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INTRODUCTION

The policies and procedures contained in this handbook aim to ensure a productive and effective partnership between school personnel, parents and students. Note that the 2021-2022 academic year, due to the fluctuations of the COVID-19 pandemic, has required our faculty, students, and families to remain flexible and adaptable. Policies and procedures herein may change due to changing health conditions in our area. As of February 2022, the Ministry de Salud continues to mandate mask use when indoors, even if you have been fully vaccinated against Covid-19. Until the Ministry updates that restriction, all students, teachers, staff, and visitors will be required to wear a mask while on indoors on campus, or within proximity when outdoors. Masks are optional from Toddler to KG.

The founding principles for all policies and procedures are intended to create a safe and respectful learning environment in which all parties understand and fulfill their responsibilities. Such a learning 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 compassion.

This Family Handbook contains a range of information from guiding statements like the school mission 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 during human interactions in a school during any given school year.** Ultimately, it is the CRIA mission, values and the desire for a safe, respectful environment underlying the written document that is of prime importance to guide our interactions about 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!

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:

1. Knowledge and inquiry processes that allow informed decision-making
2. Thinking and communicating mathematically and scientifically
3. Coherent production of English and Spanish in the four modalities of language learning (reading, writing, listening, and speaking)
4. Responsible, safe, and effective use of technology to demonstrate a high level of electronic literacy for education
5. Analytical and critical reading of a wide range of texts

Our CRIA students are able to utilize the following thinking skills and learning approaches:

6. Innovative thinking that encourages students to embrace challenges, develop persistence, learn from and apply feedback, and see effort as a path to mastery
7. Curiosity as demonstrated by a desire to explore, generate questions, and seek answers
8. Organizational skills, study habits and effective time management
9. Apply thinking skills independently, critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems

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

10. Demonstrating thoughtful reflection about one's role as a community member on a local, national, and global level
11. Successfully working both independently and collaboratively
12. Respecting and caring for our planet through active stewardship
13. Exhibiting respect for people of different backgrounds, including ethnicity, learning differences, country of origin, race, nationality, sexual orientation, gender, and/or beliefs

Our CRIA students exhibit the following personal qualities:

14. Integrity through adherence to moral and ethical principles, and by accepting responsibility for one's own actions
15. Leadership as illustrated through self-discipline, effective communication, initiative, and compassion for others
16. Mental flexibility in the face of challenges
17. High quality decision-making concerning the emotional and physical well-being of oneself and others

US AND COSTA RICA ACCREDITATIONS

CRIA is fully accredited with the Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges (MSA), and the Ministry of Education (MEP) in Costa Rica. The school's time-tested traditional values were reaffirmed and commended in the last MSA self-study, and CRIA exceeded accreditation standards 23 times in the last MSA visitors' report. The school's strategic goals are academically focused to improve student learning as measured by external assessment results (MAP, AP, PSAT) and to provide a comprehensive and exemplary school health program.

In addition, CRIA values are aligned to MEP expectations for private schools. The school does not undertake any psychological conditioning in social, political or religious dogmas. In keeping with the spirit of private school law in Costa Rica, CRIA recognizes the rights of individuals in a free society to have a diversity of thought, and therefore we do not permit what is called in the CR law, "...uniformity and univocality [that are] more possible or more easily attainable in totalitarianism and dictatorship than in democracy and freedom." In practice, CRIA teaches students *how* to learn, with an understanding that critical thinking skills can only be developed if teachers are taking the time to teach substantial standards-based and subject-specific content knowledge and skills.

Traditional academic subject content and skills are highly valued and given priority at CRIA. Therefore, sociopolitical indoctrination (“uniformity and univocality”) typically found under “totalitarian and dictatorship” societies is avoided and the processes of democracy, freedom and a diversity of viewpoints are emphasized. Individual freedom, natural rights, traditional universal virtues/values, and diversity of thought are part of the CRIA learning experience; however, the right to hold one’s own sociopolitical viewpoints does not grant the right to manifest one’s views within the CRIA school community.

HISTORY OF COSTA RICA INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY

A quality T-12 school is vital infrastructure for any community that values the education of their children. In the year 2000, it was evident that the Guanacaste province of Costa Rica was destined to be a highly desired location for foreign residents to settle, not only for retirement, but for families from around the world. The current day Costa Rica International Academy (CRIA) was thus formed in that year to provide a quality, US accredited education for expat families. CRIA chose a development path that values US accreditation from those first years. By affiliation with a highly successful independent school in the capital city of San Jose in those initial years of operation, CRIA at its founding was immediately accredited for its quality K-12 program and its commitment to academic excellence. CRIA is currently fully accredited by the Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges as a private, independent K-12 school.

From the year 2000 to the present day, the CRIA school community has grown from a couple of dozen students to 360 in 2022. CRIA’s founding vision anticipated a steady growth of new foreign residents, as well as increasing demand from local families. CRIA has indeed enabled Guanacaste to become a top destination for families to emigrate to from around the world.

As one of the most stable constitutional republics in Latin America, and with a longstanding commitment to sustainable use of resources and protections for private property within competitive markets, Costa Rica continues to attract new foreign residents seeking a *pura vida* lifestyle. The ‘Gold Coast’ region of Guanacaste, with CRIA as a central magnet for families, is destined to continue its long-term growth path. From 2000 to the 2011 census, Costa Rica has become the number one destination for expats in Latin America relative to its size, with an impressive 9% of the population recognized as foreign residents.

Approximately half of the students are in Grades 6-12 and half in Toddler through Grade 5. Typically, one third of our students are from the U.S., one third from Costa Rica and a third come from Canada, Europe, and Latin America.



Average class sizes are eighteen with an overall student to teacher ratio of 11:1.

With a solid history of excellence, and a well-earned reputation among American universities admissions officers, CRIA is strategically prepared to grow to 850 students in the near-term as *the* school of choice in Guanacaste, Costa Rica.

Our school complies with all anti-discrimination laws within Costa Rica. We explicitly prohibit offensive behavior. Discrimination is defined as any negative action directed toward someone because of human characteristics including religion, ethnicity, race, color, nationality, sex, disability, marriage status, gender and sexual orientation.

ACADEMICS

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

English	4 credits	English credits may include English 9, English 10, English 11 and English 12
Social Studies	3 credits	Social Studies credits may include Early World History 9, U.S. History 10, Modern World History 11, Modern U.S. History, Economics, World Geography, Psychology
Mathematics	3 credits	Math credits may include Algebra I, Alg. II, Geometry, Pre-Calculus, AP or Honors Calculus AB, and AP Statistics
Science	3 credits	Science credits must include Biology, Physics, and Chemistry. Optional course may include AP Biology, AP Environmental Science, Computer Science or other sciences. Two science credits must include a Laboratory class
World Languages	3 credits	Language credits may include Spanish I, II, III, or IV, AP Spanish Language and Culture, or other Foreign Language courses
Fine Arts	2 credits	Fine Arts credits may include Art, Music, PE, Theatre/Drama
Core Electives	6 credits	Elective credits may be chosen from previously listed courses, Creative Writing, Speech, University Dual Enrollment courses and courses from external online providers
TOTAL	24 credits	Transfer credits from other institutions will be at the Director's discretion (See Online Credits Policy section) There is no provision for mid-semester graduation regardless of credits earned. All seniors must attend a full year of classes to be eligible to earn the high school diploma in May.

COURSE PLACEMENTS

Spanish

CRIA offers several levels of Spanish courses for students in Grades 3-12 to support and challenge Spanish language acquisition and skills at various proficiency levels. The Spanish Department is responsible for assessing students' Spanish proficiencies and placing students into the appropriate Spanish classes. Placements are based on previous schools' transcripts, and a placement test which assesses students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing levels. As the education specialists with professional knowledge of the language learning process, as well as knowledge of our curriculum and course content, **Spanish class/course placement is decided by our Spanish Department faculty.** Students may be recommended for a move to a different level within the first two weeks after the student starts classes at CRIA, or after the mid-term exams and end-of-year exams. Should a parent decline the placement that is recommended by the school, they may withdraw their child from the Spanish class and enroll him/her in an online program at the cost of the family. The credit requirement for Spanish will not be waived should a placement be declined.

Mathematics

Beginning in seventh grade, students will be placed in either Math 7 or Pre-Algebra. To qualify for placement in Pre-Algebra, students must earn a minimum of 90% (final grade) in Math 6, as well as have a teacher recommendation, supported by MAP test scores. Beginning in eighth grade, students will be placed in either Math 8 or Algebra 1. Placement depends on the student's final grade in Math 7 (minimum of 90%), teacher recommendation supported by MAP test scores and/or a placement test. Placement is done to support and challenge students at their level of math understanding. Math course placement is decided by our Mathematics Department faculty. Should a parent decline the placement that is recommended by the school, they may withdraw their child from the math class and enroll him/her in an accredited online program at the cost of the family. The credit requirement for math will not be waived should a placement be declined.

