



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS LOWER SCHOOL: PREK–GRADE 5

### ACADEMIC CURRICULA

#### Which co-curriculars are offered?

The Lower School division is proud to offer dedicated teachers for Art, Spanish (immersion), P.E., Band, Vocal, Creative Dramatics, and Social-Emotional Learning.

#### Will my child change classrooms during the day?

Students utilize the entirety of CSS's 28-acre campus, often walking outside to get to and from co-curricular classes such as P.E. and Creative Dramatics.

#### Do you offer foreign language classes?

Yes. CSS offers Spanish beginning as early as PreKindergarten. The Lower School Spanish teacher runs a full immersion learning model, including co-teaching some subjects typically presented in English.

#### Will my child be learning on a device all day?

While students are introduced and perform some classwork in the digital sphere, we also believe in authentic, hands-on learning requiring a pencil and paper!

#### Do you conduct standardized testing?

We do not teach to the test nor do we conduct standardized testing regularly throughout the academic year, however, our faculty do use benchmarks to determine individual student progress.

#### Do you teach sex education?

Yes. Beginning in the spring of students' 4th-grade year, we teach basic sex education from a biological and scientific standpoint in an age-appropriate way as based on curricular standards. Teaching of sexual reproduction begins in the 7th-grade year. We also encourage families to partner with us in having further discussions with their students according to individual preferences.

#### If my child is dyslexic, can we still apply?

Yes. CSS employs a dedicated Learning Specialist and Academic Interventionist trained to work with students presenting all types of learning differences.

#### Do you have a Talented and Gifted Program?

Academically, we are typically half- to one full year ahead of other schools in the Colorado Springs area, so our entire program fits into this category. Education is differentiated by the teachers and, therefore, no child will be capped within a specific class.

#### My child reads (X) years above grade level, will they be challenged?

Teaching is individualized based on the learning level of each student. If they can go further, we'll take them there. If they need help, we'll ensure they get what they need.

#### Do most children start in PreK and go all of the way through Upper School?

Every year at Commencement, CSS recognizes "Lifers" who have attended CSS continuously from Kindergarten – or earlier – through high school for 13 years or more.

### COMMUNITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

#### Are you associated with any religion?

No. We are a fully independent, secular institution.

#### Will my child fit in?

CSS students come from all walks of life and backgrounds. We are a tight-knit community, with everyone working together to integrate new students and parents into the CSS way of life. Families come from approximately 40 zip codes in the Pikes Peak region, as well as from across the nation and around the world.

#### Do you accept international students?

Yes, and at all divisional levels!

#### Are you a boarding school?

No, but we do offer a homestay program for anyone coming from afar who would like to attend CSS. As part of the homestay program, a student will be paired and live with a current CSS family during the school year.

#### Where do international students stay?

As part of the homestay program, international students will be paired and live with a current CSS family during the school year. We work hard to determine the best fit for both the family and the student.

### DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS

#### When are drop-off and pick-up times?

Carline drop-off takes place from 7:45-8 a.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, and from 8:45-9 a.m. on Late Start Wednesdays designed to allow for faculty/staff professional development. Pick-up takes place at 3:15 p.m. every day.

#### Do you offer Extended Care?

The Colorado Springs School offers Morning and Afternoon Extended Care in the Lower and Middle School divisions, and at reasonable rates. Please visit [css.org/community/current-families/extended-care](https://css.org/community/current-families/extended-care) for the most up-to-date information on Morning and Afternoon Extended Care in the Lower School and Homework Heaven in the Middle School.

#### I live far away. Are buses an option?

The Colorado Springs School offers its own fleet of buses and drivers. In a typical school year, there are at least two bus routes for students beginning in Kindergarten and we are happy to discuss those with you. Note: there is an additional charge for bus transportation. Learn more at [css.org/admissions/transportation](https://css.org/admissions/transportation).

#### Do you follow a specific school district with regard to weather delays and cancellations?

Decisions pertaining to school delays and cancellations are strictly circumstantial and are made with a variety of factors in mind, all of which can be found in greater detail at [css.org/admissions/transportation](https://css.org/admissions/transportation).

