

Cape Fear Center for Inquiry Parent & Student Handbook

Mission Statement	3
Vision Statement	3
Inquiry	4
Who We Are/Non-Negotiables	5
Admissions	6
Application and Lottery	6
Enrollment	6
Placement Policy	7
School Mascot and School Colors	7
Contact List and Areas of Responsibility	7
Committees	7
Specialist information	7
Student and Parent Responsibilities	8
Partnership for CFCI	8
Parent/Teacher Conferences	9
Curriculum	9
Looping	9
Field Study/Scholarship Fund	10
Social Curriculum and Behavior Expectations	11
Resolution/Grievance Policy	12
Resolution Form	14
Violence and Serious Misconduct	15
On-Premises Restrictions (non-weapon)	16
Assessment	16
Student Support Team	17
Exceptional Children's Program	18
Homework	18
Retention/Promotion	18
Extracurricular Activities	18
Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)	19
Personal Information	19
Requesting/Forwarding Records	19

Absences	19
Tardies	20
Early Check Out	20
Student Release	21
Court and Custody Orders	21
Donations	21
Lunches/Snacks	22
Hot Treat Fridays	22
Birthdays	22
Dress Code	22
Telephone Use	23
Lost and Found	23
Playground Expectations	24
Building Usage	25
Illness	25
Lice	25
Medication	26
Immunizations	26
Internet Access and Fair Use Policy	26
Transportation	27
Arrival At School	27
Dismissal From School	27
Visitors	29
Emergency Closing	30
Lock Down Procedures	30
Middle Grades	31

Mission Statement

Cape Fear Center for Inquiry is committed to promoting students' abilities to think and create in personally meaningful ways through an integrated, inquiry-based curriculum in a nurturing environment.

Vision Statement

Our school exists because we love and value children. Children and learning are the heart of what our school is all about. We base our purpose and daily decisions on our greatest priority—the well-being of our students.

At CFCI, we believe that the whole child is more important than any single factor. We recognize physical, intellectual, emotional and social development as integral parts of each child's growth and learning process.

Therefore, we:

- focus on student inquiry because we believe that all children have an innate sense of wonder.
- design and provide hands-on, integrated and exciting learning experiences— through classroom and field experiences— because children learn best when they are actively engaged in making personally meaningful connections.
- are committed to a small student-teacher ratio because this is the best way to create communities of learners.
- nurture our students to be independent, lifelong learners by increasing responsibility for their learning,
- appreciate diversity among learners because we value the uniqueness of each child.
- aggressively prepare our students to become effective communicators, critical thinkers and creative problem solvers because problem solving is a natural part of everyday life.
- implement a comprehensive social curriculum because children learn best in a safe and caring environment where every child is respected and valued.
- rely on mutual support of home, school and community. Communication and family involvement are vital to ensuring student growth. We agree

that nurturing and educating children are monumental tasks that require the collaborative efforts of the entire school community.

Inquiry

CFCI's teaching methods do not look like those of traditional schools. CFCI teachers and administration work to implement new methods such as inquiry-based instruction, alternative assessment techniques, and providing student choices, as well as other innovative initiatives. We ask that parents support us in making our school of choice different and innovative.

Inquiry-based learning is a meaningful process. In this process: STUDENTS are actively exploring interests and taking ownership of their learning through

- asking questions
- working together
- thinking and problem solving
- reflecting and sharing new understandings

While TEACHERS are creating a safe environment by

- accepting mistakes
- respecting students' ideas
- sharing leadership with students

And are guiding student learning by

- knowing students well enough to address individual needs and interests
- helping students make new connections
- nurturing a sense of wonder
- encouraging students to create their own understanding

Who We Are/Non-Negotiables

The faculty at CFCI came together during the 2003-2004 school year to create the following statements about who we are. They support the mission and vision and further clarify the fundamental beliefs of our school community.

- We foster inquiry-based teaching and learning, creativity, and personal growth for all members of the school community.
- Children are the heart of the school and all decisions take into consideration their individual physical, intellectual, social and emotional needs.
- Learning is a continuous process, enhanced by experience. We will always be "becoming."
- Because we have a unique opportunity to be professional decision-makers, our professional responsibility and accountability are paramount.
- Learning is joyous.
- All members of our learning community are encouraged and expected to continue learning.
- We work to create a community in which we foster open communication in order to grow professionally and to resolve conflict.
- We actively seek to show that our students are learning and we are able to explain our teaching and the inquiry process. We are accountable to our students and their parents, each other as faculty members, the Board of Directors, the larger professional community, the State of North Carolina (DPI) and the local community at-large.
- We are a unified group of diverse thinkers.
- We are expected to be involved in decisions that affect our school and our classrooms.
- We are creative as problem solvers and teachers.
- We promote the care and respect of others.

Admissions

Statement of non-discriminatory policy

The Cape Fear Center for Inquiry shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of gender, race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, ancestry, disability or measure of intellectual ability or achievement or aptitude or athletic ability in its admissions or education programs. Tuition or admission fees shall not be charged to any student.

Application

The Cape Fear Center for Inquiry accepts applications for prospective students starting each January for a set application period. Applications are made available only at parent meetings held through the application period. These meetings will be announced and advertised. Out of state families and those who apply after the lottery date must meet with appropriate faculty before receiving an application. Students who are currently attending CFCI do not need to apply again; however, if these students have siblings wishing to start at CFCI they do need to complete an application. Applications for siblings of currently enrolled students are available in the school office.

Admission to the school is based on a lottery system. Maximum class size limits will determine the numbers of students in each class.

Enrollment

Once a student has been admitted to the Cape Fear Center for Inquiry, formal enrollment is required to reserve the student's space in the school. Enrollment will take place during the month of April. The enrollment procedure will ensure that the school has all information it needs to meet State Board of Education records requirements for charter schools.

North Carolina State law requires all students to have immunization records complete and on file within 30 days of starting school or the student may not be allowed to return to school.

A student who has been admitted but who has not fully enrolled by April 30, may be removed from the list of admitted students and may have to re-apply to the school to gain entrance.

Placement Policy

As Board policy states, the current and prospective teachers decide on class placement for all students. All information available will be considered in making classroom placements for each child. Parents who wish to have input regarding their child's placement should discuss concerns with their child's teacher; however, requests specifically for a certain teacher will not be honored. Written requests to address specific educational needs should be provided to the Director. Tentative class placements will be made by the end of June and the Board reserves the right to amend the class lists as needed. Any appeals to class placement decisions must be made in writing.

Students who have been home schooled or do not have standardized test scores from their previous schools are required to meet with the appropriate teachers and/or complete testing before being placed in a class.

School Mascot and School Colors

It has always been important to CFCI to establish school traditions and each year we have worked toward this goal. In our second year, our students, through nominations and voting, made the decisions regarding school colors, a school mascot, and a name for our mascot.

Our school mascot is the dolphin named Riptide. Our school colors are navy blue, teal and silver.

