

# Experiential Education Handbook



**Preparing Students for a Dynamic World**

THE COLORADO SPRINGS SCHOOL

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## **Table of Contents**

Introduction and Scope and Sequence at CSS

Grading, Essential Questions and Benchmarks

Communication while in Field

Health Information

- 1st Aid Kits - not all are created equal
- Student Meds, OTC Meds
- Vaccines for specific trips

LS: Fall Adventure and CO EXs, PELs

MS: Seminars - Families that opt out

US: Mountain Caravan and ECSs

Service Learning

CSS Cell Phone Policy

Emergency Communication of Parents

Communicating with Parents

# Introduction

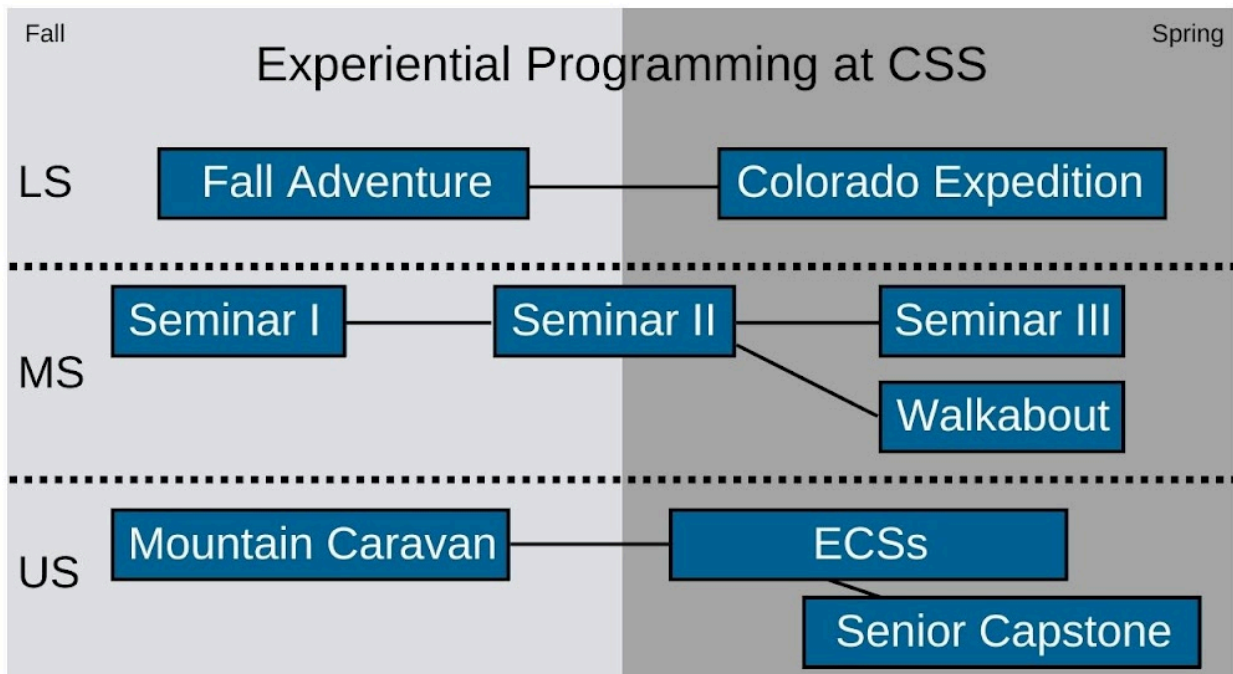
## **School Mission:**

Through superior academics and mentoring, The Colorado Springs School prepares students to think independently and to meet the needs of a dynamic world with leadership, ingenuity, problem-solving skills, and personal integrity.

## **Introduction and Scope and Sequence**

At The Colorado Springs School, our experiential education programs are designed to provide a continuity of experiences that span the 13 years that a child might be enrolled from Prekindergarten through 12th grade. Each grade-level experience follows a predictable sequence of growth and an increase in the level of challenge presented to students. We believe that the cornerstones of our mission - prepare students to think independently, problem-solve, exemplify personal integrity, and meet challenges with leadership and ingenuity - are nourished and encouraged when students enter new environments. Through overnight and camp experiences, our students transform as individuals when they feel the accomplishment of being away from home, getting along with classmates, and living in the outdoors.

