



# **FAMILY HANDBOOK 2015-2016**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Introduction.....                                | 4 |
| Director’s Welcome.....                          | 4 |
| Mission and Vision.....                          | 5 |
| Values/Philosophy/Objectives.....                | 5 |
| Profile of the CRIA Graduate.....                | 6 |
| History of Costa Rica International Academy..... | 7 |

## ACADEMICS

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Graduation Requirements.....                      | 9  |
| Advanced Placement.....                           | 9  |
| Course Changes.....                               | 10 |
| Discipline  |    |
| CRIA Student Code of Conduct.....                 | 10 |
| Classroom Rules and Procedures.....               | 12 |
| Profanity and Vulgarity.....                      | 12 |
| Promotion of Illegal Activity.....                | 12 |
| Public Displays of Affection.....                 | 13 |
| Smoking and Substance Abuse.....                  | 13 |
| Suspension, Expulsion and Behavior Probation..... | 13 |
| Primary School Behavior Policy.....               | 14 |
| Assessment and Reporting                          |    |
| Principles of Assessment.....                     | 15 |
| Purpose of Assessment.....                        | 16 |
| Evidence of Learning.....                         | 17 |
| Grading Practices.....                            | 18 |
| Reporting Practices.....                          | 18 |
| Parent/Teacher Conferences.....                   | 19 |
| Examination Procedures.....                       | 19 |
| Failed Courses.....                               | 19 |
| Academic Probation.....                           | 20 |
| Homework.....                                     | 20 |
| Academic Honesty.....                             | 21 |
| Special Services.....                             | 23 |
| Standardized Testing.....                         | 23 |
| Internet Safety and Computer Acceptable Use.....  | 23 |
| Cell Phones/Electronics.....                      | 25 |
| Test Calendars.....                               | 25 |
| Textbooks.....                                    | 26 |
| Uniforms – School Dress Code Policy               |    |
| School Uniform.....                               | 26 |
| PE Uniform.....                                   | 26 |
| Field Trips.....                                  | 26 |
| Swimming Pool Attire.....                         | 27 |
| Parent Attire.....                                | 27 |
| Withdrawal Procedures.....                        | 27 |

## **ATTENDANCE**

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Attendance Philosophy.....             | 29 |
| Arrival and Dismissal.....             | 29 |
| After School.....                      | 29 |
| Late Arrival.....                      | 29 |
| Early Dismissal.....                   | 29 |
| Late Entrance.....                     | 29 |
| Absences and Course Credit.....        | 30 |
| 90% Attendance Policy.....             | 30 |
| Partial Day Attendance Guidelines..... | 31 |
| Tardiness.....                         | 32 |

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

|                                |    |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Back to School Event.....      | 34 |
| Websites and Newsletters.....  | 34 |
| Channels of Communication..... | 34 |

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Accident Insurance.....                | 37 |
| Emergencies.....                       | 37 |
| Dangerous Items at School.....         | 37 |
| Student Drivers.....                   | 37 |
| Parking.....                           | 37 |
| Harassment and Bullying Policy.....    | 37 |
| Leaving School Grounds.....            | 39 |
| Lockers.....                           | 39 |
| Illness.....                           | 39 |
| Lost and Found.....                    | 40 |
| Medication.....                        | 40 |
| Off-Limit Areas.....                   | 40 |
| Rollerblades and Skateboards.....      | 40 |
| Safety Guidelines & Safety Drills..... | 41 |
| Searches.....                          | 41 |
| Vandalism and Theft.....               | 41 |
| Visitors.....                          | 42 |

## **STUDENT LIFE**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| After School Activities.....                  | 44 |
| Athletic Eligibility.....                     | 44 |
| Valedictorian Policy.....                     | 45 |
| Conduct on School Trips/Activities.....       | 45 |
| Dances.....                                   | 45 |
| Field Trip Permission.....                    | 45 |
| Food Services/Lunchtime/Snack time Rules..... | 45 |
| Fundraising.....                              | 46 |
| National Honor Society.....                   | 46 |
| Parent Association.....                       | 46 |
| School Photos.....                            | 47 |
| Student Government Association.....           | 47 |
| Recycling/Water.....                          | 47 |

## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the 2015-2016 school year at Costa Rica International Academy.

The policies and procedures contained in this handbook aim to ensure a productive and effective partnership between school personnel, parents and students. The foundation of all of the policies and procedures is the desire to create a safe, respectful environment in which all parties understand and fulfill their responsibilities. Such an environment not only supports the physical well-being and academic success of students but also supports their continued development as young people of good character and high self-esteem.

The handbook contains a range of information from ‘big picture’ concepts like the Mission Statement to very specific details of procedures to follow in certain circumstances. Setting out the policies and procedures allows for expectations and parameters to be known in advance. However, it is impossible to have a written policy and a well-defined process to deal with absolutely everything that may occur in the course of human interactions in a school during any given school year. Ultimately, it is the CRIA mission and values and the desire for a safe, respectful environment underlying the written document that is of prime importance and that will guide our interactions in regard to the policies and procedures contained in the following pages. The administration, faculty and staff look forward to working with you throughout the year to provide the best possible education for your child. We are excited to be on this learning journey together.

## **DIRECTOR’S WELCOME**

### **A College Preparatory Day and Boarding School**

Welcome to Costa Rica International Academy (CRIA). There are countless reasons to be proud to be a member of the CRIA community. We are fortunate to have excellent facilities which include ample spaces to run, play and explore. Our spaces include a swimming pool and covered gymnasium, computer labs, a library and large, comfortable, air conditioned classrooms. Our dedicated and enthusiastic teachers hail from the United States, Canada or Costa Rica and are passionate about helping students to learn and challenge themselves. Our dual accreditation – with both Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges in the United States, and the Costa Rican Ministry of Education – enable students to work towards the goal of attending colleges and universities anywhere in the world.

Our commitment to helping students learn more about Costa Rica and the Spanish language also sets us apart– Spanish, art, music, physical education, Costa Rican studies, and many sports and after school activities are taught in Spanish. On the playground, you may hear English, Spanish, or one of the many other languages represented by students on campus.

CRIA teachers are committed to utilizing our incredible surroundings to enhance learning. Teachers seek ways to provide hands-on, real world experiences to deepen understanding of learning objectives. Students engage in geology lessons by visiting the caves at Palo Verde National Park; experience the physics of waves, water pressure and oceanography by conducting beach studies; learn about sustainable development by visiting the turtle nesting sites at Ostional, just to name a few.

Our boarding program is geared towards allowing students to explore all of the natural beauty that makes Costa Rica special – excursions are a part of the program with trips to places like Arenal

volcano, Monteverde cloud forest, and the Caribbean coast. Students learn to SCUBA dive, snorkel, kayak, surf and enjoy the splendor that our location offers us on a daily basis.

We have high expectations for our students – ethically, academically, artistically, and athletically – and our teachers, coaches and administration work hard to help our students meet those expectations. Small class sizes and caring teachers are a combination which allows us to reach students at their levels, differentiate in the classroom and help students to achieve their goals.

I am looking forward to working together with students, parents and staff to make the CRIA experience one filled with learning, wonder, and fun!

Sincerely,

Lois Maré

Director

## **MISSION**

Costa Rica International Academy, a U.S. accredited college preparatory school serving an international community, inspires a passion for learning and provides children with the skills, values, and courage to become responsible leaders in their communities and the world.

## **VISION**

We aspire to be a world-class international school with a culture of high expectations, high performance and accountability.

## **VALUES**

We respect all creeds, religions and points of view. The School does not undertake religious instruction nor blend secular and sectarian education. At the same time, moral values and spiritual issues have a place in the educational process. Values such as fairness, justice, compassion, honesty, and the “Golden Rule” are taught without a religious label. Faculty and staff conduct reflect these values and serve as models for the students.

## **PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES**

In keeping with the mission, vision and values of the school, we strive to:

1. Provide for the development of intellectual, social, aesthetic and moral values that satisfy the needs of our students;
2. Serve students from the expatriate and local communities;
3. Maintain high academic standards and foster a love of learning;
4. Provide a program that focuses on basic skills in English (literature, writing, speaking, and listening), math, science, history, geography, Spanish, physical education and the arts;
5. Maintain a structured plan for learning, which clearly articulates curriculum content;
6. Evaluate student learning frequently with a variety of assessment tools to ensure that each child is progressing appropriately;

7. Help students prepare for a world of rapid change in which continuing education, creative thought, the ability to use technology, and acquisition of skills are essential;
8. Value and teach cultural understanding and knowledge of the complexities of our world;
9. Teach and model virtues such as honesty, compassion, diligence, kindness, fairness, loyalty, and the “Golden Rule”; and
10. Prepare students for admission to universities in North America, Costa Rica and around the world.

## **PROFILE OF THE CRIA GRADUATE**

**Our CRIA students demonstrate a strong academic foundation in the following areas:**

- Thinking and communicating mathematically and scientifically
- Knowledge and inquiry processes that allow informed decision-making for the public good as citizens of an interdependent world
- Coherent oral and written expression in both English and Spanish, including listening, and speaking
- Responsible, safe, and effective use of technology for education and personal satisfaction
- Literacy in the areas of print and electronic media
- Organizational skills, study habits and effective time management
- Analytical and critical reading of a wide range of texts

**Our CRIA students are able to utilize the following thinking skills:**

- Specific elements of critical thinking such as discerning purpose, asking questions, challenging assumptions, and recognizing implications and point of view,
- Problem solving which includes defining a problem, considering solutions, and making right decisions, both independently and as a team member
- Innovative thinking that allows creative ideas to become reality
- Curiosity as demonstrated by a desire to explore, generate questions, and seek answers
- Self-awareness as shown through reflection and understanding about own learning styles, behavior, personality, and perspectives

**Our CRIA students are able to actively and meaningfully contribute in various communities by:**

- Working both independently and collaboratively
- Actively building community locally nationally, and globally
- Courageously showing empathy and compassion to others
- Demonstrating respect for people of different backgrounds, including ethnicity, learning differences, country of origin, race, nationality, sexual orientation, gender, or beliefs
- Respecting and caring for our planet through active stewardship

**Our CRIA students exhibit the following personal qualities:**

- Integrity through adherence to moral and ethical principles
- Accountability by accepting responsibility for his or her own actions
- Leadership as shown through self-discipline, communication and organizational skills, and initiative
- Adaptability as shown through adjustment to new environments, challenges, and conditions
- Commitment to wellness as shown through making good choices that enhance emotional and physical health

## **HISTORY OF COSTA RICA INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY**

Costa Rica International Academy continues its commitment to academic excellence we had under the Country Day School (CDS) name in Costa Rica for over 50 years. We officially changed Country Day School Guanacaste to Costa Rica International Academy beginning in August 2014, and we make decisions based on the needs of our growing school community in Guanacaste.