Committees

Most CFCI committees are comprised of Board members, CFCI employees and parents; however, some committee membership is limited to Board and faculty members due to confidential matters.

If you are interested in being involved on a committee, please speak with a CFCI administrator or teacher for a list of available committees and their responsibilities.

Specialist information

At CFCI we offer several different specials classes. Spanish, music, art, technology and PE are offered at all grade levels. Additionally, fifth through eighth graders are offered band and chorus as well. These classes follow the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.

Student and Parent Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of each student at CFCI to respect others, our school building and our learning materials. Students are also expected to be active learners, asking questions and fully participating in classroom activities.

In addition, it is the parents' responsibility to support the mission of CFCI, to nurture their child's learning, and to participate in their child's class in whatever way they can. This support includes bringing children to school on time and ready to learn, talking about the day's activities with their child, and extending what students are learning beyond the classroom. Parents are also expected to uphold the principles of our social curriculum by being respectful of our learning community on campus and on field studies.

We strongly encourage parents to thoroughly read and understand the CFCI handbook. In addition, since each teacher will have rules and procedures for his/her classroom, parents are expected to become familiar with these as well.

Partnership for CFCI

The Partnership for CFCI is a volunteer organization that works to strengthen connections among parents, teachers, students and community members while supporting the mission of CFCI. Members work together to organize many important aspects of our school's activities. Every parent or guardian of a CFCI student is automatically a member. Family and friends are also invited to become members. There are no dues or permanent obligations.

Parents are encouraged to volunteer as often as their schedules or interests permit. Opportunities for parents to get involved include fund raising, building and grounds maintenance, and curriculum enhancement. All families are encouraged to attend the bi-monthly meetings of the Partnership. At these meetings, the Partnership officers give updates on recent developments, a member of the CFCI Board of Directors gives an update on current school issues, parent education topics are discussed, and a class may make a presentation. The Partnership officers are elected each year in March.

Teachers may request the help of a Room Parent through the Partnership. Room parents are volunteers who help in a given classroom on a regular basis and are available to be called on when special assistance is needed. Room parents help in the classroom or outside the classroom by making phone calls, arranging parties, collecting needed project materials, obtaining field trip drivers and chaperones, or in other ways which benefit the students. Parents volunteer at the beginning of the year to be a room parent.

Parent/Teacher Communication and Conferences

Regular, open communication between home and school is critical for student success. Conferences can be requested at any time by parents, teachers or students. Conferences with teachers should be scheduled for a time other than class time, preferably after the end of the school day. Unscheduled conferencing with teachers before or after school takes away from student learning and can not be accommodated.

Home/school communication is important and there are several means by which this is done:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Weekly classroom news• Monthly school newsletters• Backpack flyers (In the event a family has more than one student at CFCI, the | <ul style="list-style-type: none">youngest student usually receives the flyer.)• The CFCI website• Exterior message sign• E-mail |
|--|---|

Teachers must approve all class/grade level information sent out; and whole-school communications must be reviewed by the Director or other appropriate administrative staff prior to distribution.

Curriculum

As a public charter school, CFCI uses the North Carolina Standard Course of Study as a guideline for our curriculum. The NCSOS objectives are a foundation for instruction, and through inquiry, classes and individuals may go beyond these expectations. For information on specific grade level objectives visit www.ncpublicschools.org and choose "curriculum."

Looping

In order to promote the development of close classroom communities, CFCI, whenever possible, arranges looping—that is, a teacher staying with one group of students for two school years. This allows teachers to know

their students better and to more easily individualize instruction. Classroom dynamics, teacher strengths and individual student needs will be considerations in making decisions about looping. Current grade loops are K-1, 2-3, and 4-5. Middle grades teachers do not typically loop.

Field Study/Scholarship Fund

Children learn best through experience. Field study is an excellent way to provide these experiences. Each teacher will arrange for appropriate field studies that support and expand learning at each grade level.

Although field studies are voluntary, it is important to realize that since the planned trip is a valuable foundation for inquiry-based learning, students should attend field study events if at all possible. If a student does not go on a field study, he or she will complete work related to the field study in another classroom at school.

Every precaution will be taken to ensure student safety. Parents will receive prior, written notification of each field study including any known risks involved. Parents should understand that unknown risks may also exist. Parent volunteers or charter bus will provide transportation for field studies. These volunteers must hold a current North Carolina driver's license and will be responsible for ensuring that safety belts are used. Drivers may be subject to a background check.

Parents are expected to follow North Carolina State Law with regard to child restraints. Children under age 8 or 80 pounds must be in an appropriate child restraint in order to go on field trips. Parents must provide approved car seats the morning of the trip.

Appropriate behavior is required on field studies. Inappropriate behavior will be addressed by having parents pick up their child from the field study experience.

Field studies may require the collection of a nominal fee. Parents in need of financial assistance should contact his or her child's teacher or obtain a form from the school office. All requests for assistance will be confidential. We are happy to accept donations to this fund at any time. These donations are tax deductible.

CFCI requires parents to complete a permission form for their child to participate in the field study experience. These forms require that parents provide contact information in case of emergency. Additionally, all out-of-town permission forms must be notarized. Field study forms can be notarized in the school office after 8:30 am Monday through Friday.

Social Curriculum and Behavior Expectations

Treating others with respect and being responsible for one's own actions are the goals of the social curriculum at CFCI. We want our students to learn how to interact in a supportive, cooperative learning environment. Through the social curriculum, students internalize rules and procedures and develop self-control and self-confidence. Students are taught and encouraged to learn the principles of cooperation, honesty, responsibility, and compassion. Each class begins the day with Morning Meeting during which students build the class community through establishing expectations, participating in group-building activities and learning about the above mentioned values.

Students participate in creating rules and procedures to help our classrooms function safely and productively. We teach them the skills they will need in order to function as caring, self-responsible citizens by discussing, modeling and practicing appropriate ways to interact. However, we understand students sometimes test behavioral boundaries. When this happens, we ask the student to sit away from the group, but within the classroom, and reflect on his or her behavior. This time-out is an opportunity to regain self-awareness and self-control and to prepare to rejoin the group or activity ready to participate. If a student is unwilling to take appropriate responsibility, or if a student has needed more than two time-outs on a given day, the next time out is taken in another classroom. The student is escorted to another teacher's classroom and is given the opportunity to regain control outside his/her classroom environment. The amount of time a student remains in the alternative setting is dependent on the student's age and the individual circumstance.

If a student needs a fourth time-out, the child's teacher will call the parent(s) to come pick him/her up from school. The student will remain in an appropriate, supervised location until the parent arrives. Having a child go home following a fourth time-out recognizes the important role parents have

in supervising their child's behavior. Going home after a fourth time-out is not the equivalent of a suspension. Generally, after a child sees that boundaries are firm, and that students will go home if they cross them, this final option is only rarely needed.

