

# Student & Family Handbook

Creative Minds International  
Public Charter School  
School Year 2022–23

(202) 588-0370 • [creativemindspcs.org](https://creativemindspcs.org)

3700 North Capitol Street NW #217  
Sherman Building  
Washington, DC 20011

# Table of Contents

[Welcome](#)

[Creative Minds International Public Charter School](#)

[Mission](#)

[Philosophy](#)

[Governance / Board of Trustees](#)

[Open Meeting Policy](#)

[International Program](#)

[Fieldwork Education: International Early Years, Primary Years & Middle Years Curricula](#)

[Inclusive Education](#)

[Differentiated Instruction](#)

[Special Education Services](#)

[Technology Integration](#)

[English-Learners Program](#)

[School Information](#)

[Absences](#)

[COVID Mitigation Strategies](#)

[Admissions and Enrollment](#)

[Creative Minds' My School DC Lottery Policies](#)

[Assessments](#)

[Extended Creative Day](#)

[Birthdays & Other Celebrations](#)

[Calendar](#)

[Closings](#)

[Contacting Students During School Hours](#)

[Middle School Cell Phone Policy](#)

[Creative Families Association](#)

[Dress Code](#)

[Early Dismissals & Appointments](#)

[Elevators](#)

[Emergencies](#)

[Family Conferences](#)

[Family Vacations](#)

[Field Trips](#)

[Grievance Policy & Procedure](#)

[Informal Complaint](#)

[Formal Grievance](#)

[Resolution of a Formal Grievance](#)

[Appeal of a Formal Grievance](#)

[Prohibition Against Retaliation](#)

[Additional Grievance Resources](#)

[Health](#)

[Requirements](#)

[Illness](#)

[Injury](#)

[Medications](#)

[Head Lice](#)

[Food Allergies](#)

[Medical Conditions](#)

[Hours of Operation](#)

[Lost & Found](#)

[Meals](#)

[Breakfast](#)

[Lunch: School Provided](#)

[Enrolling in Paid School Lunch](#)

[Cancellations and Withdrawals](#)

[Meal Charge Policy](#)

[Questions or Concerns about School-provided Meals](#)

[Lunch: Brought from Home](#)

[Benefits of Applying for Free and Reduced-Price Meals](#)

[Nut-free School Policy](#)

[Outdoors & Recess Policy](#)

[Parking & Drop-off Procedures](#)

[Arrival](#)

[Dismissal](#)

[Families Whose Children Have Different Dismissal Times](#)

[Students Walking Home](#)

[Early Release](#)

[Personal Items, Toys & Electronic Devices](#)

[Safety & Security](#)

[Tardiness](#)

[Visits & Observations](#)

[Volunteerism](#)

[Wellness](#)

[Safety & Discipline](#)

[Conscious Discipline](#)

[A Restorative Response to Misbehavior](#)

[Disciplinary Procedures for Students with Disabilities](#)

[Parental Rights & Responsibilities](#)

[Suspension & Expulsion](#)

[Long-term Suspensions & Expulsions](#)

[Appeals Process](#)

[Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy](#)

[Objectives & Purpose](#)

[Definition of Bullying](#)

[Prohibition against Bullying](#)

[Reporting Bullying Concerns](#)

[Reporting Incidents of Bullying or Retaliation](#)

[Investigating Incidents of Bullying](#)

[Consequences of Bullying & Retaliation](#)

[Appeals](#)

## [School Policies](#)

[Attendance](#)

[Child Family Services Agency Reporting](#)

[Children & Youth in Transition \(Homelessness Policy\)](#)

[Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#)

[Nondiscrimination & Antiharassment Policy](#)

[Students with Disabilities Nondiscrimination Policy](#)

[Providing False Information: Penalties](#)

## [Family Involvement & Communication](#)

## [Appendices](#)

[APPENDIX 1: Curriculum](#)

[APPENDIX 2: Extended Creative Day](#)

[APPENDIX 3: School Calendar](#)

[APPENDIX 4: Creative Families Association](#)

[APPENDIX 5: QR Codes and Links to Forms and Documents](#)

[APPENDIX 6: Discipline Chart](#)

[APPENDIX 7: Leadership & Administration](#)



# Welcome

Dear Creative Minds Families:

Welcome to the 2022–23 school year! Ten years ago, in the fall of 2012, Creative Minds first opened its doors. Back then, we were a much smaller community, but our focus was the same: offering an inclusive, holistic, international program that respects the integrity of each and every student.

This year we will be celebrating our tenth anniversary with special events and even a documentary about our school. The anniversary’s theme is “Creativity Takes Courage,” which speaks to the innovative ways that our staff and teachers embrace diversity and nurture a community where all students can learn and grow.

Also this year we will be recommitting to our roots. Did you know that Creative Minds is one of only two public schools in the United States that implement the international curricula from Fieldwork Education? Professional development will involve a deep dive into the International Early Years, Primary Years, and Middle Years curricula.

A reengagement with our strategic plan, which was developed before the COVID-19 pandemic, is also happening this school year. Central to the plan is a graduate profile—the skills and traits we will have developed in our students by the time they graduate, so that they’re ready for high school and beyond. The profile states that Creative Minds graduates will be able to

- build warm, strong relationships across racial and socioeconomic lines of difference that are inclusive, empathetic, and kind;
- seek to authentically learn about the world around them and value diverse traditions and cultures;
- see problems as opportunities to design creative solutions that improve the lives of others; and
- possess the foundational academic and self-advocacy skills to own their future learning.

This graduate profile will guide our work with all students, from our youngest learners to our 8th-graders. In middle school, the profile means continuing with our rigorous program, with its emphasis on preparation for high school and on ensuring, as our mission states, that students go out into the world with “the mindset, skills, creativity,



and commitment to equity essential in becoming globally aware and independently minded citizens.”

We are also making a deep commitment to literacy this school year with special efforts designed to help students who may have missed some skills during the pandemic to get caught up and learn new ways to create educational opportunities that will meet ALL of our students where they are academically.

I’m excited for August 29, the first day of school, when I get to say hello to returning community members and meet the new families and students who are joining us for the first time. I’ll be in front of the school building during arrival, ready for high-fives with our amazing students. See you then!

Sincerely,  
*Chuck Jackson*  
Executive Director

# Creative Minds International Public Charter School

## Mission

To cultivate within ALL of our students the mindset, skills, creativity, and commitment to equity essential in becoming globally aware and independently minded citizens.

## Philosophy

Creative Minds International Public Charter School embraces an inclusive and child-centered approach to education that respects the integrity of each and every student. We believe in the importance of meeting the educational requirements of students with a diversity of backgrounds and learning profiles, with the goal of nurturing each child's engagement and skills so they can achieve their personal and academic goals. We believe that children's progress in key social and cognitive developmental milestones is a prerequisite to academic success.

To implement our inclusive vision of education, our international curriculum and teachers' professional development are based on the latest research on child development and education neuroscience.

## Governance / Board of Trustees

The DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB) granted the charter to operate Creative Minds and oversees our activities. The school's charter agreement and DC Charter Law establish all of Creative Minds' legal obligations.

Creative Minds is governed by an all-volunteer board of trustees that includes parents and persons with no other direct relationship to our school. The board meets at least six times a year, and may also meet on an ad hoc basis if appropriate. The full and current list of Creative Minds Board of Trustees members is [on our website](#).

## Open Meeting Policy

The board's overall objective is to conduct school business in a transparent manner; many board documents, including financial statements, are available for viewing online. Creative Minds International is required to hold open board meetings, per the DC Open Meetings Act. We publish a meeting calendar to our website and send notifications of meetings, via ParentSquare, to our community at least two business days before the scheduled meeting. The board may hold closed-to-the-public executive sessions to discuss personnel issues, awards, or other matters of a confidential nature. This meeting schedule complies with Creative Minds' bylaws, which specify that there shall be at least six meetings of the board each year. Members of the Creative Minds community who wish to contact the board are welcome to do so at any time by sending an email to [board@cmipcs.org](mailto:board@cmipcs.org).

## International Program

Creative Minds International offers an education model that promotes high levels of engagement in learning with the goal of-maximizing each child's learning opportunities, taking into account their current skill levels and depth of understanding. Our program includes a social-emotional and international curriculum, which creates a positive and inclusive environment for all members of the school community.

## Fieldwork Education: International Early Years, Primary Years & Middle Years Curricula

To fulfill our mission of preparing students for success in a global society, we implement the holistic, research-based framework of the International Early Years Curriculum (IEYC), Primary Curriculum (IPC), and Middle Years Curriculum (IMYC), developed by Fieldwork Education for students ages three to 14. The unique international, project- and arts-based curricula provide teachers a framework with which to differentiate and individualize instruction and tap into students' unique strengths while supporting their areas of growth.

The learning cycle embedded in the IEYC, IPC, and IMYC provides opportunities to integrate students' interests and experiences in thematic units that promote deep engagement in learning. These curricula are designed to develop personal, academic, and international learning goals.

For additional details on each curriculum please see [Appendix 1](#).

## Inclusive Education

Creative Minds' unique program is based on an inclusive philosophy of equitable education and a holistic pedagogical approach. We celebrate the wisdom of diverse learning profiles and cultural backgrounds, and thoughtfully design opportunities into every school day for students to play together, work together, collaborate, listen, empathize, and discuss their ideas.

As many studies, such as the Great British Diversity Experiment, have shown, all students benefit from learning in a diverse community, and at Creative Minds we also find this to be true. Inclusion encourages our community members to be more authentic and to contribute in a more creative way. The possibility of making new connections dramatically increases, and students are more willing to analyze and assess ideas on the basis of merit. Please see below for some of the ways that Creative Minds lives out its commitment to inclusive education.

## Differentiated Instruction

We emphasize differentiated and individualized instruction. This is central to our inclusion program and ensures that we support students who perform on, above, and below grade level. Our approach to instruction taps into each student's unique strengths, allowing him or her to learn through multiple modalities—including verbal, visual, and kinesthetic.

Strategies that teachers use to differentiate instruction include the following:

- Standards-based goals, individualized for each student
- Individualized academic and social-emotional goals
- Multisensory instructional methods
- Sensory diets for students who benefit from scheduled breaks and movement opportunities
- Small-group work
- Close collaboration between classroom teachers and special education teachers

## Special Education Services

Our goal at Creative Minds is to include students who receive special education services with their peers in the general education classroom setting as much as possible. Students who qualify and have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) may receive specialized instruction inside and/or outside the general education classroom, if necessary. We offer specialized instruction in reading, writing, mathematics, and daily living skills. Additionally, our related service providers offer speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, audiology services, counseling, and other services as required by the IEP.

If a student referred by parents or teachers is suspected of having a disability requiring special education, a psychoeducational evaluation of the need is conducted to gain more insight. Parents or teachers who are concerned that a student may have a disability should contact Creative Minds' special education coordinators to share their concerns. Written parental consent is required before an evaluation for special education may be conducted.

Once the evaluation has been completed, a meeting with the student's parent or guardian and a multidisciplinary team is held to determine whether a child requires special education services on the basis of the results of the evaluation and additional information collected in the process. For students who require special education services, an IEP is developed and implemented.

For questions about the special education program or process at Creative Minds, or to learn more about the rights of students with disabilities and their parents, please contact our Director of Inclusion, Dr. Emmanuel Taiwo at [Emmanuel.Taiwo@cmipcs.org](mailto:Emmanuel.Taiwo@cmipcs.org).

For grade-level-specific questions please contact Yendry Quesada at [yendry.quesada@cmipcs.org](mailto:yendry.quesada@cmipcs.org) (for students in prekindergarten through 3rd grade) or Nicole Keler at [Nicole.Keler@cmipcs.org](mailto:Nicole.Keler@cmipcs.org) (for students in 4th through 8th grades).

## Technology Integration

At Creative Minds, instructional technology supports student achievement in all areas of academics (international curriculum, Common Core National Standards, inclusive education, and arts education/integration), and in all programs (early childhood, elementary, and middle school). Technology is integrated into instruction in a way that

empowers student voice and provides students with the skills for success in a global society. In other words, technology integration is well aligned to Creative Minds' vision of taking a global approach to learning, while always maintaining focus and attention on the development of the individual student.

In order to support academic achievement, Creative Minds integrates technology to achieve the following:

**Provide every student** with an age-appropriate device.

**Enhance instruction** in all areas of the education program: international curriculum, inclusive education, and arts education/integration.

**Meet and exceed learning objectives** in all content areas (including technology), as defined by the [IPC](#) and [IMYC, Next Generation Science Standards](#), and [Common Core State Standards in Literacy and Math](#).

**Facilitate the assessment of student achievement in all content areas**—for example, in literacy and math via the PARCC assessments; through rubrics in IPC/IMYC units; through digital portfolios throughout the curriculum.

Creative Minds students use a variety of hardware and applications to support technology integration: desktop computers, laptops, Chromebooks, and Promethean boards, as well as a wide variety of developmentally appropriate software and web-based applications. These applications allow students to demonstrate critical and creative thinking, build skills in communication and collaboration, create original content, and access materials at a level appropriate to their needs, as well as demonstrate competency in their Learning Goals.

Digital citizenship is another important part of the Creative Minds Instructional-Technology program. Based on the [Common Sense Digital Citizenship](#) resources, the program aims to instill in students an understanding of the rights, responsibilities, and opportunities associated with technology use. At the beginning of each school year, students agree to follow age-appropriate guidelines for appropriate technology use at Creative Minds, such as:

- using electronic resources for educational purposes only;
- avoiding waste of resources, such as printer toner and paper;
- respecting intellectual property and copyright laws;
- protecting oneself and respecting others when accessing the internet;

- reporting any incidents of cyberbullying immediately;
- reporting any offensive materials or computer viruses immediately;
- acknowledging that any message or file saved on, sent from, accessed through, or received on Creative Minds equipment may be inspected;
- keeping one's passwords private and respecting the privacy of others' passwords;
- taking care of the school's hardware, electronic systems, and network;
- protecting one's safety by not sharing any personal information online; and
- protecting oneself and the school's technology equipment by not viewing, sending, displaying, or downloading any illegal, inappropriate, or offensive materials.

Any questions about Creative Minds' Instructional-Technology Program may be directed to, [Tsitsi.Sithole@cmipcs.org](mailto:Tsitsi.Sithole@cmipcs.org), for prekindergarten through 1st grade, [Jessica.Curry@cmipcs.org](mailto:Jessica.Curry@cmipcs.org) for 2nd- 4th grade, and Lorna Dill, at [Lorna.Dill@cmipcs.org](mailto:Lorna.Dill@cmipcs.org), for 5th through 8th grades.