CDS was founded in 1963 as a private coeducational school, similar to U.S. college preparatory schools. The Country Day School San Jose campus grew from an initial 18 students to its present enrollment of over 850 students, representing over forty nationalities. CDS is recognized throughout Costa Rica and internationally for its consistent level of excellence in academics.

In 2000, CDS began the development of a second campus in the northwest province of Guanacaste about 15 kilometers north of Tamarindo which is now Costa Rica International Academy. CRIA has grown to 170 day and boarding students. About one third of the students are in Grades 7-12 and the remainder in Toddler through Grade 6. Typically about half of our students are from the U.S. and the remainder of our students come from Canada, Europe, and Latin America. Average class size in CRIA is 12-18, with a student to teacher ratio of 8:1.

In August of 2013, a lease-to-purchase agreement went into effect between the CDS founders and a group of parents. This agreement meant a transition for CDS Guanacaste from a for-profit, proprietary school to a non-profit operated school with a Board of Directors. Under this agreement, the major school attributes remain the same – accreditation by the Costa Rican Ministry of Education as well as Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges, the curriculum, facilities, basic infrastructure, and staff, all remain.

# ACADEMICS



## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

|                        |                   |   |
|------------------------|-------------------|---|
| <b>English</b>         | <b>4 credits</b>  | English credits may include English 9, English 10, US Literature, British Literature  |
| <b>Social Studies</b>  | <b>3 credits</b>  | Social Studies credits may include Early World History 9, U.S. History 10, Modern World History 11, AP US History, Modern Conflict, AP Comparative Government and Politics, Contemporary World Issues |
| <b>Mathematics</b>     | <b>3 credits</b>  | Math credits may include Algebra I, Alg. II, Geometry, Pre-Calculus, AP or Honors Calculus AB   |
| <b>Science</b>         | <b>3 credits</b>  | Science credits may include Biology, Physics, Chemistry, AP Environmental Science, Honors Marine Biology (must include a Laboratory class)  |
| <b>World Languages</b> | <b>4 credits</b>  | Language credits may include Spanish I, II, III , IV or AP Spanish Language and Culture, AP Spanish Literature or other Foreign Language course   |
| <b>Fine Arts</b>       | <b>2 credits</b>  | Fine Arts credits may include Art, Music, PE, Theatre/Drama   |
| <b>Core Electives</b>  | <b>5 credits</b>  | Elective credits may be chosen from previously listed courses and online providers such as K12 and Virtual High School  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>24 credits</b> | *Transfer credits from other institutions will be at the Director's discretion  |

## ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM

Advanced Placement (AP) courses are offered primarily to students in Grades 11 and 12 although in special circumstances, AP courses may be available to exceptional Grade 10 students. These courses are typically much more rigorous than a standard high school class and can require additional time outside of class to prepare, such as during holidays and over the summer break. Students seeking admission to highly selective universities will certainly want to seek teacher advice about enrolling in AP courses. AP tests are taken in May and in some cases college credit and grades can be earned for acceptable scores on these exams. **All students who sign up for an AP course are required to take the exam which incur additional costs (approximately \$135).** AP examinations are graded on a 1-5 point scale, with 5 being the highest possible score. Although any student may register to take the AP tests, in general, they are recommended for a student who has completed an AP course offered at CRIA. Most of the exams take three hours although some are only an hour and a half. Students electing to take an AP exam in an area where CRIA is not offering a class need to register with the Director by January 15. AP examinations that are taken in high school can enhance a candidate's chances of receiving admissions offers from selective universities both in and outside the United States. Uniforms must be worn to all AP exams.

## **COURSE CHANGES**

The master schedule is created each spring based on faculty expertise, graduation requirements and student interest. For these reasons, after course selections are made, course changes are discouraged. There are very rare and exceptional circumstances, however, which may justify changing classes during the first two weeks of classes during the first semester. All schedule change requests must start with the Director. Attendance in the student's original class is required until the change has been confirmed by the Director, and the student has received a new schedule. In cases where it becomes apparent during the first 3 weeks (15 school days) that a student has been misplaced or there are other extenuating circumstances, the teacher may initiate a request for a student to change courses. Consultation with the student, teacher, and Director must occur before the student will be allowed to change their schedule. Students must complete any work missed in their new course. After the initial 'drop period' of the first three weeks of a semester, should a student withdraw from a course, the transcript will indicate a 'Fail' grade for the semester and will not receive credit. Credits and partial credits are given at the semester. Any student who withdraws from a course during the semester will not earn credit for the dropped course.

## **DISCIPLINE**

### **CRIA STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

CRIA provides each student the opportunity to develop to the highest possible degree his or her talents, capacities, and interests in a school climate reflecting the high standards of good citizenship expected in countries around the world. Effective learning takes place within a positive program of discipline. CRIA's program will encourage the individual student to develop desirable qualities of self-discipline, will hold the student responsible for his or her actions under the supervision of school authorities, and will protect the student from the individual whose behavior or actions disrupt an effective learning program.

The responsibility for the basic behavior development rightfully belongs with the individual and his or her parents. Parents have an obligation to assist the School in promoting and maintaining positive social and moral standards of conduct both on and off campus. Ultimately students must assume responsibility for their own behavior. They are expected to obey all rules and regulations set forth in the CRIA Student's Rights and Responsibilities.

### **Student's Rights and Responsibilities**

#### **It is Your Right:**

- To be part of an environment in which you are addressed politely, treated with dignity and respect, and are free from discrimination.

#### **Your Responsibilities Include:**

- Avoiding language and behavior which is offensive to others.
- Respecting the rights of others.
- Using acceptable manners, and appropriate social etiquette.

**It is Your Right:**

- To be part of an environment which is free from intimidation, including all forms of physical and verbal abuse

**Your Responsibilities Include:**

- Avoid causing or encouraging bullying, teasing, harassing or ganging up on others.
- Showing due consideration for others when moving on or around campus.

**It is Your Right:**

- To work, learn, and achieve success in an environment which supports your efforts and helps encourage you to successfully reach your goals
- To be able to express your thoughts and to ask questions

**Your Responsibilities Include:**

- Arriving on time to all your classes with all necessary books and supplies, ready to work.
- Being cooperative and displaying a positive attitude.
- Completing all of your assignments and class work within an agreed upon time frame.
- Allowing others to speak and to listen sensitively to what they have to say.
- Accepting and giving opinions which are critical of ideas but never of people.
- Being intellectually honest - No cheating, plagiarism or copying of another student's work.
- Avoiding types of behavior which interfere with or discourage other students from learning effectively.

**It is Your Right:**

- To expect that all property and equipment at CRIA whether personal, shared, or belonging to the school should remain free from damage, abuse, or theft

**Your Responsibilities Include:**

- Treating all property with respect and using it in an appropriate manner
- To avoid using or touching property that belongs to other people without their permission
- Compensating owners for property damaged due to your inappropriate use

**It is Your Right:**

- To be able to spend your day at CRIA in a friendly, clean, and safe environment

**Your Responsibilities Include:**

- Placing litter in appropriate containers and cleaning up your table after lunch.
- Refraining from bringing dangerous articles to school.

- Helping to keep any non prescription drugs, alcohol, or tobacco away from the CRIA campus.

### **It is Your Right:**

- To be a member of a school that is highly valued by parents and the wider community.

### **Your Responsibilities Include:**

- Obeying all Costa Rican laws.
- Behaving in an appropriate manner when off campus.
- Not smoking or consuming alcoholic drinks off campus during school sponsored activities.
- Complying with the CRIA dress policy and generally behaving in a manner which engenders pride in our school and in the achievements of its students.

### **It is Your Right:**

- To have any disputes involving you settled within a reasonable time frame and in a fair and rational manner.

### **Your Responsibilities Include:**

- Allowing all members involved in a dispute to state their case and be listened to.
- An obligation to seek assistance from a teacher or administrator, if you feel that a dispute cannot be resolved amicably.
- Accepting with good grace the final decision of the arbitrating member of staff.

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

## **Classroom Rules & Procedures**

In line with their subject area, each teacher establishes and enforces standards for the students under his /her supervision. These classroom rules are expected to be reasonable and consistent with the general welfare, philosophy, and purposes of the school, and students are expected to follow the classroom rules and procedures. Students who violate classroom rules and procedures will be subject to disciplinary measures from the teacher. Continued violations may result in a parent conference involving the Administration, and additional disciplinary measures. Any student, parent, or staff member with questions concerning in-class rules should contact the appropriate teacher.

### **Profanity & Vulgarity**

Profanity involves using inappropriate language or directing vulgar language or obscene gestures toward another individual or group. The school views this type of action as totally unacceptable and disciplinary action will be taken.

### **Promotion of Illegal Activity**

Costa Rica International Academy cannot be used as the venue for the promotion and/or encouragement of illegal activities. The promotion of such activities by CRIA students will lead to suspension or expulsion from school.

## **Public Displays of Affection**

Public displays of affection should always be in good taste as a sign of respect for one's self as well as others and the host country. Students should not embarrass themselves or others by making public what should be private and personal. Members of the CRIA community represent various ethnic backgrounds and religious beliefs and some may be offended by public displays of affection. Additionally, younger students in our T-12 community may also be offended by such displays. Hand-holding is the only acceptable public display of affection on the school campus, school bus, and on school sponsored activities.