Resolution/Grievance Policy

CFCI's social curriculum extends to our larger community of parents, faculty, Board members, administrators, etc. CFCI believes that our learning community grows stronger by resolving conflicts in the most straightforward approach possible. In the event that any member of the CFCI community has a concern with another CFCI community member, the steps below should be followed to resolve the issue.

- Speak directly with the person with whom you have the concern or write a letter describing the specifics of your concern and possible ways to resolve the issue to that individual and attempt to set up a meeting to seek a resolution.
- If you would like to document your meeting, there is a Resolution Form available in the CFCI handbook, on the CFCI website (www.cfc.org) and at the front window of the office. Any documentation can be put in the Resolution Committee mailbox in the front office.
- If a resolution is not reached, you may seek the assistance of the Resolution Committee by contacting the "Resolution-Facilitator-On-Call" for that month. The Resolution Facilitator is a board member who is also a member of the Resolution Committee; s/he is not on the CFCI faculty. The name and contact information of the Facilitator-On-Call is available on the CFCI website and is posted on the bulletin inside the front door of the CFCI building.
- The Facilitator-On-Call will confirm that you have made contact with the person with whom you have a concern.
- If you have been unable to set up a meeting, or if you feel you need help, the Facilitator-On-Call will help set up a meeting with you and the community member with whom you have a concern. The Facilitator will also attend this meeting and help document this part of the process.
- It is the Facilitator-On-Call's job to keep the Resolution Committee informed of issues of which s/he has been made aware.

- It is the Resolution Committee's job to keep records of these concerns, to review or investigate any unresolved issues and to determine what further action is necessary to achieve an acceptable resolution.

Grievance Flow Chart

Speak to the person
(You may document with the CFCI
form or your own letter)

□□

A Facilitator on Call is
available if you need help

□□

If the issue can not be resolved,
the Resolution Committee will decide
how to proceed

RESOLUTION FORM

***Please be sure to place a copy of this form in the Advisory Board box in the front office.**

Name: _____

Date of Meeting: _____

Location of Meeting: _____

People in Attendance of Meeting:_____

Reason(s) For Meeting:

Actions Agreed Upon:

Signatures of all parties involved in the agreement:

Resolution Committee

Violence and Serious Misconduct

In order to promote an atmosphere of learning, CFCI will have a straightforward approach to violence and serious misconduct. All students must feel safe in order to learn; therefore, violence is never an acceptable way for children to solve problems. Violence or the threat of violence is not permitted at any time for any purpose within the CFCI Community. Any child who chooses to inflict harm (including, but not limited to, pushing, hitting, kicking, biting or throwing things) or threatens to inflict harm on another child, even if in retaliation, will be immediately removed from class.

Conditions of frequency, intensity and duration will be taken into consideration to determine the appropriate consequences. Violent behavior may result in suspension for up to 10 days or expulsion in accordance with North Carolina Public School Law. If necessary, the proper authorities will be notified.

Serious misconduct will not be tolerated and will be addressed at the discretion of the child's teacher. Serious misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- physical abuse;
- verbal abuse;
- sexual harassment;
- possession and/or use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs;
- assault;
- communicating threats;
- theft;
- destroying school property or
- bringing weapons to school.

Students must not bring weapons or instruments that have the appearance of a weapon to school. Types of weapons include but are not limited to, the following: firearms, knives (including pocket knives), martial arts weapons, explosives, poisons, bows and arrows, slingshots, laser devices, mace, pepper spray, or throwing darts.

Regarding serious misconduct, teachers have the following procedures at their disposal:

1. Teachers will call parents to pick up their child.
2. If necessary, the teacher may seek assistance from the Director or another adult in dealing with the situation.
3. A student may be asked to discuss or write down the events that occurred and what they could have chosen to do differently.
4. The students resolve the issue with adult mediation.
5. If suspended, student(s) return to school with parent(s) for a conference.
6. Class meetings may provide support for student returning to class.
7. Formal records will be kept of all incidences of violence or misconduct.
8. Parent conferences will be scheduled to address patterns of unacceptable behavior.
9. Length of suspension will be based on the nature of the incident and past instances of violence or misconduct.

On-Premises Restrictions (non-weapon)

Students are not to have toys or electronics at school, including video games, cameras, cell phones, radios, game cards, etc. Likewise, students may not sell items on school grounds for personal gain. If any CFCI employee sees students with these or any other item deemed inappropriate, the items will be confiscated. Parents must come to school to pick up confiscated items.

Assessment

Students at CFCI are constantly being assessed for their understanding through formal and informal means. Each teacher is expected to report data on their students' progress as a class to the Board.

Informal methods of assessment may include:

- observations by teacher or other faculty members
- running records (anecdotal notes about the student)
- samples of student work

Formal assessments may include:

- portfolios
- reading assessments
- tests

- project rubrics and feedback
- quarterly report cards and narratives

Portfolios are collections of student work that are student-chosen and teacher-guided. Typically, a class will discuss what items should be included in the portfolio. Many teachers develop guidelines based on the standard course of study to help students choose evidence that meets these expectations.

Portfolios are used to guide **student led conferences**. These are held twice a year, generally after the first and third quarters. It is an expectation at CFCI that all parents attend student led conferences. During the conference, your child will share with you what s/he has accomplished during the quarter. In many classes, students will actually perform tasks for parents so that they can see what's expected of the kids in the class.

Teacher completed assessments are sent home at least twice a year, although most teachers send home progress reports and other checklists more frequently. These are generally based on the goals of the Standard Course of Study. Teachers look at the students' performance and growth to create a checklist and/or a narrative.

As a North Carolina public school, CFCI participates in the **End of Grade and End of Course testing program**. Students in grades 3-8 take reading and math tests annually. Eighth graders who elect to take Algebra also take an Algebra End of Course test. In addition, there are writing tests at grades 4 and 7. Grade 8 students take a computer skills test and a science EOG. Beginning in the 2006-07 school year, 8th grade students will be given a social studies field test, with an EOG for this test added in 2007-08.

Student Support Team

The Student Support Team at the Cape Fear Center for Inquiry is made up of a team of professionals, typically teachers that work in the student's loop level as well as related support staff (as needed) and parents. The purpose of SST is for teachers and parents to come together and discuss particular concerns or issues regarding a student. The team is made up of different teachers so there will be a wide variety of perspectives and ideas in problem solving. Frequently, the outcome of taking a child through SST is that the

team comes up with strategies and interventions that will address the concerns that the teacher or parent has for their child. Parents and teachers collaborate to address the student's needs.

Exceptional Children's Program

The EC Program provides services for the implementation of Individualized Education Plans when a child is eligible for one. The EC Program also has related service staff members that provide services to students when an IEP team determines that these services are necessary and appropriate. The related service staff currently consists of a speech language pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, and a school psychologist.

Homework

Children need time to participate in extra-curricular activities and families need time to be together. However, children may be given tasks to reinforce understanding of current material for completion at home. Children and parents are encouraged to explore and learn together designing projects, investigating topics of interest, enjoying cultural opportunities and reading together. Parents are also encouraged to support student's class work by discussing their student's day. In keeping with developmental expectations, middle grade students will be expected to complete more homework than students in grades K-5. Students who enroll in Algebra must sign a homework contract.