Advanced Placement

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. AP courses all have prerequisite courses with typically an achievement level of 85% or higher, and teacher recommendation. A student's PSAT test results may also help determine AP readiness. AP courses are not a requirement for most universities and are designed for academically driven students.

Since these courses are typically much more rigorous than a standard high school class, they 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.** 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 in writing with the College Counselor by the published deadline.** 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. A 1-point boost in GPA is added for each AP class for all students enrolled in an AP class if and only if the student earns a C, B, or A in the class.

ONLINE CREDITS

In today's technological world, it is possible for students to supplement their CRIA education with a limited number of online credits. High school students (Grades 9-12) may choose to take online courses because CRIA does not offer the course on campus, a student needs a certain course for vocational or college program requirements, or the student is simply interested in the course material.

Online credits can be earned under the following conditions:

- The online provider must be accredited by a recognized accrediting institution
- The Principal must approve all online credits before the student enrolls in the online course. **The Virtual Course Approval application** is available in the Main Office and must be signed by the College Counselor *before* the course begins
- CRIA will accept between 0.5 and 4.0 online credits over the course of a student's high school career at CRIA. Given the campus-based restrictions during the Covid pandemic of 2020-22, transfer credits will be determined on a case-by-case basis
- No more than 2.0 online credits can be earned in the student's senior year (Grade 12)
- Costs associated with online courses are borne by the student's family. CRIA will not pay for or reimburse for online courses
- While in past years Physical Education could not be taken with an online provider, given the restrictions during the Covid pandemic, online P.E. credit will be determined on a case-by-case basis
- CRIA does not have a tuition structure for part-time students. All students are considered full-time students, regardless of how many credits they are taking with CRIA
- CRIA is not responsible to assist with course content and tutoring for students enrolled in online courses
- It is the students' family's responsibility to research university requirements for acceptable courses. Please note that some online providers will not be accepted by some universities or by the NCAA for athletic eligibility. Additionally, most colleges/universities require a full credit of pre-calculus and a full credit of senior English

TRANSFER CREDITS

Students transferring to CRIA from another high school can have credits count towards CRIA graduation criteria. CRIA will accept up to seven high school credits from another institution per full year of study in Grade 9. Up to six credits will be accepted in Grades 10 and 11, respectively. Official transcripts must be provided before transfer credits will be recognized. The Director/Principal and the College Counselor will review transcripts indicating more than seven credits and will have the final authority over which credits CRIA will recognize.

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 beginning of each semester. All schedule change requests must start with the Director/Principal and College Counselor. Attendance in the student's original class is required until the change has been confirmed by the Director/Principal, 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, Director/Principal and College Counselor 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.

EARLY YEARS PROGRAM

CRIA works to provide a safe, challenging, and engaging program for children in Toddler (2/3 years old) to kindergarten. We balance social, emotional, physical, linguistic, and academic development through a holistic approach to teaching and learning.



Toddler Program

This is a multi-age class for children 2 and 3 years old. Children must turn 2 years old by the 15th of September. If a toddler’s fourth birthday falls within **21 days** of the September 15th cutoff date, upon parent’s request, the child may be considered for the Pre-K class. Recommendation from the Toddler teacher will be required before testing will be considered. To determine whether the child is emotionally, developmentally, and academically ready for the Pre-K level, the Pre-K teacher will conduct a series of tests to be reviewed by school administration. The decision to move or not will be based upon the outcome of the testing and both the Toddler and Pre-K teachers’ recommendations. Administration’s decision is to be considered final.

CRIA offers a full-day program which runs from 8am to 3pm. Should a family desire to collect their toddler at lunchtime on a regular schedule, this can be arranged with the teacher. However, there is no cost difference between the full-day and half-day programs. Full-day students benefit from rest time after lunch. This is a quiet time where children sleep or rest quietly. There are no alternative activities to the rest period. Please do not send children with toys/stuffed animals, etc. to school. A small blanket and pillow should be sent for the rest period. Toileting habits are supported but toilet training of children is not the responsibility of the teachers. Diapers and wipes must be provided from home. Car seats are required for all field trips.

Pre-K Program

Children must turn 4 years old by the 15th of September. If a child’s fifth birthday falls within **21 days** of the September 15th cutoff date, and he/she has already completed one year of Pre-K, upon parental request, the child may be considered for the Kindergarten class. Recommendation from the Pre-K teacher will be required before testing will be considered. To determine whether the child is emotionally, developmentally, and academically ready for the Kindergarten level, the Kindergarten teacher will conduct a series of tests to be reviewed by school administration. The decision to move or not will be based upon the outcome of the testing and both the Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers’ recommendation. Administration’s decision is to be considered final.

This is a full day program, and all students attend from 8am to 3pm. Children must have independent toileting habits before entry into our Pre-K program. Children in the Pre-K program benefit from rest time after lunch. This is a quiet time where children sleep or rest quietly. There are no alternative activities to the rest period. Please do not send children with toys/stuffed animals, etc. to school. A small blanket and pillow should be sent for the rest period which can fit into a large zip lock bag. To support each child's growing independence, they are expected to perform morning responsibilities on their own. To do so, they need backpacks large enough for materials and should carry their things into the room. We do not accept students needing diapers and children must be able to wash themselves after using the toilet. CRIA's program does not offer supervised tooth brushing. The American Pediatric Dentistry Association supports this policy: Typically, pediatric dentists will recommend that kids brush their teeth 2-3 times per day—morning, night, and another convenient time throughout the day. This would mean that brushing at school may not be necessary since they can brush their teeth when arriving at home after school. Car/booster seats are required for all field trips.

Kindergarten Program

Children must turn 5 years old by the 15th of September. Children must have independent toileting habits before entry into our Kindergarten program. We do not accept students needing diapers and children must be able to wash themselves after using the toilet. CRIA does not offer a half-day program and all students attend from 8am to 3pm. Children in the Kindergarten program benefit from rest time after lunch. This is a quiet time where children sleep or rest quietly. There are no alternative activities to the rest period. Please do not send children with toys/stuffed animals, etc. to school. A small blanket and pillow should be sent for the rest period which can fit into a large zip lock bag. CRIA's program does not offer supervised tooth brushing. The American Pediatric Dentistry Association supports this policy: Typically, pediatric dentists will recommend that kids brush their teeth 2-3 times per day—morning, night, and another convenient time throughout the day. This would mean that brushing at school may not be necessary since they can brush their teeth when arriving at home after school. Field trips are an important part of our program. In order to continue to develop independence in our students, parent chaperones will be limited to 4 parents per field trip. It is not possible to include/invite all parents to attend the field trips due to logistics. Car/booster seats are required for all field trips.

Classroom Assignments

When there are two or more classes in each grade level, the Principal approves student assignments to a class with recommendations from the grade level teachers as well as ELL/Learning Support teachers and the School Counselor. Under no circumstances are parent or student requests for classroom changes granted.

K-12 DISCIPLINE

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 encourages 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 student and his or her parents. Parents have an obligation to assist the school in promoting and maintaining positive social and moral standards of conduct on 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 necessary supplies, ready to work.
- Being cooperative and displaying a positive attitude.
- Completing all 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.
- Avoiding using or touching property that belongs to other people without their permission.
- Compensating owners for property damaged intentionally or mistakenly by you.
- Safeguarding your personal property. The school is not responsible for a student's lost or stolen personal items.

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/recess.
- Refraining from bringing dangerous articles to school.
- Helping to keep any illicit/recreational drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products 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 or illicit/recreational drugs 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 heard.

- 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, visuals, or directing vulgar language or obscene gestures/exposures toward another individual or group. The school views this type of action as 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 oneself 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 certain public displays of affection. Additionally, younger students in our T-12 community may also be offended by such displays.

Smoking/Substance Abuse

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

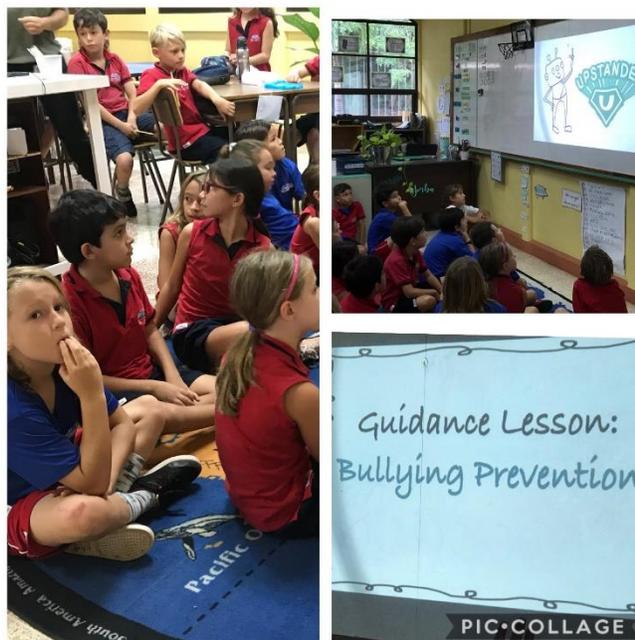
The possession or use of harmful and/or illegal drugs of any kind (stimulants, inhalants, or depressants, including prescription drugs for which you cannot produce a prescription) on school grounds or at any school sponsored event will result in a suspension or expulsion from school.