## **Smoking/Substance Abuse**

The possession or use of tobacco or alcoholic beverages by students is forbidden on any part of the school grounds. CRIA is a no-smoking campus. The consequence for the possession or use of tobacco or possession or use of alcohol is suspension. (This includes school-sponsored events when off-campus.)

The possession or use of harmful or illegal drugs of any kind (stimulants, inhalants, or depressants) on school grounds or at any school sponsored event will result in an expulsion from school.

## **Suspension, Expulsion & Behavior Probation**

**Suspension:** Grounds for suspension may include but are not limited to: stealing, cheating, bullying in any form, lying, disrespect toward students or adults, smoking on school grounds, abuse or destruction of school property, fighting; actions outside of school that would bring negative attention to the institution, or other behavior which is deemed to be improper or offensive.

When consequence is a suspension, the student will receive a grade of ZERO on class test or assignments on that/those days, with no right to make-ups. Should a suspension occur for non-cumulative reasons, whether the suspension is temporary or indefinite, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The student and the parents will be notified immediately.
2. The decision to suspend a student on a temporary basis will be made by the Director after taking all reasonable measures to gather the relevant facts, consulting with any involved teacher or staff member, and meeting with the student and parents.
3. Many college applications require the school counselor to indicate whether or not a student has had disciplinary action taken, including suspensions. CRIA will disclose suspensions if asked.

## **Indefinite Suspension**

Serious misconduct, or failure to fulfill the contract terms of behavioral probation within the specified time, is considered grounds for indefinite suspension. In such cases, the student is suspended until the end of the academic year, and may not be re-admitted for the following academic year. Tuition and fees will not be refunded.

**Expulsion:** Grounds for expulsion may include but are not limited to: continued repetition of any of the offenses listed under suspension; vandalism or theft; possession of, use of, or dispensing of any alcoholic beverages or any unauthorized drug on campus grounds; bullying in any form; physical

violence and carrying knives, firearms or other weapons; actions outside of school that would bring negative attention to the institution. Tuition and fees will not be refunded.

**Behavior Probation:** In the case of serious and/or chronic misbehavior, a student may be placed on behavioral probation at any time during the school year. Conditions of probation will be set in writing at the discretion of the school administration, in the form of a contract between the student, the parents and the school. The contract may include mandatory counseling as one of the conditions.

### **Primary School Behavior Policy**

These steps must be followed when an unacceptable behavior occurs.

**Step 1:** An incident report is filled out by the teacher who witnessed the incident, clearly detailing the occurrence. This incident report is sent to the office with the child after the teacher speaks with the child about the incident, choices, what he/she could do next time.

**Step 2:** While in the office, a behavior reflection form is completed by the child. This form should be attached to the incident report and sent home for parents to sign and return. The signed form will be placed in the child's school records.

**Step 3:** The Director and teacher will discuss the incident with the child. The Director speaks with the child in an effort help the child determine what better choices would be. Role playing is sometimes necessary, depending on the incident.

The Administrative Assistant or Director will contact the parents to notify them of the incident. Depending on the type of incident, the child will either be sent back to class, or will remain in the office to be picked up by their parents.

If a student is to be found intentionally hurting someone else, he/she will be sent home immediately.

**First incident:** The child receives a warning and a call is made to the parents. The teacher and the child have a discussion about better choices and conflict-resolution (if the situation involves another student.)

**Second incident:** A meeting is set up between the parents, the Director and the classroom teacher to further discuss the incident, locate triggers, formulate a plan for improvement, etc.

**Third incident:** In-school suspension

**Fourth incident:** Suspension from school for the day

If a child is sent home, he/she may not participate in school dances, activities, sports or school sponsored activities on that day.

After the fourth incident, if the child is sent to the office again, a meeting is called with the teachers and parents and a behavior plan is put into place by the disciplinary team. This plan is followed by all involved and may include consultation of a child psychologist. If it is found that the plan does not work, adaptations to the plan can be made.

# ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

The aim of assessment at Costa Rica International Academy is to provide a positive, continuous and supportive mechanism that promotes and improves student learning and achievement, guides instruction and practice, and evaluates program as well as instructional effectiveness.

## PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

We, at Costa Rica International Academy, understand that:

- The primary purpose of assessment is to improve and encourage student learning*  
Good assessment is based on a vision of the kinds of learning we most value for students and how they might best achieve these. It sets out to measure what matters most.
- Assessment works best when it is used to **inform planning and teaching and is a continuous, on-going process.***  
Student learning is best fostered when assessment involves a linked series of activities undertaken over time, so that progress is monitored towards the intended course goals and the achievement of relevant standards.
- Assessment should be based on an understanding of how students learn*  
Assessment is most effective when it reflects the fact that learning is a complex process that is multi-dimensional, integrated and revealed in student performance over time.
- Good assessment provides useful information to report credibly to parents on student achievement*  
A variety of assessment methods provide teachers with evidence of particular student strengths and weaknesses. Teachers then can report to parents on how far their child has progressed during the year, where they are compared to the relevant standards, and can discuss what the student must do to improve performance.
- Good assessments are directly related to learning outcomes/curriculum standards and are criterion based*  
Assessment works best when it is based on clear statements of purpose and goals for the course, the standards which students are expected to achieve, and the criteria against which we measure success. Assessment criteria in particular needs to be understandable and explicit so students know what is expected of them from each assessment they encounter. CRIA utilizes the Virginia Standards of Learning and the Advanced Placement course standards. Any deviation from these standards must be approved by the Director prior to instruction.
- Good assessment **uses a wide range of multiple strategies and tools which include assessment in an authentic/contextual manner***  
It is generally the case that a single assessment instrument will not tell us all we need to know about student achievement and how it can be improved. We therefore need to be familiar with a variety of assessment tools so we can match them closely to the type of information we seek.
- Assessment methods used should be valid, reliable and consistent*  
Assessment instruments and processes should directly measure what they are intended to measure. They should include the possibility of moderation between teachers where to enhance objectivity and contribute to a shared understanding of the judgments that are made.
- Assessment **engages the learner in the reflection of their learning and allows students to receive feedback to improve understanding***  
All assessment methods should allow students to receive timely and meaningful feedback

on their learning and performance so assessment serves as a developmental activity aimed at improving student learning. Assessment should also provide students and staff with opportunities to reflect on both their practice and their learning overall.

## **PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT**

**The primary purpose of assessment is to improve student learning.**

**Effective assessments allow students to:**

- Have criteria known and understood in advance
- Understand and learn from errors and misunderstandings
- Reinforce reflection of own learning and growth and partake in peer and self-assessment
- Gain motivation and confidence
- Take ownership of learning and personal development / become independent learners
- Build capacity to use assessment in their own learning / identify areas of strengths and areas for improvement
- Challenge themselves to synthesize and apply learning to new situations/problems
- Demonstrate competencies in the desired outcomes / highlight strengths

**Effective assessments enable teachers to:**

- Determine degrees of prior knowledge before connecting new learning
- Ascertain degrees of understanding at various stages of the learning process
- Identify and support learning differences and learning styles
- Plan the next stages in the learning process
- Monitor and modify our curriculum, our teaching and our assessment practices

**Effective assessments provide parents with:**

- The opportunity to be partners in the learning process
- Accurate information on their children's progress
- Accurate information on their children's strengths, and areas in need of support
- Information to assist their children in planning for the future, both immediate and longer term

**Effective assessments provide curriculum leaders with:**

- Data necessary for effective curriculum evaluation and revision

**Effective assessments provide other schools with:**

- Data necessary for admissions and grade/year placement decisions
- The opportunity to place students effectively within a learning continuum

## EVIDENCE OF LEARNING COLLECTED IN FOUR WAYS:

### External Assessments\*

### Common Assessments

**Grades K-2:** Each year, students write the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests in September and again in May for Reading and Mathematics.

**Grades 3-8:** Each year, students write the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) in September and May for Reading, Language Usage and Mathematics.

**Grade 9-11:** Each year, students write the PSAT test

**Grades 11-12:** Students applying to universities sit for the SAT in Oct., Dec. or May or the ACT in Oct.

**Grades 10-12:** Qualified students write a variety of AP exams in May

\*These tests are not used as part of a student's evaluation (report card) but rather as a way for the CRIA to make program improvements.

**Tasks designed** by a group of teachers, given to all students across a grade level or course.

Examples: Reading A-Z benchmark assessments, grade level writing prompts, common exams, rubrics

### Unit Assessments

### On-going Assessments

**Teacher-designed tasks;** given after a 'chunk' of learning has taken place, to assess achievement of unit standards. Examples: products, performances, tests, projects

At least 2 **unit** assessments are used per unit.

Semester Exams are given during the last week of each semester. All students will be provided with a Study Guide for each course for which there is a semester exam. No further assessments will be conducted the week prior to exams.

**Teacher-designed strategies** for collecting evidence of standards related to learning processes, affective standards.

**Examples:** observation of students working, homework\*, running records

\*Homework is assessed on completion/effort and is practice of content or skills learned in class or is used to prepare students for further discussions in class.

Guidelines for time spent on homework at each grade level can be found in the Family Handbook.