## English-Learners Program

In compliance with state and federal laws, potential English learners (ELs) are identified through the Home Language Survey completed during enrollment. If a student or family member in the home is identified as speaking a language other than English, the student will be administered the WIDA Screener. The results are used to determine if the student qualifies as an EL.

When students are identified as ELs, the school provides them with additional small-group support for language and literacy skills. All EL instruction is designed to increase access to grade-level content. Similar to the goal of our special education program, the goal of our EL program is to maximize services provided in the general education setting.

English learners take an ACCESS for ELLs test, from WIDA, each year so that we may measure their annual progress. ACCESS for ELLs is a secure, large-scale English-language proficiency assessment given to students in kindergarten through 12th grade who have been identified as English learners.

All ELs in grades 3 through 8 at Creative Minds also take the PARCC assessments, with allowable accommodations, to assess their mastery of the Common Core Standards.

Students who score lower than 4.5 on the ACCESS for ELLs test are entitled to accommodations on the PARCC. Newcomers (students who have been in the United States for less than one year) are exempt from taking the PARCC.

To be exited from the EL program, students must achieve a composite score of 4.5 on the ACCESS for ELLs test. After exiting the EL program, students are monitored for two years, using a review of grades, benchmark tests, standardized-assessment scores, and teacher observations. Records of these reviews are kept in the student's file.



# School Information

## Absences

### Excused Absences

These are valid excuses for absences:

- Student illness or other medical cause
- Illness or other family emergency that requires the presence of the student in the home or prevents the parent from bringing the child to school
- Exclusion by direction of the authorities of the District of Columbia, due to quarantine, contagious disease, infection, infestation, or other condition requiring separation from other students for medical or health reasons
- Medical or dental treatment
- Death in the student's family
- Necessity of the student to attend legal proceedings
- Observance of religious holidays
- Lawful suspension or exclusion from school by the school administration
- Temporary closing of the school due to severe weather, official holidays, unsafe conditions, or emergencies
- Visiting a parent or a legal guardian who is in the military during or immediately before or after deployment
- Other absences approved in advance by the head of school upon written request of the parent or legal guardian

### Procedures

Parents should notify the **registrar** when absences can be anticipated. For unanticipated absences, please call the absence hotline, at (202) 588-0370 ext. 118 or email [frontdesk@cmipcs.org](mailto:frontdesk@cmipcs.org). In addition, a note to the registrar, which includes the reason for the absence, is required when the student returns to school. Notes may be submitted via email or in person.

A student who is absent for three or more consecutive days must present a doctor's note upon his or her return to school.

Any student who is sent home sick (e.g., with fever or vomiting) must be symptom-free without medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school. Any student sent home sick due to the [DC Health’s COVID exclusion criteria](#) and any student exhibiting COVID-like symptoms must meet the [DC Health’s return to school criteria](#).

## COVID Mitigation Strategies

Creative Minds will employ a layered-mitigation strategy that will change depending on the [community level](#) and the number of cases in the building (hereafter, in-school level). If there is a difference between the community level and in-school level, we will adhere to the higher category of the two thresholds. Our full plan can be found [here](#).

	Community Level: <b>LOW</b> School Level: <b>LOW</b> (≤10 cases/5 days)  Nivel comunitario: <b>BAJO</b> Nivel escolar: <b>BAJO</b> (≤10 casos/5 días)  የማህበረሰብ ደረጃ:- ዝቅተኛ የትምህርት ቤት ደረጃ:- ዝቅተኛ (≤10 ጉዳዮች/5 ቀናት)	Community Level: <b>MEDIUM</b> School Level: <b>MEDIUM</b> (≤20 cases/5 days)  Nivel comunitario: <b>MEDIO</b> Nivel escolar: <b>MEDIO</b> (≤20 casos/5 días)  የማህበረሰብ ደረጃ:- መካከለኛ የትምህርት ቤት ደረጃ:- መካከለኛ (≤20 ጉዳዮች/5 ቀናት)	Community Level: <b>HIGH</b> School Level: <b>HIGH</b> (>20 cases/5 days)  Nivel comunitario: <b>ALTO</b> Nivel escolar: <b>ALTO</b> (>20 casos/5 días)  የማህበረሰብ ደረጃ:- ከፍተኛ የማህበረሰብ ደረጃ:- ከፍተኛ (>20 ጉዳዮች/5 ቀናት)
<b>Personal accountability (stay home if sick, hand hygiene, vaccines, and boosters, etc.)</b> Responsabilidad personal (quedarse en casa si está enfermo, higiene de manos, vacunas y refuerzos, etc.) የግል ተጠያቂነት (ከታመሙ ቤት	Yes  Sí  አዎ	Yes  Sí  አዎ	Yes  Sí  አዎ

መቅረት፣ የእጅ ንፅህና፣ ክትባት፣ ወዘተ.)			
Masking for classrooms with COVID+ case in the past 7 days Mascarilla para aulas con casos de COVID+ en los últimos 7 días ማስክ - ባለፉት 7 ቀናት የኮቪድ ጉዳይ ያላቸው ክፍሎች ማድረግ አለባቸው	Yes Sí አዎ	Yes Sí አዎ	Yes Sí አዎ
Symptomatic testing Pruebas sintomáticas ምልክታዊ የኮቪድ ምርመራ	Yes Sí አዎ	Yes Sí አዎ	Yes Sí አዎ
Periodic testing of close contacts Pruebas periódicas de contactos cercanos የቅርብ እውቂያዎችን በየጊዜው መሞከር	Yes Sí አዎ	Yes Sí አዎ	Yes Sí አዎ
Encourage vaccinations and boosters Fomentar vacunas y refuerzos የኮቪድ ክትባት እና ማበረታቻዎች መወሰድ ማበረታት	Yes Sí አዎ	Yes Sí አዎ	Yes Sí አዎ
UV-C Air Circulation / Ventilation Ventilación/circulación de aire UV-C UV-C የአየር ዝውውር / አየር ማናፈሻ	Yes Sí አዎ	Yes Sí አዎ	Yes Sí አዎ
Deep cleaning and weekly electrostatic spraying Limpieza profunda y rociado electrostático semanal ጥልቅ ጽዳት እና ሳምንታዊ ኢሌክትሮስታቲክ ስፕራይ	Yes Sí አዎ	Yes Sí አዎ	Yes Sí አዎ
Indoor masking for all Mascarilla interior para todos ሁሉም ህንፃው ውስጥ ማስክ ያደርጋል		Yes Sí አዎ	Yes Sí አዎ
Outdoor masking for all			Yes

<p>Mascarilla al aire libre para todos ሁሉም ወጪ ማስክ ያደርጋል</p>			<p>Sí አዎ</p>
<p>Test-to-return after breaks of one-week or more Prueba para regresar después de recesos de una semana o más ከ1 ሳምንት ወይም ከዚያ በላይ እረፍት መልስ ምርመራ</p>			<p>Yes Sí አዎ</p>
<p>Building limited to staff, students, and essential visitors El edificio está limitado al personal, estudiantes y visitantes esenciales ህንፃው እስፊላጊ ለሆኑ ሰራተኞች፣ ተማሪዎች እና ኅብኛዎች የተገደበ ነው</p>			<p>Yes Sí አዎ</p>
<p>Virtual if the school lacks adequate staff to operate safely La escuela carece del personal adecuado para operar de manera segura ትምህርት ቤቱ ደህንነቱ በተጠበቀ መልክ ለማስተማር በቂ ሰራተኞች ከሌሉት ምናባዊ ነው</p>			<p>Yes Sí አዎ</p>

## Admissions and Enrollment

The admissions policies of Creative Minds meet the enrollment guidelines set forth by the District of Columbia Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB) and are based on the School Reform Act, which states that public education must be free and accessible to any District of Columbia student and not be designed to exclude any student.

Creative Minds International PCS follows the [My School DC](#) admission timeline, which typically begins in mid-December and ends in the spring. Each year's registration and enrollment dates will be available [on our website](#).

Children entering Creative Minds must be three years old for pre-K3, four years old for pre-K4, and five years old for kindergarten by September 30 of that school year. Other Creative Minds' lottery policies can be found [here](#).

Creative Minds fills open seats via the My School DC common lottery process. Information and application dates for the common lottery can be found at the [My School DC website](#).

Creative Minds International Public Charter School requires currently enrolled students to reenroll for the next school year. This process takes place in the spring to allow the school to determine the number of seats available for new applicants.

To reserve a seat for current students, parents and legal guardians must submit reenrollment forms online or to our registrar by the designated date, which is announced via Parent Square and [on our website](#).

To complete enrollment at Creative Minds, the child's parent or legal guardian must present a birth certificate, current record of immunization, [Universal Health Certificate](#), and [proof of residency](#) in the District of Columbia.

## Creative Minds' My School DC Lottery Policies

Creative Minds International Public Charter School accepts applications through the My School DC common application and lottery process and has adopted the following policies:

### **Underage Applications**

Creative Minds follows the My School DC policy for age cutoffs and cutoff dates.

### **Over-age Applications**

For children with a birth date after June 1, families may apply to the age-eligible grade level or to one grade level below, if the family believes that the child is not ready for the eligible grade. A child cannot be entered into the lottery for two grades. For example, a

family with a child who turns four years old on June 3 may apply to pre-K3 or to pre-K4 but not to both grade levels.

### **Sibling Preference**

Sibling preference applies to children residing in the same household. If the siblings do not have the same parent or legal guardian, each parent or guardian must show proof of residency for the same address.

### **Reverse Decline**

Families sometimes change their minds about declining a seat at Creative Minds and request a reverse decline. A reverse decline will be granted if there is at least one open seat at the relevant grade level.

### **Student Leave of Absence for Short-Term Relocation Out of State**

Previously enrolled students are defined as students who were enrolled at Creative Minds and officially withdrew because the family relocated outside the Washington, DC, metropolitan area (including Virginia and Maryland).

### **Requesting a Leave of Absence**

Students enrolled at Creative Minds for at least one academic year may be eligible for a short-term leave of absence, in limited circumstances. ). Prior to the leave of absence, a parent or legal guardian must submit an “Intent to Return Form” to the Creative Minds director of operations & compliance. The school will provide a copy of the form to the family upon request.

To be granted a leave of absence, a student must meet the following conditions:

- The student’s family is moving out of the Washington, DC, metropolitan area (including Northern Virginia and Maryland).
- The student is not leaving Creative Minds to attend another school in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area (including Northern Virginia and Maryland).
- The leave of absence will last no more than two years.

## **Reenrolling after a Leave of Absence**

To reenroll at Creative Minds, a parent or legal guardian must (1) notify Creative Minds by February 1 immediately preceding the school year in which the student wishes to return, and (2) complete enrollment paperwork, including residency verification, by July 1 immediately preceding the returning school year.

Families must also submit a letter requesting reenrollment. The letter must contain the following: Verification that all conditions of the leave of absence were maintained and the requested grade level for the reenrolling student at Creative Minds.

Upon receipt of the reenrollment request, Creative Minds will determine whether the student meets the requirements for returning to school. If the requirements are met, Creative Minds will process the student for reenrollment. This process will include an assessment of the appropriate grade-level for the student.

If a student struggles academically upon returning to Creative Minds, the school will reassess the grade-level placement.

Previously enrolled students must reenroll at Creative Minds no later than October 1 of the returning academic year.

Students returning from a leave of absence are considered current students and will be placed in the current grade. They will not be placed on the waitlist. If returning students have siblings that were not previous students at Creative Minds, the siblings must apply via the My School DC lottery. These students will follow the admissions rules for siblings at Creative Minds.

## **Lottery Preferences**

Creative Minds offers the lottery preferences below, in the following order:

- Sibling enrolled
- Child of staff
- Sibling offered

# Assessments

Ongoing assessment is an essential component of effective teaching and meaningful learning at Creative Minds. Assessment serves the following important purposes:

- Gives teachers an understanding of how children are learning
- Gives students important feedback and offers them the opportunity to reflect on and improve their own learning
- Allows teachers to monitor each student's progress toward learning goals

Creative Minds uses a variety of tools to assess student's knowledge, skills, and understanding of subject and learning goals within the IEYC, IPC, and IMYC. Learning portfolios showcase student work and provide added documentation of their progress in international, personal, and subject goals.

In addition to our international curriculum assessments, formal assessments allow teachers to gauge students' progress according to grade-level standards. Our formal assessments are fully aligned with Common Core State Standards and give our teachers important benchmarks by which to gauge academic growth and respond to needs for further instruction or "reteaching" key subject matter.

Formal assessments in place at Creative Minds include:

- **Teaching Strategies GOLD:** Given to our prekindergarten students to assess students' growth in literacy and math standards three times over the course of the school year.
- **Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA):** Given to all students from kindergarten through 2nd grade to assess their instructional level in reading. The DRA is given three times over the course of the school year.
- **The Northwest Evaluation Association's Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA-MAP):** We use the NWEA-MAP assessment to measure our kindergarten through 8th-grade students' performance on grade-level standards in math. Our 3rd- through 8th-graders take the NWEA-MAP assessment for English-language



arts (ELA), as well. These assessments are given three times over the course of the school year.

- **Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC):** PARCC is the District of Columbia’s annual standardized assessment, given to all students from 3rd through 8th grades to measure performance in ELA and math.

## Extended Creative Day

In fall 2022 our auxiliary program, Extended Creative Day (ECD), includes Before School, After School, and Friday--afternoon enrichment.

The goal of the ECD program is to provide Creative Minds students with a safe, healthy environment in which they can continue to learn, grow, and experience enrichment activities aligned with their interests.

See [Appendix 2](#) for details on the ECD program.

### Hours

<b>After School (prekindergarten–4th grade)</b>	3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
<b>After School (5th–8th grades)</b>	4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
<b>Friday Enrichment (all grades)</b>	1:00 p.m.–3:30 p.m.

## Birthdays & Other Celebrations

We know the joy children feel when celebrating their birthdays, and we want all our children to feel special. Consistent with our [local wellness policy](#), classrooms will host a birthday celebration once a month for all students who have birthdays that month. If you would like to celebrate a child’s birthday in school, please adhere to the following:

- Parents and guardians must make arrangements with classroom teachers for birthday celebrations at least a month before a child’s birthday.
- Parents and guardians are encouraged to provide healthful snacks and natural fruit juices or water, and to limit sweets. Please don’t bring chips, candy, soda, sugary snacks, goody bags, or piñatas to school.

