



# STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME TO THE CORNERSTONE SCHOOL.....	1
PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK .....	2
ABOUT OUR SCHOOL.....	3
MISSION STATEMENT .....	3
SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY .....	3
ACCREDITATION AND MEMBERSHIPS .....	4
NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY .....	4
STUDENT DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS.....	4
ACADEMIC PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES .....	6
SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AGREEMENT .....	6
TARDY POLICY .....	6
SIGN-IN AND SIGN-OUT PROCEDURES .....	8
DISMISSAL.....	8
REPORT CARDS .....	8
ASSESSMENTS AND GRADING.....	9
SELF-DIRECTED LEARNER .....	9
STANDARDIZED TESTING .....	9
PROMOTIONS.....	10
ACADEMICS AND ATHLETICS.....	9
PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING .....	10
HOMEWORK.....	11
SCHEDULE AND TEACHER CHANGES .....	11
PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES .....	12
CONTACTING FACULTY/STAFF MEMBERS .....	12
SOCIAL GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS .....	12
PURPOSE AND GOAL.....	12
STANDARDS FOR ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR .....	13
POLICIES AND RULES.....	15
Animal/Toy Policy .....	15
Behavior in Class/Halls/Walkways.....	15
Cell Phones and Other Electronics .....	15
Computer and Systems Usage Policy .....	16
Child Abuse and Cooperation with Governmental Authorities .....	16

Destructive Acts.....	16
Displays of Affection .....	17
Dress Code.....	17
Drugs and Alcohol .....	18
Food, Drink, Gum .....	20
General Conduct.....	20
Harassment/Bullying.....	20
Honesty and Dishonesty .....	21
Language.....	21
Lockers and Cubbies .....	21
Messages .....	21
Parties .....	22
Weapons and Threats .....	21
CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR.....	22
Suspension from Cornerstone .....	25
Dismissal from Cornerstone .....	25
Expulsion .....	25
STUDENT SERVICES, ACTIVITIES, AND RESOURCES.....	25
GUIDANCE COUNSELORS .....	25
MEDIA CENTER .....	26
FIELD TRIPS.....	26
IMMUNIZATIONS, MEDICATIONS, AND CLINIC.....	27
OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION AND POLICIES.....	28
INSPECTION POLICY.....	28
PAYMENT OF TUITION AND FEES .....	30
TUITION & TUITION PAYMENTS.....	30
LUNCH .....	30
STUDENT RECORDS AND INFORMATION .....	31
PARENT/FAMILY COOPERATION .....	31
CHILD SAFETY FROM SEXUAL OFFENDERS AND PREDATORS.....	31
FUND RAISING.....	32
SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICE HOURS.....	33
VISITORS.....	33
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS.....	33
CONTACTS.....	34
PLAN.....	34
CAR LINE.....	34
FIRE DRILL REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES.....	35
LOST AND FOUND.....	35
TEXTBOOKS.....	35
EARLY AND EXTENDED DAY PROCEDURES.....	36
EARLY RELEASE.....	36

ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND RECEIPT OF STUDENT HANDBOOK..... 37

CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT GUIDELINES.....38

STUDENT AGREEMENT AND PARENT PERMISSION FORM.....39

FACULTY/STAFF DIRECTORY.....40

## **WELCOME TO THE CORNERSTONE SCHOOL**

Dear Parents and Students:

Welcome to The Cornerstone School. For many of you this means a new grade, new teacher and new assignments, while for others everything is new for the first time! Whatever the case, we are delighted to have you as part of our School family.

We are dedicated to creating an atmosphere in which every student will feel important, successful and motivated to learn in order to reach his/her full potential. We see that occurring when parents, teachers and administrators work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect, trust, cooperation and open communication. The faculty and administration are available to listen to your cares, compliments and concerns.

This Handbook is intended to convey the expectations of our community. We look forward to our partnership with you in your child's educational experience. Please take some time to read this Handbook with your child as it contains useful information and will help answer some questions regarding our procedures and expectations.

Sincerely,

Ingrid Wasserfall  
Director

## **PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK**

This Handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you and your parents may have during the School year. Because the Handbook contains information about student rights and responsibilities, parents and students are responsible for knowing its contents. Please take the time to become familiar with the following information and keep this Handbook available for your use. It can be a valuable reference during the School year and a means to avoid confusion and misunderstandings when questions arise.

The School reserves the right to interpret the content of this Handbook, including the rules and regulations governing the academic and non-academic conduct of students. This Handbook is not a contract, nor is it intended to be so construed. Our School reserves the right to modify and/or amend the content of this Handbook at any time during the year. If any written modification or amendment is made to this Handbook, a copy of such modification or amendment will be distributed to students and parents.

If you have any questions about the Handbook or any of its policies, please contact the Director.

# **About Our School**

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of The Cornerstone School is to inspire students to be passionate learners who think creatively and independently, and to nurture in them a sense of purpose guided by the values of tolerance, integrity, and mutual respect.

## **School Philosophy**

The guiding philosophy of The Cornerstone School is to provide and cultivate educational experiences which allow children to develop academic, social-emotional, and creative potential. The school environment will foster honesty, trust, openness and respect for the dignity of all people.

In order to implement this philosophy the following goals have been established:

- To provide a teaching staff that will facilitate an atmosphere for self-directed learning. Creating a balance that blends teachers' and children's knowledge and interests, the program will reflect an appreciation and understanding of the uniqueness on each child.
- To integrate the Arts into the curriculum, recognizing that children are active learners who need opportunities for direct experience with a wide variety of materials. The School will provide individual, small and large group instruction so that children learn in a democratic atmosphere.
- The School will provide a climate that promotes the development of self-respect, self-control and cooperation. The staff, the children and their parents will come together to achieve this goal, working to encourage self-expression, imagination, and a sense of humor. Students will be encouraged to show leadership in modeling respect for the rights of others.
- Assessment will take place in multiple forms. Close observation and documentation of children's development, parent conferences, written documentation of children's academic progress, standard measure and the collection of children's work over time will be used in the evaluation and assessment of children and the program.
- The School will solicit and encourage participation by parents in the operation and management of the School through its Board of Trustees, and C.A.P. (Cornerstone Association of Parents), in the classroom environment and in fund raising efforts in order to strengthen and to support The Cornerstone School community.
- The School will maintain an enrollment policy that encourages participation by children of all races, creeds, and cultures.

## **Accreditation and Memberships**

The Cornerstone School is fully accredited by the Florida Kindergarten Council (FKC) and the Florida Council of Independent Schools (FCIS). The Florida Council of Independent Schools (FCIS) was established in 1954 to set high standards for quality elementary and secondary nonpublic education. It assures, through the accreditation process, that member schools maintain those high standards and independence in the area of administration and academic programs. The organization has grown to become one of the nation's largest organizations of independent schools. FCIS accredits grades 2 – 8. FKC is responsible for the accreditation for Preschool through 1<sup>st</sup> grade. The School undergoes a visit from an FCIS/FKC committee for the purposes of re-accreditation every 5 years. The most recent visit was during the 2004/2005 school year. In preparation for this, the faculty and staff serve on committees and evaluate a designated area. This "self-study" comprising all areas of The School is then compiled into a comprehensive report. The most recent self study is available in the library.

FCIS and FKC host annual conventions and the FCIS convention day is a non-school day to allow faculty members to attend. The FKC Convention is usually held on a Saturday although FCIS offers workshops for Early Childhood educators too.

Additional professional associations and memberships include NAIS (National Association of Independent Schools) and NMSA (National Middle School Association).

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

The Cornerstone School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. The Cornerstone School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, disability, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, financial aid, athletic or other school-administered programs

## **Student Disability Accommodations**

We understand that there may be circumstances when a parent may request that the School provide an adjustment or accommodation for a student's medical needs or physical, mental, or learning disability. As the range of requests have grown over the years, The School believes that it is appropriate at this time to outline The School's policy and general guidelines for addressing such requests.

**General Policy:** In general, it is our School's policy to provide accommodations or adjustments for a student's minor needs in circumstances in which the administration determines, in its sole discretion, that doing so is within the reasonable ability of the School and/or its staff and will not result in an unacceptable impairment to the rights of



other students (or employees) or a fundamental change to our educational environment or mission. We also ask parents to realize that, given the size of our school and our available resources, we may not be able to provide all requested accommodations. To the extent we agree to provide accommodations, we may require a sharing of responsibility for the accommodation.

