/caregivers are responsible for replacing damaged or lost school property.
- Our goal is to support positive change and resolution rather than punishment. While we do have consequences for behavior, these are designed to be constructive and help children learn from their actions. Consequences are used as a means to reinforce expectations, promote self-awareness, and foster a positive learning environment. Please see [Appendix I: Discipline Policy](#) for more information.

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 Pick-up:

- 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 driveway, **do not** drop your child off.
- School ends at 3:10 p.m. After School Care begins at 3:45.
- Drivers should be in line to drop off and pick up 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 /pick-up line.
- ***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. Please see information on cellphone, electronic device, tablet and laptop use.

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.

Enrichment Classes:

- Foreign language, 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/caregivers about events, activities, and information about the classroom.

Fall Festival:

- Fall Festival is a time-honored outdoor tradition that all students participate in during late September or early 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.

FERPA:

- Please see [addendum V](#) for the notification of parent and student rights under The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. For the purposes of FERPA, Community School understands school officials and a legitimate educational interest to include the teachers, educational aides, therapists and counselors who work with the student, as well as the administrative staff. School officials may also include the school's attorneys and members of the executive committee of the Community School Board of Trustees.

Field Trips:

- Parents/caregivers 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/caregivers 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/caregivers informed about special trips via classroom *F.Y.I.*'s, emails, and/or *Quick Notes*.
- Teachers often need parents/caregivers 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 under the age of eight years old MUST ride in a booster or safety seat.**
- **Caregivers who chaperone overnight field trips will need to pass a background check.**

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.

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, filling snack. Candy and soft drinks should not be part of their lunch.
- Lunch boxes and containers should be labeled with the student's name.
- Students are not allowed to share food due to allergies.
- 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.

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. This is considered an integral part of their academic program.

Fruit Break:

- A morning break that allows students to have a healthy snack and play outside from 10:00-10:30 (Preschool and Elementary) and 10:40-11:00 (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 for the different levels.

Grandparents & Special Friends:

- We welcome grandparents and/or special friends to visit with us and celebrate our students' success. See our school calendar for information on specific events and be sure to include contact information in the Family Survey distributed each fall.

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.

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/caregivers 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 IV](#) recommendations regarding illness including Covid.***
- Click [here](#) for the latest CDC guidelines on Covid precautions and isolation guidelines.

Immunization Policy:

- Community School follows state law requiring documentation of full immunization or a medical or notarized religious exemption form for every student annually. In the event of a local outbreak of a communicable illness for which parents/caregivers 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/caregivers 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.

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; this process is known 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.

Lunch Time:

- 12:15 pm – 12:45 p.m. for preschool and elementary classes
12:40 pm – 1:10 p.m. for middle school classes
- Parents/caregivers 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 with package directions.
- Parents/caregivers 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.

Mission Statement:

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

Non-Graded Instruction

- We embrace a non-graded approach to education, which focuses on the individual growth and development of each student rather than traditional letter grades or numerical scores. This

method allows us to create a learning environment where children are encouraged to explore, take risks, and develop a deep understanding of the material at their own pace.

- See the [Assessment](#) section for more information on how progress is monitored.

Pets:

- 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/caregivers may order pizza (cheese or pepperoni) at \$2 per slice. Orders may be made on the specified day.

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/caregivers on conference days.

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/caregivers who are visiting CS if you did not previously refer those parents/caregivers. That includes talking to prospective parents/caregivers 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.

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 ensure the safety of all students.

School Hours:

- 7:00 a.m. - 8:15 a.m. Before School Care
- 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. - 1:00 p.m. Partial Day Option for Preschool
- 3:10 p.m. - 3:45 p.m. Dismissal
- 3:45 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. (Fridays 5:30 p.m.) After School Care
- *OFFICE HOURS: 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Strawberry Festival:

- Our **Annual Community School Strawberry Festival** is held on the first Friday and Saturday of May, at Elmwood Park in downtown Roanoke. This is a parent-driven event coordinated with the school staff. The **Strawberry Festival** is our *major* annual fundraising event. We do this in place of smaller ongoing fundraisers such as selling wrapping paper, raffle tickets, chocolates etc. Staff and parents/caregivers contribute time on behalf of our students. Our volunteers include parents/caregivers, students, staff, board members, grandparents, alumni, friends of Community School, and more. **Strawberry Festival** requires an enormous number of volunteer hours. If you are interested in chairing a committee, please contact us at [Development CS](#) .
- Each parent or caregiver is expected to volunteer at least 12 hours towards the festival. There are many opportunities throughout the planning process.