## DRESS CODE

### Are uniforms worn?

No. There are general protocols for dress code, however, CSS does not require school uniforms. We are a hands-on learning institution, so be sure you send your student to school in something you don't mind getting dirty! In addition, Lower School students should always have access to sneakers, as they get two official recesses per day and attend Physical Education classes twice a week. Teachers also utilize CSS's 28-acre campus to the fullest by conducting classes outdoors in the sunshine!

## EXTRA-CURRICULARS & OUTDOOR EDUCATION

### Do you have assemblies?

Yes. We feel it is important for the Lower School to come together at certain times throughout the year and there are even opportunities for students to lead the assembly with presentations.

### What after-school sports or clubs are offered for younger students?

After-school sports or clubs are offered for students in Kindergarten through grade 5 and vary by year. Learn more at [css.org/academics/childrens-school/clubs-activities](https://css.org/academics/childrens-school/clubs-activities).

### My child has never camped, will they be OK on overnight trips?

They'll be fine – have faith! Our faculty members are officially trained in outdoor education and engagement.

### Can parents volunteer to help with overnight trips?

Yes. At the beginning of the school year, our faculty members ask that any parent interested in assisting with and/or attending overnight trips kindly let them know. There is an official application process for the position of Parent Education Leader (PEL).

## FACULTY

### What is the teacher-to-student ratio?

This ratio varies depending on grade level, however, PreKindergarten is mandated to maintain an 8:1 ratio. Kindergarten through grade 5 enrollment is more flexible based on needs and class configuration.

### Why do some grades have two teachers?

Additional faculty may be added to a class depending on the grade level and needs of this particular cohort. Such additions help to ensure that teaching and learning can be conducted at an exemplary level.

### Are your teachers licensed to teach?

It is not a requirement of independent school faculty to have a teaching license, but approximately 70 percent of CSS faculty do hold advanced degrees, and a good number hold teaching certifications.

## FACULTY CONT.

### Do teachers work/communicate with parents?

We see education as a partnership between faculty and parents. This is, however, dependent upon open lines of communication. Lower School teachers are in regular contact with parents using the Talking Points app specific to their class. In addition, one-on-one meetings are held with parents/students during report card periods. Report cards include narratives on student's individual progress in comparison to benchmarks and not just grades!

### Can I help in the classroom?

Yes, if you are interested in helping in the classroom or believe you have a skill that would be valuable to the class, please let us know! A school-run background check is required.

### What is your turnover rate for teachers?

The average tenure of a teacher at The Colorado Springs School is six years. CSS is home to a significant number of individuals with 5+ years of service and faculty members with over 20 years of service!

## TUITION & FEES / AID

### What is the cost of tuition?

Tuition varies by grade level and may include merit scholarships, discounts or financial aid depending on your family's unique situation. For up-to-date tuition and fees, and aid offerings, please visit [css.org/tuition](https://css.org/tuition).

### Do you have to pay for lunch or is it provided?

Your student may bring lunch or purchase food from Maytag Dining Hall. CSS is proud to have a personal chef on staff who [sources many ingredients from local farmers](#). Lunch menus and pricing: [css.org/community/current-families/lunch](https://css.org/community/current-families/lunch).

### Are field trips included in the cost of tuition?

In the Lower School division, all [Experiential Education outings](#)\* are included in the cost of tuition. In the Middle School division, [Seminar I](#)\* is included in the cost of tuition, but Seminars II & III are provided at an additional cost, which varies depending on students' selected experience. In the Upper School division, Mountain Caravan\* is included in the cost of tuition, but the [Experience-Centered Seminar](#) is provided at an additional cost, which varies depending on students' selected experience. *\*The cost for food per student is not included in the price of tuition.*

### Can we apply for a CSS scholarship?

We do not offer scholarships, but do follow a protocol of Indexed Tuition – CSS's very own version of "Financial Aid."

### What is Indexed Tuition (IT)?

IT is a form of Financial Aid wherein families must apply annually. CSS does its best to meet your family where you are, taking into account changes in your financial situation year-over-year. Learn more [here](#).

### Do you offer military discounts?

We do take into account active and retired military, among other things, when making Indexed Tuition award decisions. In addition, there are several external institutions that offer scholarships for active and/or retired military personnel. Learn more at [css.org/admissions/military-families](https://css.org/admissions/military-families).

## SCHEDULE A TOUR & APPLY

[admission@css.org](mailto:admission@css.org) | (719) 434-3500 | [css.org/discover](https://css.org/discover)