## GRADING PRACTICES

| High School  | Middle School   | Primary School   |
|--|---|--|
| <b>All High-School Level Courses</b><br>Level 1: 50%<br>Level 2: 25%<br>Level 3: 25%<br>Semester Grade: 80% course work from above + 20% semester exam | <b>All MS Level Courses</b><br>Level 1: 40%<br>Level 2: 30%<br>Level 3: 30%<br>Semester Grade: 90% course work from above + 10% semester exam | <b>3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> &amp; 5<sup>th</sup> Grade</b><br>Level 1: 35%<br>Level 2: 30%<br>Level 3: 35% |

Level 1 Assessments: unit tests, major essays/projects/papers, laboratories

Level 2 Assessments: minor quizzes, mini-projects/essays/papers

Level 3 Assessments: work processes such as homework, participation, organization

## REPORTING PRACTICES

|  |  |               |                          |
|--|--|---------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Primary School<br/>Grades Pre-K - 2</b> | Four full Report Cards per year; Progress Reports as needed.                                   | <u>Letter</u> | <u>Description</u>       |
|  |  | E             | Exceeding expectations   |
|  |  | M             | Meets expectations       |
|  |  | A             | Approaching expectations |
|  |  | NI            | Needs Improvement        |
| <b>Primary School<br/>Grades 3 - 5</b>     | Four full Report Cards per year; Progress Reports as needed; continual access to Quickschools. | <u>Letter</u> | <u>Percentage</u>        |
|  |  | A             | 90 – 100                 |
|  |  | B             | 80 – 89                  |
|  |  | C             | 70 – 79                  |
|  |  | D             | 60 – 69                  |
|  |  | F             | 0 – 59                   |

|   |  | <u>Letter</u>  | <u>Grade Pt</u> | <u>Percentage</u> |
|---|--|--|-----------------|-------------------|
| <b>Secondary School<br/>Grades 6-12</b> | Two full Report Cards per year;<br><br>Continual access to Quickschools. | A  | 4.0             | 90 – 100          |
|   |  | B  | 3.0             | 80 – 89           |
|   |  | C  | 2.0             | 70 – 79           |
|   |  | D  | 1.0             | 60 – 69           |
|   |  | F  | 0.0             | 0 – 59            |
|   |  | An additional 1 point is added to GPA for an Advanced Placement course (AP) and 0.5 points for Honors classes. |                 |                   |

## **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Once in October and again in March, Parent/Teacher Conferences are held for Toddler to Grade 12. Meetings with individual teachers can be scheduled to discuss student performance and progress. Individual meetings at any time with a teacher can also be arranged by appointment.

## **EXAMINATION PROCEDURES**

Secondary students participate in a culminating assessment right before the end of the first and second semesters.

### **Exam/Grading Guidelines:**

- Semester grades are given in all academic subjects (math, science, English, Spanish and Social Sciences) in Grades 7-12. Grade 6 students will sit for the Spanish exam only.
- Semester / Final exams cannot be given early.
- The only excuse for missing a semester exam, presentation or project due date is a doctor's medical excuse for a serious illness, and the Director must be informed at the earliest possible time. A make-up session for that exam will then be set. Students who miss an exam for any other reason will receive a score of zero for the exam.
- Students are not required to be at school during the exam period if they do not have a scheduled exam. Students may leave campus after the completion of their exam(s) for the day.

## **FAILED COURSES – High School Credits**

If a course is failed, it may be required to repeat for credit at CRIA. The transcript will reflect both grades with the most recent grade being used for the student's GPA. When deemed necessary by the administration for a student to retake a course online via an accredited school other than CRIA, the course would satisfy the credit requirement. However, the failed grade would remain on the transcript. The credit, if gained by another institution, would not be included in the student's GPA calculation but the credit would count towards graduation requirements.

## ACADEMIC PROBATION

Quarter and semester grades determine whether or not a student falls into Academic Probation. The Division Coordinators and the Director will review all report cards at mid-semester. If a student receives two “F’s” in any subject; one “F” and two “D’s” in any subjects; or a G.P.A. less than 2.0 on all graded subjects, he/she will be placed on academic probation for the following two reporting periods. A meeting will be arranged with the student, his/her parents, Division Coordinator, and Learning Support Teacher (where appropriate). Behaviors and/or actions that teachers recommend which would contribute to academic success will be discussed at the meeting. Students performing at a level that places them on academic probation will likely be recommended to have tutoring in the subject(s). In addition, the school may recommend for a student to receive an educational evaluation in order to better understand that student’s learning needs. A student must perform at or above the minimum standards of D’s or higher for two successive reporting periods in order to be removed from Academic Probation. A student who remains on academic probation for 3 quarters within a school year is not able to sustain academic success, therefore, he/she will be assisted in finding an alternative academic environment more suitable to his/ her needs. Such discussions will begin, for example, if a student remains on academic probation for three successive reporting periods following the quarter in which he/she fell into Academic Probation, or if a student repeatedly falls on academic probation even if the probationary periods are not consecutive.

CRIA will provide help and guidance for students on Academic Probation. CRIA recognizes that students must choose to behave in ways that will promote their own success, and at times CRIA may not be the right fit for all students.

## HOMEWORK

Educational research confirms that homework that is relevant, meaningful, connected to classroom learning and that receives timely feedback has a positive impact on student learning, habits of mind, and attitudes toward learning. Homework may include studying for an assessment, reviewing or practicing concepts learned in class, working to complete a project / essay / assignment, preparing for an upcoming topic by doing research or reading, etc.

Students should take care to record all due dates and details in their CRIA Planner or other time management tool to ensure that homework is completed on time. Planning for short and long term homework assignments is necessary. Students should arrange a homework area that is free from distraction, and should expect to spend the below amount of time on homework each night. Advanced courses, such as those at the AP level, may require additional time. Students should consider the homework requirements of individual courses at registration time.

Primary Grades 1 – 6: You can expect your students to have between 10 minutes to 70 minutes of homework each evening on average. Homework will not be assigned over a weekend. A general guide is as follows:

|              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Kindergarten | None            |
| Grade 1      | 10-15 minutes   |
| Grade 2      | 20-25 minutes   |
| Grade 3      | 30-35 minutes   |
| Grade 4      | 40-45 minutes   |
| Grade 5      | 50-60 minutes   |
| Grade 6      | 60 – 70 minutes |

Please keep in mind that these guidelines do not include additional reading expectations which vary by teacher.

**Grades 7 – 8:** You can expect students to have between 1 – 1.5 hours of homework per night on average. Homework may be assigned over the weekend for completion for Monday’s classes.

**Grades 9 – 12:** You can expect students to have between 1.5 – 2.5 hours of homework per night on average. Homework may be assigned over the weekend for completion for Monday’s classes.

If a student misses work because of illness, the student will have one day per day missed in order to make up work. Teachers will not take in late work except by prior arrangement.

An “incomplete” (“I”) will be given at the end of a marking period only in exceptional circumstances, such as extended illness. Students who miss classes because of suspension will not be eligible for an “incomplete.”

In the event that an “incomplete” becomes necessary, the due date for the catch-up work should be sent before the “I” is given. This date should fall, at the latest, within the first week of the subsequent marking period.

No “incompletes” will be given at the end of the spring term. If a student fails to submit catch-up material by the set date, the “I” for that quarter will be converted to an “F”.

All students are expected to comply with each individual teacher’s syllabus and expectations/guidelines.

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Costa Rica International Academy (CRIA) offers a quality education that not only ensures a strong pursuit of knowledge, but also cultivates the values of fairness, justice, compassion and honesty. To help advance the development of such values, an Academic Honesty Policy has been established for all students at CRIA. This policy exists to promote, uphold and reinforce values that are central to the tradition of excellence, and applies to all classes and activities associated with CRIA.

The purpose of this Academic Honesty Policy is to:

- Develop responsible and ethical behavior
- Reinforce self-respect, respect for peers and respect for the work of others
- Protect the integrity of the academic achievement level of all students
- Promote a high level of learning and an understanding of the inter-connectedness of human knowledge
- Guide parents and students in the traditions of academic honesty valued by the school
- To prepare students for academic honesty expectations in post-secondary education.

## **PROMOTING ACADEMIC HONESTY**

At Costa Rica International Academy, we believe that honesty is a virtue and that all members of the school community have an obligation to treat the work and ideas of others with integrity. Towards this end, the school commits itself to educating its community on what academic honesty is, how to be academically honest, and how to take responsibility for the representation of their own and others' ideas.

### **Practices Related to Developing Student Understanding of Academic Honesty:**

- In classes, students are taught how to correctly cite the work of others and are given clear guidelines for submitting work.
- Teachers work with students to develop shared understandings about cheating, plagiarism, and other instances of academic misconduct.
- Teachers educate students carefully about matters of academic honesty, including engaging students in activities that clarify what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it and about the difference between authorized collaboration and illegitimate collusion.

### **Examples of Academic Misconduct**

Academic misconduct, or cheating, includes, but is not limited to, the following examples:

- **Plagiarism**– knowingly submitting ideas or selections of passages of any length with the intent to represent this work as one's own by failing to acknowledge or seek permission from the original author. This includes copying or cutting and pasting directly from a web page or another person's work in whole or in part and submitting it as your own. A superficial change of wording or structure or conclusion is not sufficient to turn aside the charge of plagiarism.
- **Collusion**– one student permitting another student to copy or submit his or her work and failing to report this to the teacher. A superficial change of wording or structure or conclusion is not sufficient to turn aside the charge of collusion.
- **Examination and Test Dishonesty**- using cheat sheets or other prohibited items during a class test or examination; looking at another student's paper during a class assessment; providing another student, whether at CRIA or elsewhere, with questions or answers from an examination or test which he or she has taken and the other student has not (school-based; Advanced Placement examinations; PSAT; SAT; ACT; etc.).
- **Theft** – stealing notes, notebooks, reports, assignments or other work from other students to use as one's own or to share with any other user.
- **Too Much Assistance** – receiving too much assistance from sources such as websites, individuals (tutors, classmates, parents) or other services that offer answers or parts of answers to assignments.

## **CONSEQUENCES**

If a student is found guilty of academic misconduct, the following steps will be taken:

- He or she will receive a mark of zero for the assignment or test in question.
- Eligibility for awards will be under review.
- The respective teacher will inform parents of the infraction and the report will be added to the student's file.
- Each of the student's teachers will be informed of the infraction and will be asked to report any similar incidents to the administration.
- Repeat offenders will face more serious consequences, with the possibility of suspension.