This organizational chart reflects the progression of CSS's primary outdoor education programs, which include Fall Adventure and Colorado Expedition in the Children's School, Seminars I, II, and III and Walkabout in the Middle School, and Experience-Centered Seminars -- known as ECSs for short -- in the Upper School.



## **Why does CSS Invest in Experiential Education**

- ❑ 21st century learning draws inspiration from global education, sustainability, and service learning programs
- ❑ Our mission statement makes direct reference to preparing students for a dynamic world - there is no better preparation than actually inserting students into that world and presenting real-world context and relevance to the topics explored in the classroom. Through so doing, students develop and apply:
  - ❑ leadership
  - ❑ ingenuity
  - ❑ problem-solving and critical thinking skills
  - ❑ personal integrity
  - ❑ transfer of learning to new situations, even those that are complex or ambiguous. Information, technology, and resources change so dramatically and quickly in modern day that “the capacity for continuous learning is critical”
    - ❑ “Unless students learn explicitly to recognize when their knowledge might be useful, can recall that knowledge, and know how to apply it, they will fail to transfer what they know; their understanding is incomplete” (Eyler).
- ❑ Collaborative and common experiences encourage cooperation, effective communication, and reciprocity. When students embrace the mindset of being a member of a team, they assume responsibility for specific actions or consequences and, as a result, there is an increase in effort and attention.
  - ❑ Conversely, students learn that a team falters or does not meet its maximum potential if any one individual cannot be depended on.
  - ❑ This approach to learning mirrors the realities of a workplace
- ❑ “Empathy shatters rigid ideologies and destroys stereotypes” (Goleman, 1995).
- ❑ A student’s imagination will always win over until that student has been put in a position to conquer a phobia or disbelief in reality.

## **What Experiential Education looks like at CSS**

- ❑ Predicated on getting students to think something through from start to finish, to visualize the chain of events, and to take action as appropriate.
- ❑ At CSS, we value “the story” that bonds a class through experience. Most often, a class speaks animatedly about the encounters that could have never been predicted and that certainly are not part of a syllabus. Students integrate multiple senses into their storytelling and the memories are vividly on point. Always, the takeaway from the story is life-affirming or demonstrates the human capacity to overcome obstacles. These stories foster “interdependence and a sense of ‘we’ that builds emotional intelligence” (Fatum 2013).

- ❑ Students are presented with choices. They are also prompted to evaluate potential consequences associated with their choices. The implementation of the choice is done in a safe environment thanks to the boundaries that are established by the instructor. The result is that students experience self-efficacy and independence and learn a tremendous amount about themselves.

# Benchmarks and Outcomes

## **Overview - Head, Hands and Heart**

The Experience Education programs at CSS provide students with immersive academic experiences that subscribe to the educational theory that “learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience” (Kolb). A cyclical model of learning, consisting of four stages shown below, grounds every program:

1. Concrete experience - students encounter a new experience or situation
2. Reflective observation - students write, orate, question, or make arguments about the new experience
3. Abstract conceptualization - students analyze the experience or situation and draw generalizations that ultimately provide the framework for a new idea and/or action
4. Active experimentation - students apply the new idea to generate yet another new product or experience.

Over the course of these experiences, students engage in multiple iterations of the learning cycle. A student’s first exposure to an ex ed requires him or her to separate from the familiar or comfortable style of classroom-based learning that fits within a 45- or 90-minute container of time. Instead, students are challenged to navigate a first-person experience that consumes from half a day to 19 full days. Students become accustomed to learning at a higher level and constantly working towards self-awareness and the development of personal purpose. In each subsequent year’s experience, students grow greater confidence in relating to people, as well as in taking necessary risk to influence people and problems with action.

The topics and capacities that are explored in each experience follow a multidisciplinary approach to answer broad, big-picture questions or relevant state history that anchor the curriculum. These questions are often so vast that they incite curiosity beyond the scope of the experience, influencing students to continue the intellectual quest throughout their high school years and beyond. Furthermore, every curriculum includes (or should include) tone setting and forming activities that establish meaning and structure for the seminar experience, as well as intentional and guided transference that motivates a student’s behavior and learning beyond the seminar.

Ex Ed courses are designed to stretch a student’s skills in three distinct areas:

1. Head - The academic learning objectives for a seminar are met through rigorous intellectual content and a workload that calls for a high level of cognition.
2. Hands - Students transform from being observers to doers.