**Request and Documentation:** For any type of accommodation (including administration of medication at school), the parent must inform the School of the need. The School office will then advise the parent of the type of medical documentation needed, which generally will state the student's diagnosis, how the condition limits the student, the recommended accommodations, and the length of time that the accommodation(s) will be needed.

**Release for Communications with Physician:** Sometimes, the documentation received from the physician may raise questions or be unclear as to the recommendations. For that reason, the parent(s) must sign a Release of Information form, permitting the School to contact the medical professional, when necessary. In addition, if there is any cost associated with the physician's cooperation (i.e., to answer a set of questions submitted, etc.), the parent must agree to bear the cost of such process.

**Assessment of Request:** Once the parent's request and medical documentation has been received by the School, appropriate persons within the administration will meet with the parents to clarify information and to discuss whether the School will be able to implement the accommodation requested. In some cases, the parent may be asked to provide (at the parent's cost) any special equipment needed, training for the school's staff, or other associated matters. In addition, the School may advise the parent that the School will allow a particular accommodation, but the full responsibility for doing so will rest with the parent. For example, if the student needs to be tested or have certain types of medicines administered during the day that the School believes are beyond the scope of the School's responsibility, the School may allow the parent to make arrangements to visit the campus for the purpose of testing and administering.

**Limitations on Requests:** Please understand that the School is not a medical facility and does not have the personnel, training, or equipment to handle certain types of medical procedures best left to the student, parent, or physician. Examples of accommodations made for students include appropriate classroom locations, extended time on tests, use of computers, and/or dispensing with medication through the School office.

## **Academic Procedures and Guidelines**

### **School Attendance Agreement**

The consistent and timely attendance at school is extremely important not only to the student's educational experience, but it also teaches the student the responsibilities needed to maintain employment in the workplace.

The Cornerstone School strongly encourages all students to attend class everyday. Many instructional activities cannot be duplicated by simply reading and completing assignments or reviewing material from notes. Please understand that the emphasis at Cornerstone is on application, experiential, and situational learning. Collaborative and cooperative group problem-solving tasks are an essential component of the Cornerstone learning philosophy which means the student is often an essential member of a team and that peer discussion or "learning by doing" is extremely difficult to replicate. In fact, it is improbable that the teaching moment can be recreated effectively for any student who is away from the classroom on any given day. For example, a student who misses out on a Science lab experiment cannot realistically experience that same teaching moment again. With that in mind, we ask that parents give thoughtful consideration to absences, tardy arrivals, and early withdrawals.

Excused absences are described by illness, death in families, family emergencies, school sponsored events and religious holidays. When a student has an excused absence, no penalty of any sort will be assessed. However, the student will be held responsible for making up missed assignments on a schedule determined by the student's teacher. Students with excused absences are entitled to ask teachers to review material in a manner selected by the appropriate faculty member.

Unexcused absences include absences for family vacations and non-school related events. Written notification of the absence must be given to the teacher at least one week in advance. A schedule for completion of missed assignments and deadlines will be outlined by the teacher. Incomplete work and assignments that cannot be replicated (i.e. special projects, science experiments, etc) may cause academic consequences.

For unexcused absences, the student must provide the teacher, with a written request for homework 1 week in advance of the scheduled absence (vacations, etc). At this time, the teacher will arrange for work to be completed during the absence with the understanding that the assignments are submitted the day the student returns to school. However, it is understood that the teacher cannot recreate the teaching moment and cannot be expected to re-teach missed classroom lessons. In the event that the student is going to be away from school for an unexcused absence, the responsibility for completing all work/tests falls on the student. For those assignments that are a direct result of in-class activities/lessons (ex: collaborative group tasks, Science labs, etc) that cannot be recreated, the student is likely to receive a reduction in points.

Please use non-school days (Early Release, Teacher Workdays, etc) to schedule appointments for the student. When arranging for an early dismissal, please make every effort to have the student dismissed at the end of the class period. A student will only be dismissed from the classroom when the parent signs the student out at the front office. Students who are checked out prior to lunch will be counted as absent. This also applies to late arrivals.

In all cases, daily assignments/homework are posted on the teacher's blog and/or on Engrade (1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade). Also, the student has an obligation to contact other students in his/her class to access assignments and their descriptions.

Regarding missed tests, middle school students are expected to take missed tests on the day they return to school. However, if the absence is a result of an illness (ex: excused absence), the teacher will work with the student to ensure that all components of the missed lessons are comprehended prior to scheduling a make-up day. As always, certain extenuating circumstances exist and will be considered prior to making a final decision.

In the event that a student's progress is jeopardized by excessive absences, a conference will be held with the parents, students, and an administrator.

### **Tardy Policy**

- A Child is tardy if he/she arrives after the start of class
- Pre-K through 8th grade students late to class must report to the office for a "late" notice
- If late, the parent must walk the student to the office to sign their child in for class.

Children start their day at quite a disadvantage when they arrive after their first period class has already begun. It is unfair to them as well as to their classmates and teachers to have such interruption. A child is considered tardy if he/she arrives in class after the official start of class time.

Excessive tardies may lead to a conference with parents and the Director during which the school and the parents will attempt to arrive at a solution to the problem. An excessive number of tardies is detrimental to a child's success as a student. As often, the tardy is beyond the control of the child, we welcome your support in getting your child to school in time to start class.

If your child does happen to be tardy he/she will be issued the appropriate pass to be used to enter class. Of course we understand that an occasional tardy happens to almost everyone.

## **Sign-in and Sign-out Procedures**

There are specific procedures for signing a student in and out of School. Children who arrive late to School must have their parent sign them in in the School Office, and then receive a late pass to class.

Students who find it necessary to leave campus during the School day must notify the School Office. They must sign out when leaving, and sign in upon returning to the School campus. A parent must be present when a student signs in or out of School. The School will not allow a student to leave School early with another person unless authorized by the parent to do so.

## **Report Cards**

Report cards are issued at the end of each semester (see the academic calendar for the scheduled issue dates.) All tuition and fines must be paid prior to a student receiving his/her report card. Our report cards are comprehensive. We feel that the best way to convey a child's progress is through letter grades, number grades and written evaluations. In Upper Elementary and Middle School, we adhere to the ten point grading scale for core classes. Additionally, we evaluate each child in social/study skills.

## **Assessment and Grading**

Students are assessed using a range of methods which can include grades and/or rubric of performance criteria.

At The Cornerstone School, we encourage students to feel a sense of achievement as a means of intrinsic motivation. Quality is also an important aspect of the final product and is always considered part of the assessment.

The terms "authentic assessment" and "performance based assessment" are terms you will often hear at Cornerstone. For clarification purposes, the following definitions are provided:

Authentic assessment tasks are those "in which students are asked to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills" - Jon Mueller

Performance assessments "call upon the examinee to demonstrate specific skills and competencies, that is, to apply the skills and knowledge they have mastered." - Richard J. Stiggins

## **Self-directed Learner**

You will often here the term “SDL” at Cornerstone. The program at The Cornerstone School is deliberate in its effort to guide students from being “supported learners” to becoming “self-directed learners”.

According to Abdullah (2001), self-directed learners are "responsible owners and managers of their own learning process" (p. 1). Such individuals have the skills to access and process the information they need for a specific purpose. Self-directed learning integrates self-management (management of the context, including social setting, resources, and actions) with self-monitoring (the process whereby learners monitor, evaluate, and regulate their cognitive learning strategies). It is important to note that being a self-directed learner is a trait or disposition we want students to develop, rather than a laundry list of observable behaviors we wish students to exhibit. (<http://www.nwrel.org/planning/reports/self-direct/>)

## **Standardized Testing**

Standardized tests are administered in the Spring to students in 3rd through 8th grade. The primary purpose of standardized testing is to support the curriculum decisions at Cornerstone. Current research indicates that the benefit of standardized testing below 3rd grade is unsupported. Parents will be provided the results and an explanation of their child(ren)'s test scores.

## **Promotions**

At Cornerstone, the approach and curriculum used is intended to be developmentally appropriate. Appropriate grade placement is determined after consideration of many factors. The Director will make the final decision after consulting with the Division Head regarding the appropriate grade placement.

In our 4th grade—8th grade program, for a child to be promoted to the next grade level, he/she must have an overall passing average in each of the following subjects: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. The overall yearly average is computed by using the grades given each quarter averaged together.