## **SPECIAL SERVICES**

CRIA provides special services for students in the form of:

- Social/emotional guidance counseling
- College counseling
- Learning support instruction for students with mild learning differences

## **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

Kindergarten through Grade 12 students are involved in the school's standardized testing program. Kindergarten to 8th graders will take Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests twice per year, once in the fall and again in the spring. Reports are generated and sent home within three weeks of the close of the testing period.

Ninth, tenth and eleventh graders take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Tests (PSAT), a practice version of the SAT which is the most widely accepted college entrance exam. The PSAT also serves as the qualifying test for the National Merit Scholarship.

SAT is used by most American Universities and Colleges as an entrance requirement and as a predictor of academic success in university. Scores on each part of the SAT range from 200 -800, and are reported separately for the writing, mathematics, and critical reading sections.

SAT Subject Tests are one-hour tests in specific subject areas. Along with the SAT, many universities require three SAT Subject Tests. These tests are required by many universities and colleges as an indication of subject mastery (placement purpose) rather than an entrance requirement. These tests are administered at the same time and location as the SAT. A student may elect to take one, two or three SAT Subject Tests on a single date, but the SAT and SAT Subject Tests may not be taken together.

ACT (American College Test) is required by some U.S. colleges. Students should check carefully the catalog of each prospective college to determine the exams required. The ACT gives sub-scores from 36 in English, mathematics, natural science, social studies, and a composite score. The tests are 2 hours and 40 min. Students should seek advice from the counselor about which tests to take and when to take them.

## **INTERNET SAFETY AND COMPUTER ACCEPTABLE USE**

1. The computer network at CRIA is provided to students and staff for educational and research purposes.
2. CRIA is not responsible for any delays, non-delivery of e-mail, or any loss of data as a result of using the Internet.
3. The use of the Internet is a privilege. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with the use of computer systems will have his/her computer access severely limited.
4. The School has no responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the Internet. The Internet is unregulated and all of the information found on the Internet has not been verified for accuracy. Each user must exercise critical thinking skills when using Internet resources as source material for schoolwork. The School system will not be held responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained from the Internet.

5. Users should realize that email and social media is not private. Students are cautioned not to include anything in a computer message that they would not want made public.
6. Each user is expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include being polite, using appropriate language (no profanity, obscenity or vulgarity), and not disrupting network use by other users.
7. Students should not reveal any personal information (description, telephone numbers, address, etc.) about themselves or other students over the Internet. They should not contact anyone they have met using Internet resources, without the knowledge and permission of their parents.
8. Loading software and/or files onto a school computer or network by a student without the permission of the school network supervisor is prohibited.
9. Students should not access sites or send material over the network that contains obscene, abusive, threatening, or illegal material. Users should not deliberately use the computer to annoy or harass others with language, images or threats.
10. A filter is in place to eliminate objectionable sites. If a student discovers inappropriate material during a routine search that was not recognized by the filter, he/she should notify the teacher immediately.
11. The Director authorizes all web pages that represent the school. Students may design and publish web pages through the school network as part of classroom instructional activities. These pages may be published through the school Intranet or on password-protected pages on the Internet.
12. Students may not check their e-mail when it interferes with instructional time.
13. Vandalism of computer hardware will result in disciplinary action. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy the school's equipment or materials, data, and/or the computer/Internet network. Vandalism includes, but is not limited to, removing a mouse ball and/ or mouse, placing foreign objects such as paperclips, paper, or gum in hardware, and removing or altering placement of keyboard keys.
14. Vandalism of computer software will also result in disciplinary action. Software vandalism includes, but is not limited to, deliberate production or introduction of computer viruses, modifying passwords, tampering with the Internet filtering software, using passwords and logins assigned to other students or staff, accessing and/or modifying information to which the computer user has not been given appropriate authorization.
15. Student vandals will be required to compensate the school for any expenses or costs incurred relating to or arising out of such vandalism.
16. If the student identifies or perceives a security problem (for example, accessing files that should not be available), the student should immediately notify the Director, his/her designee or other appropriate staff. The student must not demonstrate the problem to other students.
17. Food and beverages are not allowed in the Computer Lab.
18. If a computer in one of the labs is found to be inoperable or is in need of maintenance, the student should inform the teacher and the teacher will contact the school secretary who will call IT support for assistance. Students should not attempt to fix computer issues.
19. Students are not allowed inside the Computer Lab without the supervision of a teacher.

## CELL PHONES/ELECTRONICS

*Cell phones/electronic devices may serve as an outstanding instructional tool and learning resource if used appropriately. We encourage our staff members and our students to use electronics and other 21<sup>st</sup> century devices to supplement instruction and learning. In order to preserve the teaching and learning environment, this document is to clarify the cell phone/electronic devices policy for CRIA. In order to preserve a constructive learning environment, the policy on cell phones and is:*

- Cell phones/electronic devices may only be used for educational purposes in the classroom setting. If a student wishes to use their device for non-educational purposes, they may do so before the first period class, between classes, snack, lunch, and after school.
- Cell phones/electronic devices must be turned OFF and put away before you enter any classroom, office, library, and locker room. Students may power their phones at the request of the classroom teacher.
- Once inside any of the aforementioned locations, students must store their cell phones/electronic device in a location (ie-book bag) that is not visible to the teacher or other students, even though they are OFF. Phones are NOT to be stored in desks. Students may use the device with teacher approval.
- If a cell phone/ electronic device rings, vibrates, or is used for any reason without teacher permission, or is visible anytime during class time or if you are caught using it on campus during class time, a staff member may confiscate the device.
- Refusal to surrender your phone when asked is considered in violation of the CRIA Code of Conduct. This violation may result in disciplinary consequences, including suspension. Parents will be contacted.

First Offense ~ the device will be held by the classroom teacher until the end of the school day and a lunch or after school detention will be issued. Students may pick up their phone at the end of the school day.

Second Offense ~ the device will remain in the main office until the end of the following school day. Students may pick up their phone at the end of the school day.

Third Offense ~ the device will remain in the main office for one week. The Administrator will issue an in-school suspension. Phone may only be picked up by a parent.

The staff of Costa Rica International Academy requests your FULL co-operation with our policy. You can contact your child via their cell phone during snack and lunch. In the event of an immediate emergency, please call the main school line at 2654-5042.

## TEST CALENDARS

Teachers schedule tests collaboratively. Although difficult to schedule, every attempt will be made to limit the number of major tests to two per day. When a student is scheduled for 3 or more tests/major projects in a day, the student should report that conflict to the teachers immediately and tests will be rescheduled.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

The school makes every attempt to provide textbooks in good condition. When a textbook is issued, students must write their complete names in ink on the inside cover. Students are responsible for this book and are expected to keep it in good condition. If students lose a textbook, students must show a receipt from the Business Manager for the replacement cost of the textbook before another textbook is issued.

If a book is turned in damaged, but still usable, students have to pay a percentage of the cost of a new book, since the book will now have to be replaced sooner than expected. The Division Coordinator will decide what percentage students will pay based on the condition of the book.

Students will not receive a report card at the end of the year until all books are returned in good condition and any lost or damaged books are paid for.

## **UNIFORMS – SCHOOL DRESS CODE POLICY**

### **School Uniform**

The school uniform is required. We find that in many respects it encourages a sense of equality and fraternity in a school having such a variety of cultures. All students must wear the CRIA polo shirt and navy blue bottoms that must be purchased from the School store. Students may choose to wear the tan or red polo shirt although they must possess at least one red polo. Special days may require red polo shirts. All shirts must have the uniform logo. Students who participate in sports during lunch should wear a T-shirt for that activity, and then put the uniform shirt back on for class. T-shirts should be the same as those approved for P.E. classes. Boys and girls should have neat hairstyles. Only moderate jewelry and cosmetics are allowed. Students not in compliance with the Uniform Policy will be given a lunchtime detention. Three detentions in one quarter will result in the student being sent home for the appropriate uniform.

Students must wear sneakers, athletic shoes, or sandals. Flip flops are prohibited for safety reasons. Students may wear sweaters, jackets, or sweatshirts that are navy blue or those of CRIA. Hats or other headgear are not permitted in classrooms. Any T-shirts worn under the polo shirt should be short-sleeved, solid color in white or blue or official school T-shirts. Students not in compliance with the Uniform Policy will be given a lunchtime detention. Three detentions in one quarter will result in the student being sent home for the appropriate uniform.

### **PE Uniform**

In addition, all CRIA students are required to have a Physical Education (PE) uniform that consists of red shorts and a tan T-shirt with the school logo on its front. All uniforms must be purchased by the family at the school store.

### **Field Trips**

While on field trips that involve water (beach, boat, etc.), all secondary students are required to wear shorts (board shorts or others). No bikini bottoms are allowed. When indicated, students may be requested to wear clothing other than the school uniform while on field trips. In these cases, clothing should be modest. No spaghetti strapped tops or mid-riff bearing shirts are allowed. Clothing may not display logos that are inappropriate for a T-12 academic setting.

### **Swimming Pool Attire**

For swimming classes, female students must wear a one piece, a tankini, or a rash guard. A swim cap and goggles are also mandatory for all students involved in the swim classes whether during school or as part of the After School Activities program.

### **Parent Attire**

Appropriate dress is required of all parents while on the school campus. Parents may not enter campus without a shirt/shorts/dress and shoes.

## **WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES**

Before a student can be formally withdrawn from CRIA, and before official transcripts and records of work completed during the student's stay at the school can be issued, the following procedure must be followed:

- Parents should fill out a Withdrawal Notification Form (available in the Main Office) at least one week prior to withdrawal.
- The Homeroom teacher will give the withdrawing student a Student Check-Out Form the day before the last day of attendance. The homeroom teacher supervises the student in obtaining the required signatures.
- The completed Student Check-Out Form should be returned to Rebeca by noon on the day of withdrawal. All items on the form must be signed before school records can be collected.
- If the withdrawal is at the end of the school year, report cards will be distributed by Rebeca after all signatures are obtained on the Student Check-out Form.
- Because student records must be recorded on transcripts and credits reviewed, official records may be picked up two working days after the last school day or arrangements should be made to have them mailed to the next school.