Sycamore Schools Family Portal

- Sycamore is the student information system used by Community School staff and parents/caregivers. Through Sycamore parents/caregivers can:
 - Update medical forms and other documents
 - Schedule student conferences
 - View Quick Notes, the school calendar and other important communications from Administration
 - Access re-enrollment forms
 - View student rubrics and transcripts

Tardy Policy

- If a student is tardy ten (10) times within a school calendar year, a reminder letter may be sent home. If a student is tardy fifteen (15) times within a school calendar year, parents/caregivers may 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.

Thanksgiving Art Show & Reception:

- This school-wide event is held the week of 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 tradition at Community School.

Toys:

- We ask that toys only 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 weapons are not allowed at school.

Transcripts:

- Parents/caregivers must complete and sign a written authorization for the release or exchange of record information before Community School will release transcripts/student record information. Release forms are available from the admissions office. Transcripts will be sent via email, fax or USPS. Community School will copy and mail up to two (2) paper copies of transcripts per student without charge. After two paper transcript requests, the parent/caregiver is required to pay \$5 per paper transcript at the time each request is made.

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 the account is current.
- [See Appendix III: 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, running workshops, organizing and working on all aspects of the Strawberry Festival.
- Please contact our Director of Development to learn more about how you can be of assistance.

Weapons:

- Guns, knives, or other weapons are not allowed at school. Violation will result in student suspension. [See Appendix I: "Discipline Policy"](#)

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 BrightArrow, a web-based program that allows you to receive a 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 that you would like notified, please contact the Administrative Director, Patrick Critzer at patrick@communityschool.net.
- You can call the school number (540-563-5036) and listen to the recorded message for up-to-date information on weather-related delays and closings.
- On delayed opening days, classes will begin at 10 am with drop-off starting at 9:45 am.
- The weather can change over a short period of time. An early decision to delay school may result in a closing. Watch for alerts or call the school for up-to- date information.
- When we delay the opening of school, there will be no Before School Program.

Withdrawal:

- Parents/caregivers 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 III: Tuition Payment Policy and your Community School Tuition Contract](#) for details and withdrawal penalties.***

Appendix I

Community School Discipline Policy

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 Community School.

LEVEL ONE

HANDLED AT THE CLASSROOM LEVEL

(Consequences include, but are not limited to: space to take a break , written reflection, peer mediation, study hall, loss of fruit break or recess with peers, 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 OR SUSPENSION

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

- Repeated Level One offenses
- Bullying (Targeting a student with repeated negative or unwanted behavior)
 - on campus
 - on social media
 - in text messages or emails
- 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/dismitted From class/Major Disruption
- Deliberate disobedience/Insubordination/Disrespect

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/caregivers & teachers, loss of field trip or other off-campus privileges, meeting with parents/caregivers & teachers, suspension, expulsion)

- Defacing/destroying school property
- Defacing/destroying a community member's property
- Stealing
- Discrimination, harassment or slurs against students, staff or others on the basis of race, culture, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or any other characteristics protected under applicable federal or state law.

LEVEL THREE

(On or off campus offenses)

SUSPENSION OR 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

Appendix II

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.
5. Shouting and hitting will not be tolerated as ways to solve differences.
6. 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/caregivers may be contacted. It may be necessary to temporarily revoke bus privileges to a rider in the interest of safety.

Appendix III

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 due 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 in the amount of 25% of the principal balance due at the time the account is turned over for collection. You will also be responsible for interest at the rate of 12% from the date of delinquency.**
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

Appendix IV

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 the 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.

Click [here](#) for the latest CDC guidelines on Covid precautions and isolation.

Appendix V

Notification of Parent and Student Rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents/caregivers and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day Community School receives a request for access.
- Parents/caregivers or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the Executive Director or Director of Admissions a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.
- Parents/caregivers or eligible students who wish to ask Community School to amend their child's or their education record should write to the Executive Director or Director of Admissions, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. The criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest must be set forth in the school's or school district's annual notification for FERPA rights. A school official typically includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
- Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another

school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school or school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request or the disclosure is initiated by the parent or eligible student.

- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the [School] to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland
Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202

- See the list below of the disclosures that elementary and secondary schools may make without consent.
 - FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in § 99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, § 99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure.
- Parents/caregivers and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents/caregivers or the eligible student -
 - To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in § 99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(J) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(3) are met. (§ 99.31(a)(1))
 - To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of § 99.34. (§ 99.31(a)(2))
 - To authorized representatives of the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency (SEA) in the parent or eligible student's State. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf, if applicable requirements are met. (§§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
 - In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the

- conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to § 99.38. (§ 99.31(a)(5))
 - To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction, if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(6))
 - To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§ 99.31(a)(7))
 - To parents/caregivers of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8))
 - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(9))
 - To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§ 99.31(a)(10))
 - Information the school has designated as "directory information" if applicable requirements under § 99.37 are met. (§ 99.31(a)(11))
 - To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L))
 - To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(K))