3. Heart - Soft skills are delivered to students with intentionality so that they grow their capacity for interacting effectively and harmoniously with other people.

Each skill area is approached with consistency across experiences, as is detailed below.

## Head

- Starting point: the complex essential questions frame the academic content.
  - The essential question should imply the content needing to be assessed. What content do students need to be exposed to in order to answer the essential question?
  - Content: subject-specific vocabulary; readings; research and research-based writing; homework; reports; interviews and visits with experts; discussion.
  - Frequent assessment of learning: quizzes, journals, larger projects, discussion and participation. Ongoing synthesis of information that helps students answer their essential question.
  - Individualized midpoint assessment to keep students on track.
  - “Product” (e.g. ECS presentation night; individual and/or group presentations/papers, etc. that synthesize answers to complex questions)
- Academic Skills: Researching; appropriate use of internet, evaluation of sources, correct citations, works cited, how to find and read primary sources.
- Consultation and engagement with experts in the field

## Hands

- Concrete and specific skills: sailing, Wilderness First Aid, SCUBA certification, HAM radio operation, fishing, etc.
- Both local and traveling programs provide opportunities for discrete immersion opportunities: attendance at a religious service, exposure to a craft or skill (Native American drum making, cedar weaving), shadowing the homeless population, visiting industry facilities and gaining access to products in the design phase.
- Executive skills:
  - Presentation skills: Powerpoint, video production, portfolio, live oral presentation, public speaking.
  - Interaction skills: Interviewing skills; how to ask controversial questions without offending; how to meet and greet and speak for a group; self-discipline, focus and attention; how to present yourself well.
- Risk management: essential to be hands on, safety, responsibility; students are forced to act in a responsible manner due to seriousness of consequences

## **Heart**

### *Self reflection:*

- Journaling
- Guided and intentional discussion with peers
- Student-led mid-seminar assessment with faculty

### *Leadership:*

- Leader of the Day - might mean different things depending on the age of the student
- Taking leadership roles in group activities
- Taking responsibility for learning opportunities, such as asking questions and engaging with speakers
- Understanding when to lead and when to follow
- Develop an ambassador mindset and demonstrate behavior that reflects well upon the individual, group, and school

### *Empathy and Tolerance:*

- Understand, respect, and participate in cultural norms
- Respect other cultures, to dress, speak, eat, listen, act accordingly
- Learn to recognize and confront personal biases, shortcomings, discomfort; how to challenge self
- Look at an issue from multiple perspectives
- Role play and “walking in the shoes of others” through immersive activities

### *Teamwork:*

- Collaboration and cooperation on projects, in discussion, and through goal-directed activities
- Understanding of what you bring to a group and how you fit in; recognize personal shortcomings and capitalize on the strengths that others can offer to a group

## Health and Medication Information

It is best practice to have one leader assigned to be the keeper of the medications. This includes prescription and over the counter (OTC) meds. This person needs to be designated prior to departure and will meet with Dr. Melissa Hocate to receive students medications and first aid kits.

If a student falls ill on a traveling program and feels they need to miss an activity, a staff member **MUST** stay back with them. At no time, no matter the age, may a student/s be left alone during a school Ex Ed program.

### **First Aid Kits**

Every time a group leaves campus, they need to take a first aid kit with them, but not all kits are created equal. A kit for lower school students will have pediatric meds in them while a kit for upper school groups will have more adult medications.

There is a list in the appendices section with suggested contents for first aid kits. Dr. Hocate will check kits regularly and keep them updated, but **TEACHERS** need to also check their kits before they leave, particularly if they know that some of their activities need specific items.

### **OTC Medications**

Group leaders will be given a printed list of permissions for OTC meds along with their first aid kits. Leaders must double check these sheets before handing out any medications and must note every time OTC meds are given on the appropriate form (found in the appendices).