# ATTENDANCE



## ATTENDANCE PHILOSOPHY

The process of education includes a combination of instruction, classroom participation, learning experiences, and study in order to achieve the maximum educational benefit for each student. Regular class attendance increases the student's probability for successful performance and fosters the development of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility. CRIA is committed to working with parents to ensure consistent attendance for all students. Our students are an integral part of the CRIA learning community. Being at school and on time for school is important for the individual student and the class as a whole.

Attendance is taken at 8:00 a.m. each morning. When your child is absent from school for any reason please call 2654-5042 or email [r.zuniga@criacademy.com](mailto:r.zuniga@criacademy.com) by 8:00 a.m. on the day of the absence. This will allow the school to ensure all students are safe. To protect the health of others, if your child is ill for the day they are not allow to attend after school activities. **CRIA will not accept phone calls or emails excusing a student from school from anyone other than the child's parent or guardian.**

A doctor's note is required following an absence of 2 or more consecutive days due to a major illness, communicable disease or injury.

### Arrival and Dismissal

Students should arrive at school between 7:45 a.m. and 7:55 a.m. Classes begin at 8:00 a.m. and conclude at 3:00 p.m. Classrooms open at 7:50 am. If a Primary school student arrives at school prior to 7:50 am, they must be accompanied and actively supervised by an adult until 7:50 am when the child is sent to the classroom. Secondary students may wait in the Cafetorium or Rancho until classrooms open.

### After School

1. Parents of Primary students may collect their child in the designated hallway at 3:00 pm. If a student has not been picked up by a parent by 3:10, the Primary student is brought to the main office to wait.
2. Primary students participating in activities immediately following school should wait to be collected by the ASA teacher. Secondary students may proceed to the designated location.
3. No students should be on campus after 4:15 pm without adult supervision.

### Late Arrival

Students arriving late to first period sign in at the office and receive a pass for admission to class. If a student arrives after first period, the parent must contact the school to verify the absence. Students who do not sign in at the office and go straight to class will be subject to the consequence for skipping class.

### Early Dismissal

When it is necessary to pick up your child during the school day you will need to provide a signed note or call personally to allow your child to obtain a pass from the Main Office. The pass will need to be presented to the gate security personnel for exit from the campus.

### Late Entrance Policy

Should a student miss ten or fewer days at the beginning of any quarter, any coursework missed must be made up. Should the student miss 11-15 school days at the beginning of any given quarter,

the student has the option to make up any coursework missed, in order to receive credit for that quarter. Should the student miss more than 15 school days at the beginning of any quarter, no credit will be awarded for that quarter. A semester average may be awarded if the work is made up by the end of the second quarter of attendance.

## **Absences & Course Credit**

Because of the importance of attendance, the school expects students not to miss more than nine (9) classes per semester in any given course. Students who exceed nine absences **for any reason** in a specific class will receive NO CREDIT for that semester course. While the grade for the course will be displayed on the student's transcript, the corresponding credit will indicate 0. **Students who miss more than 9 days/classes per semester will risk losing course credit for that semester. This includes all absences due to illness, visa runs, family visits, travel, etc. The only exception is for absences related to a school sponsored event such as sports matches, Model United Nations conferences, etc.**

Special absences from school, when taken to accommodate a family's vacation plans, are regarded as contrary to the best interest and welfare of students and the school. Because such absences are pre-planned, the Main Office and individual teachers need to be notified a week in advance, when possible. The responsibility of contacting the teachers, getting assignments, doing the work and submitting it to the teacher rests with the student.

Parents and guardians are urged to arrange doctor and dental appointments, college visits, family trips, etc. after school, on weekends, during the summer, or during school holidays in order to minimize the loss of school time. CRIA has scheduled long weekends into the master calendar every month for these very purposes.

Parents must notify the school of an absence with a phone call to the Main Office at 2654-5042.

**The Administrative Assistant will contact the student's parents by email and telephone when a child has accrued 5 absences, and then again should the child reach 8 absences.**

## **90% ATTENDANCE POLICY**

1. A student cannot exceed nine absences per class, per semester.
  - Students who are absent will be permitted to make up work missed and receive credit for all work submitted. Secondary students are responsible to contact the teacher via email and/or access the coursework via Google Classroom. Parents of Primary students can contact the teacher directly via email.
  - In the case of illness, an extra class period is allowed for each day of the absence due to illness in order to allow time to finish the work.
  - The responsibility of contacting the teachers, getting assignments, doing the work, and submitting it to the teacher rests with the student.
  - Any missed tests/quizzes will be made up at the time given by the teacher.
  - Whenever possible, it is in the student's best interest to obtain work in advance.
2. If an absence is determined to be unauthorized (skipping), parents will be notified. Students will receive no credit for assignments due or assessments missed during the unauthorized

absence. In addition, students will be assigned a detention to make up double the missed class time.

3. All other absences will be included in the attendance record. Illness, family trips, early departure for vacation, late return from vacations, etc. all count towards the total. For example, if a child were to miss 5 classes due to illness and 5 classes due to a family trip, that student would lose credit for the course for the semester, because it is understood that attendance in school must be a priority and family trips must be scheduled during one of the many holiday breaks that occur within the calendar throughout the year.

4. A physician's note is required for any absence of two (2) or more consecutive days due to illness.

5. If a pattern of concern develops, such as repeated absences when there are quizzes or tests, the Coordinator may require additional verification to authorize subsequent absences. If it is a question of academic integrity, the student may not be allowed to make up a missed assessment.

6. On the 5th absence, the Main Office will send an e-mail to the parent/guardian and student indicating the severity of the situation and explaining the consequences for missing more than five blocks in any one class.

7. After the 8th absence, a meeting will be required with the parent/guardian, the student and the Administration (Coordinator, Director).

8. Once a student exceeds NINE absences (on the 10th absence), the student will receive NO CREDIT for the course, and this will be shown on the student's High School transcript. While the grade will still appear, no credit will be issued.

## **PARTIAL DAY ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES**

Students are not to leave the campus during school hours without written release from the Administration and parental permission. A student who becomes ill at school must see Rebeca and check out through the Main Office. For students who need to leave early for an appointment, a written note or phone call from home must be given to the office. Leaving school without permission will be considered skipping and no credit will be given for missed work. Students would receive a detention or suspension from school for such an act.

If a student begins the day ill, and later feels better and decides to come to school, the student must check in at the Main Office before proceeding to class. The student would not be allowed to participate in field trips or extra- curricular after school on that day unless he/ she had attended more than half the school day.

## **TARDINESS**

Students are expected to be in class and to Homeroom on time. A student is tardy when he/she is not physically in the classroom at the time the class is scheduled to begin. Teachers keep accurate attendance records for each class. When a student arrives more than 20 minutes late to class, the tardy will be changed to an ABSENCE.

- If a student arrives late to class with an authorized note from school faculty or staff, then they are not considered tardy.
- Students arriving late to class any time after the start of the class without a note are marked tardy and will be sent to the Main Office to get a pink tardy slip.
- Students with more than 3 tardies to any class in a given quarter will be required to make up that missed time with the teacher. The time will be arranged by the teacher.
- Students who continue to struggle to get to class on time will be referred to the Main office for further disciplinary measures.

### **Morning Lateness**

Students arriving late for the first period of the day should report to the Main Office to sign in and receive a pass admitting them to class. After the third morning tardy in a quarter, the student and parent will receive a warning notice. Additional tardies to school in the morning will result in a detention after-school or at lunch.

# COMMUNICATIONS



A child's school life is greatly enriched by a family that is well informed and active in school activities. We welcome your involvement and encourage close ties between parents and teachers. We recognize that effective partnerships are characterized by a shared commitment to collaboration, open lines of communication and a common vision of the goals to be achieved.

To support effective partnerships, CRIA communicates with families in a variety of ways.

### **Back to School Event**

An opportunity to develop new learning relationships and partnerships for the upcoming school year.

### **Websites**

- CRIA school website ([www.criacademy.com](http://www.criacademy.com))
- Quickschools - Online grade program for Grades 3 and up
- Google Classrooms – Secondary course websites

**Teacher/Student/Parent Conferences:** Fall and Spring

### **Family Handbook**

### **Emails/Phone**

**Primary School: 4 Report Cards per year; Progress Reports as needed; continual access to Quickschools for students in Grade 3 and up**

**Secondary School: 2 Semester Report Cards per year; continual access to grades on Quickschools**

**Student Planner (student assignment notebook)**

**From the Director's Desk – bi-monthly Enewsletter**

**Primary Grades Weekly Newsletter (each Friday)**

## **CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION**

### **Addressing Concerns**

We want to embrace a positive culture of communication, one that is open, transparent and respectful.

- **If concerns regarding your child arise, your first contact is the teacher directly involved.** In most cases, concerns are easily resolved through direct contact with the teacher. Please do not escalate an issue to the Division Coordinator or Director without first speaking with the teacher concerned.
- If you are not sure who to speak with, or there are extenuating circumstances, contact the Division Coordinator for guidance.
- If the concern continues, contact the Director.

The school will communicate with parents through the use of email, Primary School classroom newsletters, *From the Director's Desk* (our bi-monthly school newsletter), scheduled conferences between school personnel and parents, mid-semester/semester report cards, and the Quickschools website.

Proper communication among students, parents, teachers, administration is vital to the health of any school. To assist in achieving this objective, the following general procedures are recommended for all concerned parties

- 1) When the problem concerns your son or daughter and their work in school, the best person to see is the classroom/subject teacher. An appointment to see a teacher may be made by emailing the teacher directly. Problems of a personal nature or questions about a student's program, his/her overall potential and general progress may also be discussed with the teachers.
- 2) Problems that cannot be resolved through a conference with the personnel mentioned above and questions of a more general nature concerning the operations of the school may be discussed with the Secondary or Primary School Coordinators.
- 3) Problems that have not been resolved after conferences with the teacher and Coordinator may be taken to the Director who will discuss any questions related to the general operation of the school or school policies. An appointment may be made by calling the Main Office.
- 4) The Director is the executive officer of the Board and is responsible for the organization, operation, and administration of the total school program. Therefore, he/she is the normal channel of communication between the Board and the public. Questions about school policy should be directed to the Director.
- 5) Requests for changes in school policy and appeals regarding decisions made by the Director may be addressed to the Board. All communications to the Board should be in writing and should be addressed to the CRIA Board of Directors and delivered to the School Director.