## **Academics and Athletics**

Any students participating in a sport must maintain an academic average of “C” (70%) or above during the entire time that he/she is involved in the sport. If the student's academic average falls below a “C” (70%), he/she will be required to stop participating in the sport in order to devote more time to School work and will not be allowed to attend practices or travel with the team to away games. Suspension from all sports activities will last until the student has raised his/her academic average to a “C” (70%)

or above. This policy is intended to help students keep their academic work as a high priority and not neglect it while participating in sports.

## **Plagiarism and Cheating**

All work that students complete for which they receive credit must be their own. A student who asks or allows another person to complete or submit the student's work is responsible for the actions of the other person.

Cheating and plagiarism are academic dishonesty. *Plagiarism* is the presentation of the words, ideas, concepts, images, or works of another as one's own. Material (in whole or paraphrased) taken from a primary or secondary source without following standards of conventional attribution, and/or without appropriate reference citation is considered to be plagiarized. *Cheating* is obtaining (or attempting to obtain) something by dishonest or deceptive means. A failing grade will be recorded for any work containing any information improperly submitted as one's own, or, completed by means of academic dishonestly, or, deception.

Situations involving cheating or plagiarism on School work (tests, quizzes, homework) will result in a zero, and further disciplinary action. Lending homework to a fellow student to copy is considered cheating by both participants. Discussing the items on a test before all students have taken the test is also considered cheating by all participants.

The concept of plagiarism is explained and discussed in all grades, and thus, the student should be well qualified to make the necessary judgment to avoid erroneously representing someone else's work as his/her own.

## **Homework**

Planners are provided for 3rd – 8<sup>th</sup> grade. In 3rd grade students are actively taught to use their planners. This is supported through 6<sup>th</sup> grade with independence expected in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Homework requirements should always be posted in the classroom or on the blog, and time allocated before the end of class for students to get the homework noted in their planners and to get organized.

Homework may also be posted on your child's class website, which may be accessed through the school site.

Homework is intended to be meaningful and is designed as practice, reinforcement or introduction to peak interest in the following day's lesson. As the focus of the curriculum at Cornerstone is on "learning by doing" and actively engaging students in the learning experiences the authentic learning experience cannot be replicated on paper. Your child therefore, depending on the unit of study, may not receive homework every day.

Our policy regarding the approximate amount of homework per grade:

Grades 1 and 2 (10 – 20 minutes)

Grade 3 (30 – 45 minutes)

Grade 4 (1 hour)

Grades 5 and 6 (1 hour 30 minutes)

Grades 7 and 8 (1 1/2 hours to 2 hours)

Aside from long term tasks: there should be no homework:

On Fridays, if assigned the due date will not be Monday (families need time together)

On nights of school functions

On Religious holidays

For grades 3-8, during standardized testing

## **Schedule and Teacher Changes**

Schedule and/or teacher changes will be initiated by the School when operational needs require or when the administration believes the change will be in the best interests of the student and/or institution.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parents may request a conference with their child's teacher at any time by making arrangements in advance with the teacher via voice mail or email. In consideration of the great demands placed on teachers, the administration requests that you refrain from engaging teachers in a discussion at times when their attention needs to be on their duties.

## **Contacting Faculty/Staff Members**

### **Telephone:**

In an effort to increase your access to Faculty/Staff members, a phone system with voice mailboxes is assigned to each class. You can contact the School by dialing the main number (352) 351-8840, or website, at any time and entering the appropriate extension for the faculty/staff member desired (see Faculty/Staff Members for a complete listing of extensions and email addresses). You will be connected with that person's voice mail as precautions were taken to ensure the classrooms were not disturbed by phone calls.

If you need to contact the School regarding your child being late, change of person picking up your child, early dismissal, etc., please call the office and if necessary leave a message on voice mail. Please be assured that each phone has a "RED" light that flashes when a voice mail is left; thereby, alerting the staff/teachers for the need to check their messages. Teachers may not be able to return your call until later in the day, at the conclusion of instructional time, but they will receive information regarding your child prior to dismissal.

**Email:**

Another avenue you can utilize in communicating with your child's teacher is via email. All teachers have an email account they check and respond to daily. (visit the website for a complete listing of email addresses, [www.thecornerstoneschool.org](http://www.thecornerstoneschool.org))

Our goal is to assist you in the communication efforts between you and our faculty/staff.

As always, in the event of an emergency or need to speak with someone directly, dial 0 and you will be connected to the front office.

## **Social Guidelines and Expectations**

### **Purpose and Goal**

Our goal is to maintain a secure, challenging, and nurturing School environment, where students develop a strong sense of integrity and respect for others. In order to promote this goal, students are expected to take care in the language they use, the attitudes they express, and the behaviors they exhibit.

The standards of student conduct are designed to provide students with guidance to help meet the goals and expectations of our community. The list of behavioral expectations and policies should be read carefully. Violations will result in serious consequences, up to and including suspension or dismissal from School. Students may also be held responsible for any damage or harm that they cause to individuals and/or the School community at large.

The policies and standards apply any time a student is on campus, any time a student is participating in or attending a School-sponsored event on or off campus; any time a student is officially representing the School; and any time a student is traveling on behalf of the School.

In addition, the School regards any behavior prejudicial to the best interest of the school, whether at School or elsewhere, as sufficient grounds for a disciplinary response.

Consistent application of disciplinary policies is sought, although each situation is judged on its merits, and every effort will be made to insure that decisions are not arbitrary.

The policies and rules outlined in this handbook should not be read as an all-inclusive description of the School's standards, which are based on **honesty, respect, trust, and safety**. Any behavior that constitutes a breach of these School values may be treated as a major School rule violation. Students are expected to comply with School standards and rules, and they are also encouraged to discuss with their fellow students, teachers or administration any issues or infractions of School standards and rules toward the purpose of caring for one another in a spirit of kindness and of what is best for each person in the School community.



## **Standards for Ethical and Responsible Behavior**

The emphasis on respect and mutual respect at Cornerstone requires that behavior should be ethical and respectful.

**A student who has self respect will:**

**Take responsibility for themselves and their personal actions by:**

- Acknowledgment of an action or mistake
- Acceptance of the consequences of personal actions or the failure to act
- Reporting harmful or hateful behavior to a trustworthy authority figure

**Show courage in the face of ethical challenges by:**

- Doing the right thing even if it is not popular
- Seeking the advice and assistance of a trustworthy adult when making difficult decisions, or when in a dangerous or troublesome situation
- Holding high aspirations for yourself
- Holding others accountable if they engage in unethical or harmful behavior by notifying a trustworthy adult.

**Be honest in academic endeavors and interpersonal relationships by:**

- Speaking the truth respectfully
- Understanding the difference between collaboration and collusion
- Recognizing that trust is an essential aspect of all relationships
- Not engaging in plagiarism of the work of others
- Not cheating

**A student who is respectful of others will:**

**Appreciate and honor diversity**

**Tolerate views and beliefs that differ from personal views and beliefs**

**Understand that everyone is entitled to a quiet and orderly atmosphere in which to work**

**Show compassion by:**

- Treating all people with kindness
- Empathizing with others
- Lending a helping hand to those in need
- Not teasing, taunting or ridiculing others
- Taking care to ensure that no one feels left out or ostracized

**Be fair in dealing with others by:**

- Treating others the way you would want to be treated
- Not engaging in malicious criticism of others
- Not stealing or cheating

- Not attempting to further individual interest and desires at the expense of others

**Be courteous by:**

- Being polite and helpful to everyone on campus
- Greeting and acknowledging all adults on campus
- Allowing right of way to adults
- Being respectful in both words and actions, being polite in responses, both verbal and nonverbal, and following rules and direction given by all Cornerstone faculty members.
- Engaging in active listening when others are talking, focusing on the speaker, not engaging in distracting behaviors, sitting appropriately and not speaking when others are speaking.
- Using an appropriate tone when addressing others
- Using friendly and courteous words: please, thank you, excuse me
- Referring to people by their name (not her, she, it)
- Respecting other people's personal space and always using safe hands appropriately and with permission
- Using appropriate volume when indoors.