### **Student Prescription Medications**

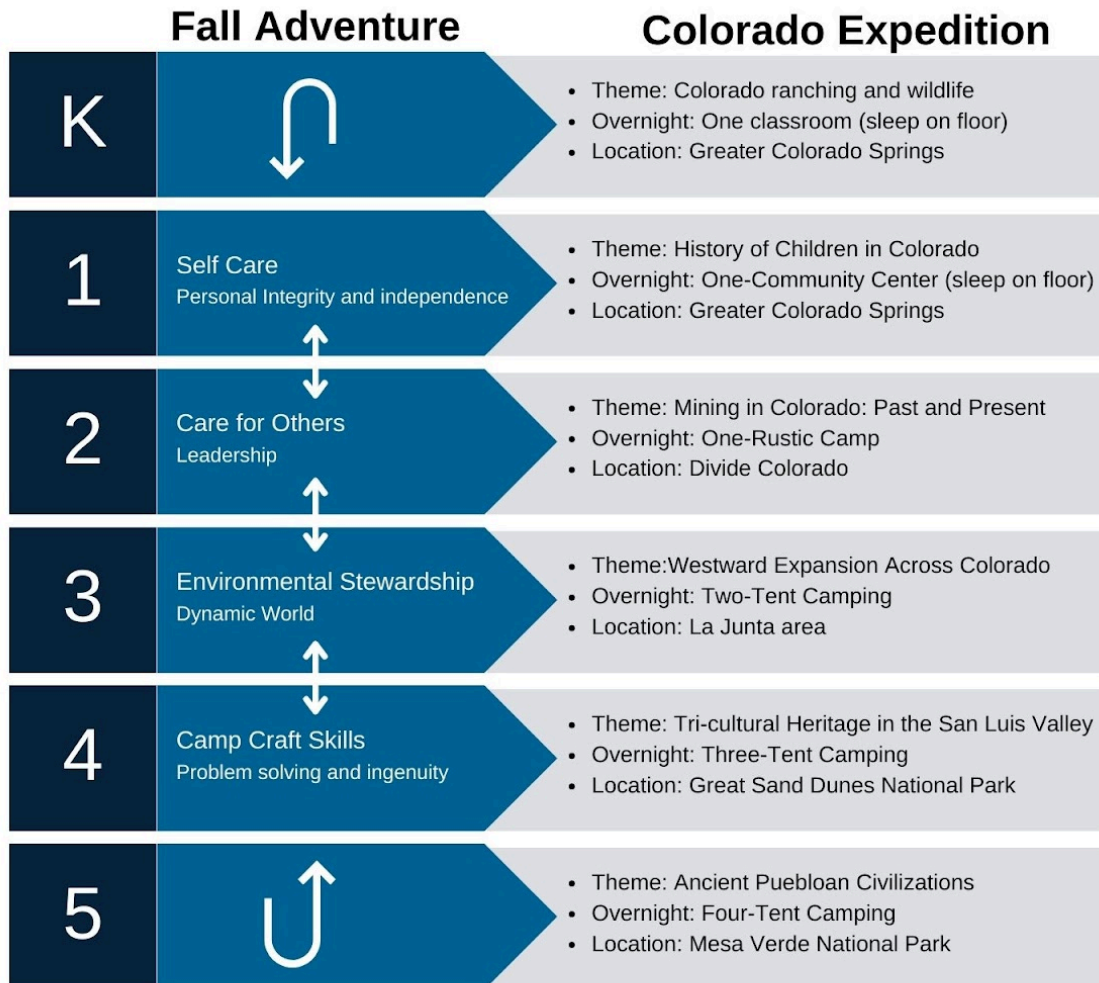
The selected group leader must meet with Dr. Hocate prior to departure to be given all student prescription medication and necessary instructions. The leader will be given a binder that will include: prescription medications and instructions for each student, OTC medication tracking form and permission forms. It is imperative that leaders track every time medication is handed out, whether it is prescription or OTC.

### **Prescription Meds and Time Changes**

Adjust meds to the new time zone. Do not try to keep giving meds on the time zone in Colorado.

## Lower School

- Fall Adventure
- Colorado Expedition



Our program is developmentally structured to increase the level of challenge from grade to grade. Each grade-level experience follows a predictable sequence of growth and change. Personal growth occurs when children feel a sense of accomplishment, such as being away from home overnight without their parents, getting along with classmates, and living outdoors for an extended period of time.

Unique to Children's School Adventures and Expeditions is the participation of Parent Educational Leaders.

- Model behavior and lead with questioning so that students learn to make choices that best serve either an individual or the whole community of grade-level students.

- ❑ Adults provide safety and serve as the protectors of the students.
- ❑ Provide a group celebration mentality (they are there for ALL the children)
  
- ❑ Fall Adventure:

Experiences are differentiated by grade level but all aim to meet three common objectives.