Suspension, Expulsion & Behavior Probation

Grounds for suspension may include but are not limited to stealing, cheating, bullying in any form, lying, disrespect toward students or adults, smoking/vaping or consuming alcohol on school grounds, abuse, vandalism or destruction of school property, fighting, and 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 assessments 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/Principal after taking all reasonable measures to gather the relevant facts, consulting with any involved teacher or staff member, and meeting with the student.
3. Type of suspension and length of suspension will be determined by the Director/Principal. Considerations will be taken according to age/grade of student/s, severity of offense, and repetition of offense.
4. Many college applications require the School Counselor to indicate whether 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. When indefinite suspension is considered, the Disciplinary Team will meet to hear the case and will decide together. The Disciplinary Team consists of the Director, Principal and three Primary or Secondary teachers.

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; repeated bullying in any form; physical violence and carrying knives, firearms or other weapons; other serious actions. 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, at the parent's expense, as one of the conditions.

Primary School Behavior Policy

These steps will 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 the classroom teachers sends it home for parents to sign and return. The signed form will be placed in the child's school records.

Step 3: The Director/Principal and teacher will discuss the incident with the child. The Director/Principal 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 Director/Principal 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, that student will be removed from the milieu and confined to the office. Additionally, he/she may be sent home.

First Incident:

The child receives a warning, and a call is made to the parents. The teacher and the child discuss better choices and conflict-resolution (if the situation involves another student).

Second Incident:

A meeting is set up between the parents, the Director/Principal 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 or psychiatrist. If it is found that the plan does not work, adaptations to the plan can be made, or the school may recommend an alternative school placement.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)

CRIA's Behavior System in the Primary School is based on a *Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports* approach. The Primary School follows a set of school-wide rules called CRIA Pirate Practices. They are "Be Safe, Be Respectful, and Be Responsible." Teachers use these rules to clearly outline their expectations in each subject area and reinforce these behaviors positively in their classroom. Within the Primary School, expectations for transitions, cafeteria, and recess times are also clearly outlined using these school wide rules. Our goal is to create a safe and predictable environment which is proactive and preventative. Students also may receive re-teaching during a part of their recess when they need to review these expectations or need help problem solving. Teachers document incidents when they occur to identify areas of need and students who might need additional supports.

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:

1. **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.

2. **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.

3. **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.

4. **Good assessment provides useful information to report credibly to parents on student achievement.**

A variety of assessment methods provide teachers with evidence of 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.

5. **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 needs to be understandable and explicit, so students know what is expected of them from each assessment they encounter. CRIA has adapted the Virginia Standards of Learning and the Advanced Placement course standards. Any deviation from these standards must be approved by the Curriculum Director prior to instruction.

6. **Good assessment uses a wide range of 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.

7. **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.

8. **Assessment engages the learner in reflection upon 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

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
- 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:

<p>External Assessments*</p> <p>Grades K-2: Each year, students write the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests in September and again in May for Reading and Mathematics.</p> <p>Grades 3-8: Each year, students write the MAP tests in September and May for Reading, Language Usage and Mathematics.</p> <p>Grade 9-11: PSAT each October</p> <p>Grades 11-12: Students applying to universities sit for the SAT or ACT in the fall and/or spring.</p> <p>Grades 10-12: Qualified students write a variety of AP exams in May</p> <p>*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.</p>	<p>Common Assessments</p> <p>Tasks designed by a group of teachers, given to all students across a grade level or course. Examples: Reading benchmark assessments, grade level writing prompts, common exams, rubrics</p>
<p>Unit Assessments</p> <p>Teacher-designed tasks; given after a ‘chunk’ of learning has taken place, to assess achievement of unit standards. Examples: products, performances, tests, projects</p> <p>At least two Level 1-unit assessments are used per quarter for courses that meet every day. For courses that meet less than four times per week (PE, art, music, CRSS, health) only Level 2’s and 3’s are given.</p> <p>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 assessments will be conducted the week prior to exams.</p>	<p>On-Going Assessments</p> <p>Teacher-designed strategies for collecting evidence of standards related to learning processes, affective standards. Examples: observation of students working, homework*, running records.</p> <p>*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.</p> <p>Guidelines for time spent on homework at each grade level can be found in this Family Handbook.</p>

GRADING PRACTICES

High School	Middle School	Primary School
All High-School Level Courses Level 1: 50% Level 2: 35% Level 3: 15% Semester Grade: 80% course work from above + 20% semester exam	All MS Level Courses Level 1: 45% Level 2: 35% Level 3: 20% Semester Grade: 90% course work from above + 10% semester exam *Note that Algebra 1 is a HS course	3rd, 4th & 5th Grade Level 1: 35% Level 2: 30% Level 3: 35%

Level 1 Assessments:

Unit tests, major essays/projects/papers, laboratories. There is a minimum of two Level 1 and a maximum of five Level 1 assessments per quarter.

Level 1 Retakes: In some instances, it may be appropriate to offer a re-take of a Level 1 assessment. These cases are at the discretion of the classroom teacher and are not a student right. Should a teacher offer a re-take, the maximum score that can be earned on a re-take is 75%.

Level 2 Assessments:

Minor quizzes, mini projects/essays/papers

Level 3 Assessments:

Work processes such as homework, participation, organization

PE Grades:

Based on Level 2 and 3 assessments only.

- Level 2 = 30%; Quizzes, performance assessments
- Level 3 = 70%; Effort, participation, cooperation and uniform

REPORTING PRACTICES

Primary School Grades T – 2	Two full Report Cards per year at the end of each semester; 2 Progress Reports at end of Quarters 1 and 3. *A student who is not in attendance at least half of the quarter, will not receive a formal report card or progress report. Toddlers receive semester reports.	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>Letter</u></th> <th><u>Description of Understanding</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Consistently & Independently</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Consistently Demonstrates</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Developing</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Limited</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Letter</u>	<u>Description of Understanding</u>	4	Consistently & Independently	3	Consistently Demonstrates	2	Developing	1	Limited								
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Primary School Grades 3 - 5	Two full Report Cards per year at the end of each semester; 2 Progress Reports at end of Quarters 1 and 3; continual access to Quickschools. *A student who is not in attendance at least half of the quarter will not receive a formal report card or progress report.	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>Letter</u></th> <th><u>Percentage</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>A</td> <td>90 – 100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B</td> <td>80 – 89</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C</td> <td>70 – 79</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D</td> <td>60 – 69</td> </tr> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>0 – 59</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Letter</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	A	90 – 100	B	80 – 89	C	70 – 79	D	60 – 69	F	0 – 59						
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Secondary School Grades 6-12	Two full Report Cards per year at the end of each semester. Continual access to Quickschools. A student who is not in attendance at least half of the quarter, will not receive a formal report card and may be in danger of losing credits (see Attendance Policy).	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>Letter</u></th> <th><u>Grade Pt</u></th> <th><u>Percentage</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>A</td> <td>4.0</td> <td>90 – 100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B</td> <td>3.0</td> <td>80 – 89</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C</td> <td>2.0</td> <td>70 – 79</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>60 – 69</td> </tr> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>0.0</td> <td>0 – 59</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>An additional 1 point is added to GPA for an Advanced Placement or Dual Enrollment course if a C or better is earned. 0.5 points is added for Honors classes.</p>	<u>Letter</u>	<u>Grade Pt</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	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
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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 exams are given in all academic subjects (math, science, English, Spanish and Social Sciences) in Grades 6-12.
- 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/Principal 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.
- Exams are typically scheduled from 8:00-10:00am and 10:30am-12:30pm and students are dismissed after their exam(s) for the day.

FAILED COURSES – High School Credits

If a course is failed, it may be required to repeat the 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.

FAILED COURSES – Middle School

CRIA is a standards-based school. Should a Middle School student end the school year with a failing grade in any subject, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The Director/Principal will review Semester 1 report cards of all Middle School students. Should there be a failing Semester 1 grade for English and Mathematics, the Director/Principal will arrange a meeting with the student, parents, and teacher of the failing course to devise a plan to improve the student's score. Progress will be monitored throughout Quarter 3.
2. Should the student continue to be in jeopardy of failing the course after Quarter 3, parents will be informed that if the student fails the course for the year (overall score for the academic year is below 60%), the student will be required to sit for an exam in August. This is an opportunity for the student to relearn the content over the summer and demonstrate proficiency of the material. If the student can demonstrate basic proficiency on this exam, he/she will pass the course and move on to the next grade level. Should the student fail the exam, he/she will be required to repeat the Grade. Students who fail two or more academic core classes may be required to repeat the grade. The Director/Principal will review student test scores, academic progress, and utilize teacher recommendations in making the determination to retain a student. The Director/Principal's decision is to be considered final.