**A student who is respectful of property will:**

**Appreciate that things have value and act accordingly by:**

- Cleaning up after yourself at all times
- Taking care of playground equipment and using it in a manner that is appropriate to its purpose, e.g. basketballs are not for kicking
- Taking pride in, and care of, your classroom and assuming responsibility for its cleanliness and appearance
- Taking care of school property that is loaned to you; such as textbooks, library books, and computer equipment
- Not defacing or damaging school property or the property of others
- Not taking anything that belongs to another, or to the school, unless given express permission to do so.

**A student who is respectful of the environment will:**

**Appreciate and understand the interdependence between humans and the environment and act accordingly by:**

- Making a conscious and concerted effort not to be wasteful; to recycle and to reuse materials where possible.
- Take home any uneaten food, and not throw it in the garbage at school
- Make ordered lunches that are not wanted available to those who perhaps have forgotten their lunch.
- Be sensitive to the fact that we are a socio-economically diverse

community and that children throwing away untouched food in front of those who cannot afford to buy lunches is totally unacceptable and inappropriate.

- Not play with food or be derogatory about anyone else's food.
- Clean up after lunch and ensure that trash is disposed of appropriately.

## **Policies and Rules**

### **Animal/Toy Policy**

Pets and toys may only be brought to school if the classroom teacher has given written permission. Permission will be given only if the purpose for bringing a pet or toy is for instructional purposes.

### **Behavior in Class/Halls/Walkways**

Students are to refrain from talking in class or other required gatherings except as permitted, are to use a reasonable tone of voice, and should exhibit orderly behavior at all times. Students must walk from place to place on campus. Students must exercise good judgment in traveling from place to place, which includes watching for obstacles, not walking with items in the student's mouth, not playing in the corridors, not blocking entrances or walkways, etc.

### **Cell Phones and Other Electronics**

Students may bring cell phones in to School, but must ensure that they are turned off and dropped off in the Front Office in the morning, prior to class. Students may use cell phones with teacher approval only. Whenever cell phone use is permitted, students may not use them in any way that is harassing or disruptive to the educational environment, including making threats, using camera phones to take inappropriate pictures or to videotape classes, to send text messages to other students in class, or in ways that would otherwise violate a School rule.

Students may not bring other electronics to School, including games, radios, walkie-talkies, etc unless permitted during exceptional activities. Students who violate this policy will have their cell phones or electronics confiscated. Parents will be required to come to the School office to pick up confiscated items. Students will also be subject to disciplinary procedures for violation of this policy. The School will not be responsible for loss, damage, theft of personal electronic equipment.

## **Computer and Systems Usage Policy**

The rapidly changing, technologically driven society in which we live presents us with new challenges in our pursuit to encourage honorable behavior for our students. Among our objectives is to help students understand technological piracy and to discourage them from doing it. We do not allow students to “surf” the net, nor do we direct them to sites that we have not personally previewed as appropriate for their educational use. If you have any questions about sites that your child claims he/she is using for school, please contact us.

We understand that normal usage of computers and other technological equipment may lead to breakage or malfunction. However, if a student misuses the equipment or damages it due to negligence, he/she will be liable for its repair or replacement. The Director will determine the financial repercussions of negligent damage.

The following regulations will help to guide our students in the acceptable use of computers.

- Students are required to read carefully, understand, endorse and submit an “Acceptable Use Policy” contract. (See Appendix)
- Students are required to follow the directions of their teachers in the use of computers, the Internet, and any network used by the school.
- Students are not to invade individual rights to privacy by opening or manipulating files other than their own.
- Purposeful changing of system configuration is not permitted.

## **Child Abuse and Cooperation with Governmental Authorities**

We take our responsibilities to report suspected child abuse, neglect, and abandonment seriously and will cooperate with governmental authorities in connection with their investigations. If you have any questions regarding the School’s mandatory reporting obligations, please consult with the Administration.

## **Destructive Acts**

Students should govern their actions by the values of respect for self, person, and property. Thus, any destructive actions, including setting fires, causing damage to property, stealing property, harming others, or similar conduct is prohibited.

## **Displays of Affection**

Students are prohibited from inappropriate displays of affection on campus or any school-related events.

## **Dress Code**

It is helpful if home and school cooperate in the matter of student dress. The School administration reserves the right to make a final decision regarding appropriate dress in school and at school sponsored events. Bandanas, hat, visors, or other head apparel of a non-religious nature are not permitted at school. Also, clothing that is distracting, offensive, or inappropriate is also not permitted. (e.g. swim trunks, cut offs). Although we do not want to mandate exact clothing requirements, we often find ourselves in the awkward position of having to send students home because of bare midriffs, excessively tight clothes, too short of skirts or shorts, and exposed underwear due to low riding pants and high riding shirts. Shorts must be longer than the shirt or sweatshirt worn over them. Please help us keep the students' attention focused on academics. Other distractions that would not be permissible at school would include face painting or hair cut in an atypical fashion or colored an un-natural color. Our goal is to ensure that students have the full opportunity to learn. Below are a few quick guidelines regarding our dress code:

All Grades:

- All clothing should be neat, clean, and properly fitted.
- No undergarments should be visible at any time.
- Preschool—5th grade are required to wear closed toe and back shoes at all times.
- Clothing with inappropriate pictures, weapons, liquor advertisements, sexually suggestive messages, tobacco or gang affiliation slogans which contain offensive or obscene symbols, signs, or slogans degrading any cultural, religious, or ethnic values, or drug related messages, are not permitted.
- Articles that could cause damage to other students or property (chains, cleats, etc.) are not permitted.
- Cut-offs and ripped clothing of any type are not permitted. Skirts, shorts, and pants must have a hem at the bottom. Shorts and skirts should be at least finger-tip in length.
- Leggings are not considered outerwear. A skirt or shirt that is finger-tip length must be worn over leggings.

## Middle School Addendum:

- Students are required to wear polo shirts to school daily, for example, The Cornerstone School Polo.
- Athletic apparel is prohibited, exception Cornerstone PE uniform and athletic pants for PE in cold weather.
- Middle School students are required to wear Cornerstone attire for P.E., then change into clean clothing after PE. Closed toe shoes must be worn on PE days for Middle School students.
- If long pants or leggings are worn in the colder months, a shirt of finger-tip length must be worn.
- Sandal's or flip flops are permissible, note that the playground is a mulch base

Students who do not adhere to the dress code will be referred to the office for an appropriate t-shirt or shorts. A second reminder on inappropriate attire will require students to call home for a change of clothes.

If dress code becomes a chronic problem with an individual student we will required a parent conference.

## Drugs and Alcohol

**General:** Our students are prohibited from possessing, using, selling or purchasing any alcoholic beverages or other mind-altering substances on or near School property or at School-related activities. Off-premises possession, use, sale or purchase of mind-altering substances and off-premise alcohol abuse is also prohibited.

**Testing:** Students may be required to submit to urinalysis drug screens, blood alcohol tests, breathalyzer tests and medical examinations under the following circumstances: (a) when a student is suspected of attending School or School-related activities with intoxicants or mind-altering substances in his or her system; (b) when a student suffers an injury or is involved in an accident while at School; (c) on a periodic or random basis, including but not limited to, in connection with the student's participation in extracurricular activities; or (d) when a student is placed under disciplinary contract and such screenings or examinations are terms of the contract. The presence of 0.02% alcohol or the presence of any other intoxicants or mind-altering substances in the body is a violation of this policy. Refusal of a student (by the student or the student's parent) to undergo testing or to cooperate fully with any of these tests (including signing

consent forms or providing testing results promptly to the school) is also a violation of our policy and will result in expulsion.

This policy does not prohibit the proper use of medication under the direction of a physician. However, the misuse or abuse of such drugs is prohibited. Students who are taking prescription or nonprescription drugs, which could affect their ability to function in a safe and efficient manner must notify an administrator in the School Office of this fact when they report to School.

**Consequences:** In addition to determining the appropriate disciplinary action pursuant to the School's Disciplinary Rules, the School reserves the right to impose the following additional or different requirements as appropriate for the circumstances: determination of possible legal action; required professional counseling approved by the administration; removal from all elected or appointed positions of leadership in the School; required random and/or regularly scheduled drug and/or alcohol testing at a School-approved local clinic or doctor's office for a time period and at intervals to be determined by the School's administration.

### **Food, Drink, Gum**

Students who elect to bring their own lunch, should make sure it is a well balanced meal that adheres to our snack guidelines. Beverage choices should be water, milk, or 100% juice as soft drinks and caffeinated beverages are not permissible. In the rare event that lunch is forgotten, we will make every effort to supply a student with something to eat. Parents are asked to donate various types of lunch items to their child's classroom for this purpose. If none of these lunches are available, you may be charged for a lunch if one is supplied to your child.