- Celebrations that are not food-based are strongly encouraged by adopting [alternatives](#) such as but not limited to:
  - Line leader for the day
  - Donating a book to the class library in lieu of sugary treats

## Calendar

Creative Minds' calendar is built around the 180 required instructional days and is divided into two semesters of approximately 90 days each. The first day of school is August 29, 2022.

See [Appendix 3](#) for the current year's full calendar. Sync your calendar with the [Google Calendar](#) on our website or our calendar in ParentSquare to stay up to date on additional events

## Closings

We follow District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) for school closings, early dismissals, and delayed openings and notify families through ParentSquare, using phone, text, and email messages. Please keep the school registrar updated with your current contact information; you may contact the registrar at [frontdesk@cmipcs.org](mailto:frontdesk@cmipcs.org).

DCPS information will be available on the organization's website, at [www.dcps.dc.gov](http://www.dcps.dc.gov), and the following local radio and television stations:

### **Radio Stations**

WAMU (88.5 FM), WHUR (96.3 FM), WMAL (630 AM), WTOP (1500 AM, 107.7 FM), WETA Radio (90.9)

### **Television Channels**

4, 5, 7, 8, and 9, DCPS cable channel 99

We also post announcements about school closings and delays to our [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) accounts; find us at @CMIPCS on these platforms.

## Contacting Students During School Hours

Creative Minds students are not allowed to use cell phones during the school day, including our before- and after-school programs. If you need to contact your child during the school day, please call the front desk at (202) 588-0370 and request that your child be told to call you. In these circumstances, students will be allowed to use school phones. They may also use school phones in emergency situations.

## Middle School Cell Phone Policy

Creative Minds has a zero tolerance Cell Phone and Unauthorized Electronic Devices Policy. Cell phones and other Unauthorized Electronic Devices should be turned off and stored in backpacks and lockers during school hours. If students receive multiple violations, they will become ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities, up to and/or including the end of the year trip.

If you wish to contact your child during the school day, please call the front desk at 202-588-0370. In these circumstances, students will be allowed to use school phones. Students may also use school phones in emergency situations. We appreciate your cooperation and the anticipated cooperation from your child, with regards to maintaining a cell phone free educational environment.

Students will be informed and reminded about this policy throughout the year, however, having a dialogue with your child regarding what to expect will aid in their cooperation in consistently implementing the Cell Phone Policy. Feel free to contact [lorna.dill@creativemindspcs.org](mailto:lorna.dill@creativemindspcs.org) with any questions or concerns.

## Creative Families Association

The Creative Families Association (CFA) promotes and fosters the education and culture of the students of Creative Minds. The CFA provides school-wide and classroom-specific support (financial and otherwise) and outreach and communication

to parents and guardians. The organization hosts special programming and events throughout the year. The CFA Board of Directors works with Creative Minds to set goals, strategies, and activities for achieving the CFA's overall mission and annual targets.

See [Appendix 4](#) for additional information about the CFA.

## Dress Code

While there is no formal dress code at Creative Minds, students are expected to wear appropriate attire. This includes safe footwear, clothing that does not display inappropriate language, and clothing that provides adequate covering of the body. Students should wear comfortable closed-toed shoes appropriate for playground use and PE.

Please check the weather and send your child to school with appropriate clothing. Students go outside to play each day, weather permitting, and should dress accordingly (e.g., coats in the winter months).

## Early Dismissals & Appointments

If a child has a medical or dental appointment requiring an early dismissal, please notify the registrar at [frontdesk@cmipcs.org](mailto:frontdesk@cmipcs.org) and your child's teacher ahead of time and provide supporting documentation. Students are signed out using this [link](#) or the associated QR code in [Appendix 5](#).

## Elevators

Students are not permitted to use the elevator unless accompanied by an adult. Family members are welcome to use the elevator, as needed.

## Emergencies

In the event that Creative Minds closes early or is evacuated because of an emergency, we will use ParentSquare to notify families by phone, email, and text message.

Throughout the year we conduct monthly fire drills and emergency-evacuation drills. We conduct these drills to prepare students, faculty, and staff for a real emergency, such as

a fire, shelter-in-place order, or an earthquake or other natural disaster, should one occur. Our gathering place in the event of a building evacuation is the grassy area beyond Stanley Chapel; if we need to shelter indoors during an evacuation, we will proceed to the basement of the Scott building. Family notifications of emergency drills will be sent via ParentSquare.

## Family Conferences

We value regular communication between families and teachers about academic and social-emotional progress, and we facilitate formal conferences during the school year. Please see the [academic calendar](#) for family-teacher conference dates.

Conferences are a time for teachers to share with parents and guardians the learning that has been happening in class. This is also an opportunity for families to ask any questions they may have about a child's development. If you need to meet with your child's teacher at other times, please contact him or her to set up an appointment. Due to the demands of the teaching schedule and the importance of being present for and supervising students, teachers cannot meet families for unscheduled meetings. Please contact teachers ahead of time to schedule a meeting.

## Family Vacations

Family vacations are not automatically recorded as excused absences. Please contact our registrar at [frontdesk@cmipcs.org](mailto:frontdesk@cmipcs.org) about a family vacation. The registrar will direct you to the Leadership Team member with whom you can discuss your plans.

## Field Trips

Field trips are scheduled throughout the school year to provide Creative Minds students with learning opportunities outside the traditional classroom environment. Participating students are required to submit a completed field-trip permission form which will provide specific information about the purpose of the trip, destination, date and time, and mode of transportation (e.g., school bus, Metro, walking). A student will not be permitted to attend a field trip without a permission slip and payment of any fees associated with the trip.

# Grievance Policy & Procedure

The grievance procedures outlined below establish, generally, how complaints will be investigated and resolved. These grievance procedures are intended to provide for a prompt and equitable resolution of complaints. Any person who believes they have been discriminated against or who otherwise wishes to bring a complaint related to Creative Minds' administration of its programs may file a complaint by following the steps outlined below. Creative Minds reserves the right to take whatever actions it deems appropriate to best educate students, keep them safe, and resolve conflict. That means that the school reserves the right to alter, amend, or interpret these provisions within its sole discretion, unless such action or interpretation would violate due process or applicable law.

## Informal Complaint

Ideally, anyone with a concern should first attempt to resolve it informally with school staff. You may bring an informal complaint to the attention of a classroom teacher, grade level director, inclusion director, or ECD Coordinator. See [Appendix 7](#) for key administration contacts. These individuals will seek to resolve the complaint by working with those involved to reach a cooperative agreement. Please remember that all concerns and complaints are very important to Creative Minds. Every member of the faculty and administration is also working diligently to run a school that focuses on education and safety, as well as making sure the students are engaged and having fun. To that end, Creative Minds asks that anyone seeking informal resolution please allow time for said resolution. The school's employees are encouraged to act as quickly as possible, and resolution may take time.

## Formal Grievance

Any person wishing to bring a concern in a more formal, documented manner directly to administration, or if you believe that Creative Minds has discriminated on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, source of income, or otherwise please submit a written complaint to the Creative Minds chief operating officer (COO), [Craig Bednarovsky](#) ([craig.bednarovsky@cmipcs.org](mailto:craig.bednarovsky@cmipcs.org)). The grievance as well as any supporting documentation should also be mailed to:

Craig Bednarovsky  
Chief Operating Officer  
Creative Minds International PCS  
3700 N. Capitol Street NW #217  
Sherman Building  
Washington, DC 20011-8400

## **Resolution of a Formal Grievance**

The grievance procedures outlined below establish how Creative Minds will investigate and resolve complaints. These grievance procedures are intended to provide for a prompt and equitable resolution of complaints. These grievance procedures are for use by employees, students, parents, families, or third parties. These grievance procedures do not bar individuals from filing claims in other forums to the extent permitted by state or federal law.

Creative Minds encourages individuals to discuss their concerns with appropriate school officials before resorting to a formal complaint. However, individuals are not required to do so before filing a formal complaint.

Creative Minds will not retaliate against any person who files a complaint or participates in an investigation in accordance with these procedures. A formal complaint may be filed by following the steps outlined below:

Within ninety (90) days of the concern or alleged discrimination or harassment, file a written notice of the complaint with the COO. If the complaint is against the COO, submit the complaint to the CMI executive director, [Chuck Jackson](#) ([chuck.jackson@cmipcs.org](mailto:chuck.jackson@cmipcs.org)). The grievance as well as any supporting documentation should also be mailed to:

Chuck Jackson  
Executive Director  
Creative Minds International PCS  
3700 N. Capitol Street NW #217  
Sherman Building  
Washington, DC 20011-8400

The written notice must include the nature of the complaint, the date(s) of the occurrence(s), and the desired result. The signature of the person making the complaint and date the complaint is made are also required.

Upon receipt of the written complaint, the designated individual to whom the complaint was submitted will:

- 1) Initiate an adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation of the complaint. Each investigation will include, as necessary, meeting with the grievant, interviewing witnesses, obtaining and reviewing applicable documents, and allowing parties to present evidence. All documentation related to the investigation will remain confidential.
- 2) Determine whether mediation is appropriate. Creative Minds will evaluate the complaint and, if appropriate, recommend mediation. The nature of mediation is flexible, but in general, one or more school officials will meet with the grievant and any other involved parties to discuss the incident(s) that led to the grievance and potential resolutions. The goal of mediation is for the parties involved to agree on a solution or resolution together.
- 3) Within thirty (30) business days of receiving the complaint, the individual investigating the complaint will respond in writing to the complainant. The response will summarize the course and outcome of the investigation and identify an appropriate resolution. If it is determined that discrimination or harassment have occurred, CMI will take the appropriate corrective and remedial action.

### **Appeal of a Formal Grievance**

If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision or resolution, the complainant may submit a signed statement of appeal to the Creative Minds executive director within ten (10) business days of receiving the response. The appeal as well as any supporting documentation should be mailed to:

Chuck Jackson  
Executive Director  
Creative Minds International PCS  
3700 N. Capitol Street NW #217



Sherman Building  
Washington, DC 20011-8400

The executive director will review all relevant information and meet with the parties involved, as necessary. Within twenty-one (21) business days of receiving the statement of appeal, the executive director will respond in writing to the complainant summarizing the outcome of the appeal and any corrective or remedial action to be taken.

If the appeal relates to a complaint made against the Creative Minds executive director, or if the executive director responded to your formal grievance, the complainant may appeal to the Creative Minds Board of Trustees by providing a signed statement of appeal. The statement must be delivered in writing either in person or by postal mail to:

Navin Nayak or Current BoT Chair  
Creative Minds International PCS  
3700 N. Capitol Street NW #217  
Sherman Building  
Washington, DC 20011-8400

In trying to resolve the grievance, the Board of Trustees shall review all relevant information and meet with the concerned parties and their representatives within thirty (30) days of receiving such an appeal.

The Board of Trustees will send a copy of the disposition of the appeal to each concerned party within fifteen (15) business days of this meeting.

Additional email correspondence on the matter can be directed to the Board of Trustees via email using [board@cmipcs.org](mailto:board@cmipcs.org).

## Prohibition Against Retaliation

Creative Minds prohibits retaliation against any individual who has made a complaint pursuant to this grievance policy in good faith, assisted in an investigation, or otherwise exercised rights protected by law. Creative Minds also prohibits taking any adverse action against an individual based on an unsubstantiated allegation or rumor. Any individual found to be engaging in any kind of retaliation will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Parents and guardians, students, staff members, and other members of the Creative Minds community are expected to cooperate in good faith in the investigation and resolution of any grievance raised by them or against them.

## Additional Grievance Resources

Grievances may also be filed with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights by: (1) mailing the complaint to Director, District of Columbia Office, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-1475; (2) faxing it to (202) 453-6021; or (3) filing it electronically at: [www.ed.gov/ocr/complaintprocess.html](http://www.ed.gov/ocr/complaintprocess.html). For more information, you can contact OCR at (202) 453-6020 (voice), (800) 877-8339 (TTY; US DOE Customer Service), or [ocr.dc@ed.gov](mailto:ocr.dc@ed.gov).

## Health

### Requirements

By [law](#), all students enrolled in District of Columbia public charter schools must have a current and complete vaccination record on file at the school. This record must include verification of inoculation against measles, poliomyelitis, tetanus, and diphtheria, and a tuberculin skin test. It is vital to the health of all children that everyone complies with these vaccination requirements. Students will have twenty (20) days from the beginning of the school year to have their vaccination records brought up to date. Students with incomplete health records will be barred from the school until records are complete.

For students 12 and over, vaccinations include the primary dose of the COVID-19 vaccine (two doses). The first dose must be administered by September 16, 2023. Students turning 12 have 70 days from their birthday to receive the primary dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Currently, the COVID-19 primary vaccine is highly encouraged but not required for students younger than 12. Once the vaccination for younger-age groups receives full FDA authorization, students have 70 calendar days from FDA full approval to comply with the COVID-19 vaccine.

Additionally, each child entering Creative Minds International must have a current medical and dental examination. This examination must include a screening for lead content in the blood.

### Illness

**Please do not send your child to school when they are sick.** Keep your child home if they have a fever, has been vomiting, has diarrhea, or is displaying COVID-19 symptoms.

Your child should not return to school until they have had zero symptoms for 24 hours without the help of fever-reducing or other medicine. If your child has a contagious disease, such as COVID-19, monkeypox, strep throat, chicken pox, hand-foot-and-mouth disease, scarlet fever, conjunctivitis (pink eye), and/or other diseases, please notify [covid@cmipcs.org](mailto:covid@cmipcs.org) immediately. Notifying the school of illness will help minimize the spread to other students.

## Injury

If a student sustains a minor injury, the school nurse or health designee will administer first aid at the school. Creative Minds will complete a minor incident report form and inform you of the incident. If a student sustains a more serious injury or a head injury, we will contact you and, if necessary, we will request emergency medical services.

## Medications

We discourage the administration of any medication in the school setting. If required, however, a trained member of the school staff may dispense prescription medication to students. In order for prescription medicine to be dispensed, [appropriate forms](#) must be completed by a family doctor. All prescription medication must be in their original packaging and stored in the nurse's office. Under no circumstances may any nonprescription medication, including aspirin and cough drops, be in the possession of students at school.

In compliance with the Student Access to Treatment Act of 2007, students may carry asthma inhalers or auto-injectable epinephrine at school, provided the proper conditions are in place.

