



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS UPPER SCHOOL: GRADES 9-12

ACADEMIC CURRICULA

Do you offer AP classes?

Yes, however, this is not the focus of the school. We offer both Advanced Placement and top-level courses to fully prepare students to succeed at the college level and in life.

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 progress.

Can someone help my student apply for college?

CSS is home to a dedicated Career & College Counselor who works closely with all families to find that right fit college for students. During their sophomore year, students take a College Overview course that assists them in identifying college choices and covers how to interview, write essays, etc. At the start of their senior year, students attend a College Bootcamp to fully prepare them for the college application process. In addition, college representatives frequently visit campus to meet with CSS students throughout the year.

Does CSS expect all graduates to go to college?

The school will counsel students on any path they choose. Typically, 100 percent of each graduating class does go on to attend a post-secondary education institution.

What are some schools your graduates have gone on to attend?

A look at CSS's college matriculation list can be found at css.org/academics/upper-school/college-counseling.

Is there a strong emphasis on Ivy League education following graduation?

CSS's Career & College Counselor works closely with each student to understand their unique needs and goals. Together, they create a list of colleges that are a good fit for the individual student. We have had students who have been admitted to and who have attended the most selective universities in the world.

Is there a community service component required for graduation?

Students are required to complete a minimum of 18 hours of community service per year.

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 student 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.

What is Senior Capstone?

The Senior Capstone is an individualized, student-generated project completed in conjunction with a mentor at the end of a student's senior year.

Do most kids 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

How many students are in each grade level in the Upper School?

Grade levels vary from 14-26 students, or more, with individual class sizes typically ranging between 12 and 14 students.

Do kids feel that this is too small of a school?

We keep our school small for academic purposes, to enhance community connections, and to allow for individualized attention. For some students, that is exactly what they need whereas others need a larger pool of students. It is a very personal decision.

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.

How is bullying handled?

Bullying protocols and procedures can be found online in the [Parent-Student Handbook](#). Bullying is not permitted. Our goal is to restore relationships.

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.

What are your cell phone and social media policies for students?

We ask that students use technology for school-related purposes only throughout the school day.

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 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.

DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS CONT.

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.

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!

FACULTY

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.

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.

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."

Are Experience-Centered Seminars offered at an additional cost?

Yes. Participation in the ECS is required, and experiences are offered at an additional cost depending on the excursion, which does vary from year to year.

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.

Are field trips included in the cost of tuition?

In the Lower School division, all [Experiential Education trips](#)* 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.

TUITION & FEES / AID CONT.

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.

EXTRA-CURRICULARS & OUTDOOR EDUCATION

What is ECS?

Experience-Centered Seminars (ECSs) are local, regional, national and international excursions that provide opportunities for active participation and engagement over the course of three weeks in a hands-on setting. Such experiences allow for optimized critical thinking, organized inquiry, and demonstrated use of in-depth analysis. Students synthesize their learning and experiences via oral and written presentations, blogs or journals, group projects, tests, etc.

What places have you gone to in the past?

In addition to local excursions, some regional ECSs in recent years have included Yellowstone National Park, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Washington, DC, France, Italy, Hawaii, California, etc.

What clubs are offered in Upper School?

All clubs are student-led and vary from year to year. If it does not exist already, there are always opportunities to start new clubs as well!

Do you have Student Government?

Yes. The Upper School Student Government organization is known as Forum. There are student government representatives from each class, and each grade level has projects they work on together as a cohort. They also have the freedom to bring initiatives to school administrators as advocates for the needs of the greater student population. Previous topics of interest have included dress code, off-campus lunch protocols, etc.

Can my child play more than one sport per season?

Students MUST select a single sport to play. All annual Upper School sports offerings – ranging from Cross Country, Volleyball, Tennis, Basketball, Lacrosse, and Soccer – can be found at csskodiaks.com. Note: participation in CSS sport offerings is not included in the cost of tuition.

Do you have prom, homecoming or other common high school traditional events?

We host everything that the bigger schools offer, including prom and homecoming.

SCHEDULE A TOUR & APPLY

admission@css.org | (719) 434-3500 | css.org/discover