RETENTION – Primary School

Current education research shows that most often retention does not benefit a child. The entire Primary staff will do everything possible to ensure that our students are not only successful academically but that he/she also shows appropriate development and growth socially, emotionally, and physically. However, when the teacher feels that a child is not ready for the next grade (at least one grade level below expectations), a team meeting will be held with the child's teacher, the Counselor, the Learning Support Teacher, the Director/Principal, and the child's parents. The child's best interest will always be of foremost concern. Costa Rica International Academy reserves the right to make the final decision regarding student placement, promotion and retention.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

Quarter and semester grades determine whether a student falls into Academic Probation. The College Counselor and the Director/Principal will review all grades at mid-semester. If a student receives two "Fs" in any subjects; one "F" and two "Ds" 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, Director/Principal, 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 external tutoring in the subject(s), at the parent's expense.

In addition, the school may recommend for a student to receive an educational evaluation 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 to be removed from Academic Probation. A student who remains on Academic Probation for three 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 – 5: You can expect your students to have between 10-45 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	5-10 minutes
Grade 2	10-15 minutes
Grade 3	20-25 minutes
Grade 4	30-35 minutes
Grade 5	40-45 minutes

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

Grades 6 – 8: You can expect students to have between 45 – 65 minutes of homework per night on average. Homework will not be assigned over the weekend although a quiz or test may be scheduled on a Monday, necessitating some studying over the weekend.

Grades 9 – 12: You can expect students to have between 1 – 2 hours of homework per night on average. Homework may be assigned over the weekend for completion for Monday's classes.

Note that AP and University Dual Enrollment courses have a heavy time demand.

If a student misses work because of illness, the student will have one day per day missed to make up work. Teachers will not take in late work except by prior arrangement. When a student knows in advance of an absence, it is the student's responsibility to inform the teacher and get any work they will miss in advance of their absence. No extra days for work will be granted for days known in advance (medical appointments, visa runs, travel, etc.).

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/or expectations/guidelines. All students in Grades 1-12 are provided with a Student Planner where they are expected to record homework assignments. In addition, homework is posted on Google Classroom (Grades 5-12) by 4pm of the day that the homework is assigned. If a student was absent, they should refer to GC.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Costa Rica International Academy (CRIA) offers a high-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 and the Director/Principal 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.
- 2nd and subsequent offences will result in a one to three-day suspension from school.

SPECIAL SERVICES

CRIA provides special services for students in the form of:

- Social/emotional guidance counseling (School Counselor)
- College counseling (College Counselor)
- Learning support instruction for students with mild learning differences (Learning Support Teacher. See Learning Support Policy on website.
- English Language Learners (ELL Teacher) for students Grades 2-9. See Language Policy on website.

College Counseling

Our College Counselor offers guidance and advice for the college admission process for currently enrolled CRIA students. However, most of the work to complete the college applications process lies with the student and his/her family. Any expenses incurred for required notarization and mailing for official documentation lies with the student's family. Students applying to universities in Europe may incur fees of approximately \$400 for these notarizations.

High School diplomas are awarded to all graduating students in May. Should a replacement diploma be required, a fee of \$100 is charged. Electronic and hard copies of a student's transcripts are also provided upon graduation. Replacement transcripts are available to CRIA graduates for \$30 per transcript.

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. MAP testing may occur in January/February for internal purposes only (no reports home at this time). All registered students take the MAP tests - no exemptions are granted. Data from tests are used for differentiated learning.

Ninth, tenth and eleventh graders take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Tests (PSAT), a practice version of the SAT, a 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/or 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 mathematics and critical reading sections.

ACT (American College Test) is also widely accepted by most U.S. and Canadian colleges and universities. Students should carefully check the catalog of each prospective college/university to determine the exams required. The ACT gives sub-scores from 36 in English, mathematics, natural science and a composite score. The tests are approximately 4 hours. Students should seek advice from the counselor about which tests to take and when to take them.



The new FARO tests will be conducted towards the end of the academic year. All students in Grades 5 and 11 will be required to take the tests, regardless of nationality, language level, and post-secondary education plans. To take the FARO tests, students MUST be registered in a MEP accredited school, like CRIA.

A child will not be allowed to move schools without the FARO certificate and will not be able to take the test unless they are registered with MEP. CRIA has incorporated FARO prep classes into our regular schedule to help prepare our students for these tests.

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 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/online communications 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/Principal, 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 Computer/STEM Labs.
18. If a computer in one of the labs is found to be inoperable or needs 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/STEM Lab without the supervision of a teacher.

CELL PHONES/ELECTRONICS

Cell phones and video game consoles are NOT permitted any time during school hours for Primary students. The below policy applies to Secondary students only. Cell phones/electronic devices may serve as an outstanding instructional tool and learning resource if used appropriately. We encourage our staff members and students to use electronics and online 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. To preserve a constructive learning environment, the policy includes:

1. Cell phones/electronic devices, ear buds, and headphones may only be used for educational purposes in the classroom setting. If a student wishes to use their device for non-educational purposes, high school students may do so before the first period class, between classes, snack, lunch, and after school in adherence with Device Free Days policy. Middle school students may not access their cell phones or electronic devices at school unless approved by a teacher for educational purposes.
2. Cell phones/electronic devices, ear buds, and headphones 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.
3. Once inside any of the locations, students must store their cell phones/electronic device in a location (i.e.-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, for educational purposes only. Phone use may not be utilized for rewarding students except for the last five minutes of class, and then only with teacher permission.

4. If a cell phone/ electronic device rings, vibrates, or is used for any reason without teacher permission, is visible anytime during class time, or if a student is found using it on campus during class time or during a device free day, a staff member may confiscate the device.
5. 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.
6. Students may not record (audio or video) any person without their expressed consent. 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. In the event of an immediate emergency, please use the main school line at 2654-5042.

DEVICE FREE DAYS

Middle School: Students in Grades 6-8 are NOT allowed to use devices (cell phones, computers, e-readers, iPads, game consoles, etc.) during the morning and lunchtime breaks from Monday through Thursday. Devices will be allowed on Fridays during the two breaks. Should a student require their device to prepare for a test or lesson, they will speak in advance with their classroom teacher to see if a special study hall can be arranged for that day. However, teachers are not obliged to offer such a study hall. Students should come with printed notes or prepare for tests in advance of the school day.

High School: Students in Grades 9-12 are NOT allowed to be on devices (cell phones, computers, e-readers, iPads, etc.) during the morning break or lunch break on **Wednesdays**.

TEST CALENDARS

Teachers schedule tests collaboratively. Although difficult to schedule, every attempt will be made to limit the number of tests or major assignments 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 must pay a percentage of the cost of a new book, since the book will now have to be replaced sooner than expected. The Director/Principal 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.

LIBRARY BOOKS

Students in Toddler through Grade 5 have a weekly library lesson and the opportunity to check-out a library book. The overall library collection includes 6000+ titles and CRIA strategically adds to the collection every year. The Secondary collection (gr. 6-12) is distributed out from the Library Center to the classrooms for easier checkout and wider use among our MS and HS students. All Library books and resources are vetted by the Curriculum Director to ensure that the collection is aligned with the school's values and strategic goals.

All library books are required to be returned to the school within the last two weeks of each semester. Should a book be lost or damaged, the book must be replaced with a similar type of book (a chapter book is replaced by a chapter book, a picture book replaced by a picture book) or payment to replace the book must be received. Failure to reimburse the school for lost or damaged books will result in Report Cards being held until payment is made.

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. House System t-shirts are required for each student and will be required for certain days. Boys and girls should have neat hairstyles. 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 may NOT alter the length of the shorts or skirts.

Students must wear sneakers, athletic shoes, or sandals. Flip flops are prohibited for safety reasons. **Students may wear the CRIA sweatshirt only.** Students will not be permitted to wear other sweaters/hoodies or shirts over their CRIA uniform. 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 or will remain in the office until the appropriate uniform is brought to school.

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. Running or tennis shoes are required. All uniforms must be purchased by the family at the school store. Primary students must wear their polo and blue bottoms on swimming days.

Field Trips and School Events

While on field trips or attending school events 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 or for special events. In these cases, clothing should be modest. No spaghetti strapped tops or mid-riff bearing shirts or revealing shorts are allowed. Clothing may not display logos/imagery/wording that are inappropriate for a T-12 academic setting; sociopolitical causes or affiliations, drugs/alcohol messaging or imagery may not be displayed on clothing.