## Head Lice

In cases of head lice or nits found on a child, the student's parents or guardians will be notified by the school nurse with a phone call. **The student will be allowed to stay in school for the remainder of the day.** The following day, the parent or guardian must provide documentation that the student has been treated, with the name of the product used (if treated at home), or a letter from the doctor or nurse who treated the student (if taken to a lice service). The students will be checked for lice or nits at school that day, and the parents or guardians will be notified again if the student continues to have lice or nits. The students in a class where lice or nits have been found will be notified with a letter from the nurse.

To help us prevent a larger outbreak of head lice among our students, please notify the front desk if you discover head lice in your child. We will keep your child's name confidential.

## Food Allergies

To lower the risk of students having severe allergic reactions to nuts in their environment, Creative Minds strives to be a nut-free school zone. If your child has any food allergies or restrictions (foods they cannot eat for health reasons or that would be dangerous for them to be near), you must tell us in writing.

## Medical Conditions

If your child has a medical condition, please be sure to notify the school nurse and inform us of required care in case of emergencies using the [appropriate form](#).

## Hours of Operation

### **Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday**

**Prekindergarten–4th** 8:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**5th–8th** 8:45 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### **Friday (Half Day / Afternoon Professional Development for Teachers)**

**Prekindergarten–4th** 8:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

**5th–8th** 8:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

[Find information about our Friday-afternoon enrichment program in Appendix 2.](#)

## Lost & Found

Make sure you label all of your child's clothes and belongings, especially outdoor jackets and coats. The school is not responsible for lost items. Misplaced or lost items will be placed in the lost-and-found bins. Just before winter break, summer recess, and as needed, unclaimed items are donated to local charities.

# Meals

We strive to provide students high-quality and nutritious no- or low-cost meals. Monthly breakfast, lunch, and snack menus are posted to our [Nutrition & Wellness](#) webpage and in ParentSquare. Families may also send their children to school with a shelf-stable, ready-to-eat lunch. Students in our after-school programs receive a free snack; a snack should be brought from home for the regular school day.

## Breakfast

Breakfast is available to all Creative Minds students free of charge. Breakfast is served from 8:15 a.m. until 8:45 a.m. Students arriving after 8:45 a.m. may still grab breakfast “to go” until 9:00 a.m.

## Lunch: School Provided

Discounted or no-cost lunch is available to students who qualify for the free and reduced-price meals program. Families that do not qualify for free and reduced-priced meals purchase school lunch. Lunch costs \$5.00 per school day and families are billed monthly.

## Enrolling in Paid School Lunch

Families that wish to purchase school lunch for their children must register beforehand so that our meal-service team can anticipate demand. Those who elect to purchase school lunch, and who do not qualify for free or reduced-price meals through the FARM application, will be billed monthly. Please sign up [here](#) or use the QR code in [Appendix 5](#). Invoices will be sent directly to families. Payment will be made through [PowerSchool](#).

School-Lunch Billing Table	
Month	Fee
August	\$15 (3 meals)
September	\$ 105 (21 meals)
October	\$90 (18 meals)
November	\$90 (18 meals)

December	\$80 (16 meals)
January	\$95 (19 meals)
February	\$75 (15 meals)
March	\$110 (22 meals)
April	\$70 (14 meals)
May	\$110.00 (22 meals)
June	\$70 (14 meals)

## Cancellations and Withdrawals

To ensure that we honor our commitment to our meals vendor, we have a strict policy on withdrawals from the lunch program. Families must provide the school with written notice at least two weeks before the end of the month to cancel meals for the next month. We order lunches in advance on a monthly basis, so we are unable to provide refunds for school lunches. To withdraw from the lunch program, please email [frontdesk@cmicps.org](mailto:frontdesk@cmicps.org).

## Meal Charge Policy

We strive to provide students high-quality and nutritious no- or low-cost meals each school day. However, unpaid charges place a large financial burden on our school. Our [meal charge policy](#) complies with federal requirements and provides oversight and accountability for the collection of outstanding student meal balances. If your family is experiencing financial hardship, please contact the [director of operations](#).

## Questions or Concerns about School-provided Meals

If you have questions or concerns about school lunch, please contact [frontdesk@cmicps.org](mailto:frontdesk@cmicps.org) or call (202) 588-0370.

## Lunch: Brought from Home

**We cannot refrigerate, cook, or heat up lunches that students bring from home.** Please make sure that lunch from home is ready to eat and that it is packed to remain fresh and safe for consumption.

## Benefits of Applying for Free and Reduced-Price Meals

Families may qualify for free or reduced-price school lunches on the basis of income or if they currently receive financial assistance. You must fill out the free and reduced-price meals (FARM) application for us to determine whether you are eligible for discounted or no-cost meals. **Families must reapply to FARM each year; FARM qualification lasts for only one year.**

To apply to FARM, fill out an application in [English](#), [Spanish](#), or [Amharic](#). The application should be returned to the front desk or emailed to [frontdesk@cmipcs.org](mailto:frontdesk@cmipcs.org).

We urge all families that think they might be eligible to apply to FARM. If you are determined eligible for free or reduced-price meals, you will also receive discounts on our before- and after-school programs.

If you have any questions about the FARM application, please email [frontdesk@cmipcs.org](mailto:frontdesk@cmipcs.org) or call (202) 588-0370 ext. 112.

## Nut-free School Policy

To ensure a safe learning environment for all students, Creative Minds International Public Charter School allows no food containing nuts at school; ours is a nut-free campus. Disallowed food includes nuts; peanut and other nut butters and products made with nuts, including granola bars and cookies. Please adhere to this policy, by checking the ingredient lists on wrappers, when sending snacks or lunch items to the school. Even though your child may not be affected by food allergies, others in the school or classroom could be adversely affected if nut items are present.

## Outdoors & Recess Policy

To ensure a safe and enjoyable outdoor and recess experience for all students, Creative Minds follows these guidelines for outdoor activities:

- Students go outside for recess as long as the following conditions are met:
  - It is not actively raining
  - Lightning activity has not occurred in the previous 30 minutes
  - The “feels like” temperature is above 32 degrees
  - The “feels like” temperature is below 95 degrees

- There are no active severe-weather warnings
- If the “feels like” temperature is below 32 degrees or above 95 degrees teachers may use their discretion to request permission from their program director to take students outside for a shortened time of no longer than 15 minutes.

## Parking & Drop-off Procedures

[See our campus map here.](#)

Families may drop off students between 8:15 a.m. and 8:45 a.m. Families are not permitted to leave students in prekindergarten through 4th grade unattended outside the school building before 8:15 a.m.

Driving families may park only in Lot 5, at the bottom of the hill adjacent to Harewood Gate, and walk their children into school, or they may use the drop-off loop. Staff will assist students as they exit cars in the drop-off loop and enter the school building. The drop-off loop is available from 8:15 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. If you arrive after 8:45 a.m., you must park in Lot 5 (only) and walk your child inside.

During the first week of school, staff will be posted outside to direct families in using the drop-off loop or in locating the correct parking lot.

Please note the following:

- Creative Minds families are not authorized to park at any time in Lot 2, the lot adjacent to the playground, which is for Lincoln’s Cottage use only; in the numbered school-staff parking spaces painted with red lines adjacent to the school; along the curb from Stanley Chapel to the Lincoln Cottage lot; or in any other Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) parking lot.
- Do not double park or park along the red fire lane curb in the drop off lane area.
- If your vehicle has handicapped tags, please use the drop-off lane each day. If you need to come into the school, drive to the end of the drop off-lane, where there are three handicapped-parking spaces. If these are full, you may park at the end of the drop off lane for five to ten minutes, providing you are not blocking traffic, and inform the front desk of where you parked and your tag number.
- You **may not** park in the drop-off lane and walk your child into the building.
- For the safety of our students, please observe the speed limit of 15 mph and all posted stop signs. Reckless or inattentive driving will not be tolerated.
- The AFRH cites drivers and vehicles not adhering to parking and driving rules and is authorized to revoke campus driving and parking privileges; Creative Minds has



no authority to alter AFRH decisions. Families whose privileges have been revoked must park in the neighborhood and walk to campus. Examples of behavior that may result in a citation or revocation of driving and parking privileges include the following:

- Speeding
- Not following directions of AFRH security personnel
- Abusive language to other drivers, Creative Minds staff members, or AFRH personnel
- When using a mobile device, failure to use a hands-free device while driving on campus
- Leaving a vehicle unattended in the drop-off lane
- Use of any gate other than Harewood, at times when this gate is open for Creative Minds families

## Arrival

These are the logistics for morning arrival:

<p><b>Using the Drop-off Lane</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enter and exit through Harewood Gate.</li> <li>● Pull all the way up and <b>remain with your vehicle.</b></li> <li>● Staff will assist your family.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Parking and Walking to the School Building</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enter and exit through Harewood Gate.</li> <li>● Park in Lot 5 and escort your child to the appropriate entrance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Walking or Biking onto Campus</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enter and exit through Eagle Gate.</li> <li>● Proceed to the appropriate entrance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Family Member Escorting a Child into School</b> <i>First two weeks of school only</i></p>	<p>Follow either the “Parking and Walking” or the “Walking and Biking” instructions to access campus.</p>

## Dismissal

Our dismissal plan is based on weather and COVID community level.

	Low	Medium	High
<b>Non-inclement Weather</b>	Outdoor dismissal for all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pre-K: In front of the school</li> <li>● K-8th: Grassy lawn next to Stanley Chapel</li> </ul>		
<b>Inclement Weather</b>  <i>If picking up multiple students, pick up the youngest first.</i>	Parents pick up their children inside the building. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pre-K: Main lobby</li> <li>● K-1st: Learning commons</li> <li>● 2nd-8th: Main Hall</li> </ul>	Parents pick up children outside, with staff assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pre-K: Main entrance</li> <li>● K-1st: Door 2 (Sherman South / ADA door)</li> <li>● 2nd-8th: Door 6 (Main Hall)</li> </ul>	

## Families Whose Children Have Different Dismissal Times

Students in **prekindergarten through 4th grade** who have an older sibling in **5th through 8th grade** and do not participate in Extended Creative Day, (insert details here)

## Students Walking Home

Some parents or guardians allow their children in 5th through 8th grades to walk home or take public transportation unaccompanied. If you would like to grant permission for your child to sign himself or herself out of school in the afternoon, we will need written confirmation from you. Submit a [request](#) or use the QR code in [Appendix 6](#).

If at least one child is in 5th through 8th grade, parents may allow the child in middle-school to escort younger siblings when walking or taking public transportation home. Submit a [request](#) or use the QR code in [Appendix 6](#).

Creative Minds prohibits students who are not authorized to sign themselves out from using a ride-sharing service, such as Uber or Lyft. These students must be accompanied by an authorized adult when using a ride-sharing service; the authorization must be on file in our student-information system.

## Early Release

If a child has a medical or dental appointment requiring an early dismissal, please notify the registrar at [frontdesk@cmipcs.org](mailto:frontdesk@cmipcs.org) ahead of time and provide supporting documentation. Students are signed out using this [link](#) or the QR code in [Appendix 6](#).

## Personal Items, Toys & Electronic Devices

Elementary and early childhood students have either cubbies or lockers in which to store jackets and other belongings. Middle school students will be issued lockers for storing their belongings during the school day. Middle school families should provide a new, unopened lock at the beginning of the school year. Should a student forget their combination or code requiring the lock to be cut off, Creative Minds will not be responsible for the cost of replacing the lock. Nothing of value should be left in jacket pockets. Students must store backpacks and other personal belongings in their assigned lockers during the school day. Students should not bring athletic gear, basketballs, footballs, or other similar items to school.

While we aim to provide a secure school, Creative Minds is not responsible for loss or theft of student property. The school's policy is that, in cases of accidents that happen in the normal course of the school day, we do not pay and do not try to facilitate parents and guardians paying for other students' materials. For example, if during a basketball game, a student's glasses are accidentally knocked off and broken, the school will not take responsibility for the loss.

Toys must be left at home unless the teacher has made a special request that children bring them to school. Students who do not follow this expectation will be reminded and asked to put the toy in their backpack until they return home. Families will also be reminded of this expectation. Toys include balls, bats, games, electronic toys, sports cards, game cards, cars, stuffed animals, and dolls. Please note that Creative Minds will not allow any toy weapons on campus at any time.

Creative Minds students are not allowed to use cell phones, wireless earbuds, hand-held gaming devices, or similar personal electronic devices during the school day, inclusive of the before school and after school program. If a child brings a [cell phone to school](#), it should remain off and stored in the child's backpack or locker during the school day and after-school programs. Violation of this policy will result in confiscation, and the device

will be held by a member of school administration until a parent or guardian can retrieve it. If multiple confiscations occur, additional ramifications will be in effect.

## Publications

We communicate with families through ParentSquare; the [Creative Minds website](#); and Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, where we are @CMIPCS.

School-wide ParentSquare messages are sent to all families, at the email address or phone number provided during enrollment. These messages contain school announcements, practical details about upcoming events, and other timely information.

New families received a ParentSquare invitation in July. After creating accounts, parents and guardians can set preferences for notification type, language, and frequency. [Learn more here.](#)

Though a ParentSquare account isn't required for receiving messages, we strongly encourage all parents and guardians to create an account. An account allows users to set preferences; access resources; comment on posts; send direct messages to staff members, with real-time language translation; and fill out and submit the forms we share on ParentSquare.

A ParentSquare mobile app is available for [Android devices](#) and [iPhone and iPad](#). The app is the most convenient way to stay up to date on our messages and resources.

It is important to us that all families be able to access these materials. Any family experiencing barriers to access is encouraged to speak with us so that we can suggest solutions or provide alternatives. Likewise, a parent or guardian who does not want to receive this information may opt out. Any questions about publications, including ParentSquare, or digital access can be directed to the manager of marketing and communications.

## Safety & Security

All District of Columbia public charter schools are designated as closed campuses. For this reason, all visitors to the school must report to the front lobby on the ground floor and must sign in to the visitor's log. No child is allowed to leave school unless

accompanied by an identified parent or guardian. Every student leaving early must be signed out using this [link](#) or the associated QR code in [Appendix 5](#).

## Tardiness

All students who enter the building after 8:45 a.m. are marked tardy by the classroom teaching staff. If you have an excuse for your child's tardiness, you must submit a written note to the registrar or by email to [frontdesk@cmipcs.org](mailto:frontdesk@cmipcs.org). If a student has a note from a parent or guardian, the note will be added to his or her file.