Retention/Promotion

Each child has individual strengths and challenges; therefore, retention/promotion decisions will be made on an individual basis. Teachers and parents will work together to decide the most beneficial placement for each child, taking into consideration academic, social and emotional needs, as well as attendance.

Extracurricular Activities

CFCI has developed a list of guidelines for extracurricular activities. Any and all extracurricular activities are subject to the established procedures.

Any parent interested in starting an extracurricular group should find a faculty member willing to sponsor him/her. The faculty member can help the parent set up the program and make certain that it meets the guidelines. A

faculty member or other school employee must be present at any event, practice, or session conducted as part of any extracurricular activity.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA is a federal law that governs the maintenance of school records. Under the law, parents or guardians of students or students who are 18 years of age or older have the right to inspect all records kept by the school about the student and the right to correct inaccuracies in those records. Under FERPA, access to the records by persons other than the parents or guardians is limited and generally requires written consent by the parents, guardians and/or students age 18 or older. Requests to review student records and requests to correct inaccurate records may be made to the Director.

Personal Information

CFCI must have up-to-date personal information for all students including a correct address, phone number, and emergency contact numbers. Parents should remember to update this information if changes occur throughout the year. All personal information about students and families will remain confidential unless parents request it be disclosed.

Requesting/Forwarding Records

When a student transfers into CFCI, a request for records is sent to the student's previous school. When a student leaves CFCI, the students' new school will request records from CFCI. Records are not forwarded until students officially withdraw from our school. Parents should contact the school office with questions or concerns regarding transfer of records.

Absences

The foundation of our school is experience-driven, inquiry learning that primarily happens at school or on school field trips. Students must be present to be full members of the learning community. We expect parents to support the mission and vision of our school by limiting their child's absences to the greatest extent possible.

Excused absences are defined by North Carolina General Statutes. When a student is absent, the parent must submit a note stating the reason for the absence to the teacher within two school days of the child's return. If no note is sent within that time frame, the absence will be recorded as

unexcused and students may not be allowed to make up any work they have missed.

Parents wishing to take a trip with an educational component must submit a request to have absences excused at least a week before the proposed date of the trip. This request should be submitted to the classroom teacher for a decision. The teacher will prepare assignments as appropriate. Students who are absent on educational trips are expected to make up work missed within a time frame determined by the classroom teacher.

Students who miss more than twenty days, either excused or unexcused, may be retained in their grade the following year. In cases of extenuating circumstances, students may submit a written request for a waiver of this policy before the last day of the school year. The request must be accompanied by appropriate documentation of reasons for absences; for example, doctor's notes. The Director and the student's grade level teacher(s) will create a committee of appropriate personnel to review the request. Parents can appeal the decision of the committee to the Board of Directors. The Board's decision is final.

Tardies

At CFCI, we believe that building a strong community in the classroom enhances learning and teaches children to care about others and the world around them. This belief is a cornerstone of our school's philosophy. Because one of the primary ways we build community is through morning meetings, we expect all children to arrive at school on time every day. Students are tardy if they are not in their classrooms by 8:15 a.m. If a child arrives at school after 8:15 a.m., a parent must come into the building to sign him/her in at the front office.

Early Check Outs

Just as absent or tardy students cannot fully participate in the learning community, students who are checked out early miss valuable classroom time. Parents should consult the school calendar and make doctor's and other appointments after school or on teacher workdays when possible.

Students checked out for the day before 11:30 am are absent.

When a student is being checked out, the parent must sign the child out in the front office. The school will not honor requests that the child wait in the front office at a specific time or meet their parent in the parking lot. Students will not be released to siblings under 18 years of age. Parents should allow time for following the procedure above.

Student Release

Each student must have on file a list of people to whom they may be released from school. Though it may cause an occasional inconvenience, this policy is essential for each child's safety. If students are to ride with someone not on his or her list of people to whom they may be released, a signed note **MUST** be sent by a parent giving permission. Students will not be allowed to use the telephone to arrange transportation during the school day.

Please recognize that there is a 15 minute time difference between elementary grade dismissal (2:45 p.m.) and middle grade dismissal (3:00 p.m.). Middle grade students can not leave prior to 3:00 pm without being signed out through the office by a parent.

Court and Custody Orders

For student safety, relevant custody papers and/or court orders must be on file in the school office. Documentation should be presented to the Director who will notify appropriate personnel. Records will be kept in the student's cumulative file.

Donations

Raffles - Items may be offered to the school for raffle purposes. The Director will ensure that items offered are appropriate. The school may advertise raffled items, or if appropriate, local media may be used to assist in advertising. This service must be at no charge to the school. Proceeds from a raffle must be designated for a specific use.

Corporate Sponsors - Donations may be accepted by CFCI from corporate sponsors. Thank you letters and charitable contribution forms will be provided upon request for the donation and the sponsor may be recognized in the school newsletter. The Director must approve any other form of recognition such as a logo on a t-shirt, etc.

Sales - Students at CFCI will not participate in door-to-door sales. Students may participate in "booth" type selling with certain restrictions. There can be no solicitation—patrons must approach the "booth" to purchase the item. Adequate adult chaperones must be present with the children at all times.

Equipment - CFCI accepts donations of useable equipment in good working condition. If you have equipment to donate, please see the director or the Finance Officer to determine if the school can use the equipment before leaving it at the school.

All donations made to CFCI must be recorded with the school Finance Officer.

Lunches/Snacks

As meals are not provided on site, parents are responsible for providing a nutritious lunch and snack from home. These should be sent with your child to school each morning. While classes have lunch at a regular time most days, part of inquiry is allowing the schedule to be flexible. This means that on occasion lunch times will vary somewhat. If your child is waiting for you to deliver their lunch on one of these days they may be very disappointed and very hungry. This problem can be easily avoided by sending lunch in the morning. Forms are sent out at the start of each school year to address issues of financial difficulty. If you need assistance, please complete and return the form. All issues will be confidential.

Hot Treat Days

Some classes choose to provide a Hot Treat once a week. This is a program coordinated by classroom parent volunteers who collect funds to purchase hot foods for their classes one day per week. Forms will be sent home to let parents know when/if this is available in their child's classroom.

Birthdays

Please speak to your child's teacher about appropriate classroom celebrations for children's birthdays.

Dress Code

At CFCI students work and play hard. They often sit and work on the carpet. For these reasons it is important that students come to school in easy-care

clothes and safe shoes. A student who wears shoes which are inappropriate for play on our playground (clogs, slides, and flip-flops or other shoes without backs) will not be allowed to participate in active play. For health and safety reasons, children will only be allowed to participate in physical education and on the playground during recess and break time if they are wearing tennis shoes. Students must be dressed comfortably for the season and temperature.

Students must wear comfortable clothing and tennis shoes on the days they will be participating in physical education classes.