Free Dress/Themed Dress Days

Free dress and themed dress days are periodically offered as fundraising activities and/or student incentives. On such days, students are required to adhere to the pre-established dress code policy. There are to be no midriffs, no spaghetti straps, and shorts need to be at a length to provide full coverage on front and back for all students. Clothing may not display logos/imagery/wording that are inappropriate for a T-12 academic setting; sociopolitical causes or affiliations, drugs/alcohol messaging or imagery may not be displayed on clothing. Students found in violation will be required to wait in the main office until appropriate attire can be dropped off for them. Repeat violations may result in detention. The occurrence of such days is subject to the School Director's approval.

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 footwear.

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 the Administrative Assistant 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 EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 7, 2022

For the 2021-22 school year return to campus-based learning, CRIA temporarily eased the Attendance Policy to help the school community navigate the Covid pandemic. With the most recent easing of Ministry of Health Covid restrictions, the school is reverting to normal attendance policies with exceptions made for serious illnesses and Covid-related absences, effective February 7, 2022. All absences prior to February 7, 2022, shall not count toward the normal attendance policy for each semester of the 2021-22 school year. The intent is to help our students to successfully complete the academic program with full credit without any absentee penalties incurred on account of ever-changing restrictions during these previous pandemic times. **See Illnesses clauses of this policy for Covid-related absences.**

ATTENDANCE PHILOSOPHY

The process of education includes a combination of instruction, classroom participation, learning experiences, and study 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. To maximize the contact days and minimize absences, CRIA has traditionally established the school calendar with at least one long weekend in each school calendar month so families can attend to family business and/or enjoy family holiday time together during the school year. We strongly encourage families to use these school calendar breaks for non-urgent doctor/dental visits, visa runs and family getaways. 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.

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 8866-8920 or email 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 allowed to attend after school activities. Please see illness policy below. **CRIA will not accept phone calls or emails excusing a student from school from anyone other than the child's parent or guardian.**

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 a.m. 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

- Parents of Primary students may collect their child in the designated hallway at 3:00 p.m. If a student has not been picked up by a parent by 3:15, the Primary student is brought to the main office to wait.
- 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.
- 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

Late entrance policy is applicable for **students new to CRIA only**. Should a new student miss ten or fewer days at the beginning of any semester, any coursework missed must be made up. Should the student miss 11-15 school days at the beginning of any given semester, the student has the option to make up any coursework missed, to receive credit for that semester. **Should the student miss more than fifteen school days at the beginning of any semester, no credit will be awarded for that semester.** Should a previously enrolled student be absent at the beginning of a semester, the days missed *will count* towards to total of nine allowable days per semester.

Partial Day Attendance

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 activities on that day unless he/ she had attended more than half the school day.

Cancelled Days and Make-up Days

The school calendar is planned each year with 180 contact days with students, inclusive of early dismissal days. Occasionally, the school administration will cancel a school day, either partially or in full, in the interest of safety. From time to time, wildfires, controlled burns, and flooding may occur. Please follow the procedures as communicated by the school in these circumstances. Up to three cancelled days out of 180 school days may be experienced within a school year without any make-up requirements. Any cancelled days beyond three shall be added to the school calendar either on Saturdays or at the end of the school year in June.

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 three tardies to any class in each quarter will be required to make up that missed time with the teacher. The teacher will decide the makeup time.
- 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.



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 zero. **Students who miss more than nine 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 exceptions are for absences related to a school sponsored event such as sports matches, Model United Nations conferences, pre-approved athletic event, school-approved community service activities, prolonged illness with a doctor's note, mandatory quarantines, Covid related travel restrictions that deny re-entry after a school break, emergency surgery recovery, 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 to minimize the loss of school time. CRIA has scheduled long weekends into the school 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 or 8566-8920.

Absences for religious reasons for up to two days in the school year may be excused if written permission is gained from the Director at least two weeks in advance. Only published religious holidays that are not already included in the CRIA calendar may be considered.

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

1. A student cannot exceed nine absences **per class**, per semester.
 - a. Students who are absent will be permitted to make up work missed and receive credit for all work submitted (absences within the allowed nine per semester). 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.
 - b. In the case of illness, an extra class period is allowed for each day of the absence due to illness to allow time to finish the work.

- c. The responsibility of contacting the teachers, getting assignments, doing the work, and submitting it to the teacher rests with the student.
 - d. Any missed tests/quizzes will be made up at the time given by the teacher.
 - e. 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. Illnesses other than doctor verified prolonged 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 other than doctor verified prolonged 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 (please see illness policy below for details).
5. If a pattern of concern develops, such as repeated absences when there are quizzes or tests, the Counselor/Director 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 fifth 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 eighth absence, a meeting will be required with the parent/guardian, the student, and the Administration (Counselor, 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.
9. Primary teachers will not provide worksheets and lesson plans and grade work for students who are absent for more than five consecutive days. Teachers will provide a general overview of content missed and it will be the family's responsibility to work with their child during the absence on the topics provided.

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.

MODES OF COMMUNICATION

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. Both in-person and virtual events will be held.
- Curriculum Night
- CRIA school website (www.criacademy.com)
- Quickschools - Online grade program for Grades 3 and up
- Google Classrooms – Grades 5-12 course websites; homework posted here in addition to given in class (students expected to write homework in school planner)
- Parent/Teacher Conferences: Fall and Spring
- Family Handbook
- Emails/Phone
- Primary School: 2 Report Cards at end of each semester; 2 Progress Reports at end of Q1 and Q3; 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)
- Primary Grades Weekly Newsletter (each Friday)
- Periodic news emails from administrative office

COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL

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 Director/Principal without first speaking with the teacher concerned.
- If you are not sure who to speak with, or there are extenuating circumstances, contact the Director/Principal for guidance.
- If the concern continues, contact the Director/Principal.

The school will communicate with parents using email, Primary School classroom newsletters, frequent news email from the Administrative Team, scheduled conferences between school personnel and parents, mid-semester progress reports/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 child 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. These are very stressful pandemic times for parents and teachers, and we ask all parties to let the *Golden Rule* guide your interactions, especially when there are serious disagreements on issues being discussed.
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 Director/Principal.
3. Problems that have not been resolved after conferences with the teacher may be taken to the Director/Principal 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. Should the issue not be resolved with the Director/Principal, and is a policy change related query, the issue may be elevated to the Board.

4. The School 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 appropriate 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. The School Director then forwards the communication the Board of Directors.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Health and Safety and Ministry Decrees

If the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education have placed restrictions on the operations of the school, CRIA will follow such policies and procedures. Some of the procedures outlined in this handbook may be superseded by government mandates.

Communication Regarding School-Wide Emergencies

All parents must download WhatsApp to their smartphone and join the CRIA Families group. This app is set to no-reply mode. We will use this App to communicate emergency evacuations or school cancellations only. Please follow the directions in the message.

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/ChjO8xs8QnW6PACuzb39t5>

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 USD 1000.00. Claim forms, as well as more information, are available in the Business Office, for reimbursement of expenses incurred for medical treatment.

Accidents and 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 (Metropolitano Hospital or Beachside 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. Should a student sustain a head injury of any significance, the parent will be notified via phone. If the parent cannot be reached via phone, an email will be sent.

Illness

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

- Student has a positive Covid test (or a household member with a positive test)—keep child home for seven calendar days from *onset of symptoms*
- Fever- Temperature of 100°F/ 38°C or higher. Child must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to class. According to the National Institute of Health (NIH), for children the normal oral temperature ranges between 97.6–99.3°F (36.4–37.4°C). Identifying your child’s normal range can make it easier to know when you have a fever
- 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, skin rash, impetigo, Covid, etc.)

It is often difficult to decide about whether 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 encounter 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 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, have a temperature, have diarrhea or a rash at school will be sent home. In the case of a positive Covid test, please follow ministry guidelines for quarantining your child (currently seven calendar days from onset of symptoms).



A doctor's note is required following an absence of two or more consecutive days due to a major illness, communicable disease, or injury. In the case of a student within a household where there is a ministry approved Covid positive test, please see procedures below.

Covid-19

The Covid pandemic has had a significant negative impact for school on-campus attendance and overall student learning. The school has updated attendance policies in recognition of recent changes to Ministry of Health quarantine requirements. **The school no longer closes on-campus classes when there is a student, teacher or family member who tests positive.** Covid-19 related absences shall be treated as follows, effective February 7, 2022:

Excused Covid Related Absences:

1. Students who have a positive test (or who has a household member who has tested positive) must quarantine for the Ministry of Health mandated period (currently seven calendar days from the *onset of symptoms*)—those days of quarantine are not counted as absences
2. Parents/guardians who have a positive Covid test within their household may elect to self-quarantine their asymptomatic child. Also, if the child is presenting with any Covid symptoms within a household with a Ministry-approved positive Covid test, the family must keep that child at home for seven calendar days—Both instances do not count as an absence from school
3. If a family and/or student is Covid illness restricted from traveling back to Costa Rica from a school break, then those days away are excused as absences

Lice

Students with head lice will be sent home and parents will need to treat their child's hair. Students who were sent home for lice may not return to the classroom until they have been checked by office personnel and given a clean bill of head health before they can return to class.