The attendance committee will review each student's attendance on a monthly basis and will contact parents to discuss regular absences or instances of being tardy. Parents or guardians will receive a letter when a student reaches five unexcused absences and will be invited to the school for a meeting.

## Visits & Observations

There will be many opportunities for families to visit the school. Opportunities may include reading a book to the class, sharing knowledge about a topic the class is studying, chaperoning a field trip, participating in an Entry or Exit Point, sharing your family's culture during a community meeting, and celebrating holidays.

Families may request to observe their child's class. We ask that you wait until after the first four weeks of school to make this request. These first weeks are an essential time for building classroom and school communities. Routines and expectations are set, as we emphasize how the members of a class will work together as a community. During this period, the presence of family members and other visitors can hinder group development.

Parent and guardian observations can be requested by submitting the request form in the [Classroom Observation Request Packet](#); email the form to [frontdesk@cmipcs.org](mailto:frontdesk@cmipcs.org) or drop it off at the front desk to the attention of the director of lower school or the director of middle school, depending on your child's grade.

The request must be received at least one week before the date on which you'd like to visit and be approved by the teacher or program director. You will submit three proposed dates and times, and the teacher will select from these. The observer must sign a confidentiality agreement before coming to the school for the observation. All visitors

must sign in at the front desk. Please see the [Classroom Observation Request Packet](#) for more information.

## Volunteerism

Creative Minds welcomes individuals, community groups, civic organizations, and businesses to volunteer throughout the year. There are opportunities to contribute in a variety of ways, including reading or presenting to students in the classroom (with an appointment), participating in learning activities, chaperoning, organizing beautification days, or translating. Contact Margaret Ward, director of grants and development, at [Margaret.Ward@cmipcs.org](mailto:Margaret.Ward@cmipcs.org) for details about the volunteer program.

If you wish to make a sustaining commitment, we encourage you to contact the [Creative Families Association](#) about opportunities to contribute to our school community.

## Wellness

Consistent with [regulations](#), our [school-wide local wellness policy](#) provides a holistic approach to wellness, including nutrition, health, physical activity, and environmental sustainability.

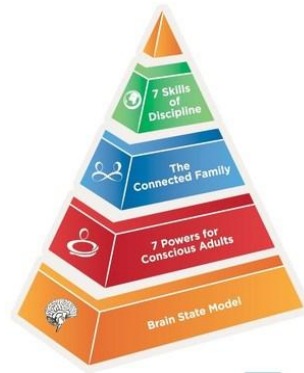
# Safety & Discipline

## Conscious Discipline

Creative Minds' education program incorporates Conscious Discipline, a research-based approach to social-emotional development designed by Dr. Becky Bailey. Fundamental to this developmentally appropriate approach is the concept that "discipline is not something we do to children but something we develop within them." Conscious Discipline can teach families and children to

- set and achieve goals together . . . despite obstacles;
- manage emotions, instead of acting out;
- set personal boundaries that encourage mutual respect; and
- resolve conflict in a way that creates closer relationships.

Conscious Discipline was created to support educators, parents, and other caregivers. It can be pictured as a pyramid with four stages:



**The Brain State Model** resides at the base of the pyramid. It's a framework for understanding the internal brain-body states that are most likely to produce certain behaviors in children and in ourselves.

**Seven Powers for Conscious Adults** is the second layer of the pyramid. Once adults have an understanding of the brain states, they need to become familiar with and wholeheartedly believe in the seven powers, along with their mission statements.

**The School Family** is the next layer of the pyramid. With an understanding and acceptance of the previous two layers, teachers can easily begin to implement the Conscious Discipline classroom structures along with connection tools and rituals.

**Seven Skills of Discipline** is the fourth, and final layer, of the pyramid. After mastering the previous three layers, teachers master the seven skills, which give them the tools to successfully guide students in disciplining themselves from within, rather than being disciplined by a teacher.

## A Restorative Response to Misbehavior

We have created a research-based behavior system tailored to our school's unique mission and philosophy. The system provides a structured and safe learning environment, while teaching students skills that will benefit them as they engage within the world beyond school.

Our approach is dedicated to building positive relationships between adults and children, while viewing each child as a unique individual. Whenever possible, staff deliver restorative responses geared toward providing a student with the opportunity to

right the wrong he or she committed. Student accountability is balanced with support from an adult, to prevent misbehavior in the future.

Restorative consequences are related to the function of the misbehavior, respectfully delivered, and reasonable in duration and severity, depending on the student's developmental level. These consequences are not arbitrary punishments but rather meaningful opportunities for students to make restitution and comprehend the real weight of cause and effect when it comes to their decision-making.

If expectations are continually unmet and interfere with other students' safety, security, and ability to learn—and we are unable to address a student's negative behavior through positive interventions and classroom redirection—families will be contacted and administrative disciplinary action will be taken. Because the Creative Minds philosophy views each individual and behavioral situation as unique, we do not utilize a one-size-fits-all approach to addressing student behavior; we tackle each situation by thoughtfully prioritizing the physical and emotional safety of all students.

We know that families play an important role in supporting positive behaviors at school and encourage families to be a part of addressing difficult behaviors as they arise. Our staff will document students' social, emotional, and behavioral challenges and communicate with families as needed.

## Disciplinary Procedures for Students with Disabilities

Creative Minds abides by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and DCMR Chapter 25 and Chapter 30 when suspending or expelling special education students. When a student with an IEP demonstrates significant behavioral challenges at Creative Minds, the following procedures will apply:

1. If the student's IEP includes specific disciplinary guidelines, the student will be disciplined in accordance with those guidelines. If the disciplinary guidelines appear to be ineffective when followed with respect to a specific infraction, or if there is concern for the health and safety of the student or others, the matter will be immediately referred to the special education coordinator for action;
2. Students for whom the IEP does not include specific disciplinary action may be disciplined in accordance with standard school policy related to DCMR Chapter 25 relating to each infraction. If the program director decides to suspend the



student, the special education coordinators will arrange for appropriate alternative instruction;

3. If a student identified as having a disability is suspended during the course of the school year for a total of ten days, the student must be immediately referred to the Special Education Discipline Committee (“SEDC”) for a manifestation meeting. The SEDC is made up of the executive director, the director of inclusion, the special education coordinator, and the student’s teacher. The SEDC will explore whether the infraction is a result of the disability. Special education services are not to be interrupted during the manifestation process or long-term suspension. If it is determined that the behavior was a manifestation of the student’s disability and the student is suspended beyond 10 days, educational services, including access to the general curriculum, must continue.

## Parental Rights & Responsibilities

Parents and guardians play an integral role in helping Creative Minds create a safe and supportive school environment. Parents and guardians have the right to

- be a partner in a supportive and safe school environment that fosters quality relationships, mutual respect, and effective communication;
- see their children experiencing success through meaningful and relevant curricula;
- feel safe; and
- be treated with care, cooperation, courtesy, and respect.

Parents and guardians have a responsibility to

- actively support and contribute to the development of a safe and supportive school environment;
- support and encourage their children to participate to the best of their abilities in all aspects of the curriculum;
- behave and communicate in a way that respects and supports the safety and well-being of self and others; and
- treat others with care, cooperation, courtesy, and respect.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to

- inform the school of any situation or information that is relevant and concerns their children’s behavior;

- encourage their children to follow the school expectations and Personal Goals;
- support their children in taking responsibility for their behavior by using problem-solving strategies;
- attend any meetings arranged by the school to discuss their children’s behavior; and
- work in partnership with Creative Minds to develop a safe and supportive school environment.

## Suspension & Expulsion

Suspension and expulsion are the school’s most serious disciplinary actions and will only be considered when serious or repeated conduct violates the rights of others to feel safe and engaged in learning. Creative Minds works hard to be a low-suspension and no-expulsion school by implementing consequences that give students an opportunity to restore their relationships—fixing the problem they have caused, rather than being excluded from a learning environment.

Our goal is to keep students in class and learning, and we believe that punishing students does not alter behaviors, but that interventions do.

Suspension is defined as the denial of the right of a student to attend CMI, including all classes and school activities, for a defined period of time, not exceeding ten school days. Expulsion is the denial of a student’s right to attend CMI, including all classes and school activities, for at least one school year or longer.

The executive director and appropriate members of CMI’s staff will determine the number of days for a suspension on the basis of the severity of the infraction, the developmental stage of the student, and any previous infractions.

In the event that a student is suspended or expelled, the student’s parents or legal guardians will be contacted and informed of the suspension and will need to pick up the student from school. If a parent or legal guardian is unable to pick up the student that day, the suspension will begin on the next school day. A copy of the suspension letter will be sent home with the student and another will be retained in his or her permanent school file. Parents or guardians wishing to appeal a suspension must do so by making an appointment with the appropriate leadership staff.

## Long-term Suspensions & Expulsions

Any student involved in a very serious discipline incident (i.e., Tiers 4 or 5, defined in [Appendix 6](#)) may be a candidate for long-term suspension or expulsion. According to the Student Fair Access to School Amendment Act of 2018, no student may be subject to an out-of-school suspension for longer than five consecutive days for grades kindergarten–5 and ten consecutive days for grades 6–12. IDEA discipline provisions are observed in cases regarding students with disabilities. Only the executive director will make the decision regarding long-term suspensions or expulsions. Expulsion is an action taken as a last resort. It is a consequence used for repeated offenses by a student who shows an inability to correct his or her behavior after repeated measures and options have been exhausted. If a student is under consideration for expulsion, the executive director will contact the parents or legal guardians to arrange a meeting to review the conduct that led to the consideration for expulsion. The student will be considered suspended until the expulsion is final. The executive director will then convene the school's Disciplinary Committee to make a final decision regarding expulsion and notify the parent or guardian by telephone and in writing.

## Appeals Process

Families may appeal the decision to expel a student through a formal appeals process that includes a hearing before an Appeals Committee, consisting of the chair of the Creative Minds Board of Trustees (or his/her designee) and two other board members. The appeal must be made in writing within 48 hours of notification of expulsion and delivered by email or regular mail to the executive director. The Appeals Committee will consider the testimony of all participants and render a decision within 48 hours of the hearing.

# Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy

## Objectives & Purpose

Creative Minds expects all students and staff to behave in a way that promotes an understanding of the Personal Goals outlined in the social-emotional curriculum and derived from the IEYC, IPC, and IMYC. These Personal Goals allow us to maintain a safe and inclusive environment for all students, staff, and other community members. Creative Minds expects students and staff to treat one another with respect and does not tolerate acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Similar to violent or highly disruptive behaviors, this type of conduct violates the rights and abilities of students to

engage in learning and makes it difficult for Creative Minds staff to adequately educate students in a safe environment.

Creative Minds has created a bullying prevention and intervention policy in order to protect our school culture and the safety and well-being of all members of our school community. Creative Minds staff will use this policy to immediately investigate reports of bullying, harassment, and intimidation and determine appropriate next steps for all involved in an incident.

## Definition of Bullying

CMI defines bullying as any severe, pervasive, or persistent act or conduct, whether physical, electronic (cyber), or verbal that:

- 1) May be based on a youth's actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, intellectual ability, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intrafamily offense, place of residence or business, or any other distinguishing characteristic, or on a youth's association with a person, or group with any person, with one or more of the actual or perceived foregoing characteristics; and
- 2) Shall be reasonably predicted to:
  - a) Place the youth in reasonable fear of physical harm to his or her person or property;
  - b) Cause a substantial detrimental effect on the youth's physical or mental health;
  - c) Substantially interfere with the youth's academic performance or attendance; or
  - d) Substantially interfere with the youth's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by an agency, educational institution, or grantee.

## Prohibition against Bullying

Acts of bullying, including cyber bullying, whether by youth, volunteers, or staff, are prohibited:

- 1) On CMI grounds and at CMI sponsored or related events on and off the CMI grounds, on any vehicle used for CMI business, at any transit stop at which youth

wait to be transported to CMI business, or through the use of any electronic devices owned by CMI, leased by CMI or used for CMI business;

AND

- 2) At a location or function unrelated to CMI, through the use of any electronic devices, including those not owned or leased by CMI, if the acts of bullying or cyberbullying create a hostile environment at CMI for the victim or witnesses, infringe on their rights at CMI or materially and substantially disrupt the orderly operation of CMI.

Retaliation against a youth, volunteer, or staff member who reports bullying, provides information about an act of bullying, or witnesses an act of bullying is also prohibited.

## Reporting Bullying Concerns

The Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy, and age appropriate versions thereof, will be distributed to Creative Minds students and parents annually through the *Student & Family Handbook* as well as the Code of Conduct. All Creative Minds staff will be trained on the bullying policy and reporting procedures annually. Our School Wellness Team is responsible for coordinating Creative Minds' bullying-prevention efforts. All questions, comments, and concerns about the bullying policy and Creative Minds' prevention efforts can be directed to our school social worker or school counselor by calling (202) 588-0370 or emailing [SWT@cmipcs.org](mailto:SWT@cmipcs.org).

## Reporting Incidents of Bullying or Retaliation

Creative Minds expects all staff members to report incidents of bullying or retaliation they witness or are made aware of. Staff members should immediately report all such incidents to the school social worker or school counselor. Students, parents, and guardians are encouraged by Creative Minds to report any incidents of bullying that they witness or become aware of. Reports of bullying may be made to the Student Wellness Team by completing an [online reporting form](#) or a paper form, or by calling (202) 588-0370.

Reports of bullying by students, parents, and guardians may be made anonymously, but disciplinary action cannot be taken by Creative Minds solely on the basis of an anonymous report, though such a report may trigger an investigation that will provide

actionable information. All reports received as part of this process will be transcribed onto a Creative Minds Bullying Incident Report Form.

## Investigating Incidents of Bullying

An investigation of an incident will be initiated no more than one day after the Student Wellness Team (SWT) receives a report of bullying and will conclude no later than 30 days after the receipt of such a report. As part of the investigation the SWT will interview any involved or relevant parties. Prior to the investigation of an incident, the SWT will take steps to ensure the safety of the alleged victim referenced in a reported bullying incident. These steps will be designed to restore a sense of safety to the victim and to protect him or her from further incidents if necessary. Examples of such actions may be to establish a staff “safe” mentor, create preferential seating, or to change the alleged bully’s/bullies’ school schedule when necessary. Once an investigation is concluded, further steps will be taken as needed to assure the continued safety of the victim from additional incidents of bullying or retaliation.