Apparel should not advertise violence, tobacco or alcohol use, nor contain sexual content or profanity. Hats and sunglasses are only to be worn outside the building. Sleeveless shirts must have straps at least three fingers wide. Underwear must not be visible under any circumstances. Midriffs are to be covered. Skirts and shorts must be longer than the student's index finger when the arm is extended at the side of the body. Students must be able to sit on the floor when wearing skirts. The intent of these specifications is to avoid distractions to the educational process.

If a child's attire is deemed to be inappropriate, the parent(s) will be called to bring suitable clothing. All decisions regarding the appropriateness of clothing items is at the discretion of the teacher.

Telephone Use

Students may use the school telephone only in the event of an emergency such as sickness, and students may not use the telephone during the school day without faculty supervision. Arrangements for transportation should be made before school.

Lost and Found

Lost and found is a service provided to all members of the CFCI community. Lost items are housed in the common area. Items such as keys and glasses are turned in to the office. Check the lost and found often. Clothing not claimed will be donated to charitable organizations. Notification of upcoming donations will be sent home.

Playground Expectations

Students should:

- Put equipment away unless another student has asked to use it
- Use equipment for its intended purpose
- Put trash in trashcans and pick up trash when they see it
- Stay inside the fenced area
- Stay off the fences around the air units
- HAVE FUN!

Students should not:

- Move or stand on the picnic tables
- Lean on or hang on the fences
- Go outside of the fence unattended
- Shake, move, or climb on the basketball goal
- Play with or near the storage equipment
- Play on the patio area around classroom doors

Faculty should:

- Discuss and enforce playground expectations with their class
- Take out trashcans during each recess
- Monitor play to ensure equipment is used for intended purpose
- Put away teacher directed equipment in locked storage
- Survey the playground to make sure students have cleaned up trash and put away equipment
- Keep storage containers locked at all times
- ALWAYS BE ALERT TO STUDENTS!

Parents should:

- Reinforce good playground behavior with their child
- Understand and support CFCI policy that because of liability, students are not permitted on the playground before or after school hours or at any time without the supervision of their teacher or their teacher's designee

Building Usage

Classrooms may be used for meetings after school hours. Groups other than faculty or Board committees wishing to host a meeting must consult with the classroom teacher and Director. During meetings, children **MUST** be supervised at all times. Children **MAY NOT** use the playground or remain in classrooms without adult supervision.

Illness

Sometimes it is necessary to send a child home from school due to sickness. This occurs when the teacher sees that a child is unable to participate in school activities. If your child needs to go home, we will make every effort to contact you. If, for some reason, we cannot reach you or you will be detained for some length of time, we will then contact the people you have listed on the emergency contact sheet. It is very important that you keep this sheet up-to-date.

If a child has a fever over 99 degrees; the presence of lice, scabies, impetigo, inflamed eyes, rash, or lesions; or is vomiting s/he will be sent home and should not return to school until symptoms have ceased for 24 hours. If a student is limited in his/her ability to participate in the activities of a regular school day, the parent(s) provide written explanation for the student's limitations. A doctor's note may be requested as appropriate.

There is no need to call the school office if your child will be out sick. However, a note should be provided upon return to school.

Lice

Should lice be found on a child in one of our classrooms, the child's parents will be called to pick up their child. The parents will be provided with written suggestions for lice and nit removal. The classroom where lice have been detected will be thoroughly vacuumed, and all pillows, blankets, and stuffed animals will be bagged for the duration of the outbreak. The other parents of children in the class will be sent a note alerting them that lice have been found in the class. They will be reminded to check their children carefully each day for the next few weeks and to continue checking as part of routine hygiene. If nits are found on the child upon returning to school, they will be sent home again for further nit removal. All the students in that classroom will be checked weekly until there have been no new cases for 14 consecutive

days. At that time, the classroom will be declared "lice free." Parents will be expected to follow procedures for lice and nit removal to avoid re-occurrence of infestation and minimal number of absences.

Medication

A physician's authorization for medication is necessary if school personnel are to distribute medication at school or on field trips (including over-the-counter medication). This is applicable for short-term and long-term periods. All medication must be in an original, labeled bottle. This includes prescription and over-the-counter medication. All medication will be kept in a secure location. Parents may come to school to administer medication as well.

Immunizations

Parents of all children must present to the school acceptable medical evidence indicating that the required immunizations have been received, which are:

- a) 5 DTP doses (If the 4th dose is after the fourth birthday, a 5th is not required)
- b) 4 Polio doses (If the 3rd dose is after fourth birthday, a 4th dose is not required)
- c) 1-4 Hib dose
- d) 2 Measles, Mumps, Rubella doses (On or after first birthday and before entering school)

Religious and/or medical exemptions must be appropriately documented and on file in the school office and submitted for review as to legal exceptions. Students not in compliance with the immunization policy will not be allowed to attend school.

Internet Access and Fair Use Policy

At CFCI, we believe that helping students develop computer/technology skills is an essential component of a 21st century education. Students will have instruction and access to computers, including Internet access. With this access comes the availability of materials that may not be considered suitable in the school setting. While CFCI cannot prevent the possibility that users may discover controversial information while working on the Internet, it will employ all reasonable measures to prevent inappropriate usage. The use of computers and the Internet will be in support of education and in accordance with the educational objectives of CFCI. Appropriateness of internet usage is at the discretion of the teacher.

Unacceptable use includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Abusive or objectionable language
2. Malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user
3. Transmission of material in violation of any US or state regulation
4. Use for commercial purposes or political lobbying

Privacy of personal information is an important consideration. No student data, student work or photographic representation of students will be posted online without written permission of student and parents.

Transportation

When the founders of CFCI set priorities in how resources would be utilized, they chose to emphasize quality teachers and safe facilities over providing an elaborate transportation system for students. That means the school does not provide buses or vans for transportation. All parents are asked to provide transportation to and from school. Neighborhood car pools are encouraged.

According to NC Charter School Law (§ 115C-238.29A), each charter school "shall develop a transportation plan so that transportation is not a barrier to any student who resides in the local school administrative unit in which the school is located." CFCI's transportation plan is to provide a means for parents to generate their own carpool connections if transportation is an issue.

A student's parent(s) or legal guardian is ultimately responsible for transportation to and from CFCI.

Arrival at School

Students should arrive at school by 8:10 am. Classes begin morning activities at 8:15 and students need time to unpack and get ready for the day. Early morning care is available from 7:30 am to 8:00 am on an as needed basis. Students should not be on campus prior to 7:30 am because there is no one available to supervise them and the building is not open before 7:30.

Dismissal from School

The elementary grades dismiss at 2:45; the middle grades dismiss at 3:00. Parents are expected to pick up their child(ren) within 15 minutes of the

dismissal time. Elementary only parents should arrive between 2:45-3:00. Parents of middle grade only or students in both elementary and middle grades should begin arriving at 3:00. Middle grade parents in the line prior to 3:00 will be asked to pull around to the end.