While we regret any inconvenience that this may cause since keeping sick children at home may mean lost workdays/ 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 a student needs 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.

Allergies

Should a student have an allergy that prevents them from participating in an activity (i.e. – allergic to chlorine so cannot participate in swimming), a doctor's note is required to be presented. Until the note of non-participation is produced from a doctor, the student will be required to participate in all activities. We are unable to provide alternative classes for a student in these instances so the child will be expected to sit on the sidelines and watch the activity without participating.

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
- maintain social-distancing protocols
- 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
- using designated crosswalks
- pool area is off limits during breaks or non-swimming activities

Safety Drills: Fire, Flood, Earthquake, Lock-down and Bomb Threat Procedures

One of these procedures is practiced on regular rotating basis. Flood evacuation procedures are practiced in August and May, and the fire, earthquake, and lock-down procedures rotate throughout the remaining months. The time of day that each drill is practiced changes so that students know which evacuation location to go to depending on where on campus they are located during the drill or emergency.

CRIA has five evacuation meeting points throughout the campus which are marked with signs:

- Evacuation Point 1 - the field behind the Primary school building
- Evacuation Point 2 - the parking lot between the Primary and the cafeteria
- Evacuation Point 3 - the Secondary parking lot
- Evacuation Point 4 - next to the gym on the field
- Evacuation Point 5 - the parking lot between the music room and Early Years' Center

Each classroom is equipped with an evacuation route map, indicating the evacuation route and meeting point for each location on campus.

Bomb Threat

Should the school be alerted to a bomb threat of the CRIA campus, the same procedures for the Fire Drill will be employed. Exit routes will be communicated at Evacuation Assembly points. Parents will be notified to collect students via our WhatsApp protocol (See below).

In the case of an actual emergency and the main campus must be evacuated, two evacuation routes are established to take students to **The Village** which is the designated pick-up point for parents to collect their children. The safety of each route will be evaluated and selected.

Route 1: From the main soccer field to The Village across the bridge linking the two properties

Route 2: The main road from the campus to The Village

Do NOT come collect your children from the campus in the case of an emergency until you are contacted and informed of when and where to collect your children. We must keep the campus accessible to emergency vehicles.

Contacting families in case of campus evacuation: **all parents must download WhatsApp to their smartphone and join the CRIA Families group.** This app is set to no-reply mode. We will use this App to communicate emergency evacuations or school cancellations only. Please follow the directions in the message.

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/ChjO8xs8QnW6PACuzb39t5>

Emails will also be sent; however, WhatsApp will be our primary mode of informing parents of evacuations and cancellations. It is each parent's responsibility to join this group.

Collection of Children from The Village

Once students have been evacuated to The Village and parents have been informed via the WhatsApp group, parents should come to collect their children immediately from The Village. There are two collection points from The Village:

South parking lot (parallel to the dirt road) – Primary students AND their secondary siblings
West parking lot (parallel to the paved road) – Secondary students without Primary siblings

Students will be allowed to leave with another parent only if your child's homeroom teacher and/or Rebeca has been informed either by phone call or email. Students will remain at The Village until they are collected by a parent, or we have received alternative instructions.

Child Protection Policy

Costa Rica International Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our students. CRIA expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment by demonstrating their understanding of how each adult working on behalf of the school has an active part to play in protecting students from harm and promoting their welfare.

Harassment & Bullying

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

Definition: Bullying is unfair and one-sided. It happens when someone repeatedly hurts, frightens, threatens, or excludes someone 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, making racial slurs, 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 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 (Affirm Feelings, Ask Questions, Assess Safety, and **Act** by coaching child on what to do in the future)
- If warranted, fill-out Bullying Incident Report and submit to the Division Director/Principal

Consequences for Violation of the Anti-Bullying Policy

Depending on the severity, nature of the incident, and age/grade of the students involved, 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 Director/Principal. The Director/Principal will examine the report and will investigate the validity of the claim. The Director/Principal 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/Principal will redirect the student to come up with a plan to prevent similar behaviors in the future. The Director/Principal will ensure that proper documentation is filed.

Notification of Parents

School staff will notify the parents of involved students. The parents might be asked to meet with the Director/Principal 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/Principal and/or Counselor to help prevent future violations. Interventions may include but are not limited to behavior management, relationship counseling, resolution strategies, small group counseling, individual counseling, and conflict management strategies.

Consequences

The student may serve one or more days of detention during recess or lose school privileges. In cases of severe or repeated bullying, the student may be suspended.

Parental Behavior Policy (PBP)

At CRIA we are very fortunate to have a parent body which is supportive and friendly. We recognize that the success of the school is dependent on a constructive relationship between all members of the school community: students, parents, staff and the Board. This relationship must be polite, positive, and respectful. For this reason, we continue to welcome and encourage parents/guardians to participate fully in the life of our school. Any reference in this policy to a "parent", includes any parent, guardian, caregiver or other individual with parental responsibility for a student of CRIA.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a reminder about the expected conduct from our parents and visitors. We ask that all members of the school community follow these principles:

- We all respect the caring ethos of our school, including the Golden Rule.
- Both parents and staff need to work together for the benefit of the students.
- All members of the school community should be treated with respect and, therefore, we must all set a good example in our own speech and behavior.

In this context, threatening, violent or abusive behavior, against any members of our school community, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All members of our community have a right to expect the school to be a safe place in which to work and learn. Where the behavior of parents or visitors falls below expected standards, the school will take appropriate action.

Parental Conduct

Parents are asked to communicate with each other and with other children, as well as all members of staff in a respectful and courteous manner; a manner in which they themselves would wish to be addressed.

Parental Access

Normal permitted times on the premises are at drop-off in the morning (7:40 am to 8:00 am) and at pick up (3:00 pm to 3:15 pm). If a child is registered to attend after-school-activities or an after-school club, these timings will extend to reflect the normal drop-off or collection times associated with these activities. Access onto the school property at any other time is by appointment only.

Behavioral Incidents

In order to support a peaceful and safe school environment, the school cannot accept parents or visitors exhibiting the following:

- Conduct which undermines the safe and calm environment in school, either in the school office, classroom, around the school site, immediately outside the school or anywhere the school is being represented (sports and field trips, etc.).
- Using loud or offensive language, such as swearing.
- Displaying an unacceptable amount of anger and aggression.
- Threatening physical violence to a member of the school community.
- Damaging school or personal property.
- Abusive and/or excessive telephone calls, emails, letters or other forms of communication.
- Defamatory comments about school staff, the Board or other parents on social media sites and other public forums, and in school communications.
- Sexual abuse.
- Racial abuse.
- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment of one's own child.
- Approaching someone else's child in order to chastise them.
- Entering the school premises without authorization.

Any example of such behavior shall, for the purposes of this policy, constitute a "Behavioral Incident." If any such incidents are reported by a parent to the school, but haven't been witnessed by a member of staff, evidence will be required to substantiate these claims.

Excessive Emails to CRIA Staff

There is a paradox of email communications—a measured use of emails to communicate with the school is very effective for improving the overall student experience. However, when a parent uses emails excessively to rehash issues and/or debate decisions, lobby special interests, etc., that parent or group of parents that are excessively emailing are effectively crashing the

management of the school not unlike hackers who flood a server to crash its functioning. While CRIA encourages positive communications between the home and school, excessive emailing is counter-productive and harmful. Please be mindful that our teachers and administrators are extremely busy and having to respond to excessive email senders is deleterious to student learning.

Inappropriate Use of Social Media Sites and Chat Groups

Social media websites, applications and chat groups are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, administrators, school staff, school boards and in some cases other parents/students.

The Senior Leadership Team & Board of Directors of CRIA consider the use of social media websites and chat groups being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the whole school community.

Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels by using the CRIA communications protocols, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

In the event that any student, parent or other family member is found to be posting libelous or defamatory comments on social media sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site. All social network sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on the site, and they provide robust mechanisms to report content or activity which breaches this. The school will also expect that any parent or student removes such comments immediately.

Under no circumstances are parents or students permitted to use, communicate or trade using the school's name, logo and/or branding, using email accounts, chat groups, social media postings or other public communications without the Director's approval. The Parent Association must get prior approval from the Director for any public communications.

In serious cases the school will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites. Costa Rica is known for strict libel and slander laws. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly is the issue of cyber bullying and the use by one child or a parent to publicly humiliate another school community member by inappropriate social network messaging. We will take and deal with this as a serious incident of school bullying by such parent or student. Thankfully, such incidents are extremely rare at CRIA.

School Authorized WhatsApp Classroom Groups

CRIA sets up WhatsApp classroom chat groups at the beginning of each year. The purpose of such chat groups is to build a sense of community among the parents, where they can help new and returning parents to learn about school traditions and customs from other parents, pass along helpful information that may come from being a CRIA parent (for example, how to prepare for fun traditions at CRIA, Halloween, Talent Shows, Christmas events, CR Independence Day festivities, etc.), or emergency information sharing.