Once a report of bullying has been received by CMI, the following groups will be notified as needed by the School Wellness Team:

**Parents and guardians:** CMI will notify the parents or guardians of victims, bullies, and, if appropriate, witnesses to an incident of bullying behavior about the nature of the incident and the procedures and steps in place for responding to it.

**Law enforcement agencies:** If CMI determines that the reported incident may involve criminal activity or the basis for criminal charges, information about the incident must be conveyed to the appropriate law enforcement authorities after approval of the executive director or chief academic officer. As part of making this determination the School Wellness Team may wish to consult with either a law enforcement officer or legal counsel with the respective program director’s guidance.

Notification will be undertaken to ensure that services are provided to victims and bullies and to protect victims from further or sustained victimization. CMI will make every effort to protect the confidentiality of those who report bullying incidents.

The Student Wellness Team is charged with making determinations as to whether a reported incident constitutes a case of bullying. These determinations will be made in consideration of the totality of the facts and the circumstances surrounding the incident. If the SWT determines that an incident of bullying has occurred, appropriate

disciplinary steps will be taken in conjunction with the school administration to prevent the recurrence of an incident and restore the safety of a victim.

## Consequences of Bullying & Retaliation

CMI recognizes that for sanctions to be an effective component of a bullying-prevention plan, they must be applied consistently, fairly, and equitably. To this end, CMI shall ensure that staff follows these guidelines as closely as possible, while allowing for flexibility to adapt sanctions to individual contexts. Furthermore, to ensure equitability in applying sanctions, measures will be applied on a graduated basis determined by the nature of the offense and the disciplinary history and age and developmental status of the student engaging in bullying behavior. Consequences should be designed specifically to: (1) appropriately correct the bullying behavior; (2) prevent another occurrence of bullying or retaliation; and (3) protect the target of the bullying. Potential consequences of bullying include, but are not limited to:

1. Change in proximity
2. Loss of privileges
3. In- or out-of-school suspension

To ensure that single incidents of bullying do not become recurring problems, CMI's response to an active incident of bullying will always include the referral of both victim(s) and bully/bullies to the Student Wellness Team for remedial mental health services. CMI does not endorse the use of punitive strategies associated with "zero tolerance" policies when applying sanctions to an incident of bullying. CMI shall communicate to students these consequences that students can expect for participating in bullying behavior.

## Appeals

Parties dissatisfied by the outcome of a bullying investigation may appeal the determination of the School Wellness Team at Creative Minds International PCS. This appeal should be submitted in writing to the Program Director no later than 30 days after the initial determination. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Program Directors in consultation with the chief academic officer and/or executive director will conduct a secondary investigation within 30 days. This 30-day period may be extended by up to an additional 15 days if the Creative Minds International PCS indicates why more time is needed to conduct an investigation. Any decision to extend the appeals timeframe by 15

days must be documented in writing. Any party submitting an appeal shall be informed of his/her right to seek further redress under the Human Rights Act.



# School Policies

## Attendance

Our goal is for students to attend school on time each and everyday. To meet the instructional needs of all our students, we emphasize the importance of students' forming good habits of punctual arrival and infrequent absences. The District of Columbia Public Schools mandatory school attendance laws (D.C. Law 8-247) apply to students five years of age and older; as a public charter school, Creative Minds strictly enforces D.C. Law 8-247. Parents are held accountable for students' regular attendance to school. The Student Wellness Committee at Creative Minds International PCS developed the following guidelines in an effort to document tardiness and absences. Students who have 10 or more consecutive absences or 25 or more cumulative unexcused absences are considered to be chronically truant under the law and must be reported for truancy and investigation to Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) at 202-671-7233.

## Child Family Services Agency Reporting

All Creative Minds International PCS school personnel are mandated by law to report child abuse and neglect. If a staff member believes he/she has reasonable and probable grounds that a child requires protective services, they are obligated by law to report the suspected abuse or neglect to The Child Protective Services Division of the Child Family Services Agency (CFSA), via the CFSA 24-hour Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline (202-671-SAFE (7233)). CFSA is required by law not to disclose the name of the reporters to the family. It is the responsibility of the mandated reporters to support families and ensure that children are safe in their homes and community. At times, it may be challenging to apply the legal definitions and standards of abuse and neglect to a specific circumstance. For more information, please visit [www.cfsa.dc.gov](http://www.cfsa.dc.gov). For any questions or concerns, please contact the school.

# Children & Youth in Transition (Homelessness Policy)

Creative Minds International PCS acknowledges that homelessness exists in our community. The term “homeless” refers to an individual (including migratory and undocumented children and youth) who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth who are: (a) sharing housing due to loss of housing or economic hardship; (b) living in emergency or transitional housing (including being abandoned in hospitals or living in parked cars, parks, public spaces, substandard housing and/or bus/train stations); (c) living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate housing; and (d) students who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place, not designed or ordinarily for regular sleeping quarters.

Creative Minds International PCS will ensure that all children and youth receive a free and appropriate public education and are given meaningful opportunities to succeed in our school. We will also follow the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, including, but not limited to: (a) provide immediate enrollment of homeless children; (b) provide school stability for homeless students (i.e. allow students to remain in the school of origin and provide transportation upon request); (c) ensure that homeless students are provided services in such a way that they are not isolated or stigmatized; and (d) promote school success and completion).

Under federal law, children and youth in transition must have access to appropriate public education, including prekindergarten, and be given a full opportunity to meet state and local academic achievement standards. They must be included in state- and district-wide assessments and accountability systems. Creative Minds will ensure that children and youth in transition are free from discrimination, segregation, and harassment; More information regarding our full policy can be found on our [website](#) and will be distributed to all students upon enrollment and twice during the school year, provided to students who seek to withdraw from school, and posted in the school. Our school’s liaison and point of contact for more information is our school social worker, Jamia Burrows, who may be contacted at [jamia.burrows@cmipcs.org](mailto:jamia.burrows@cmipcs.org).

# Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights are:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) 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. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write to the School principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. 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 advise them 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 consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in 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. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education

concerning alleged failures by the *School District* to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
US Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-5901

FERPA requires that CMI obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, CMI may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised CMI to the contrary in accordance with CMI's procedures. If you want to limit the disclosure of directory information about your child, please advise the school by August 20.

## Nondiscrimination & Antiharassment Policy

Creative Minds International PCS is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each student has the right to learn in an atmosphere that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices.

**Harassment on the basis of any protected characteristic** is strictly prohibited. Under this policy, harassment is verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, or source of income in its programs, and that: (i) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment; (ii) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance.

Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to: epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes and display or circulation of written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group (including through email).

CMI does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, or source of

income in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

In addition, we do not allow discrimination of any kind in the workplace. We are an equal opportunity employer and also take affirmative action measures against discrimination in all aspects of employment and School business. This policy applies not only to personnel decisions, but to all aspects of the School.

We ask that everyone in the CMI community respect everyone around them—students, family members, teachers, staff, and management alike.

Any person who believes that CMI has discriminated on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, or source of income, or otherwise may submit a complaint pursuant to CMI's Grievance Procedures contained within this document.

## Students with Disabilities Nondiscrimination Policy

### **Notice: Programs for students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving federal financial assistance. Section 504/ADA defines a person with a disability as anyone who has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working. The school has the responsibility to provide adjustments, modifications and provide necessary services to eligible individuals with disabilities. Creative Minds International Public Charter School acknowledges its responsibility under Section 504/ADA to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a disability shall knowingly be permitted in any program or practice in the school.

CMI does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex or disability in providing education or providing access to benefits of education services, activities, and programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the

Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

## **Providing False Information: Penalties**

Any person, including any District of Columbia public school or public charter school official, who knowingly supplies false information to a public official shall be subject to the payment of a fine of not more than \$500, or imprisonment for not more than 90 days, or any combination thereof. The case of any such person may be referred to the Office of the Attorney General for consideration for prosecution.

# Family Involvement & Communication

We believe that effective home-school communication is essential to building and maintaining a strong school community. There are many ways in which families can receive Creative Minds news: (1) class newsletters; (2) notices sent home with students; (3) school-wide communications; (4) the school's website and social-media platforms; (5) periodic informative emails; (6) the front-lobby television display; and (7) the occasional emergency alert sent by email, text, or automated phone call.

While some of this news may be delivered in hard copy (via backpacks or postal mail) or be made verbally (in person or by phone), the majority of these updates are sent or posted electronically, in ParentSquare. Families are encouraged to make use of these resources and to inform us if there are any obstacles to access. Another way that families can help to maintain strong home-school communication is to alert us to any changes in contact information including mailing address, phone number, and email address. We ask that you promptly provide this information to administrative staff at the front desk.

It is important that families maintain open channels of communication with the school. Parents and guardians are encouraged to email students' teachers directly with any questions or concerns. During the school week, school staff will reply to emails within 24 hours, and generally not in the evening. Our staff, including our Leadership and Administrative teams, are available to meet with parents to address any concerns. These appointments must be scheduled in advance. We ask that you please your child's classroom teacher first, if appointments are for issues related to the classroom. If the issue cannot be resolved with the teacher, it should be brought to the director of the program. Contact information for our Leadership and Administrative teams is included in [Appendix 7](#).

# Appendices

## APPENDIX 1: Curriculum

### Early Childhood Program

#### International Early Years Curriculum

The International Early Years Curriculum (IEYC) emphasizes interactive, hands-on projects that spark curiosity, engage students, encourage teamwork, and make connections to children's lives. The IEYC taps into students' interests and strengths, developing their innate love of learning.

The IEYC units focus on the following targets (called the Learning Strands): Independence and Interdependence, Communicating, Inquiry, and Healthy Living. Early childhood (prekindergarten) classrooms at Creative Minds have the following characteristics:

- **Play-based learning** rooted in the IEYC themes, Learning Strands, and Learning Goals. Our teachers put research and understanding of best practices of play in early childhood to work. Following the student's lead, teachers engage with students around the themes they are exploring, with the goal of strengthening their social-emotional regulation and deepening their content knowledge. In play, students practice the Personal Goals, with special focus on adaptability, communication, and cooperation.
- **Extensive use of small-group instruction**, which provides differentiated learning opportunities and supports students in practicing respect, communication, and cooperation. In small-group work, students explore and express the knowledge and skills they are developing through the work in their classrooms with teachers and peers.
- **Project-based work** gives teachers flexibility to follow children's interests, while following the IEYC unit sequence and themes.



## Elementary Program

### The International Primary Curriculum

The International Primary Curriculum (IPC) provides a rigorous, thematic teaching structure designed to engage children of all abilities to be creative thinkers and problem-solvers in a globalized world. Instructional units bring together the social sciences and arts, enabling children to make links between the subjects in exciting and stimulating ways.

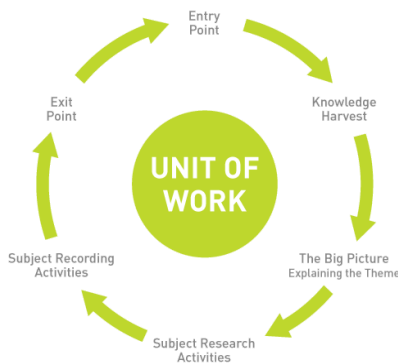
Our elementary (kindergarten–4th grade) program features the following characteristics:

- **The workshop approach to developing readers and writers.** In workshop, students are introduced to a new skill or strategy as a group, then provided with supported opportunities to practice the skill at their level individually and in small groups. The workshop model provides frequent opportunities for students to articulate their thinking, which reinforces the Personal Goals of communication and thoughtfulness.
- **Discourse-driven math instruction** that focuses on conceptual understanding and problem solving, beyond carrying out math procedures. Exploring multiple pathways of problem solving builds adaptability and resilience. Student debrief questions and exit tickets help both students and teachers to monitor understanding and provide next steps.
- **Extensive use of small-group work**, which provides for differentiation and supports students in practicing respect, communication, and cooperation.
- **Inquiry-based learning**, which includes project-based and thematic learning and a focus on research. As they practice inquiry, students engage in thoughtful learning processes, with teachers as facilitators. This approach helps students learn how to frame questions and plan approaches to solving problems. In navigating the uncertainty of less-structured questions, students practice adaptability and resilience.

### IEYC and IPC Units of Work

Each unit is distinct in the subject it studies but follows the same path in learning. Each unit begins with an Entry Point, which is an activity to introduce the subject to students

and get them excited about the topic. The teachers and the children then enter into a Knowledge Harvest to find out what the children know and want to learn about the topic. Then the classroom enters into a series of research activities. This allows the teacher to identify topics of interest specific to each student. After researching and learning, the classroom enters into recording activities. After five to seven weeks, there is an Exit Point. An Exit Point is an activity or concluding event in which children share their work with their classmates, teachers, and families. Again, the teacher and students are able to use a variety of activities to assess and reflect upon what they have learned through the Exit Point. The Exit Point also allows the children to share their learning with their families and the school community.



## Middle School Program

The features of the middle school program (5th–8th grades) include the workshop approach to developing readers and writers, discourse-driven math instruction, extensive small group work, inquiry-based learning, and arts integration.

## The International Middle Years Curriculum

The International Middle Years Curriculum (IMYC) is the extension of the IPC and mirrors its core values: to engage children of all abilities to be creative thinkers and problem-solvers in a globalized world. The IMYC continues the educational journey of IPC learners with higher order thinking skills. The curriculum design takes into account the unique developmental needs of students aged 11 to 14 and their growing ability to engage with material on a deeper level.

Each unit of the IMYC provides opportunities for students to work with and learn from peers, lead their own learning and take risks, tackle a wide range of self-directed investigation, experience security and familiarity through a consistent learning process, reflect upon their learning, and connect their learning to the world around them.

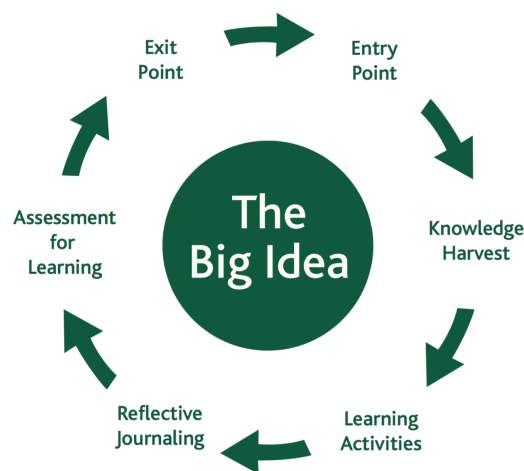
## IMYC Units of Work

Learning with the IMYC follows six-week units based on a conceptual idea, called the Big Idea. Students link the learning in their different subjects through the Big Idea, considering what they're learning from personal, interpersonal, and global perspectives.