  1. Daytime activities provide challenges to the individual and the group and push each student's personal comfort zone.
  2. Extended days and overnights provide the opportunity for students to develop independence, become better community members, and work on their leadership skills.
  3. Curriculum promotes appreciation for the outdoors, safety, and camp skills.
  
- ❑ Kicks off each academic year with the delivery of experiential education through **Place-Based Learning**: uses a location or environment as a starting point to teach concepts and ideas that contribute to personal growth. By participating in Fall Adventure, students learn to think outside.
  - ❑ Kindergarten and 1st Grade are paired in order to provide support to younger students (Kindergarteners) as they embark on a significant developmental leap. These students gain appreciation for the outdoors by exploring all that the CSS campus has to offer.
  - ❑ 2nd grade visits nature centers that have been established in city and regional parks. Structured activities in these centers build students' sensory awareness and emphasize water safety. During the evening, the class engages in nighttime activities in a familiar location: the CSS campus.
  - ❑ In 3rd grade, students stretch and grow as learners by leaving campus completely. The class uses Mueller State Park and Aspen Valley Ranch for field-based activities that address wilderness safety and preservation, student stamina, and comfort in the dark.
  - ❑ 4th and 5th grades are paired together to prepare the eldest students in the Children's School for a year of leading and mentoring the younger students in the division. Students spend the night at a campground and develop familiarity with camp craft skills. They also spend time reflecting on how to care for themselves. 5th graders experience solitude in the dark for the first time, taking part in a night hike.
  
- ❑ It is increasingly difficult to put children in environments such that the world comes to them. Fall Adventure creates experiences for students that allow that to happen.
  - ❑ Walking in the dark

- Stars, constellations, craters
  - Building dams
  - Building a fire, cooking dinner over it, and using it for warmth and a social setting
- Furthermore, the outdoors are a venue where students see that value that is added to their communities when they act with personal integrity.
  - Serving others dinner when they're hungry; leaders eat last
  - Listening
  - Being quiet
  - Letting the world come to you
  - Trusting the person in front of you
- Colorado Expedition:
  - Designed to expand upon classroom studies of Colorado history; students gain knowledge by making observations, asking questions, and investigating possible answers in places of historical significance.
  - A unique theme is explored in each grade level in the Children's School.
    - Kindergarten: Colorado Ranching & Wildlife
    - 1st Grade: Children of Colorado's Past (Miramont Castle in Manitou and Chipeta Park, Marcroft Hall)
    - 2nd Grade: Gold Mining in Colorado (Cripple Creek and Divide)
    - 3rd Grade: Westward Expansion (Pueblo and La Junta [Bent's Fort])
    - 4th Grade: History of San Luis Valley
    - 5th Grade: Ancestral Puebloan Cultures (Mesa Verde)

Each class's site-based learning is enriched by overnight and camp experiences. We believe that the cornerstones of our mission - prepare students to think independently, problem-solve, exemplify personal integrity, and meet challenges with leadership and ingenuity - are nourished and encouraged when students enter new environments. Whether sleeping in the classroom that students traditionally only see during daylight hours (kindergarten), spending the night in a tent (3rd grade), or sleeping 6 hours from home (5th grade), every Children's School student transforms as an individual in his/her overnight setting.

## Middle School

### ☐ Seminar I

- ☐ The primary goal of Seminar I is to build a strong foundation of community support. This is most effectively done in an environment unfamiliar to all group members and void of external distractions for an extended period of time. Across the three years a student spends in Middle School, s/he will camp in three different locations and practice the skill of teamwork through three different sets of activities.
  - ☐ Mt. Sherman outside of Fairplay - summit a 14er
  - ☐ Round Mountain
  - ☐ Lake Pueblo State Park
- ☐ One student teamwork component common to all three Seminar I locations is the planning, purchase of food, preparation, and clean-up for all meals during the 3-day, 2-night adventure. We camp in tents and sleep in sleeping bags.