# HEALTH & SAFETY



## **Accident Insurance**

All students enrolled at CRIA are insured against accident and injury 24 hours per day, year round. At present, the policy covers medical expenses incurred from an accident with a 5% deductible. The current maximum coverage is €100.000. Claim forms, as well as more information, are available in the Business Office, for reimbursement of expenses incurred for medical treatment.

## **Dangerous Items at School**

Items that could lead to the disruption of a class are not allowed in the school. This would include any form of weapon, weapon look-alike, or explosive device such as a firecracker. Possession of any type of weapon, weapon look-alike, or explosive device, on their person or in their backpack/bag, may lead to students being suspended or expelled.

## **Emergencies**

In the event of injury to a student, the School will render first aid as necessary and will notify the parent immediately. Should the student be seriously injured, requiring immediate transport to a hospital or clinic, the School will arrange for such transport by car or by ambulance and notify the parent immediately so they may proceed to the hospital. A student is never sent alone; he/she is always accompanied by a teacher, or an administrator according to availability.

## **Student Drivers**

Students who wish to drive onto school property must hold a valid Costa Rican driver's license which requires the driver to be a minimum 18 years of age. Should parents/guardians give a student permission to drive without a valid Costa Rican driver's license, they will not be permitted entry onto the school campus with the vehicle.

## **Parking**

There is ample parking space in the two parking lots on campus. Parking is not permitted beside the pool/covered gym area. The school cannot be held responsible for damage or losses incurred while parking on campus.

## **Harassment & Bullying**

Costa Rica International Academy is committed to making our school a safe and caring environment for all students. We will treat each other with respect and refuse to tolerate bullying of any kind.

Definition: Bullying is unfair and one-sided. It happens when someone keeps hurting, frightening, threatening, or leaving someone out on purpose.

### **Bullying behaviors include the following:**

- Hurting someone physically by hitting, kicking, tripping, or pushing
- Stealing or damaging another person's things
- Ganging up on someone
- Teasing someone in a hurtful way
- Using put-downs, such as insulting someone's race or making fun of someone for being a boy or a girl
- Touching or showing private body parts

- Spreading rumors or untruths about someone
- Leaving someone out on purpose, or trying to get other kids not to play with someone
- Cyberbullying is bullying that includes the sending of harassing communications, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images on the Internet, social media, or other technologies using a telephone, computer, or any wireless communication device. Cyberbullying also includes breaking into another person's electronic account and assuming that person's identity in order to damage that person's reputation.

Students at CRIA will do the following things to prevent bullying:

- Treat each other respectfully
- Refuse to bully others
- Refuse to let others be bullied
- Refuse to watch, laugh, or join in when someone is being bullied
- Try to include everyone in play, especially those who are often left out
- Report bullying to an adult.

Teachers and staff at CRIA will do the following things to prevent bullying and help children feel safe at school:

- Closely supervise students in all areas of the school and playground.
- Watch for signs of bullying and stop it when it happens.
- Respond quickly and sensitively to bullying reports using the Four-A-Response process (**A**ffirm Feelings, **A**sk Questions, **A**ssess Safety, and **A**ct by coaching child on what to do in the future).
- If warranted, fill-out Bullying Incident Report and submit to Director.

### Consequences for Violation of the Anti-Bullying Policy

Depending on the severity and nature of the incident, CRIA will take one or more of the following steps when bullying occurs:

#### Intervention, Warning, and Redirection

The victim and/or witness to the incident will make a report to the school Director. The Director will examine the report and will investigate the validity of the claim. The Director will ensure that the immediate behavior stops and will reinforce to the student that bullying will not be tolerated. During this meeting with the student, the Director will redirect the student to come up with a plan to prevent similar behaviors in the future. The Director will ensure that proper documentation is made. This will be the only warning that a student receives about bullying behavior.

#### Notification of Parents

School staff will notify the parents of involved students. The parents might be asked to meet with the Director or other members of the school staff, including the student's teacher.

#### Resolution with the Target of the Bullying

The student may be required to write a letter of apology to the student who was bullied. Depending upon the nature of the incident, the students involved may meet to help resolve the problem and ensure it does not happen again.

### Referral to Professional School Support Staff

The student may meet with the school Director and/or Visiting Counselor to help prevent future violations.

### Consequences

The student may serve one or more days of detention during recess, or lose school privileges.

### Suspension

In cases of severe or repeated bullying, the student may be suspended under school policies.

## **Leaving School Grounds**

Students cannot leave the school grounds during school hours without the school's permission. When a student leaves with a parent/ guardian, the parent/ guardian must meet the student in the Main Office, and the student must sign out with the Main Office Administrative Assistant. If someone other than a parent is picking up the student, the student will need his/her parent's permission for this. When the student returns, he/she must sign back in. If a student is leaving school due to illness, he/she must have reported to the Main Office.

## **Lockers**

Lockers will be made available to Secondary School students, including 6<sup>th</sup> grades students. Students must make sure they use the lockers wisely, keeping them locked at all times and not telling anyone else their lock combination. In general, students are discouraged from bringing or wearing valuables to school. If a student does have valuables at school, he/she must exercise care in locking them away safely. Unfortunately, the school cannot take responsibility for valuables that are lost or stolen.

Book lockers are issued to all students for classroom needs and supplies. Locks must be supplied by the student's family. An extra key or the combination to the lock must be provided to the Homeroom teacher prior to putting a lock on the locker. Books, backpacks, and bags should not be left in the halls.

Students may decorate the inside of lockers with items that can be easily removed, but not the outside. At the end of the year, these decorations must be removed.

Students are advised to use their lockers before school, at the breaks, at the beginning and end of lunch, and after school. This will help them to get to class on time. Having to access a locker is not an acceptable excuse for being tardy to class or homeroom.

## **Lost And Found**

Lost and found objects are generally located in the Main Office. Valuable items such as jewelry, phones, laptops, calculators, etc. are occasionally turned into the Main Office. If you find something, please turn it in. If you have lost something, check with the Administrative Assistant in the Main office. All personal items should be labeled with the student name so that they can be claimed/returned.

## **Illness**

Please do not send your child to school if your child has any of the following symptoms:

- Fever- Temperature of 100°F/ 38°C or higher.
- Vomiting, sickness or strong stomach ache

- Diarrhea
- Acute cold, sore throat, or strong cough
- Thick mucus in nose/eyes or inflamed eyes
- Head lice
- Suspicion of contagious infection (chicken pox, scarlet fever, impetigo, etc.)

It is often difficult to make a decision about whether or not your child is sick enough to stay at home. Many illnesses are easily spread, both in school and in the family. Keep in mind that hand washing is the single most important thing that you can do and teach your child to do so, to help prevent the spread of infections. In addition, it is also helpful to teach children to cough and sneeze into the elbow to help minimize the spread of germs to other surfaces. Since the elbow is less likely than your hands to come into contact with other objects, fewer areas become contaminated. If your child is unwell (but does not have any of the symptoms or illnesses mentioned above) we ask that you do not send him/her to school until he/she is fit again. In assessing whether or not your child is well enough to be in school, please ask yourself if she is well enough to attend PE and play outside, as they will be expected to take part in these activities if they come to school. Please understand that it will not be possible to make special arrangements for children to be withdrawn from activities or to be supervised in the classroom during playtime. In certain cases, for example following absence of more than two days, a doctor's note will be required before returning to school. Students who vomit or have diarrhea at school will be sent home. Students with head lice will be sent home and parents will need to treat their child's hair. Students will then need to be checked by a doctor or the school personnel to see if the child's hair is clear before they can return to class. While we regret any inconvenience that this may cause since keeping sick children at home may mean lost work days/ school days, for parents, teachers, and children; however it also means less illnesses for everyone. In the case of serious childhood disease or highly contagious disease, please bring a certificate of harmlessness from your attending physician before returning to school.

### **Medication**

If you need to take medicine during school hours, the preparation must be left with the Administrative Assistant in the Main Office. The container must be clearly labeled with your name. Students who require emergency/ occasional medicines for headaches, asthma, etc., should leave a supply in the Main Office. All medication must be left in the Main Office. A written explanation from a parent/guardian should also be submitted for non-prescribed medicine. Parents should discuss with the Administrative Assistant the use of long-term medication and emergency medication for certain conditions such as asthma.

Parents are requested to go to the Main Office to discuss the necessary information regarding the dispensing of prescribed medication. Also, parents will be asked to sign a medical release form in the Administrative Office at that time. No prescribed medication will be given to children without written permission of the parent.

### **Off-Limit Areas**

In general, students are to remain in the areas designated for their age-group use. Students are also not permitted to be loitering in unsupervised / non-public areas or at the dormitory.

### **Rollerblades & Skateboards**

Rollerblades and skateboards are not allowed on the CRIA campus unless part of an organized school activity.

## **Safety Guidelines**

A goal of CRIA is to provide a supportive and safe environment to promote learning. Students' personal safety is of prime importance in the daily use of the campus facilities.

### **General safety rules include:**

- no running in the buildings or in congested outside walking areas.
- no climbing to areas not intended for students.
- using appropriate safety equipment in laboratory-type classes.
- using physical fitness equipment under the supervision of a staff member.

### **Safety drills**

Fire drills, earthquake drills and other safety drills will be held throughout the instructional year to practice responses in the case of fire or other security emergencies. At the sound of an alarm, students will evacuate the buildings to designated positions. Students are to line up in their homeroom groups.

Drills must be completed quickly and quietly. Everyone must evacuate the building during a drill, and everyone must wait for the signal that all is clear before returning to the building.