Students reflect regularly by responding to structured questions. This process is called reflective journaling and is designed to help formulate personal and conceptual understanding of the subject knowledge and skills that they're learning about, linked to the big idea.

At the end of each six-week unit, students work individually or in small groups to create and present a media project that reflects their understanding of the ways their subject learning links to the Big Idea. This gives students the opportunity to express their own ideas through modern, creative media.

The IMYC Process of Learning creates opportunities to connect learning and develop a personal perspective; work with peers; take risks in a safe environment; and become confident, independent, and engaged learners.



## IEYC, IPC & IMYC Goals

The framework of the IEYC, IPC, and IMYC focuses teaching on three different types of learning: knowledge, skills, and understanding.

Knowledge	Skills	Understanding
<p>Facts that are important to know.</p> <p>This is information that we know is true, and the way we answer a knowledge question will be either right or wrong.</p>	<p>Finding out how to do things. Skills are practical and can be described as “being able to do something.” Skills take time to develop. We learn skills in small, progressive steps.</p>	<p>Developing a sense of the meaning behind why we know and do things. Understanding involves a combination of accumulated knowledge, practiced skills, and reflection over time.</p>
<p>“Tell me.”</p>	<p>“Show me.”</p>	<p>“Talk to me about that.”</p>

Knowledge, skills, and understanding are interconnected, building on one another in a continual cycle that promotes meaningful learning for students.

### Subject Goals

Subject Goals cover knowledge, skills and understanding. There are subject Learning Goals for the following: language arts, mathematics, science, information technology, design technology, history, geography, music, physical education, art, and society.

### International Goals

This pedagogical framework prepares students for success in a global society by developing their sense of international mindedness. Our child-friendly definition of international mindedness at Creative Minds encapsulates our international goals: “I am becoming a thoughtful global citizen through learning deeply about myself and others.”

## Personal Goals & Dispositions

For our students to be ready to participate in a global society, they will require more than academic skills. The Personal Goals aim to develop character and attitudes rather than Knowledge, Skills, and Understanding. Students will need strong social and emotional intelligence in order to navigate an increasingly diverse, global society. We teach and explore the Personal Goals and Dispositions emphasized in the IEYC, IPC and IMYC. We thoughtfully create developmentally appropriate opportunities for our students to practice these traits throughout the school day and year. This is how we define the Personal Goals at Creative Minds:

- **Adaptable:** We are okay with change. We are able to change our actions or attitude to fit new situations.
- **Communicator:** We share and let others share their ideas. We can express ourselves in a variety of ways, with different types of people.
- **Collaborator:** We work together and support each other to achieve a goal. We understand that everyone can contribute something different when working together.
- **Empathetic:** We are aware of, perceive, and are sensitive to the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of others.
- **Integrity:** We are honest and we help others. We have strong moral principles, and we act on them to improve the lives of others.
- **Resilient:** We try again, even when it is hard. We handle disappointments with maturity and continue to work toward our goals despite setbacks.
- **Respectful:** We treat others the way we want to be treated. We learn about and accept one another's differences with kindness.
- **Thinker:** We think about what we have learned and how it affects ourselves and others. We reflect on our strengths and weaknesses to identify ways to better ourselves.

The Personal Goals and Dispositions guide staff and students in a school-wide, proactive personal-goals development program during morning circles and middle school advisory.

Each month our entire community explores, in depth, what it means to show one of the following traits: Adaptable, Communicator, Collaborator, Empathetic, Integrity, Resilient, Respectful, and Thinker. These Personal Goals help our students and staff to achieve our mission of international mindedness by helping them grow from a self-centered view of the world to a more interconnected and globally aware mindset. While increasing their own sense of self, students also develop their respect and appreciation for the viewpoints of others.

Teachers embed these Personal Goals and Dispositions within academic instruction, and acknowledge examples of community members displaying Personal Goals. Our teachers take care to use various community and relationship-building techniques that involve students in decision-making. These proactive approaches decrease behaviors that detract from an engaging learning environment while promoting positive social-emotional dispositions.

## Common Core English-Language Arts and Math

Our literacy and math goals are based on the National Common Core Standards. Strong literacy skills are imperative to academic success, and our program focuses on all students' developing strong reading and writing skills. Our mathematics curriculum and instructional materials foster deep conceptual understanding required for successful future learning in upper grades.

In addition to offering students a small class size for all subjects, we further individualize literacy and mathematics instruction by implementing even smaller group sizes on the basis of ongoing assessments administered throughout the school year. Students are grouped on the basis of their strengths and areas of growth. They receive targeted instruction that maximizes their learning opportunities. Knowing that students will rely for years to come on their foundational skills in literacy and math, we support students in making progress toward individual academic goals, while meeting or exceeding national standards.

## Global Languages

To prepare students with the skills required to engage successfully in a globalized world, we offer students arts-integrated global language classes. Students receive instruction in Spanish and Mandarin from prekindergarten through 4th grade. From 5th through 8th grades, students specialize in one language in order to achieve higher levels of proficiency.

## APPENDIX 2: Extended Creative Day

Our auxiliary program, Extended Creative Day (ECD), includes before- and after-school activities.

The goal of our ECD program is to provide Creative Minds students with a safe, healthy environment in which they can continue to learn, grow, and experience enrichment activities aligned with their interests.

We're excited to announce that in 2022–23, [AlphaBEST](#) will be our partner in ECD.

### Before School

#### **Prekindergarten through 8th Grade**

Our Before School program offers families the convenience of early drop-off in the morning. Before School takes place between 7:30 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. Students attending Before School play games, read, and have breakfast before school begins.

Before School begins on the first day of school. Please note that we do not offer a per-diem rate for Before School. If you need to drop off your child before 8:15 a.m., you must enroll in a monthly Before School plan.

### After School

#### **Prekindergarten through 4th Grade**

Our After School program runs from 3:30 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. and provides students with homework supervision and a nutritious snack, as well as indoor and outdoor (weather permitting) free play. Students may participate in informal activities such as art, coding, robotics, sign language and more while enjoying social interactions with their friends and academic reinforcement from our talented staff members.

After School begins on the first day of school for students in Kindergarten through 4th grade. Prekindergarten students have a modified schedule during the first week of school and begin After School during the second week, September 6, 2022.



## 5th through 8th Grades

The ECD program for middle school has been designed to allow our oldest students the opportunity to make choices and exercise leadership and self-direction. Our goal is to provide a safe, healthy environment for continued learning, exploring interests, and developing skills.

Students will have a menu of options each day, and may include intramural sports, athletics, coding, performing arts, and homework help and tutoring.

## Enrollment

Enrollment for Before School takes place in August through [an online process](#).

See our [website](#) for current prices and available discounts. The monthly price is calculated by taking into account that some months have more school days than others and represents an average over the ten months of the school year.

## Payment

Payment for ECD is automatically billed and collected at the beginning of each month. When enrolling in ECD you must provide either credit card or bank-transfer information.

If the selected payment method fails or is rejected, a reminder is sent, and families then have five (5) days to pay the invoice. If after five (5) days an invoice remains unpaid, your child/ren will be terminated until payment in full is received. Late fees may also be assessed.

If you are experiencing financial hardship and need to discuss payment options, please contact our ECD coordinator, Shannon Smith, at [Shannon.Smith@cmipcs.org](mailto:Shannon.Smith@cmipcs.org).

## Withdrawal

If you wish to withdraw your child from ECD, you must provide written notice at least two weeks before the end of the month to cancel your enrollment for the next month.

## Childcare on Parent-Teacher Conference Days

Students enrolled in part-time or full-time After School qualify for childcare at no additional cost on the days of parent-teacher conferences. Families participating in After School for the entire school year must register each semester.

## Childcare on Friday Afternoons

Each Friday, students are dismissed at 12:30 p.m. in lower school and 12:45 p.m. in middle school, and teachers have an afternoon of professional development. We offer a paid enrichment program, for all students, on Fridays, from dismissal until 3:30 p.m. Students do not need to be enrolled in After School to attend the Friday Enrichment program, however to stay at school after 3:30 p.m., students must be enrolled in ECD.

## ECD Policies & Procedures

### Policies & Procedures

At dismissal time, all students who are enrolled in After School are brought to a designated meeting place. At 3:45 p.m., students who are not enrolled in After School but who have not been picked up will be sent to wait for pickup near the front desk.

Students in After School receive a nutritious snack provided by our meal vendor. For more information about snacks, please see the school menus on the [Nutrition & Wellness](#) page of our website.

After School ends at 6:00 p.m. Please call the school immediately if you know you are going to be late; we are obligated to call the police if we are unable to reach parents, guardians, or emergency contacts and it is past the end of After School.

Late pickup, after 6:00 p.m., also requires that the person who picks up the child pay a fine directly to the ECD manager upon arrival. This fine is \$1.00 per minute (\$5.00 minimum), per family.

The following procedures will be followed regarding late pickup:

- **First instance:** The ECD coordinator will remind parents or others authorized to pick up the child of the program's hours and collect the associated fine.
- **Second instance:** The ECD coordinator will follow procedures from the first instance and inform the Creative Minds chief operating officer (COO), who will contact the parents to discuss the situation.

- **Third instance:** The ECD coordinator may, at their discretion, contact DC Child Protective Services and terminate the ECD contract. In addition, the ECD coordinator will notify Creative Minds' COO and executive director, who will follow up with the child's parents or guardians.

## Scholarships

We strive to make our after-school programs available to all students. Creative Minds provides as many ECD scholarships as possible to students who qualify for free and reduced-price meals. The Creative Families Association, our partners, and other individual donors provide additional scholarships to expand access to activities.

Students are nominated for enrichment opportunities and selected by school leadership on the basis of financial, academic, and social needs. If you would like your child to be considered for a scholarship, please contact the ECD coordinator. Scholarships are distributed anonymously to protect the privacy of students and families.

## Questions & Concerns

Please send any questions or concerns, including billing inquiries, to Shannon Smith, Extended Creative Day coordinator, at [Shannon.Smith@cmipcs.org](mailto:Shannon.Smith@cmipcs.org).

# APPENDIX 3: School Calendar

[Download a printable version of the calendar.](#)



## Academic Calendar: 2022–23

Creative Minds International Public Charter School

Released April 8, 2022 • Subject to Updates

*Each Friday, students are dismissed at 12:30 p.m. (lower school) or 12:45 p.m. (middle school), and staff have a half day of professional development in the afternoon.*

■ First & Last Days of School    
 ■ No School for Students    
 ■ Other Dates of Note

### August 2022

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

**15–19 & 22–26** Staff Professional Development  
**29** First Day of School  
**School Days in August: 3**

### September 2022

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

**5** Labor Day: No School for Students & Staff  
**School Days in September: 21**

### October 2022

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**7** Family-Teacher Conferences: No School for Students  
**10** Indigenous Peoples' Day: No School for Students & Staff  
**11** Full-Day Professional Development: No School for Students  
**School Days in October: 18**

### November 2022

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

**11** Veterans Day: No School for Students & Staff  
**23–25** Thanksgiving: No School for Students & Staff  
**School Days in November: 18**

### December 2022

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**23–31** Winter Break: No School for Students & Staff  
**School Days in December: 16**

### January 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

**2** Winter Break: No School for Students & Staff  
**16** Martin Luther King Jr. Day: No School for Students & Staff  
**17** Full-Day Professional Development: No School for Students  
**20** End of First Semester  
**School Days in January: 19**

### February 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

**20** Presidents' Day: No School for Students & Staff  
**21–24** February Break: No School for Students & Staff  
**School Days in February: 15**

### March 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

**10** Family-Teacher Conferences: No School for Students  
**School Days in March: 22**

### April 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23/30	24	25	26	27	28	29

**17–21** Spring Break: No School for Students & Staff  
**24** Full-Day Professional Development: No School for Students  
**School Days in April: 14**

### May 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

**29** Memorial Day: No School for Students & Staff  
**School Days in May: 22**

### June 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

**19** Juneteenth: No School for Students & Staff  
**21** Last Day of School  
**22–23** Snow Makeup Days  
**School Days in June: 14**

### July 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**4** Independence Day: School Closed

**Total Instructional Days:** 182

**First Day of School:** August 29  
**Last Day of School:** June 21

**School Day PK–4th:** 8:45 a.m.–3:30 p.m.  
**School Day 5th–8th:** 8:45 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Creative Minds International Public Charter School • August 2022

# APPENDIX 4: Creative Families Association

## The Organization for Families at Creative Minds

The Creative Families Association (CFA) promotes and fosters the education and culture of the students of Creative Minds International Public Charter School. The CFA provides school-wide and classroom-specific support (financial and otherwise) and outreach and communication to parents and guardians. The organization hosts special programming and events throughout the year. The CFA Board of Directors works with Creative Minds to set goals, strategies, and activities for achieving the CFA's overall mission and annual targets.

Creative Minds' awesome school community is a product of its enthusiastic and engaged families and staff. The CFA is an inclusive and open space for all Creative Minds families and welcomes all levels of involvement, from volunteering for leadership positions to volunteering occasionally.

## Connect with the CFA

There are many ways to connect with the CFA:

### **Email**

Families can ask questions, share ideas, and discover ways to volunteer by emailing [cmifamilies@gmail.com](mailto:cmifamilies@gmail.com).

### **CFA Newsletter**

All families are automatically signed up to receive the CFA Newsletter, which is sent every other week during the school year. Families that aren't receiving the newsletter should email [cmifamilies@gmail.com](mailto:cmifamilies@gmail.com) about being added to the CFA distribution list.

### **Join the CFA Listserv**

The CFA listserv is an informal space for connecting with the Creative Minds parent/guardian community. Listserv members can promote an event that other Creative Minds families may want to attend, discuss topics of interest, and even ask for babysitter referrals. To join the listserv, send a request to [cmipcsfamilies+subscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:cmipcsfamilies+subscribe@googlegroups.com).

## Visit the Website

A calendar of future events, the latest news, announcements, and much more are available at the [CFA website](#).

## CFA Google Calendar

Community members can sync their Google calendars with the CFA [calendar](#) by clicking on the + (plus) sign at the bottom of the page.