We ask that when you join your child for lunch that you only join your child one day a week. This time, as part of our program, is intended to allow your child to grow socially and emotionally. This time also allows teachers to observe students social interactions so that we can make use of opportunities for redirection, reinforcement as well as teachable moments.

If you must deliver lunch, make sure your child is aware prior to school that lunch will be dropped off, write your child's name and grade on the bag, and bring the lunch to the Administration Building.

Lunch vouchers for purchasing lunches are available online. Payment for these lunches is due at the beginning of the month prior to the month of the lunches. For example, payment for October lunches is due at the beginning of September. Please make sure you clearly indicate the lunch selection for your child.

Gum is not permitted on school premises.

\* Please do not send drinks that have straws enclosed in plastic.\*

## **General Conduct**

Students and parents should be considerate and show respect toward other students, faculty, all guests and visitors. Students should respect school property and the personal property of other people. Students and parents, whether as participants or spectators, are required to show good sportsmanship and courtesy at all School sponsored events (on and off campus). Any person showing unsportsmanlike conduct may be asked to leave the event and may not be allowed to attend future events.

Unless chaperoning a field trip, parents are asked to refrain from assuming a disciplinary tone or stance on campus with students other than their own child. Behavioral issues involving your child and other students at school must be brought to the attention of the class teacher or appropriate assistant.

## **Harassment/Bullying**

The School is dedicated to fostering an environment that promotes kindness, acceptance, and embraces differences among individuals. Therefore, the School will not tolerate any type of harassment or bullying. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, and other verbal, graphic, or offensive conduct relating to race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, citizenship, or disability. Bullying includes, but is not limited to, physical or verbal aggression (hitting, kicking, taunting, teasing, threatening, ridiculing, etc.), relational aggression (harming or threatening to harm relationships or acceptance, friendship, or group inclusion), emotional aggression (teasing, threatening, intimidating others). The School also prohibits cyber-bullying (creating websites, instant messaging, e-mails, using camera phones, or other forms of technology to engage in harassment or bullying). Any of these types of offensive conduct can create an uncomfortable School environment.

All concerns relating to harassment or bullying should be reported immediately to the **RESPONSIBLE ADMINISTRATOR**. We also expect that anyone, whether student, faculty, staff or family member who witnesses, or has knowledge of an incident of bullying or harassment, will report the incident to administration immediately. When the School administration becomes aware of harassment or bullying, the situation will be promptly investigated. Any student found to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal from school for serious violations. No adverse action will be taken against any person who makes a good faith report of harassment or bullying. Retaliation in any form against anyone for making a complaint under this policy or for participating in an investigation is strictly prohibited. Any retaliation should also be reported pursuant to this policy and is itself a cause for disciplinary action.



## **Honesty and Dishonesty**

Dishonesty in any form, including stealing, lying, cheating, falsifying notes, and/or academic dishonesty is inconsistent with School standards. Dishonesty is considered a fundamental breach of our community's expectations. A student's dishonesty in connection with an investigation of misconduct will compound the disciplinary response, regardless of the severity of the original violation.

## **Language**

Students and parents are prohibited from using profane, obscene, bigoted, or other type of offensive language or gestures on campus or at School-sponsored events.

## **Lockers and Cubbies**

Students are to keep their locker or cubby clean. Personal items are not the responsibility of the school and should be taken home each evening. Lockers may be inspected periodically without prior notice or consent.

## **Messages**

In order to maintain an appropriate classroom environment, classroom interruptions should be limited to emergencies. **Please do not ask the office to relay messages to your child. This should be done prior to School.** Students are not permitted to call home for homework, test papers, folders, etc unless specifically authorized by the responsible teacher. If a true emergency occurs then the office should be notified.

## **Parties**

Invitations to private parties should be passed out at school **only** if the entire class is to be invited. Students are asked to give invitations to the class teacher to distribute.

## **Weapons and Threats**

The School takes a zero tolerance position on threats and weapons, even when students make comments in jest, on email, or away from School toward or about another student, employee, or the School. Students are prohibited from bringing any type of weapon to School or School-sponsored events, including knives, guns, fireworks, etc. Any such item may be confiscated and, if appropriate, turned over to law enforcement.

## **Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior**

The teacher of each class is in charge of the ordinary discipline in the classroom. The student is expected to comply with whatever regulations or disciplinary measures the teacher may impose, providing that these are within school guidelines. Faculty and staff members should always be addressed in a polite and respectful manner. Confrontational behavior with the teacher is at variance with conduct expected from all students. Each situation will be handled at the School's discretion in accordance with the School's rules, policies, and practices, as well as general common sense.

Disciplinary matters, or incidents in violation of School rules and regulations, will be handled initially at the most immediate level possible. Violations will subject the student to disciplinary consequences. The level of disciplinary response for any violation of School rules will depend on a variety of circumstances, including but not limited to:

- Whether any person was harmed;
- Whether there was property damage or other loss of property;
- The level of any class or School disruption caused by the student's behavior;
- The number, if any, of prior infractions of School rules and regulations;
- Whether the student has been previously disciplined;
- Whether there were illegal substances (for example, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, etc.);
- Whether the student had been warned earlier about the same or similar conduct;
- Whether there was a weapon or other dangerous item involved;
- Whether the conduct is of the kind also prohibited by criminal law; and/or
- Whether the student was honest and cooperative in connection with the investigation of the behavior.

The ranges of possible disciplinary consequences include one or more of the following:

Our efforts in the classroom are directed at minimizing any distraction from learning. Therefore, if inappropriate behavior occurs, the following action will be taken:

1. Reminder—Verbal, visual, post-it notes
2. Reflection opportunity—Should the inappropriate behavior continue, the student will leave the group of students and consider or write down what the disrespectful action was along with how to change it next time.
3. Teacher intervention—The teacher clearly states the behavior considered disrespectful and together with the student explores appropriate alternatives. If despite steps 1, 2, 3, the inappropriate behavior continues, the student is required to see the Director or Division Head.
4. If a student is sent by the teacher to the Administrator responsible,
  - a. The office referral note is discussed with the student, and a copy of that note must be signed by his/her parents that evening and brought back to school before school begins the next morning. (Note: The child may or may not return to the classroom after being sent to the office, depending upon the written desire of the referring teacher.)
  - b. Return of the note will permit the child to enter his/her first period class the next day. If the signed note is not returned, the parents will receive a phone call from the Director or office clarifying that the parent did receive the referral note and do intend to sign it. When that conversation is completed, the child is allowed to go to class.
5. If a child receives three office referrals for misbehavior (with his/her name being entered each time in the official record book):
  - a. The parent is called and informed that their child has now accrued three referrals.
  - b. A parent, teacher and Administrator conference will be held, perhaps with the child in attendance, to discuss the preceding events and the recorded entries.
  - c. An immediate plan will be developed by the Administrator for the child to follow which insists upon proper behavior by the child; all members of the conference sign the plan and receive individual copies of it.
  - d. The student may be required to stay after school for an hour on the same or next school day to:
    1. Write notes of apology to any person who has been offended (teacher, classmate, parent, etc.), and/or
    2. Write an action plan to correct the situation
    3. Perform community service
6. Concerns for student status at Cornerstone—Two or more Formal Conferences will cause concern regarding the continued enrollment of the student at Cornerstone.
7. Serious Exceptions: The Cornerstone School intends to follow the above

protocol consistently. However, the Director reserves the right to impose stricter and/or more immediate consequences for any student whose behavior (on school property or during a school-sponsored activity elsewhere):

- a. Threatens to or actually endangers the safety of him/herself or others by verbal threats or physical actions including but not limited to hitting, kicking, choking, pinching, biting or any other overly aggressive behavior;
- b. Destroys or defaces property of the school or others;
- c. Engages in profane or sexual actions or language, including being in possession of sexually suggestive books, magazines, or objects, and/or
- d. Involvement in dishonesty is completely unacceptable and could be considered in this “serious exceptions” category. (Involves academic dishonesty)

Very Important: Inappropriate behavior in the category of “serious exceptions” could be judged by the Director as reason for immediate suspension or expulsion from The Cornerstone School.