### ☐ Seminar II and III

Each seminar will include each of the following components:

- **Impact component** – likely to have a positive, lasting impact on participants
- **Novelty component** – cannot or will not happen as effectively in the classroom
- **Hands-on component** – students spend the bulk of their seminar time in a student-centered, authentic environment
- **Comfort zone expansion component** – is significantly challenging in at least one way: psychologically, academically, physically, socially/culturally
- **Problem solving component** – at least one segment focuses on critical thinking, design thinking, innovation, or devising creative solutions
- **Collaboration component** – at least one segment includes working with other students and/or professionals in the field

We encourage students to learn about and try new things as a means of discovering themselves and the world around them; this is a fundamental purpose of the Seminar Program. For this reason, students will be allowed to take a maximum of two courses falling within a single category during

their tour in Middle School. Since each student will take a total of five Seminar II/III courses during their 3-years in Middle School, each student will be exposed to between three and five topic areas. Seminars will be offered in the following categories:

- Outdoors
- Arts
- Social/Current Issues
- STEM
- Life Skills

☐ Walkabout

In addition to Seminar III, all 8th Grade students go on Walkabout in the spring. They raft on the San Juan River and explore the Utah Canyonlands as they learn about themselves, others, and important life-long lessons in this coming of age experience named after the Australian aboriginal tradition.

## Upper School

Excerpt from a previous student:

“For three weeks every March, my high school embarks on journeys across local and global communities to broaden our perspective of the dynamic world in which we live. We believe in active, engaged learning, both inside and outside of a classroom, and our Experience Centered Seminar (ECS) program provides students with valuable learning opportunities, like service projects in a developing country, that teach us more than a textbook ever could. ECS’s are utterly unforgettable. Countless transformative, treasured moments are permanently embedded in my memory, such as snorkeling with dolphins near Catalina Island, sharing a meal with Colorado Springs homeless in a soup kitchen, and spotting giraffes with Maasai warriors in Monduli. Defining my personality and providing me with new passions, each unique experience intensifies my sense of self, expands my empathy, and impacts me in indelible ways.”

- ❑ Experience-Centered Seminars (ECSs)
- ❑ Over the course of these three-week long intensive seminars, which are equivalent to 1.0 Academic Unit, students engage in multiple iterations of the learning cycle.
  - ❑ Concrete experience - students encounter a new experience or situation
  - ❑ Reflective observation - students write, orate, question, or make arguments about the new experience
  - ❑ Abstract conceptualization - students analyze the experience or situation and draw generalizations that ultimately provide the framework for a new idea and/or action
  - ❑ Active experimentation - students apply the new idea to generate yet another new product or experience.
- ❑ Students become accustomed to learning at a higher level and constantly working towards self-awareness and the development of personal purpose. In each subsequent year’s experience, students grow greater confidence in relating to people, as well as in taking necessary risk to influence people and problems with action.
- ❑ Multiple ECSs are offered each year and each one varies in theme, geographic location, and the means by which students will become immersed in a topic or skill. However, all ECSs are unified by a consistent level of academic rigor. Each seminar is based in research, experiential application, and the following executive skills:
  - i. Reading
  - ii. Interviewing
  - iii. Writing
  - iv. Synthesizing
  - v. Presentational sharing

The topics and capacities that are explored in each ECS follow a multidisciplinary approach to answer broad, big-picture questions that anchor the curriculum. These questions are often so vast that they incite curiosity beyond the scope of the ECS, influencing students to continue the intellectual quest throughout their high school years and beyond. Furthermore, every ECS curriculum includes tone setting and forming activities that establish meaning and structure for the seminar experience, as well as intentional and guided transference that motivates a student's behavior and learning beyond the seminar.

- ❑ ECS courses are designed to stretch a student's skills in three distinct areas:
  1. Head - The academic learning objectives for a seminar are met through rigorous intellectual content and a workload that calls for a high level of cognition.
  2. Hands - Students transform from being observers to doers.
  3. Heart - Soft skills are delivered to students with intentionality so that they grow their capacity for interacting effectively and harmoniously with other people.

Each skill area is approached with consistency across ECSs, as is detailed below.

**Head:**

- ❑ The complex essential questions frame the academic content.
- ❑ Frequent assessment of learning
- ❑ Individualized midpoint assessment
- ❑ Creation of a "product"
- ❑ Consultation and engagement with experts in the field

**Hands:**

- ❑ Concrete and specific ECS skills: sailing, Wilderness First Aid, SCUBA certification, HAM radio operation, etc.
- ❑ Discrete immersion opportunities: attendance at a religious service, exposure to a craft or skill (Native American drum making, cedar weaving), shadowing the homeless population, visiting industry facilities and gaining access to products in the design phase.
- ❑ Safety: students are forced to act in a responsible manner due to seriousness of consequences

**Heart:**

- ❑ Self reflection
- ❑ Leadership
- ❑ Empathy and tolerance
- ❑ Teamwork

## Service Learning

Learning service is a very deliberate action and a different way of thinking about service learning. It is an opportunity to give back to communities that make our experiences off campus possible. Rather than adhering to a philosophy of community service which suggests that we have the experience and knowledge, we engage in learning service.