Turn to the chat group to find out where to buy a costume for a school event or be reminded of school activities. Access has to be respected and treated correctly—otherwise we run the risk of abusing the system by rumor mongering when the answers can easily be found by asking the right person directly within the school community.

Please Respect the Purpose of the Chat Group

- 1) Respect the main purpose of the classroom chat group. Irrelevant topics, as well as religion and politics, no matter how strongly you may feel about current events, are not constructive. There is no easier way to find yourself in a heated argument than by voicing out your opinion in a school chat group.
- 2) Don't disturb the members' sleeping hours. Some people put their mobile phones on silent mode while they sleep, but others keep it on for urgent matters. Unless there's really an emergency or an announcement the members need to know first thing in the morning, it's irritating to be roused from sleep in the wee hours for small talk.
- 3) Sending a private message is preferred if a member wants, for instance, to tell another member about anything personal.
- 4) Be sensitive and think twice before sending out certain messages. It's always easier to send out invitations to a group chat—but only if you intend to invite everyone.
- 5) 'Old school' chain mail is indeed still around but reincarnated as a forward on chats and e-mail! Be careful not to be someone who is spreading misinformation that can be easily verified by simply following CRIA communications protocols.
- 6) Be helpful. If a member asks about something you know of, or have access to the information needed, share it. After all, that's what everyone is there for. Many times, a gentle reminder to someone to ask the appropriate school staff to get answers is the best course of action.
- 7) Don't call out a parent's attention. If you must discuss problems, that should be between you and the other parent, not with the whole chat group seeing the messages. Passive-aggressive remarks have no place in the chat group.
- 8) In case of tension, remember that it is the classroom parents' chat group. Everyone must act accordingly and always speak in a respectful and mindful manner.
- 9) The classroom teacher is a member of the chat group; this chat can be a good back-up way to get clarifications from the teacher on class information that may not have made it into the normal class weekly newsletter. Please be mindful that our teachers are extremely busy, and we do not want to have communications overload that takes their time away from teaching and preparation!

The Formation of Special Interest Groups, Factions and Petitions

While we encourage parents to associate with one another for the betterment of the school community, the formation of parental groups to lobby special interests from the school are counter-productive and lead to a wasteful amount of time for the CRIA staff. CRIA employees and the Board are held to strict parent/student confidentiality agreements. CRIA cannot and will not respond to special interest groups, factions, or petitions, in keeping with confidentiality requirements under Costa Rican libel and defamation regulations. We strongly discourage parents from being a follower and becoming entangled with self-anointed parent leaders who

recruit parents to join their group to lobby the school. For example, if one parent has a suspicion that bullying is occurring against their child, while another parent may sincerely have good intentions in joining the other family's grievance, the school cannot respond to such a grievance on account of confidentiality; the administration has to somehow figure out how to respond to such a group's members *individually*, leading to much time wasted that is harmful to the management of the school. The school thus requires a CRIA family to use the professional communications protocol channels to have their individual *family's* concerns or grievance addressed in a much more effective manner.

PBP Procedures

The school has processes in place for dealing with Behavioral Incidents. Any Behavioral Incident will be reported to the School Principal, and the appropriate procedures will be followed. This may include verbal warnings, written warnings, exclusion from the school premises, or non-renewal of enrollment for the following school year. Enrollment at CRIA is contractual in nature and for one year. Ongoing enrollment for subsequent years is not automatic, and parents and students are required each year to abide by all updated school policies and procedures. Notwithstanding a signed agreement, payment of the Tuition Fees Deposit is considered a binding parental agreement to abide by all Family Handbook policies and procedures.

Consequences of a Breach of the PBP

Any parent, member of school staff or student may notify the Principal of a possible breach of the PBP. The Principal will investigate the complaint and if satisfied that a breach has occurred:

- (a) provide a first and/or final warning that a breach of the PBP has occurred and that a further breach will not be tolerated.
- (b) determine whether a breach may be rectified by the parent making a private or public apology, depending on the circumstances, to an individual or group of individuals.
- (c) where the breach concerns unacceptable behavior on a visit to the school, issue a trespass warning to the parent, which, if the behavior continues, may accelerate to a trespass notice requiring the parent to stay away from the school.

Communications that are in breach of this PBP, because of the language an expression used or the manner in which it is sent or delivered, will not be responded to by any CRIA employees, other than notification of a breach in the PBP. Correspondence, which is vexatious, abusive, using wounding sarcasm, or is passive aggressive, fall into the breach category; parents are strongly advised to follow the *Golden Rule* in their interactions with the CRIA community.

Nothing in this PBP precludes any person from exercising their individual legal rights in respect of obtaining restraining and intervention orders, reporting assault, bringing action for defamation, exercising rights under vilification or discrimination laws or in any other way.

At any stage, the school may report serious incidents of abusive and threatening behavior to the Police. The school has a responsibility to ensure that any act of actual or threatened violence is referred to the Police immediately.

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. When the student returns, he/she must sign back in and must use hand sanitizer before entering the campus. If a student is leaving school due to illness, he/she must have reported to the Main Office.

Senior Privilege

Seniors who are on-track with credits for graduation may sign out of campus IF the student's parent AND the Director/Principal grant the written permission, and only if the student will not be returning to campus for a class or activity after they depart for the day. Should a student be found to be abusing this privilege, it will be revoked.

Off-campus lunch privileges may be revoked during spikes or outbreaks of COVID-19. CRIA Administration will inform you when off-campus lunches will be permitted again.

Seniors may purchase their own uniform bottoms from outside providers only if they meet the following criteria: navy blue, not stretchy fabric, 5-inch inseam minimum for shorts, and for skirts no higher than 5 inches from the back of the knee. Uniform compliance and detention rules apply.

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.

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. The land outside the school gate is not CRIA property. Parking here may lead to the towing of your vehicle.

Busses

Only students who have paid for the use of the bus may ride the bus. This is a legal regulation and exceptions cannot be made. Students registered for the bus are held accountable to the bus rules and regulations. Should behavior on the bus violate the rules, a student may be suspended from the bus.

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. The area by the pool is always off limits except when directly supervised by the swimming teacher.

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, 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 and will result in financial compensation and/or repairs incurred by the family of the student(s) involved. 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, or Director/Principal. 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

Parents and visitors to the campus **must have a scheduled appointment. Further instructions for entering campus will be shared at the time of appointment confirmation.** Visitors must

exchange a picture ID for a Visitor's Badge at the front gate and report immediately to the Main Office. The photo ID will be returned when the visitor exits the campus. Under Ministry health decrees, there may be further restrictions that supersede CRIA policies.

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. At times, some CRIA events and activities may be photographed and/or video recorded for promotional purposes (website, informational videos, etc.). If a parent does NOT want their child's photo or video to be used for promotional purposes, they must write the School Director to inform them of such within 14 days of enrollment.

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 (ASA)

For safety reasons, the provision of ASAs has been aligned with Covid protocols for the regular on-campus school day until such protocols are lifted by the Ministry of Health. ASA meetings/activities are subject to all government regulations and permissions to operate.

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. Any requests for refunds for ASAs must be between the ASA provider and the parent. The school will not intervene in these cases. CRIA hopes to instill a sense of commitment in our students.



Parents and outside ASA providers are permitted to offer an ASA within the policies of the school and are subject to the School Director's approval. The external ASA providers are subject to background checks as per Costa Rican regulations. Our creative teachers are contractually obligated to sponsor one ASA per year, leading to a wonderful diversity of options.

Note that Junior Varsity (JV) and Varsity (V) Sports are not considered as ASAs. JV and V sports require more time commitment for practices and competitions both on the CRIA campus and off-campus. The ASA program is available to students enrolled at CRIA only. We are unable to accept non-CRIA students in our ASA program.

ASAs must be co-curricular in nature, meaning that they must enhance the student experience in traditional academic subjects as well as Spanish language/culture, health, PE, technology, fine arts visual and performing arts. ASAs that center and/or promote sociopolitical ideologies are not permitted at CRIA. The school does not undertake any psychological conditioning in social, political or religious dogmas. In keeping with the spirit of private school law in Costa Rica, CRIA recognizes the rights of individuals in a free society to have a diversity of thought, and therefore we do not permit what is called in the CR law, "...uniformity and univocality [that are] more possible or more easily attainable in totalitarianism and dictatorship than in democracy and freedom."

If CRIA students desire to participate in such sociopolitical activities and/or activism, they are free to do so in the greater Costa Rican society and law. Individual freedom, traditional universal virtues/values, and diversity of thought are part of the CRIA learning experience; however, the right to hold one's own sociopolitical viewpoints does not grant the right to manifest one's views within the CRIA school community.