## Follow the CFA on Social Media

- Facebook: [@creativefamiliesassociation](#)
- Twitter: [@CFA\\_CMI](#)
- Instagram: [@cmifamilies](#)

## Show Support

Families can show their school spirit with what they wear and where they shop. A portion of all proceeds helps the CFA support families, students, and Creative Minds.

## Buy Creative Minds Merchandise

A shirt, a tote, a mug, a hoodie—these items and more are available in the CFA-sponsored [Creative Minds store](#). During the school year, the CFA partners with external vendors to offer special online-only sales of additional merchandise.

## Shop Using AmazonSmile

At [AmazonSmile](#), families can have 0.5% of their Amazon purchases support the CFA!

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way to support the Creative Minds community, at no extra cost. [AmazonSmile](#) offers the same low prices, vast selection, and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to the CFA.

At [AmazonSmile](#), families can select Creative Families Association\* as their charitable organization. Amazon will remember this selection, and then every eligible purchase at [AmazonSmile](#) will result in a donation to the CFA.

# APPENDIX 5: QR Codes and Links to Forms and Documents

<p><a href="#">Campus Map</a> Also available in the ParentSquare Resource Hub</p>	<p><a href="#">Academic Calendar 2022-23</a> Also available in the ParentSquare Resource Hub</p>	<p><a href="#">Paid School Lunch</a></p>
		
<p><a href="#">Campus Access Pass Request</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Unaccompanied Dismissal</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Early Release</a></p>
		

# APPENDIX 6: Discipline Chart

Creative Minds International Public Charter School Discipline Chart	
<p><b>Tier 1</b></p> <p>Tier 1 behaviors are those behaviors that are insubordinate or cause minor disruptions to the academic environment but do not involve damage to school property or harm to self or others. Tier 1 behaviors result in classroom-level disciplinary responses that may be elevated to administrative response if they are not successfully abated by the teacher.</p>	
Example Behaviors	Possible Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Off-task behaviors</li> <li>• Not finishing work or homework</li> <li>• Noncompliance</li> <li>• Inappropriate movement around the school</li> <li>• Using inappropriate language</li> <li>• Chewing gum</li> <li>• Littering</li> <li>• Bringing inappropriate items to school</li> <li>• Being late</li> <li>• Being in an inappropriate area</li> <li>• Inappropriate displays of affection</li> <li>• Communication with staff and peers that is not polite, courteous, or respectful</li> <li>• Unauthorized use of portable electronic devices during school hours (e.g., mp3 players, cell phones)</li> <li>• Unsafe movement around the school or AFRH campus</li> <li>• Leaving classroom without permission</li> <li>• Any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other tier in this chapter that is insubordinate or causes minor disruption to the academic environment but does not involve damage to school property or harm to self or others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Logical and restorative consequence</li> <li>• Verbal redirection</li> <li>• Teacher/student conference</li> <li>• Parental contact in writing or by phone</li> <li>• Teacher/Parent conference</li> <li>• Temporary removal of student from classroom</li> <li>• Loss of privilege</li> <li>• Lunch or After School reflection room</li> <li>• Other school-based consequences as approved by administration</li> </ul>



Tier 2	
Tier 2 behaviors are those behaviors not specifically enumerated in any other tier in this chapter that cause disruption to the academic environment, involve damage to school property, or may cause minor harm to self or others. Tier 2 behaviors result in school-based and administrative disciplinary responses.	
Example Behaviors	Possible Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Using computer / office equipment without permission</li> <li>● Intentional misuse of school equipment/supplies/facilities</li> <li>● Noncompliance with an approved dress code</li> <li>● Inappropriate use of CREATIVE MINDS PCS computer or network (restricted websites, offensive emails)</li> <li>● Acts of vandalism, destruction of property, or graffiti (tagging)</li> <li>● Sale or distribution of any item without authorization</li> <li>● Possession or distribution of obscene or pornographic material on school premises</li> <li>● Obscene, seriously offensive, or abusive language or gestures</li> <li>● Causing disruption on school properties or at any Creative Minds PCS-sponsored or supervised activity</li> <li>● Gambling</li> <li>● Leaving school without permission</li> <li>● Academic dishonesty, forgery, lying to or giving misleading information to school staff</li> <li>● Unexcused absence from class</li> <li>● Unauthorized presence in hallway during class time</li> <li>● Unexcused absence from school</li> <li>● Inappropriate or disruptive physical contact between students</li> <li>● Directing profanity or obscene/offensive gestures toward students or staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Logical and restorative consequence</li> <li>● Verbal redirection/reflection</li> <li>● Teacher/student conference or administrator/student conference</li> <li>● Parental contact in writing or by phone</li> <li>● Administrator/family conference</li> <li>● Temporary removal of student from Classroom</li> <li>● Other school-based consequences as approved by administration</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Behavior contract</li> <li>● Individual behavior chart with individualized incentives</li> <li>● Behavior Intervention Plan</li> <li>● Consider referral for counseling</li> <li>● Environmental supports (stress ball, manipulative, seating alternatives)</li> <li>● Reinforce replacement behavior</li> <li>● Modified schedule</li> <li>● Teaching new coping strategies (breathing, “stop and think”)</li> <li>● Restorative Circles</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Throwing objects that may cause injury or damage property</li> <li>● Any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other tier in this chapter that causes disruption to the academic environment, involves damage to school property, or may cause minor harm to self or others</li> <li>● Acts of exceptional misconduct at other schools</li> <li>● Vandalism/destruction of property over \$500</li> <li>● Causing serious disruption or damage to school's computer systems, electronic files, or network</li> <li>● Documented theft of school or personal property without force</li> <li>● Interfering with school authorities or participating a major disruption of the school's operation</li> <li>● Tampering with, changing, or altering an official record or document of a school</li> <li>● Trespassing or inappropriate/unauthorized movement on AFRH campus</li> <li>● Possession or use of tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, controlled dangerous substances, imitation controlled substances, inhalants, other intoxicants, or drug paraphernalia</li> <li>● Unauthorized possession, use, or distribution of over-the-counter medication</li> <li>● Activating false alarm</li> <li>● Documented pattern of persistent Tier 1 behavior</li> <li>● Possession of tools or instruments which school administrators deem could be used as weapons</li> <li>● Selling or distribution of marijuana, prescription drugs, controlled dangerous substances, imitation controlled substances, inhalants, other intoxicants, controlled or drug paraphernalia</li> <li>● Possession or distribution of alcohol</li> </ul>	
---	--

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Possession of drug paraphernalia or controlled substance, irrespective of the amount or type, pursuant to the criminal statutes of the District of Columbia, codified at D.C. Official Code § 48-1101 et seq. (2001)</li><li>• Possession of fireworks or explosives</li></ul>	
--	--

Tier 3		
<p>Tier 3 behaviors are those behaviors not specifically enumerated in any other tier in this chapter that cause harm to self or others. In addition to lesser consequences, Tier 3 behaviors may result in either on-site or off-site suspension.</p>		
Example Behaviors	Possible Consequences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Verbal, written, or physical threat to person or property (including intimidating postures)</li> <li>● Communicating slurs based on actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intrafamily offense, or place of residence or business, including derogatory sexual language</li> <li>● Engaging in sexual acts on school premises or at school-related functions</li> <li>● Posting or distributing material or literature that is disrespectful, demeaning, humiliating, or damaging to students and/or staff. This includes posting material on internet or sending material via email or cell phone</li> <li>● Engaging in behavior that demonstrates gang/neighborhood crew affiliation (displaying clothing or gestures associated with gangs)</li> <li>● Hazing</li> <li>● Bullying or using humiliating or intimidating language or behavior including internet bullying</li> <li>● Engaging in reckless behavior that may cause harm to self or others</li> <li>● Extortion</li> <li>● Fighting where there is no injury and no weapon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Logical and restorative consequence</li> <li>● Verbal redirection/reprimand</li> <li>● Teacher/student conference or administrator/student conference</li> <li>● Parental contact (written or by phone)</li> <li>● Parent conference</li> <li>● Temporary removal of student from classroom (defined below)</li> <li>● Behavior contract</li> <li>● In-school disciplinary action (defined below)</li> <li>● On-site short-term suspension (defined below) with provision of appropriate intervention services</li> <li>● Off-site short-term suspension (defined below), except in response to unexcused tardiness or absence</li> <li>● Off-site medium-term suspension (defined below), except in response to unexcused tardiness or absence</li> </ul>	
		Supportive Interventions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Restorative Circle / Conference</li> <li>● Behavior contract</li> <li>● Referral to mental health and community resources</li> <li>● Teaching new strategies (breathing, “stop and think”)</li> <li>● Reinforce replacement behavior</li> <li>● Modified schedule</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other tier in this chapter that causes harm to self or others</li><li>• Documented pattern of persistent Tier 2 behavior</li></ul>	
---	--

Tier 4	
<p>Tier 4 behaviors are those behaviors not specifically enumerated in any other tier in this chapter that cause disruption to the school operation, destroy school property, or cause significant harm to self or others. Tier 4 behaviors may result in off-site suspension.</p>	
Example Behaviors	Possible Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Persistent harassment based on actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intrafamily offense, or place of residence or business</li> <li>● Lewd or indecent public behavior or sexual misconduct</li> <li>● Sexual harassment</li> <li>● Retaliation for reporting harassment and sexual harassment</li> <li>● Fighting which creates substantial risk of or results in minor injury</li> <li>● Inciting others to violence or disruption</li> <li>● Contaminating food</li> <li>● Possession of a weapon (definition below) or replica or imitation of a weapon (including water guns), other than weapons subject to the requirements of the Gun- Free Schools Act</li> <li>● Using an article that is not normally considered a weapon to intimidate or threaten another individual</li> <li>● Any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other tier in this chapter that causes significant harm to self or others</li> <li>● Documented pattern of persistent Tier 3 behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Logical and restorative consequence</li> <li>● On-site short-term suspension with provision of appropriate intervention services</li> <li>● Off-site short-term suspension, except in response to unexcused tardiness or absence</li> <li>● Off-site medium-term suspension, except in response to unexcused tardiness or absence</li> <li>● Off-site long-term suspension, except in response to unexcused tardiness or absence</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Restorative Circle / Conference</li> <li>● Behavior contract</li> <li>● Referral to mental health and community resources</li> <li>● Modified schedule</li> </ul>

Tier 5	
Tier 5 behaviors are those behaviors not specifically enumerated in any other tier in this chapter that are illegal or cause substantial harm to self or others. Tier 5 behaviors result in off-site suspension or expulsion.	
Example Behaviors	Possible Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Theft or attempted theft using force, coercion, intimidation or threat of violence</li> <li>● Assault / physical attack on student or staff</li> <li>● Fighting that results in a serious physical injury</li> <li>● Participating in planned group fight that causes major disruption to school day or results in substantial bodily injury</li> <li>● Using an article that is not normally considered a weapon to injure another individual</li> <li>● Use, threatened use, or transfer of any weapon</li> <li>● Use, possession, or bringing to school a loaded or unloaded firearm, as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921 (2000), including but not limited to pistols, blank pistols, starter pistols, revolvers, rifles, and shotguns.</li> <li>● Any behavior that violates the Gun Free School Act</li> <li>● Deliberate acts that cause severe physical injury to others</li> <li>● Assault with a weapon</li> <li>● Commission or attempted commission of any act of sexual assault or sexual aggression</li> <li>● Arson / biohazard / bomb threat</li> <li>● Any other intentional use of violence, force, coercion, threats, intimidation, or other comparable conduct which causes or attempts to cause severe physical injury, substantial disruption, or obstruction of any</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Logical and restorative consequence</li> <li>● On-site short-term suspension with provision of appropriate intervention services</li> <li>● Off-site long-term suspension, except in response to unexcused tardiness or absence</li> <li>● Expulsion</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Restorative Circle / Conference</li> <li>● Behavior contract</li> <li>● Referral to mental health and community resources</li> <li>● Alternative or modified schedule</li> </ul>

<p>lawful mission, process, or function of the DC public schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other tier in this chapter that is illegal or causes substantial harm to self or others</li><li>• Documented pattern of persistent Tier 4 behavior</li></ul>	
--	--



## APPENDIX 7: Leadership & Administration

We value the feedback, questions, and concerns of Creative Minds families. See “[Whom to Contact at Creative Minds](#)” for more information on whom to contact about specific topics.

<b>Executive Leadership</b>	
<b>Charles (Chuck) Jackson</b> Executive Director	<a href="mailto:Chuck.Jackson@cmipcs.org">Chuck.Jackson@cmipcs.org</a>
<b>Nayamka Long</b> Deputy Director / Chief Academic Officer	<a href="mailto:Nayamka.Long@cmipcs.org">Nayamka.Long@cmipcs.org</a>
<b>Craig Bednarovsky</b> Chief Operating Officer	<a href="mailto:Craig.Bednarovsky@cmipcs.org">Craig.Bednarovsky@cmipcs.org</a>
<b>School Administration</b>	
<b>Tsitsi Sithole</b> Director of Prekindergarten–1st Grade	<a href="mailto:Tsitsi.Sithole@cmipcs.org">Tsitsi.Sithole@cmipcs.org</a>
<b>Jessica (Jessie) Curry</b> Director of 2nd–4th Grades	<a href="mailto:Jessica.Curry@cmipcs.org">Jessica.Curry@cmipcs.org</a>
<b>Lorna Dill</b> Director of Middle School (5th–8th Grades)	<a href="mailto:Lorna.Dill@cmipcs.org">Lorna.Dill@cmipcs.org</a>
<b>Dr. Emmanuel Taiwo</b> Director of Inclusion	<a href="mailto:Emmanuel.Taiwo@cmipcs.org">Emmanuel.Taiwo@cmipcs.org</a>
<b>Operations</b>	

<b>Heather Hesslink</b> Director of Operations & Compliance	<a href="mailto:Heather.Hesslink@cmipcs.org">Heather.Hesslink@cmipcs.org</a>
<b>Margaret Ward</b> Director of Grants & Development	<a href="mailto:Margaret.Ward@cmipcs.org">Margaret.Ward@cmipcs.org</a>
<b>Shannon Smith</b> Extended Creative Day Coordinator	<a href="mailto:Shannon.Smith@cmipcs.org">Shannon.Smith@cmipcs.org</a>
<b>Jenn Andruzzi</b> Marketing & Communications Manager	<a href="mailto:Jenn.Andruzzi@cmipcs.org">Jenn.Andruzzi@cmipcs.org</a>
Other nonacademic questions or concerns	<a href="mailto:frontdesk@cmipcs.org">frontdesk@cmipcs.org</a>