Behaviors that may result in disciplinary actions include, but are not limited to:

- Non-compliance with a request from, or disrespect to a staff member
- Excessive tardiness to school or class
- Leaving the school without permission
- Consistent disregard for the school dress code

### **Suspension from The Cornerstone School**

Although rarely used in disciplinary action, occasionally it becomes necessary to suspend a student from school. The suspension period is determined solely at the discretion of the Director of the school. Should a student receive a suspension,

- a. No credit will be given in all subject areas during the time of suspension.
- b. The student will be required to return to school current with all assignments through the date of readmission.
- b. The parent(s) of the child must escort him/her to school for readmission by the Director or Responsible Administrator to discuss the experience and to verbally guarantee that the child will not repeat the unacceptable behavior.
- c. Infractions that may result in suspension or expulsion from school include, but are not limited to:
  - Profanity directed at a staff member
  - Repeated harassment of any kind
  - Leaving school property without permission
  - Verbal/Emotional abuse of others
  - Actions toward another where physical harm is intended

## **Dismissal from Cornerstone School**

### **In School Suspension:**

Students required to be on campus at a designated area but are not allowed to attend class or events. Students still have the responsibility to complete and timely submit all class work and to arrange to make up examinations. Suspension becomes a permanent part of a student's record.

### **Out of School Suspension:**

Students are banned from all School activities, including classes, and are to remain at home. Students still have the responsibility to complete and timely submit all class work and to arrange to make up examinations. Suspension becomes a permanent part of a student's record.

Dismissal from The Cornerstone School is not taken lightly; we realize the impact such a decision could have on a child's development. However, in extreme cases, dismissal may be the most appropriate action in the best interest of the child and the entire student body. The Director has the last and final decision on dismissal from The Cornerstone School. Financial obligations will be determined by the Director.

### **Expulsion:**

Students may be expelled for serious first offenses; repeat infractions (even if not related); conduct resulting in harm, damage, or disruption to the educational environment; parent or family member causing to disruption to the School or the School's educational mission; non-payment of tuition or fees; not meeting academic requirements; or not meeting attendance requirements.

While we respect a parent's decision to withdraw their child from Cornerstone, the financial obligation as per the enrollment contract is the remainder of the owing annual tuition for the grade in which the student was enrolled.

In addition, the School may report to the appropriate governmental authorities any actions that appear to violate law.

## **Student Services, Activities, and Resources**

### **Guidance Counselors**

Students and parents should be aware that conversations with the Dean of Students or Administrator may be privileged and confidential, unless the nature of the communication reveals the immediate risk of harm to the student or others or a violation of the child abuse laws.

## **Media Center**

The library is designated as a quiet zone used for studying, reading, research, and checking out books. Library privileges may be denied to students who do not comply. All books, periodicals, or other cataloged materials including laptops and media equipment which are checked out by students, must be returned and cleared by the Librarian prior to receiving report cards or having files forwarded to any other institution or released to any individual.

- Students must sign out all materials prior to leaving the library.
- Students are responsible for taking care of and returning any material or equipment checked out to them. If a book is lost or damaged while checked out to a student, that student will be expected to pay for it.

## **Field Trips Off-Campus Activities and Field Trips**

When students are taken off campus on a school approved activity or field trip, they are required to maintain the same appropriate conduct and decorum that is expected of them while they are on campus. Normally, students are expected to wear their school issued Cornerstone uniform shirts. We will not take any student off campus unless the parent or guardian of the child has signed a permission slip ahead of time.

Most of our field trips are day trips with parent drivers as chaperones. Chaperones are required to assume responsibility for students assigned to them and to enforce school rules and standards of conduct. We require that all drivers have a copy of their valid drivers' license and proof of insurance on file with the school office. A driver cannot carry more children in any vehicle than there are seat belts; any child under forty (40) pounds must be in a car seat, no child under age 12 may sit in the front seat of a vehicle with an airbag. There are NO exceptions to these rules, and chaperones are expected to adhere to them. With regard to protecting the privacy of our students, parent chaperones will be asked to sign and commit to "A Confidentiality agreement for Volunteers". The Cornerstone School reserves the right to select who the parent drivers/chaperones will be.

We ask that chaperones/drivers:

- Refrain from talking on cell phones while driving unless there is an emergency
- Keep music within the car to reasonable levels of enjoyment
- Do not drive in an open convertible
- Do not stop en route to or from the approved destination of the field trip

- Do not smoke or consume alcohol
- Do not bring siblings
- Use appropriate language around the children
- Enforce the school's rules
- In addition, the specific class may have guidelines for field trip chaperones. The relevant teacher will provide you with these if necessary.

Day and overnight field trips are part of the educational process. It must be stressed however, that only those students who have demonstrated good conduct during their classes will be permitted to attend.

Proper behavior during the trip continues to be of utmost importance. Parents of any student unable to follow the given guidelines will be notified. In severe cases, the parent will be requested to come and/or provide transportation home for the student.

A condition of a student's or parent's participation in any field trip is the execution of the school's standard Field Trip permission form. For any students whose parents have not executed the release, the student will have the option of attending an alternative class for the period of the field trip.

Parents who are interested in volunteering to assist on overnight field trips must have been cleared through the School's criminal background check process (or must undergo Level II screening). This process is for the protection of all students and is not intended to hinder volunteerism or embarrass any family. We sincerely hope that you understand our concern for student safety and that you will willingly cooperate in the process.

### **Immunizations, Medications, and Clinic**

Prior to the beginning of School, a physical examination must be completed or transferred for each student entering the School. Immunization or a certificate of waiver is required for all students. Immunizations must be kept current, and a Certificate of Immunization, signed by a physician (or an immunization waiver) must be kept on file in the School office. Students may not attend School without an appropriate immunization record.

If a student is not feeling well, he/she should inform the classroom teacher and ask to be excused to go to the office. Students will be released for medical reasons only with permission from the parent/guardian or from the person designated on the student's emergency card.

Many students must have medication available at School for certain illnesses and conditions. School personnel cannot administer medication, including pain relievers, without explicit written parental/guardian permission. A permission form completed by

the parent/guardian is required in the event a student must receive medicine at School. The medicine, in its original container, labeled with the student's name, name of medicine, dose and time to be given, doctor's name (if prescribed) and possible side effects, must be given to the office together with the signed permission form.

Students who are absent from School for the following reasons require a physician's statement confirming the student's ability to return to School and any necessary limitations or restrictions.

- Measles, mumps, chicken pox, ringworm, scarlet fever
- Strep infection, mononucleosis, hepatitis, pink eye
- Absence due to an extended illness or surgery
- Students who may not participate in sports or gym classes following an extended illness or surgery

## **Other Important Information and Policies**

### **Inspection Policy**

The School reserves the right to inspect and conduct a search of a student's locker, book bag, backpack, computer, and any other possessions or property on the School premises or on a School sanctioned event. Inspections and searches may be conducted on a routine or random basis or as deemed necessary. Further, the School has the right to seize and permanently retain property disclosed by an inspection or search which is considered potentially harmful, dangerous, illegal, or inappropriate, the possession of which is a violation of the School's rules, community standards, and/or local and state law.

### **Payment of Tuition and Fees**

The School strives to provide the highest quality education while maintaining affordable fees. We depend on the timely payment of tuition and registration fees to cover our obligations. Enrolling your child requires a financial commitment much like any other major purchase. Please make school tuition a budget priority. Failure to make tuition/fee payments by the contractual dates may result in a child being removed from school. Transcripts and student records cannot be forwarded to another school if there is an outstanding balance in his/her account, or if there are other outstanding debts.

### **Tuition and Tuition Payments**

Tuition payments are made through the online tuition management company FACTS. Upon enrollment, your information will be uploaded to the FACTS website. In turn, you will receive an email with a link to your account. You will select your payment plan and payment method (ACH or Invoice options are available). All payments will be processed through the FACTS tuition management company. You will have a userid and password to your FACTS account. This will allow you to view your account at any time.



**Policy on Late Payments:**

Tuition payment due dates are selected upon setting up your FACTS account. Invoice payments are due on the first of the month and ACH payments are due on either the 5<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> of each month. After this date, a late fee of \$40 will be applied to your account, after 10 days for invoice customers and after the 2<sup>nd</sup> failed attempt for ACH customers.

In the event of unforeseen circumstances where payment cannot be made on the due date, the bookkeeper must be notified.