Parents can choose to come through the car line or walk up to the building to pick up their child(ren). It is the parents' responsibility to communicate the expectations below to any other individuals who may pick up their child.

Dismissal is not a time for parents to conference with teachers. The teachers are trying to make sure that every child gets home safely. It's a busy time of the day and the teacher cannot give parents his/her full attention. Please contact your child's teacher to arrange a time to have a parent conference. Remember: you may have "just a quick question," but if several other parents do this also, the teacher's ability to take care of the kids is seriously diminished. Be respectful of the teachers' need to focus on the kids at dismissal!

Car line

- Enter through Brailsford Drive past the Millennium Building. Do NOT enter through the turn closest to the school.
- Do NOT enter the car line by turning left into the parking lot from Covil Avenue and going behind the Grainger Building.
- Cars should not turn into the CFCI parking lot from Brailsford Drive until they can pull completely into our lot. In other words, no one should be in the driveway that runs from Brailsford Drive past the R.E. Michel building.
- Teachers will call the name of your child via walkie talkie to the classroom teacher.
- Children are to enter their cars ONLY by the orange cones. Students should not get into their cars outside of this zone—it is a safety hazard.
- Please do not call to your child or blow the horn.
- If your child does not come when called, you may be asked to pull forward to the Fed Ex box or to the back of the car line.

Walk Up

- Parents can choose to park in the gravel lot across from R.E. Michel and walk up to the school.
- Parents are not to enter the building to pick up children. This creates noise in the halls—some teachers must share a walkie-talkie between classrooms and cannot hear the children's names being called when there are people in the halls.
- Go to the outside door facing the CFCI parking lot that is closest to your child's class. The teacher there will call your child for you.
- Do not park anywhere in the complex other than the gravel lot. We are renting this facility and it is in our school's best interest to stay on positive terms with our landlord and the other tenants.

If your child will be riding a van to an after school care provider, it is your responsibility to call the van service if your child will not be riding that day.

Time between Elementary and Middle Grades Dismissal

All parents are expected to supervise their children on campus. There is a very short 'lag time" between elementary dismissal and the end of the middle grades day. During this time, parents must make certain that their children are quiet, safe, and not engaged in rough or dangerous play. We are legally responsible for the kids while they are on campus, whether or not parents are with them—we're counting on parents' support to make this a safe part of the day. Please remember that we only want the kids to be safe and to allow the middle grades to end their day without being disturbed by kids who've already been dismissed.

If patterns of disruptive behavior occur, you may be asked to spend the time between dismissals off the school grounds.

Visitors

Visitors are welcome at CFCI. When visitors enter the building, they should sign in at the front office.

Please remember that parents should not visit classrooms during dismissal times. (See dismissal section for further details.) Parents should also remember that class time is NOT a time to hold a parent conference. If parents want to volunteer in the classroom, they're welcome. If a

conference is needed, parents should call the teacher to set up an appropriate time free of distraction where both parent and teacher can focus on the child.

Emergency Closing

When CFCI must dismiss students unexpectedly due to adverse weather conditions or other types of emergencies, the early dismissals will be announced through local television and radio stations. When snow, ice or other adverse weather conditions cause school to be cancelled or delayed, information will be broadcast over local radio and television stations. CFCI will follow New Hanover County schools in cancellations and dismissals due to weather. Please do not call the school office for this information.

Lock Down Procedures

A 'lock down' is a procedure followed during the threat of danger just outside our school walls. Occasionally individuals escape police custody, for instance, and the school is advised to bring everyone indoors as a precaution. Once inside, the school day proceeds with caution and, usually, very little distraction. In the event of a lock down, the following actions will occur:

- 1) All outdoor areas will be evacuated.
- 2) Everyone in the school community who is present will be directed into the building.
- 3) The Director or designee will inform faculty and students of the lock down.
- 4) Staff, volunteers, and all people present will be informed as all rooms will be checked and confirmed to be locked to the outside and safe.
- 5) All exterior doors will be closed and locked.
- 6) Teachers will make an immediate accounting of their students. That accounting will be collected confirmed and noted on one document.

Pick up procedures during a lock down will require that:

- 1) The faculty receives notification to proceed with pick up at the time of dismissal.
- 2) All students wait indoors until escorted away from school by a recognized adult of the CFCI community.
- 3) Parents will be informed in writing that a lock down occurred by a note sent home with the students.

Middle grades program handbook

Middle grades purpose

In the CFCI middle grades program, we stress rigorous academics and a sense of personal responsibility in each student. We work towards helping students gain independence, problem solving skills, and experience collaborating with groups. We focus on students building high expectations for themselves through reflection and critical thinking.

Structure

The middle grades program is composed of two teachers at each grade level; in total, there are six middle grades classroom teachers. Currently, one teacher addresses language arts and social studies (Humanities) while the other teacher addresses math and science. Students have Circle of Power and Respect, science, and social studies with grade level peers; they are placed in mixed-grade groups for language arts and math. Exceptional children's teacher(s) offer support to students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) in a variety of ways. We are on a trimester schedule for all classes.

The 2007-08 faculty is:

- 6th grade: Sarah McCorcle (language arts, social studies)
Rose Sutzko (math, science)
- 7th grade: Lisa Brackney (language arts, social studies)
Erin Vandever (math, science)
- 8th grade: Teresa Lambe (language arts, social studies)
Indira Grimes (math, science)

Social Curriculum

The middle grades social curriculum is composed of both proactive and reactive strategies that are designed to help students develop a healthy internal sense of competency and adequacy. Six principles guide the social curriculum:

1. Social learning is as important to success as academic learning.
2. We learn best by constructing our own understanding through exploration, discovery, practicing, and applying what we have learned, both socially and academically.

3. The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interactions within a supportive community.
4. There is a set of personal/social skills that students need to learn and practice in order to be successful social and academically: cooperation assertion responsibility empathy self-control (CARES).
5. Knowing the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual needs of the students we teach is as important as knowing the content we teach.
6. Trust among adults is a fundamental necessity for academic and social success in a learning community.

(Adapted from *Guidelines for Responsive Designs for Middle School* published by The Origins Program, 2004)

What can we expect from middle grades students?

The follow brief guidelines are intended to help parents know what can be expected from middle school students. Please keep in mind that these are guidelines: any individual child may develop more rapidly or more slowly than general guidelines indicate. In addition, although the description below may fit your child, it is the role of the teacher to stretch each child beyond his/her current capacity and/or inclination.