### **Searches**

The school has the right to conduct unannounced searches of persons, possessions, and locked areas, if there is reasonable belief that a student has something that is not allowed on campus, or something that does not belong to him/her. A student may also be asked to show what is contained in pockets, purses, wallets, backpacks, bags, containers, or other personal property, if there is reasonable suspicion of the possession of objects that are disruptive to the school, or do not belong to them.

Any items deemed to be illegal, illicit and disruptive or a general nuisance may be seized by staff/faculty and/or administration. And, any article considered to contain such items, e.g. backpack, purse, jacket, may be confiscated and held by any member of staff/faculty and/or administration for further investigation. Storage, return or destruction of such items and articles will be at the discretion of the school.

### **Vandalism & Theft**

Students have the right to a safe and secure environment. Students are expected to be honorable and to demonstrate respect for other people's property and for the school's facilities and property. Any form of theft or vandalism is unacceptable. Depending on the circumstances of the case, the likely consequence is suspension or expulsion.

Any theft or vandalism incident should be reported immediately to the appropriate teacher, Coordinator, or Administrator. Students are reminded that they are responsible for any valuable or personal property that they bring to school. Students should lock any personal belongings in their locker to prevent loss or theft. Keeping valuable or personal property in a backpack or bag does not guarantee their safety.

## Visitors

Adult visitors to the campus may exchange a picture ID for a Visitor's badge at the Front Gate. The photo ID will be returned when the visitor exits the campus.

Student visitors may attend classes with a current CRIA student so long as a request form is completed and submitted to the office 48 hours in advance of the requested visit. A visitor may attend school for one day only and with one current CRIA student. Once the request has been approved, the visiting student must uphold all expectations as outlined in our student handbook, wear appropriate school attire and wear a clearly visible Visitor Pass issued at one of the campus gates.

Completing the required Visitor Request Form entails the following:

- The current student will obtain a visitor form from the Main Office and will complete the top part of the form providing information about the proposed visitor and date of visit.
- The student will then take this form around to all of his/her teachers for the date of the visit and have them approve the visit by signing the form.

Once the form has been signed by all teachers, the student will bring the form back to the office to be approved and signed by the Director.

# STUDENT LIFE



Costa Rica International Academy extends the opportunity to participate in its activities program to those students who agree to represent the school in a positive manner both on and off campus. Participants of an activity are expected to conduct themselves at all times in such a way as to reflect credit on themselves, CRIA, and the school community.

All CRIA sponsored activities are subject to this code. Such activities include all competitive sports teams, all drama and musical activities, all After School Activities, all school-sponsored trips, Student Government Association, National Honor Society, M.U.N., class officers and any other activity.

Behavior not in compliance with the CRIA Student Code of Conduct or any behavior not in the best interest of the school/activity that occurs outside the parameters of the actual activity may constitute grounds for suspension or dismissal from the team or club, depending on the gravity of the offense.

### **After-School Activities**

An overview of all known activities will be presented electronically at the beginning of each semester, so that students can map out the semester for participation. As activities and athletic schedules will sometimes be in conflict, each student will need to make choices on how much he/she will be able to do. Advisors, coaches, sponsors, and parents should be consulted for this decision.

Some ASAs will incur a fee, while others are free of charge. In the case of fees-based activities, the full fee for the semester must be collected by the Activity Sponsor prior to the activity. Some sponsors may allow one free session to allow for a student to decide if they wish to commit to the activity for the entire semester. CRIA hopes to instill a sense of commitment in our students.

### **Athletic Eligibility**

**Misconduct during sports:** Any misbehavior, disrespect, or irresponsibility shown during practices or games will lead to suspension from the game and/or team for a specified time period.

A student who is suspended from classes for misbehavior may not participate in practices or games during the period of suspension.

A student must be present in class on the day of a scheduled game in order to participate in the game. Additionally, if the game falls on a weekend day, the student must be present at school the day before the game in order to participate. For example, if a game is held on a Saturday, the student must be in class during the day on Friday.

### **Participation in AASCA Events:**

All grades must be 75% or above.

A behavior suspension will disqualify the student.

## **Valedictorian Policy**

- The valedictorian must be a full-time attendee of CRIA for a minimum of 2 years to be eligible (Grade 11 and Grade 12).
- The valedictorian must have 24 credits; the same as needed for graduation.
- The valedictorian must have a minimum of a 3.0 GPA.
- GPA includes grades from 11<sup>th</sup> grade to the end of the third quarter of 12<sup>th</sup> grade.
- We will weight the Advanced Placement courses as customary for a standard GPA calculation.
- We will NOT weight any honors classes from other schools. Those final averages will stand alone.
- This valedictorian award is based on academics but the valedictorian should also represent good character. Therefore, any suspensions on the student's record in the Junior and Senior year will eliminate a student from valedictorian candidacy.

## **Conduct On School Trips/Activities**

Students are held responsible for their conduct while attending or participating in school sponsored trips/activities beyond the regular school day. During this time, students are subject to all regulations of the school and will be governed accordingly.

## **Dances**

Dances are usually sponsored by divisions/grade levels or other student groups. The CRIA Code of Conduct is in effect for the duration of the dance.

## **Field Trip Permission**

Before a student can participate in a field trip, he/she must have a parent permission form on file with the Main Office.

## **Food Service**

Hot lunches, drinks, and snacks are available each day in the school cafeteria. Students establish debit accounts with the supplier for purchases. Students may also choose to bring a bagged lunch from home. For safety reasons, we cannot allow glass bottles or other breakable containers on campus.

## **Lunchtime/Snack Rules:**

Cafeteria food, utensils, plates, etc. should stay in the cafeteria. In general, food should be consumed in the cafeteria or Secondary Rancho. Food may be taken from the cafeteria to a teacher's room if a teacher has called a meeting or specifically asked students to attend a lunch time gathering. All items belonging to the cafeteria must be returned promptly after the meeting. Food should not be consumed in the hallways.

## **Other rules apply:**

- Respect should be shown to cafeteria personnel at all times.
- Soft drinks are not allowed.
- Students should queue in line waiting their turn.
- Students are not allowed to sit on the tables.
- Music is not permitted in cafeteria.

- Students are responsible for cleaning up after themselves.
- Students are welcome to use the field for recreational purposes, if PE classes are not using it. Tackle football is not allowed as injuries might occur.
- Students may not leave the campus without permission from the Director.
- Students may use the gym if it is free and is supervised by a teacher. Food and drinks are not allowed in the gym. All equipment must be put away at the end of the period.

## **Fund Raising**

Sales of various types may be held throughout the year by clubs, classes, or other groups. All fund raising must benefit the school and/or school related projects. All fund raising must be approved by the Director. Students may not sell items on the CRIA campus for personal gain (arts and crafts, bakery items, etc.)

## **National Honor Society**

Costa Rica International Academy joined the National Honor Society in 2006. Established in 1921, the society's aim to create enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote leadership, develop character and to encourage citizenship.

National Honor Society membership is an honor bestowed upon a select group by the Faculty Council. The selection for membership is based on outstanding scholarship, character, leadership, and service. Once selected, members have the responsibility to continue to demonstrate these qualities.

The NHS Chapter annually determine projects, which the group will undertake. In addition to the required group projects, each member will choose and complete an individual or small group project in keeping with a special personal interest. The NHS is an active service organization, contributing to the welfare of our school and community. Members are expected to be active in supporting the stated ideals of scholarship, character, and leadership. All members will take part in service projects throughout the year.

As laid down in the society's constitutions, a Faculty Council was set up at CRIA to determine the selection procedures for membership. Complete details regarding eligibility and selection can be found on the CRIA High School website and interested students are encouraged to contact the NHS Faculty Advisor.

## **Parent Association**

The Parent Association is an organization that acts as a liaison between the parents and the school administration and, on occasion, within the community to support and improve the school, its mission, its teachers and students. The Parent Association believes that there is a direct relationship between parent participation and student performance at school.

The Parent Association works to establish effective communication between parents and the school administration. We also work with the school administration to support the academic and extracurricular activities on behalf of the students at CRIA.

Other events and activities sponsored by the Parent Association include the Halloween Haunt, the

Holiday Gala, the Party at the Playa, the Staff Appreciation Party and various special awards for students in the areas of academics, sports, leadership, service, and spirit. The Parent Association invites interested parents to attend our meetings and to join our organization as a class representative or alternate.

### **Pictures/school photos**

School pictures are taken yearly during the fall for the school yearbook. Parents have the option of purchasing the photos taken during school. Later in the year, the photographer will do “retakes” for those students who were not in school on the day the photos were taken or need their pictures retaken for technical or aesthetic reasons.

### **Student Government Association (SGA)**

The Student Government Association is an integral part of both the Primary and Secondary Schools at CRIA. From the planning of the school social activities calendar to consultations with the school administration on student concerns, procedures, and policies, both SGAs are actively involved in the school. SGA serves as a forum for student opinions and suggestions, working with the faculty, administration and student body to enhance daily life in school through promoting student involvement and morale. The students should feel free to bring concerns and ideas to the SGA knowing that they will be respected and well represented.

### **Recycling & Water**

CRIA is committed to an environmentally sustainable future. All visitors to the CRIA campus should adhere to the recycling procedures and use the recycling bins in a proper manner. All students should carry re-usable water bottles so that they may drink water throughout the day without having to purchase plastic water bottles.

## DISCLAIMERS AND LIMITATIONS

CRIA reserves the right to change the policies and procedures contained in this handbook, as needed throughout the school year. Any changes will be circulated throughout the CRIA School Community.

While care and effort have been invested into developing the policies and procedures contained in this handbook to address situations likely to occur in a School, situations may occur that fall outside the processes described. In such cases, the Administration reserves the right to respond in a manner deemed appropriate.

## REFERENCES

Thanks is extended to the following schools which contributed to the formulation of this handbook: American School of Dubai, Episcopal School of Dallas, Shanghai American School, The American School of Doha, American Community School of Abu Dhabi, American School of Warsaw, and International School of Kuala Lumpur.