**Policy on Returned Payments:**

A \$30 returned payment fee will be assessed if a payment attempt fails. Returned payment fees are assessed for each payment attempt this is returned.

**Activity Fee:**

The activity fee covers classroom incidentals, small class field trips, a school shirt, tribe shirt and a copy of the yearbook.

**Lunch Fee:**

Lunch forms are available on our website under the parent tab. Payment is made via your deposit account, set up through FACTS tuition management. You will need to have funds available in your lunch deposit account prior to placing your lunch order. Once the lunch order has been received, the funds will be withdrawn from your lunch deposit account and an email notice will be sent to you acknowledging the transaction has taken place.

## **Student Records and Information**

Requests for student records and transcripts must be directed in writing to the School Office. The School reserves the right to withhold student transcripts and records for non-payment of tuition or fees.

The School makes reasonable efforts to ensure that both natural parents (or legal guardians) receive substantially the same information (transcripts, records, appointments, etc.). The School must rely upon the correctness and completeness of parental information when the student is enrolled. In situations of divorced or separated parents, if one parent believes that the other parent is not entitled to receive certain information, the parent wishing to restrict information provided by the School must provide the School with a court order that is still in effect that specifically restricts the other parent from receiving such information.

## **Parent/Family Cooperation**

A positive and constructive working relationship between the School and parent is essential to the fulfillment of the School's educational purpose. Thus, the School reserves the right not to extend the privilege of enrollment or re-enrollment to a student if the School concludes that the actions of the student's parent or other family member makes such a positive and constructive relationship impossible or otherwise seriously interferes with the School's accomplishment of its educational purpose. Moreover, the School reserves the right to expel a student at any time if, in the judgment of the Director, conduct of the student or anyone directly associated with the student, including but not limited to the student's parent or other family member, in or out of the School, is not in keeping with the School's accepted standards or principles. There will be no refund of tuition where such enforced withdrawal occurs and any unpaid balance is payable in full according to the terms of the student's enrollment contract.

## **Child Safety from Sexual Offenders and Predators**

According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), sexual perpetrators are commonly people the parents/guardians or children know, and these people may be in a position of trust or responsibility to a child and family.

Because of our concern for student safety, all employees, and those parents who volunteer for overnight field trips, are screened through the School's criminal background process.

To keep their children safer, parents should talk openly to their children about safety issues. Parents should know their children's friends and be clear with their children about the places and homes that their children visit. Children should be taught that they have the right to say no to any unwelcome, uncomfortable, or confusing touching or actions by others and to get out of those situations as quickly as possible.

Parents should regularly visit the public registry to check out individuals for prior criminal records and sex offenses. Information concerning registered sex offenders and predators in Florida may be obtained by visiting <http://www.fdle.state.fl.us>, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement Sexual Offenders database. Information may also be obtained by contacting the FDLE's toll free telephone number: 1-888-FL-PREDATOR (1-888-357-7332). To view a map of registered sex offenders living within a five mile radius of any given address, parents should visit <http://www.familywatchdog.us>. To learn about additional child safety tips and links to child and internet safety sites and searches, parents should visit the Florida Attorney General website at <http://myfloridalegal.com>.

## Fund Raising

Tuition alone does not meet the needs of the operating budget at Cornerstone. We make every attempt to control the rising cost of tuition each year. Fundraising not only offsets the cost of tuition to you as individual parents, but it also allows the school to purchase bigger items that fulfill curriculum needs. Your child benefits directly and concretely from the success of fundraisers.

No class, individual, or organization is to begin any money raising activity without permission from the School. No class, individual or organization may request money from any other class, individual, or organization within or outside the School without permission from the School administration office. All extracurricular organizations should strive to be self-sufficient, raising money through approved concessions and approved service-type projects.

Parents are required to support fundraising efforts at our school. The following is a list of events:

- Chili Cook Off
- Auction
- 5K
- Golf Tournament

Please check the school calendar and plan to attend the fundraising events. Participation is required for the Chili Cook Off.

## School Business Office Hours

The School's Business Office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

## Visitors

Parents or guardians who need to visit campus during School hours are asked to follow these guidelines:

1. **Make an Appointment:** If you are coming to see an administrator or a faculty member, please arrange an appointment in advance.
2. **Check-in in the main office:** When you arrive on campus, please report directly to the main office for authorization. If you need to proceed from there to any other part of the campus you will be issued a visitor badge.

3. **I.D. Check:** If you are asking to see your son or daughter, please do not be offended if you are asked to show identification. This is a safety measure intended to protect your children.

**Please Note:** For the safety and security of our students, anyone seen on campus during School hours without a visitor badge will be reminded to obtain one or asked to leave campus.

## Emergency Preparedness

### **Inclement Weather:**

If we are experiencing inclement weather conditions, as with a hurricane, the following procedures will be followed:

- Cornerstone School will follow the Marion County Public Schools regarding school **closings**.

For information concerning school re-opening:

- Call the main school number (352) 351-8840, select option 2, school news. (if phone line is out, see step 2)
- Call the emergency phone line, Director's cell phone, (352)494-3630. A detailed message will be provided.
- Listen to 98.5 KTK or 97.3 The Sky, for a public announcement.

The determination to re-open the school will be based on not only the weather conditions but any damage sustained to the campus. The campus will be thoroughly inspected prior to school opening.

## Contacts

**It is your responsibility to inform the School of any changes in emergency contact information.**

For health and safety reasons, it is imperative that the school have the telephone number(s) of a person or persons to contact in case of emergency. These must be listed on your child's Registration form. Your business telephone number and any cellular or other portable phone numbers are also vital information that we must have on hand. **Any time these numbers or your emergency contact person change, please call the office, email the office, or send a note.**

## Plan

The Cornerstone School has a comprehensive Emergency Preparedness Plan. A copy is available in the school office should you wish to see one.

## Dismissal

We try to stagger our dismissal times to avoid confusion and traffic jams in the afternoon. Please try to avoid coming earlier than your child's dismissal time. As we dismiss grades 3—8 at the same time, car line can become a problem if everyone does not cooperate together. (See Dismissal procedure for 3-8 below). We ask parents to park in the designated parking lot and come into the school if they have business. Please do not leave a car unattended anywhere else in the parking lot other than the lined spaces. If the parking lot is full, usually a space will become available if you circle the car line. If a student is running late and a car is blocking those behind it, we may ask the driver to circle around as a courtesy to those behind who already have their children and are ready to leave. We do our best to be as efficient and courteous in car line as possible.

The safety of students and adults is our utmost concern while we load children into cars. For this reason, we do not allow children to approach a car without an adult's escort. We also do not allow a child to leave with anyone who is not on the child's release permission form. If you find that someone else will be picking your child up from school, please notify the school in writing or via email prior to the end of the day so we can adequately identify the driver of the car in which we put your child. **We will NOT let your child leave with anyone who is not on your pick up list, unless we have been notified.** Please understand that we are not trying to cause you any inconvenience; rather, we are concerned with the safety of your child. No exceptions can be made.

For greatest efficiency, please display the license/name tag issued to you in the front window of your vehicle. This aids the dismissal team in having your child ready for pick-up.

For the safety of your child and others we ask that you do not use your cell phone in Carline. We may ask you to end your conversations before putting your child into the car.

### Dismissal Procedure for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

- Students will be dismissed from the porch (3-5) and the back tables (6-8)
- The students are loaded into cars from one of our four positions. (two on the inside lane and two on the outside lane)
- Student name tags should be placed on the vehicle dash or hang from the rear-view mirror
- The *caller* will read your name plate, call your child's name over the walkie talkie, then your child will come to the porch and proceed to the designated loading position, when told by an adult to do so.

- Students can only be dismissed by a *caller*.
- Parents are not allowed on campus during dismissal as this is a time of great congestion, the gate is open to allow ease of dismissal for students, and we hold the safety of your children in highest regard.
- If you must come on campus with your child, please wait until after dismissal (3:15) and sign in to the visitors log
- If you wish to park and pick up your child please wait on the handicap ramp for a *caller* to call your child's name.

## **Fire Drill Regulations and Procedures**

At the sound of the alarm, all students are to exit the building according to the directions posted in each room, or at the direction of the adult in charge.

Students are to conduct themselves in an orderly and silent fashion; misconduct of any kind while leaving or returning to the building will not be tolerated.