Athletic Eligibility

Junior Varsity (JV) and Varsity (V) sports are offered when there are sufficient players and coaches. Historically, the school community has had sufficient demand for the following sports:

- Girls' volleyball
- Boys' volleyball
- Boys' basketball
- Girls' soccer
- Boys' Soccer

The school encourages all interested students to tryout and participate. Spaces on athletic teams are limited and tryouts may lead to some students not making the team. All athletic teams have eligibility for CRIA students based upon age and biological sex.

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 for at least four hours 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.

Students must maintain at least a C in all courses in order to participate in a game. Coaches will ensure that academic eligibility is met. Students may not participate in games until the minimum C is reached in all courses. At the beginning of the season, coaches for each sport will set the attendance policy for practices. This attendance policy will affect eligibility for play in games.

Bathroom/Locker Room/Shower Room Policy

The bathroom, locker and shower room usage policy at CRIA is mindful of safety issues related to a K-12 campus. Upper Primary, Middle School and High School students are typically sharing bathroom spaces during the day and for ASAs and other school activities/events. Therefore, CRIA has strict conduct policies and safety procedures related to these spaces:

- All such facilities are wheelchair accessible
- Bathrooms, locker rooms and shower facilities are available for use according to biological sex, not gender identity
- A unisex option is available for students who are not comfortable with biological sex-designated spaces
- Unisex options for bathroom and shower facilities are for individual usage to protect privacy
- Only adults of same biological sex are permitted within such facilities for random yet regular safety checks
- More than one user within a closed bathroom stall, or within the unisex bathroom, is considered a serious misconduct, even if the users are of the same biological sex, and may lead to suspension consequences and written reprimands within student files
- Bathroom visit sign-out and sign-in logs are used by teachers to monitor student usage, movement and whereabouts of students during scheduled class times for safety reasons
- The campus security includes cameras on *outside* areas of entry/exit to such facilities
- Students are encouraged, to the best of their ability, to use passing time, recesses and lunch periods to attend to bathroom needs

House System

The overall purpose of the House system is to connect grades and teachers together to provide them opportunities to build community, and to develop leadership, cooperation, problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

The house system provides an interactive, real-world context for students to work together. It challenges students to unite and collaborate in teams with students not only at the same grade level, but with older or younger students as well. It provides younger students with role models to look up to in the older students and gives older students the opportunity to mentor younger students.

Students in Grades 1 - 12 and teachers are members of one of four houses: Sharks (blue), Jaguars (green), Scorpions (yellow), Toucans (red). All members of the same family are members of the same house. Each student is required to purchase their House t-shirt from the school and to wear them on designated days.

Students who participate in House Events throughout the year can earn points for their Houses as well as be recognized individually for accumulating House points. House bonding days occur at the beginning of each semester where the whole school joins together in House activities. Other Houses activities will be held throughout the year and may include, but are not limited to, quiz shows, beach clean-ups, treasure hunts, a design challenge, singing competition, Science Fair, photography contest, Mathletics, spelling bee, attendance, and various sporting competitions throughout the year, or fundraising for a community service project.

Primary School Class Parties

Class parties may be held for the celebrations of Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day and the end of year. Teachers may plan activities on these special days.

Valedictorian Policy

- The valedictorian must be an attendee of CRIA for a minimum of 3 years to be eligible (Grades 10 -12 consecutively).
- The valedictorian must have a minimum 24 credits; the same as needed for graduation.
- The valedictorian must have a minimum of a 3.0 GPA.
- GPA includes grades from 10th grade to the end of the third quarter of 12th grade.
- We weigh the Advanced Placement courses and dual enrollment university level courses as customary for a standard GPA calculation (+1 point added for C's and above. No extra weighting for D's).
- We do NOT weigh any honors classes from online schools. Those final averages 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.
- In the case of a tie of GPA based on the above criteria, the title of valedictorian will be shared.
- In the case where a graduating class has fifteen or more students, there will be a valedictorian and a salutatorian.
- The Salutatorian will be the student with the second highest GPA, based upon the same criteria as the valedictorian.

Honor Roll

Honor Roll certificates are awarded each year at the End of Year Assembly. In order to qualify for the Honor Roll, the below qualifications must be met:

Primary Students:

1. Student must have been a full-time student since Quarter 1
2. Student must be in Grade 3-5
3. Student must have no more than 5 Bs on their final end-of-year Report Card. Student must not have any grade of C or below throughout the year
4. Student had no honor code violations during the school year (cheating, plagiarizing, bullying, fighting, skipping class, etc.)

Secondary Students:

1. Student must have been a full-time student since Quarter 1
2. Student must be in Grade 6-11
3. Student must have an overall average of 90% or higher for each quarter
4. Student must not have any grade of C or below throughout the year
5. Student had no honor code violations during the school year (cheating, plagiarizing, bullying, fighting, skipping class, etc.)

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. The school does not subsidize special day or overnight trips including but not limited to the MUN, Community Service, and athletic tournaments. Such trips must be fully funded, inclusive of total costs for chaperones/coaches, by the parents of the children participating in the trip.

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 Trips

Costs for field trips will be paid for by the families as additional fees on a per trip basis. When planning field trips, teachers will do all that they can to reduce the costs associated with field trips. Should a student not be able to attend a field trip due to cost, the classroom teacher will provide the student with alternative activities that can be done at home while classmates are on the field trip.

Before a student can participate in a field trip, he/she must have a parent permission form on file with the Main Office. One form covers all field trips. Car/booster seats on field trips are required for all students up to kindergarten. Parents must provide the car/booster seat for the fieldtrip.

Lockers

Lockers will be made available to Secondary School students. Students must make sure they use the lockers wisely, keeping them always locked 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. 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. If an extra key or the combination to the lock is not provided, the school is under no obligation to replace a lock that had to be cut off. 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 in the Main Office. All personal items should be labeled with the student's name so that they can be claimed/returned. CRIA has no responsibility for the loss or theft of personal items.

Rollerblades & Skateboards

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

Toys

Toys from home should remain at home or in a student's backpack during school hours. Poke man cards or other trading/gambling activities are not permitted on campus.

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. No glass bottles or other breakable containers on campus. Microwaves are provided in the cafeteria. CRIA does not supply a method of refrigeration for student lunches. Purchases at the cafeteria are not allowed during the morning snack break for Primary students. Primary students must bring a packed snack from home.

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 always shown to cafeteria personnel
- Soft drinks are not allowed
- Students should queue in line waiting their turn
- Students are not allowed to sit on the tables and must sit in socially distanced manner
- Music is not permitted in the cafeteria or outdoor areas as classes are underway at the same time in proximity
- 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
- Students may not leave the campus without permission from the Director/Principal
- 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

Fundraising

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/Principal. Students may not sell items on the CRIA campus for personal gain (arts and crafts, bakery items, etc.). Students may not fundraise on the CRIA campus for the purposes of subsidizing the personal cost of an optional trip (MUN, Community Service, etc.).

National Honor Society and National Junior 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.

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.

Parent Association

The focus of Parent Association activities is to organize events and projects that seek to provide school members the opportunity to contribute to the general welfare of the school, to be oriented into the culture of the school, and to promote a positive sense of school community. The Parent Association is not a lobbying body for school change, and the executive committee does not act as a representative body for parent concerns. Please see Communications Protocols for the appropriate way to raise concerns/issues. Events and activities sponsored by the Parent Association have included the Halloween Haunt, the Holiday Gala, the Party at the Playa, and the Staff Appreciation Party. The Parent Association invites interested parents to attend their meetings and to join the organization as a class representative or alternate. All parents with children currently enrolled in CRIA are *de facto* members of the CRIA Parents Association.

Parent Involvement

Under COVID-19 health restrictions, parents wishing to be on campus must make an appointment with the main office first. Health and safety guidelines will be shared at time of appointment confirmation.

Should there be an issue between students, parents may NOT speak directly about an incident with someone else's child. Issues should be brought to the children's classroom teachers, and they will deal directly with the problem. The Director/Principal may be included in these discussions.

Parents on campus after drop-off and before pick-up must have permission from the Director/Principal. All parents and guests must come to the main office to sign in.



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.

CRIA Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment

The school's furniture, fixtures and equipment (FF&E) may not be removed from the CRIA campus. The school is unable to lend FF&E to parents or outside organizations.

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 must carry re-usable water bottles marked with their name so that they may drink water throughout the day without having to purchase plastic water bottles. Potable water fountains are found throughout the school campus.

DISCLAIMERS AND LIMITATIONS

CRIA reserves the right to change the policies and procedures contained in this handbook, as needed, throughout the school year.

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.

APPENDIX I

List of supporting policy documents. Please see the school website under Policies and handbooks tab: [School Policies & Handbooks - Costa Rica International Academy \(criacademy.com\)](http://criacademy.com)

1. Program of Studies
2. Language Policy
3. Learning Support Policy
4. Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Policy
5. Class Size Policy
6. Parent Association Policy
7. Tuition and Fees Policy
8. Child Protection Policy