The term learning service represents a philosophy that instead of imposing ourselves on a community, we come to learn from the extensive expertise and knowledge of our hosts and to ultimately act as responsible contributors to their self-identified needs. This approach frames each opportunity as an educational experience, rather than as an opportunity to broadly “do good” without consideration of our service work’s efficacy. Mindful of our intentions, students work closely with local mentors to contribute to a new or existing community initiative. We believe that effective, collaborative service work begins when students are guided to ask the right questions:

- Was the project initiated by the community, and is there community ownership?
- Does the project value capacity-building over infrastructure development?
- Was the project initiated due to actual needs or the ease of integrating unskilled workers (us) into the tasks?
- What is the lifespan of the project, and how will it evolve once outsiders leave?

We offer students the unique opportunity to learn from local leaders, practice language skills, and gain firsthand insight into the complexities of another culture. Service projects may involve physical labor, teaching, advocacy or volunteering at a local NGO.

At CSS, we commit to investing time, energy, and good will to benefitting the people of our city and region. In every grade level, students learn about the significance of contributing in positive ways to people or environments that rely on help from willing and able individuals. CSS students spearhead resource drives, provide physical manpower to community supported agriculture and park lands, and engage with populations of people that are elderly, disadvantaged, or physically or mentally challenged. Community service is done by grade level through 8th grade.

All CSS Upper School students must meet a yearly graduation requirement of participating in a minimum of 18 hours of service, six of which are accrued during Service Days that are designated each semester and sponsored by the school.



## CSS Cell Phone Policy

We respectfully request that students leave their cell phones and all internet-enabled devices at home. Disconnecting from cell phones and social media is important because:

- It allows students to fully immerse themselves in the present moment.
- It pushes them to build meaningful relationships with their peers, instructors, and homestay families as a means of emotional support. Students who rely on their parents for emotional support often suffer from homesickness and a sense of disconnection from the group for the duration of the course. If your child contacts you while on a CSS Ex Ed program, it is important that you contact CSS Admin immediately so that we can make a plan with your child's Instructor Team to provide them with the necessary emotional support. Although hearing from your son or daughter may provide a welcome sense of solace, it may also be an important indicator of disengagement, and we'd love to help your child re-engage with their experience.
- CSS's Ex Ed programming is a unique opportunity for students to develop new skills. Most CSS students find that they actually have time to read books or journal while on-course, activities that they rarely have the opportunity to, or choose to, embrace back home. If the constant buzz of text messages or Facebook messenger continues on-course, students will struggle to engage with the opportunities right in front of them. Thus, it is imperative that you encourage your child to leave their connectivity devices at home and to see their ex ed program as a rare opportunity to be present.

If a student chooses to bring their cell phone for use during individual travel before and after the program, please understand that instructors will collect and hold all phones for the duration of the course. Instructors are not liable for any loss or damage to students' phones. We encourage all students to unplug and leave their phones at home.

Students will have access to a telephone via the Instructor Team should an emergency occur. For non-urgent personal communication, parents/guardians may contact CSS directly and they can get a message to the group leaders.

### **Our Systems**

- The CSS Office: CSS Administration will be available 24/7 to respond to calls from the field for the duration of your child's program. Our regular office hours are 7:30 am-3:30 pm MST at 719-434-3510. After hours, please leave us a voice message for our on-call team and we will return your call as soon as possible.
- Upper School ECSs use a student-created Blog system. The goal of each ECS is to

post every other day. Families will receive notification for the first post and then it is up to them to check for further posts. It is important to remember that due to the location and nature of some ECSs, it can be more difficult to post regularly.

### **The Communication Loop**

In consideration of the risk management strategies and emergency response protocols that we've spent years fine-tuning, we feel it is important that we maintain a communication loop that starts and ends with the student and that keeps school staff, CSS administration, and instructors informed on both student and parent needs. The line of communication will work best and provide the safest and most responsive experience for your child if communication moves in the following direction:





## Emergency Communication with Parents

### The Hot Phone

If there is an emergency involving your child, we will set up an immediate and direct communication link between the parent, the school, and CSS Administration. It is crucial that all communication with parents goes through the school's ex ed office.