Students shall leave the building in a rapid walk, but **MUST NOT** run. Teachers will take attendance once everyone is safely outside the building. Students are to return to the building when the recall signal is given.

In the event of a fire drill or practice for emergency procedures, every adult must comply with the school's directives. Please cooperate!

## **Lost and Found**

Items of significant value are held in the school office for identification.

We make every effort to alert parents to items left in the lost and found. However, periodically, the school's lost and found property is cleared, and the items are donated to a local charity.

## **Textbooks**

Textbooks and library book care is the student's responsibility. Lost, damaged or defaced books must be paid for by the student to whom the book was assigned.

## **Early and Extended Care Procedures**

Extended Day—Early Bird program is available at 7:30 a.m. on the playground and/or in the CCL/Aftercare room. If a child arrives at school before 7:30 a.m. please wait with the child until an early care worker arrives. If you arrive prior to staff being on duty for morning car line (7:40 a.m.), you must walk your child to the Early Care Supervisor.

Children will be dismissed to their classrooms 10 minutes prior to the start of class.

If a sibling dismisses earlier than the other, we will send your child to Extended Day (sibling care) until the older child's dismissal time. You will not be charged for this time.

For 3rd-5th graders who stay in Extended Day— a time for supervised homework is included in the schedule. If you choose to sign your child into Extended Day for the benefit of this service, the Extended Day charge will be applied.

Extended Day/Aftercare program is available from dismissal until 5:30 p.m. After 5:30 p.m., the fee is \$1.00 per minute without exception.

Parents have the choice of a contract rate or the drop-in rate for both programs. See the business office for further information.

### **Early Release Days/Teacher Work Days**

The annual school calendar lists the regularly scheduled early release days; most of these days are on a Friday. Normally, Extended Care is available on Early Release Days/Teacher Work Days. Prior arrangements can be made in the school office. No lunch is served on these days. If your child is staying for Extended Day, you must send a lunch to school with your child.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND RECEIPT OF STUDENT HANDBOOK

The registration of a student is considered an acceptance, on his/her part and on the part of his/her parents or guardians, of all rules and regulations of our School, including the judgment of School authorities on academic and disciplinary sanctions, suspension, or expulsion of a student.

The rules and regulations contained in this Handbook are not meant to be all comprehensive. Rather, they presuppose the good will and judgment of a student in all circumstances in which he/she may find himself/herself.

Parents/guardians are asked to familiarize themselves and to ensure that their child understands all of the information contained in this Student/Parent Handbook. Parents/guardians and students over age 8 must sign the form below

We have read and understood all statements and provisions set forth in the Student/Parent Handbook. Failure to return this acknowledgment will not relieve a student or the parent(s) from the responsibility for knowledge of the contents of the Handbook.

_____	_____	_____
Student	Age	Date

_____	_____	_____
Parent or Guardian	Relationship	Date



## Code of Ethical Conduct Guidelines

We are pleased to offer a computerized community at The Cornerstone School and believe it offers valuable, diverse, and unique resources. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

### Network Warning

With access to computers and to people all over the world, there will be some material that may not be considered to be of educational value. The Cornerstone School supports only those materials that enhance the research and inquiry of the learner within the context of a school setting. However, on a global network it is impossible to control all materials, and an industrious user may discover inappropriate information. While The Cornerstone School provides a filtered network, utilizing Sonic Wall Systems, we cannot guarantee the possibility that some users may access material that is not consistent with the school's educational mission, goals, and policies.

### Terms and Conditions

1. The purpose of using computers/Internet in school is to support research and school-related projects only;
2. Respect all community computer resources as the private property of the school;
3. When corresponding electronically, either with classmates, teachers, or globally, you are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette, which are grounded in trust and respect;
4. Students are required to respect copyright laws;
5. Students who bring personal laptops onto campus should have ownership of them at all times, OR keep them stored with teachers for safe-keeping.

### Restrictions

1. Students are encouraged to bring their personal laptops to school but **MUST** have active anti-virus software installed and register their laptop with the Media Specialist **BEFORE** using them on the school network;
2. At no time are students permitted to change the set-up of any school computer;
3. Students are not to download/install any material without prior authorization from the Media Specialist.

**Please return this form to the School Office**

**The Cornerstone School's  
Acceptable Use Policy  
Student Agreement and Parent Permission Form  
For Computer and Network Usage**

As a user of electronic computer resources at The Cornerstone School, I hereby agree to comply with the terms, conditions, and restrictions of the **Code of Ethical Conduct Guidelines**. I understand that if I violate the guidelines established by The Cornerstone School, I may have my access privileges suspended or revoked, and I may face possible disciplinary and/or legal action. My signature indicates that I have read the Code of Ethical Conduct Guidelines and that I understand the significance of its terms and conditions.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

As the parent or legal guardian of the student signing above, my signature indicates that I have read the Code of Ethical Conduct Guidelines and give permission for my child to use the computer/network resources at The Cornerstone School for educational purposes consistent with the guidelines. I understand that The Cornerstone School expects efficient, ethical, and legal utilization of computer/network resources and should my child not comply with these requirements, he/she may have their privileges suspended or revoked, and may face possible disciplinary and/or legal action.

This agreement will remain in effect until The Cornerstone School receives written notice revoking permission.

Parent Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Faculty/Staff Directory

Ingrid Wasserfall	Director		<a href="mailto:ingrid@thecornerstoneschool.org">ingrid@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>
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Erica Wichtner	Administrative Office	ext 100	<a href="mailto:ewichtner@thecornerstoneschool.org">ewichtner@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>
Lucy Lesbirel	Admissions/Advancement	ext 120	<a href="mailto:lucy@thecornerstoneschool.org">lucy@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>
Jamie Zimbleman	Marketing Director	ext 116	<a href="mailto:jzimbleman@thecornerstoneschool.org">jzimbleman@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>
Elliott Musikantow	IT Coordinator	ext 227	<a href="mailto:emusikantow@thecornerstoneschool.org">emusikantow@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>

### Elementary

Erica Hogan	Prek-3 Teacher	ext 111	<a href="mailto:ehogan@thecornerstoneschool.org">ehogan@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>
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Katie Thompson	K-3 & K-4 Assistant	ext 111	<a href="mailto:kthompson@thecornerstoneschool.org">kthompson@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>
Margarita Rosello	Kindergarten Teacher	ext 112	<a href="mailto:mrossello@thecornerstoneschool.org">mrossello@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>
Karen Murray	Kindergarten Assistant	ext 112	<a href="mailto:kmurray@thecornerstoneschool.org">kmurray@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>
Jenni Hager	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher	ext 101	<a href="mailto:jhager@thecornerstoneschool.org">jhager@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>
Carol Lacey	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade Assistants	ext 101	<a href="mailto:clacey@thecornerstoneschool.org">clacey@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>
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Cindy Shawley	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Assistant	ext 102	<a href="mailto:cshawley@thecornerstoneschool.org">cshawley@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>
Tajai Kuhn	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher	ext 103	<a href="mailto:tkuhn@thecornerstoneschool.org">tkuhn@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>
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Robert Bolomey	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher	ext 104	<a href="mailto:rbolomey@thecornerstoneschool.org">rbolomey@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>
Jennifer Clements	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Assistant	ext 104	<a href="mailto:jclements@thecornerstoneschool.org">jclements@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>
Nancy Bauman	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher	ext 105	<a href="mailto:nbauman@thecornerstoneschool.org">nbauman@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>
Angela Litton	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Assistant	ext 105	<a href="mailto:alittton@thecornerstoneschool.org">alittton@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>

### Middle School

	Middle Division	ext	
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Amanda Clark-Rudolph	Language Arts	ext 107	<a href="mailto:aclark@thecornerstoneschool.org">aclark@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>
Mallory Sieg	Math	ext 106	<a href="mailto:msieg@thecornerstoneschool.org">msieg@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>
Daren Johnson	Science	ext 110	<a href="mailto:djohnson@thecornerstoneschool.org">djohnson@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>

### Specials

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Pam DiGiano	Music/Drama	ext	<a href="mailto:pdigiano@thecornerstoneschool.org">pdigiano@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>
Joe Mosley	STEM	ext 233	<a href="mailto:jmosley@thecornerstoneschool.org">jmosley@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>
Yadira Diaz	Spanish	ext 232	<a href="mailto:ydiaz@thecornerstoneschool.org">ydiaz@thecornerstoneschool.org</a>