Area of development	Sixth grade	Seventh grade	Eighth grade
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like movement • Often physicality may get out of control • Tend to be sick more often • Fine motor skills well developed, although some still struggle with handwriting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High energy • Need frequent opportunities to refuel with high quality foods • Boys and girls both experiencing puberty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls have reached adult height • Boys often still awkward • Increasing anxiety about appearance

Area of development	Sixth grade	Seventh grade	Eighth grade
Social-emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Moody ● Love to argue; want things to be fair ● Wide emotion swings ● Intensified interest in peer groups; sometimes extends to sarcasm and put-downs of "outsiders" ● Push limits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mix of enthusiasm, uninhibited behavior and self-consciousness, identity-seeking ● Empathetic with friends ● Oppositional to adults ● Healthy seventh graders stay within parental limits while often complaining / criticizing the limits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Peak of self-consciousness and embarrassment ● Girls seek close friendships; boys hang out in groups ● Hard time connecting to adults
Intellectual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interested in ideas ● Love to argue: see black & white, not gray ● Can see from more than one perspective with help ● Like new projects rather than mastering old activities ● Interested in problem solving and challenging tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Further growth in ability to think abstractly and see things from multiple perspectives ● Better organizational skills ● Can plan, organize and sustain work for longer periods ● Have patience to polish work, reflect, and revise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interested in language and vocabulary ● Will work to revise and correct errors ● Understand concepts like historical patterns and universal social themes

Proactive strategies

Proactive strategies are designed to allow students to develop self-control and community within the classroom. All teachers use them on a daily basis.

Circle of Power and Respect. Circle of Power and Respect (CPR) is a daily opportunity for students to meet with their homeroom groups to develop community. It is based on democratic, group-centered principles and provides students a safe space where they can build trust and relationships. CPR may include a greeting, an opportunity for sharing, a game or activity, and news. Students sit in a circle and all members of the group are expected to participate appropriately.

Hopes and Dreams and the Social Contract. Each student is invited to create hopes and dreams for his/her school year. These goals are used to create a social contract within the community. Students are asked to consider what expectations they should have of themselves and others in order to achieve their goals. The social contract is posted in each classroom. These expectations take the place of a traditional rule system where the teacher hands out expectations at the beginning of the year. Because students take part in creating the contract, they have a stake in its success. These expectations form the basis of all other expectations and procedures in the classroom throughout the year.

Service learning. All middle grades students are expected to participate in service learning activities. Once a month students are aired with various service projects at school and in the community. An entire afternoon is set aside to pursue these projects. Parents and family members are strongly encouraged to support these projects by driving students and participating in the service. (Please see calendar for tentative dates.)

Other proactive strategies include modeling, procedures, using proactive teacher language, and continuing the sense of community throughout the day.

Reactive Strategies

At times, each of us will make mistakes and/or break the social contract. These events are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. However, students who do not follow the social contract or take advantage of opportunities to gain self-control may face discipline procedures in accordance with the CFCI

discipline policy. Serious behavior issues, such as hitting or sexual harassment, will be dealt with using CFCI school policy.

Loss of privilege. Students who misuse materials, time, or relationships may lose the privilege of having those materials, time, or relationships. For example, a student who is off-task when working with a group may need to work alone until s/he can be on task in a group.

Take a Break. The Take a Break (TAB) chair in each classroom is used when students have broken an element of the social contract. Students are asked to sit in the TAB chair to gain control of themselves. This is not a punishment; rather, it is a chance for the student to reflect and regroup before rejoining the group.

Buddy Room. At times, students may need a longer opportunity to reflect and regroup than the TAB chair allows. In this case, a student will be sent to the Buddy Room, a designated middle grades classroom. While in the Buddy Room, the student will complete a Fix-It form that allows him/her to reflect on the event leading up to the Buddy Room and how s/he will fix the problem upon returning to the class.

Each of these strategies is intended to give the student the opportunity to regain control of him/herself before the teacher steps in with additional external discipline. Students who are unable to use TAB or the Buddy Room successfully may lose these privileges for a time.

Most often, students who are given the opportunity to regroup will do so. However, if students are unable to get on track after being given appropriate opportunities, they need to leave the community until the following day. A parent will be called to pick the child up. This ensures the stability and productivity of the learning community while giving the child the chance to step away from the group until s/he has refocused.

Students who continue to have challenges may be placed on a behavior contract, may have social conferences with teachers and/or parents, or may be asked to make an Apology of Action. (See a middle grades teacher for more information on these items.)

Curriculum

The curriculum is based on student inquiries and the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. Students are asked to consider what questions they have about themselves and the larger world. Then they work together to create themes based on these questions. Within each theme, students brainstorm the activities and skills they need to learn in order to answer their initial queries. At this point, the teaching team correlates the students' ideas with the Standard Course of Study. The result is a student-oriented curriculum that exceeds the standards expected of all middle grades students in public schools throughout the state.

The advantage of this curriculum is that learning is generated by the students and is personally meaningful. Students are able to connect information across many subjects as every class works with the same theme.

Themes for 2007-08

Trimester 1: Communications

- Λ How do people and other living things communicate?
- Λ How does communication both help and hurt us?
- Λ What are the boundaries in communication?
- Λ How do people express opposing viewpoints?
- Λ How is communication used to influence others?

Trimester 2: America Today

- Λ What issues face America and the world?
- Λ How do our choices affect our local and global communities?
- Λ Are Americans materialistic?
- Λ How is American society different from and similar to societies elsewhere?
- Λ How does pop culture influence our lives and view on the world?

Trimester 3: The Future

- Λ What will my future be like?
- Λ What careers are there? What happens after death?
- Λ How will the future be different from and similar to today?
- Λ What events today will have long-term effects on the future?

Courses

Each middle grades student is required to take math, language arts, social studies, and science. Students who meet certain criteria may take Algebra or Geometry. In addition, students are offered special courses including art, band, chorus, foreign language, physical education, study hall, and technology. Students also take an Academy of Inquiry class one day a week.

Language arts and mathematics: Students are grouped by their developmental level. Students in all three grades are placed according to their current levels of skill development rather than their grade level. These placements are made by the entire middle grades team using information from diagnostic testing, teacher recommendations, and, to a lesser extent, scores on the End of Grade test. Students' maturity levels are also taken into consideration. Students are reassessed at the end of each trimester and may be regrouped based on these assessments.

The groupings allow students to progress at a rate that is appropriate for them. Students are able to acquire the necessary skills and/or to extend beyond the standard curriculum. While all groups are working on the same themes, teachers are able to individualize instruction to meet the needs of the students in a particular group. Students are required to take the End of Grade test at their grade level.

Science and social studies: Because the Standard Course of Study is grade-specific for these courses, students are grouped by grade level. The state is currently developing tests of science and social studies for 8th grade students.

Academy of Inquiry

The Academy of Inquiry is an additional class based on students' interests. The courses are an opportunity for students to work beyond the Standard Course of Study. The Academy is based on principles of Joseph Renzulli, a researcher in gifted education at the University of Chicago. In the past, we have offered Academies such as drama, debate, the Middle Ages, Shakespeare, small engine building, the environment, food, interior design, activism, reading, film, and genetics. Academies meet once a week on Wednesdays and last a trimester.

Class materials

We do not use textbooks. The only exception is the Algebra class which uses a book since it is a high school level class. Instead, teachers use novels, nonfiction, manipulatives, simulations, Internet resources, films, and other materials. In math there is a mix of traditional skill-based tasks as well as inquiry-based instruction as appropriate for the particular group of students. From time to time, teachers may request that students purchase particular books or materials.