If parents try to manage their children independently, or if they try to manage the instructors who are working with the children, a truly risky situation can ensue. From experience and in consultation with industry experts in risk management and emergency response, it is important to understand that in times of emergency, field instructors need to be fully present for the students. If dealing with students who are distracted by calls from home or if the instructors themselves are weighed down by the voices of concerned parents, a risky situation will become even more so.

As an organization, we have substantial resources to draw on when managing an emergency situation: a high instructor-to-student ratio; a US-based administrative staff with years of program management experience; tested relationships with local healthcare providers, medical facilities, and evacuation companies; well-placed contacts within US and in-country government agencies; emergency response protocols that are practiced and reviewed with and between field staff and our administration; and retainer relationships with medical and mental health professionals.

Through attentive course planning, our hope is to avoid emergency issues. More important than "if" there is an emergency, is "how" it is handled. If your child is involved in any kind of emergency, please know that our administrative staff is committed to handling the emergency professionally and with absolute transparency. We or your school will communicate all details of the emergency and our response to parents as soon as we have the information ourselves.

### **Parent Emergency Communication**

CSS Administration maintains regular communication with all field staff and will be in constant communication if there are any student issues or emergencies that require our attention. CSS staff carry emergency communication equipment. If instructors need to reach us, they will be able to, and vice-versa. If a parent needs to urgently contact a child, the parent can contact our office using the following protocols:

In the event of an EMERGENCY, contact CSS as follows:

Telephone: If during school hours, call the main CSS line, 719-475-9747 and ask for Bronwyn or a Leadership Team member. If after hours, check the LT On Duty sheet.

Email: [exed@css.org](mailto:exed@css.org) which will forward to the LT On Duty.

A CSS administrator will respond to you as quickly as possible and will liaise with staff in the field to communicate your emergency needs.

IMPORTANT: Please email [efuller@css.org](mailto:efuller@css.org) if you intend to be away while your child is on course.

## **Non-Emergency Communication**

CSS Administration has a Risk Management Team that facilitates communication between the field staff, school, 3rd party provider, and parents. Instructors are constantly updating the Risk Management Team on issues, including non-emergency issues. Over the course of the program, some students may have an upset stomach, feel homesick, or have an uncomfortable experience. Our Risk Management Team tracks all such instances, and while we can't communicate every single instance of discomfort to parents, we will always communicate the following:

- Significant Medical Concerns such as overnight hospital stays, serious injury, or a need for other advanced
- treatment or care;
- Ongoing Concerns, if a student is struggling emotionally or physically, and it is impeding his or her full
- participation; and
- Red Rule or Behavioral Infractions

The Risk Management Team will be in touch with your school's administration and call or email the student's primary guardian, as listed on the student medical form. We will then try other numbers if necessary. Parents sometimes dread getting a call from the office, but please know that it is usually not an emergency. We will begin our conversation by immediately letting you know the nature of the call.

## **What CSS will NOT Communicate**

- Minor Health Concerns: Your child will likely get sick. However, generally speaking, young adults' bodies are able to recover quite quickly. Students often visit clinics for gastrointestinal issues and may be prescribed antibiotics for treatment. We will not communicate these minor medical issues but will communicate more significant ones.

- Minor Emotional Health Concerns: Your child will go through ups and downs. It is more common for students to want to reach out to their family when they aren't feeling great. Please know that we have trained instructors to manage these "downs." Instructors will keep us abreast of student disposition, though we will not generally inform a parent until it starts impeding a student's ability to fully participate.
- For students 18 and older: We will not communicate issues that the student has expressly requested us to keep private.

Please know that our instructors will inform us completely of any issues that arise, and you can feel free to be in touch with our office with questions or concerns. In addition, please feel free to contact us if you feel your child is not getting the attention they need. We are here to help make your child's program the most profound, transformative, and safe experience possible.

**IMPORTANT:** If your child calls or emails with a concern that has not been shared with the field staff, please advise your child to talk to the course instructors or teachers. For the physical and emotional safety of your child, it is extremely important that your child communicates openly with his or her instructor team.