Students are required to have a library card to the public library. Library books are frequent components of projects and other assignments.

Technology

An inquiry-based environment requires our students to use a variety of technologies to access supplementary materials and create projects and presentations. Our Computer/Technology Skills Standard Course of Study includes: Internet and telecommunications, word processing, multimedia and presentations, spreadsheets, databases, and social/ethical issues.

All middle grades students **MUST** purchase a memory key on which to store their projects. These keys allow students to transfer work between home and school.

CFCI uses Microsoft products including Word, Excel, and Powerpoint. Students should **NOT** use products like WordPerfect that cannot be transferred to school computers.

Assessment and grading

Students are assessed through many means, including conferences, homework assignments, class work, projects, essays, performances, group tasks, and tests. Rubrics, checklists, and other methods are used as well. These tasks are often evaluated on a percentage basis. While we do not use traditional letter grades or averages at CFCI, we do want students and parents to be aware of how much of a task a student has mastered.

Parents receive a progress report at the 6-week mark of each trimester. Other reports are sent home as needed. Detailed report cards are provided

to parents who attend Student Led Conferences at the end of each trimester.

As a North Carolina public school, CFCI participates in the End of Grade and End of Course testing program. Students who elect to take Algebra or Geometry also take their grade level math tests at the end of the year in addition to End of Course tests in their advanced math classes.

Homework

Students will be given tasks to complete at home that reinforce understanding of what they are doing in class. Middle grades students are expected to complete more homework than students in grades K-5. Typically students will have daily and weekly assignments in addition to longer-term projects. Students wishing to enroll in Algebra must sign a homework contract.

The CFCI middle grades teachers use a homework notebook and a website to help keep parents informed about homework. The homework website is <http://www.yourhomework.com>. You will need to enter the school's zip code (28403) to access the CFCI assignments. Please check this site and your child's homework notebook frequently.

Retention/Promotion

Each student has individual strengths and challenges; therefore, retention/promotion decisions are made on an individual basis. Students must pass both their core courses (math, language arts, science, and social studies) as well as the End of Grade tests. Teachers and parents work together to decide the most beneficial placement for each child, taking into consideration academic, social and emotional needs, as well as attendance.

Extracurricular Activities

Each year the middle grades teachers work to offer students extracurricular activities, including dances and movie nights. At times, teachers with parent support may offer clubs. Parents who are interested in starting a club should contact a middle grades teacher. Because we recognize the importance of celebrating students' accomplishments, there is an 8th grade semiformal dance. In addition, the 8th grade holds a Commencement at the end of each year.

High School registration

The 8th grade teachers will give students information about high school registration. Typically students are required to attend a registration session at their districted high school. Students wishing to enroll in New Hanover High School's open enrollment program must still register at their districted school. The 8th grade teachers will work with parents to select courses for 9th grade.

Parent/Teacher Communication

Regular, open communication between home and school is critical for student success. Conferences can be requested at any time by parents, teachers, or students. Conferences with teachers should be scheduled in advance during their planning (1:30-2:45) or after school. Please do not enter the building before school or during car pick up for an impromptu conference—these are critical times for student supervision and teachers need to be focused on their classes.

The middle grades teachers have a shared email account: cfcimiddlegrades@yahoo.com. In addition, teachers can be reached through the front office at 362.0000.

Supply List for 2007-08

At CFCI, students are responsible for their learning. Part of that responsibility is having the tools necessary in class every day. The supplies below are REQUIRED for success at CFCI. Please be sure your child has them by the opening day of school-- and that s/he continues to bring the individual supplies each day of the year.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Teresa at tgcfcium@yahoo.com or the middle grades teachers at cfcimiddlegrades@yahoo.com.

Individual Supplies

(You keep these with you BUT you should have them at school on the first day.)

- Five marble composition books (absolutely NO SPIRAL BOUND notebooks)
- Three inch or larger binder (no zipper binders)
- Eight tab dividers
- Twenty pencils
- Blue & black pens
- Pencil pouch that clips into the rings of the binder (no pencil boxes)
- Two packs of loose leaf paper (one can be kept at home until needed)
- Memory key (also known as a flash drive-- not sure what they are? Look here. You need one with AT LEAST 512 MB of memory. This will be used in ALL your classes-- without it, you will have a very difficult time completing assignments.)
- Graphing calculator (ONLY if you are enrolled in Algebra-- if you have questions, please contact Ms. Sutzko.)
- Hand-held pencil sharpener (Teachers will not provide electric sharpeners; each student should have his/her own handheld sharpener.)
- Library card (We do LOTS of projects for which the kids need outside sources-- every CFCI student should have a public library card.)

******* Copy of the novel The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton, our summer reading assignment. All students will read the novel, participate in activities related to the novel throughout the year, and will take a test on the book at the beginning of school. The novel is available at bookstores or through Amazon.com. Students are expected to purchase their own copy of the book. *******

Required Class Supplies

(These are given to your homeroom teacher to be kept in the room. All students are required to bring these items on the first day of school.)

- Ruler
- Pack of at least 8 markers
- Scissor
- Two glue sticks OR one bottle of glue
- tissues
- 2 paper towel rolls

- scotch tape
- bottle of white board cleaner
- dry erase markers
- cleaning spray or cleaning wipes (NOT diaper wipes-- something like Clorox wipes)
- bottle of hand sanitizer

Helpful supplies to keep at home

(These will help you complete homework assignments.)

- calculator
- ruler
- protractor
- compass
- dictionary

We will NOT be asking families to bring plates or utensils this year (unless there's a special occasion). Students should bring these items from home if they're needed for lunches; none will be available here. We would encourage families to help save the planet by using non-disposable utensils & other items rather than plastic. :)

Please also note that middle grades students do not carry book bags from class to class. The items listed above should be placed in the pencil pouch (pencils, pens, sharpener, memory key, library card, etc.) or the binder (loose leaf, tabs, etc.). Each teacher will direct students as to how to keep up with the marble composition books. Students do NOT have assigned desks, so the materials should be packed neatly in the binder & pencil pouch to allow them to carry all their belongings from class to class.

Tentative middle grades calendar

Please note that these dates may change in response to student and teacher needs as the year progresses.

- September 12: Service learning
- October 10: Service learning
- October 12: Mid-trimester
- October 15: Progress reports go home
- November 7: Service learning

- November 21: End of first trimester
- **December 6: Student led conferences**
- December 12: Service learning
- January 9: Service learning
- January 18: Mid-trimester
- January 23: Progress reports go home
- February 13: Service learning
- February 29: End of trimester
- March 12: Service learning
- **March 13: Student led conferences**
- April 4: Mid-trimester
- April 15: Progress reports go home
- April 16: Service learning
- May 14: Service learning
- **May 22: Student led conferences**
- June 10: $\frac{1}{2}$ day, last day of school