



Student & Guardian Handbook

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Contracts

Each student should be helped to reach his/her highest potential for academic, social, and emotional growth. To achieve this, families and CREATE Conservatory must work together by recognizing and agreeing on the responsibilities of each party involved. Please have your student sign the Student Contract and Technology Contract. As the guardian, please sign the Guardian Contract and Technology Contract.

Student Contract

As a student, I will be responsible for:

- ★ Showing respect, cooperating with others, and listening to directions
- ★ Coming to class on time and prepared to work
- ★ Completing all assignments to the best of my ability
- ★ Respecting the rights of others to learn without disruption
- ★ Showing respect for people and property and using appropriate language
- ★ Keeping my hands, feet, and objects to myself

Student name (print): _____ Date: _____

Student signature: _____

Guardian Contract

We expect parents/guardians to be partners with us as we grow our community of confident and self-advocating students. Your consistent effort and enthusiasm for your child's academic success and future is a crucial element for success. In order for us to best serve your child, we expect that you:

- ★ Make sure your child is at school on time every day
- ★ Review your child's work regularly
- ★ Make sure each assignment is completed to the best of your child's ability
- ★ Check your child's grades and whether assignments were turned in
- ★ Respond within 48 hours to phone messages & emails
- ★ Reach out to us if you have any questions or concerns
- ★ Reach out via phone or email to your student's teacher if your student has grades of a C or lower or discipline issues
- ★ Attend every Parent/Advisor Conference, parent meeting & grade/behavior conference you are invited to & reschedule as soon as possible if you are unable to attend
- ★ Be consistent with your expectations at home
- ★ Talk to your child about how his/her day was and monitor how his/her time is being spent after school hours

Guardian name (print): _____ Date: _____

Guardian signature: _____

Technology Contract

★ Personal Responsibility and Safety

- I know that school computers and internet communication tools must be used properly and with respect

★ Inappropriate Uses

- I understand that the purpose of having a school technology device is to support my learning; not ever for the purpose of harassing, bullying, or vandalism. Inappropriate usage, including non-approved programs, may lead to loss of privileges or reporting to law enforcement

★ Digital Citizenship

- I will treat people with dignity and respect when using the computer and accessing the internet

★ Privileges

- I understand that using technology at CREATE is a privilege I must earn and maintain by my responsible use. If I don't use technology properly or treat others respectfully, I will lose that privilege and face disciplinary actions and my parents will be notified

★ Financial Responsibility

- We understand that accidents happen. However, recurring accidents that result in damaged tech devices may have a monetary consequence. We teach our students about device expectations, safety, and responsibilities. We strongly believe in students learning the appropriate navigation of our cyber world, but we must have relief financially when damage to tech devices is excessive and/or negligent.

Student name (print): _____

Student signature: _____

Guardian name (print): _____

Guardian signature: _____

Date: _____

Mission

CREATE Conservatory's mission is to build strong educational foundations through authentic assessment and exploration through the arts. CREATE Conservatory believes in STEM education through arts integration. We believe in rigorous exploration through the arts and the desegregation of educational subjects.

Vision

CREATE Conservatory's vision is to be an alternative to public school options where all children are expected to fit into a mold, learn the same way, and complete paper-and-pencil tests to prove knowledge acquisition. We strive to maintain a minimum of 25% of our student population attending CREATE on a full or partial scholarship, because we believe all students have the right to a quality education, whether they can afford it or not.

Educational Model, Philosophy, and Leadership

CREATE offers a fresh perspective on how the foundation of education for students in K-5 education is built. In a lot of ways, the modern education system tells our bravest, most creative thinkers to sit down and be quiet. They expect all students to fit into their mold. Instead of segregating knowledge into different subjects, students at CREATE experience a curriculum focused on "SMARTE Units" that teach STEM, English, and Reading through cross-curricular exploration. CREATE utilizes authentic assessment, higher-level questioning, cooperative learning, and integration of the arts into all subject areas. We believe that teachers are not robots, and high quality professionals have the right to be flexible with curriculum. While focusing on State Standards, we build "SMARTE Units" that ensure rigor, alignment, and a deep understanding and assessment of the Standards. We believe every child has the right to discover and achieve their mind's fullest potential through art, creativity, and movement. Unlike traditional public schools, we offer an exciting, rigorous, and inclusive space to learn—where each child's unique qualities are celebrated, not stifled.

Research supports arts integration strategies. Access to the arts and use of them in the academic curriculum positively affects the cognitive abilities that are assessed with standardized test scores¹. Using the arts within the classroom to teach academic subjects has led to significant increases in achievement for diverse populations². This has been shown to increase student achievement across subjects.³

Relationship building is paramount in any educational experience. By the second week of school, each teacher at CREATE Conservatory has established a strong connection with each student in their classroom. This powerful bond supports the rest of the work we do, creating a safe environment where students can take risks, explore, analyze, and create together. Our vision is to be an alternative to public school options where all children are expected to fit into a mold, learn the same way, and complete paper and pencil tests to prove knowledge acquisition.

¹ Appel, M. P. (2006). Arts Integration across the Curriculum. *Leadership*, 36(2), 14-17.

² Rabkin, N., & Redmond, R. (2006). The arts make a difference. *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society*, 36(1), 25-32.

³ Grant, J., & Patterson, D. (2016). Innovative arts programs require innovative partnerships: A case study of STEAM partnering between an art gallery and a Natural History Museum. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, 89(4-5), 144-152.

CREATE is led by award-winning educator Nicole Duslak. She has a BFA in Fine Arts, an M.Ed. in Secondary Education, and an M.Ed. in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. Nicole has extensive administration experience and has been involved with the education system from kindergarten through higher education. She was a 6-12 teacher, K-5 Assistant Principal, a K-8 Principal, and a director at a state college. She has published work in school counseling, arts integration, and the Pearson Formative Writing Assessments. She was also a contributing author for the Drama Standards for the state of Florida. She is a passionate supporter of the arts in education, student advocacy, and positive organizational cultures and climates. Few school leaders share this amount of credentialing and experience.

Tuition Policy

Tuition must be paid by the 2nd of each month (or the first week day of the month after the 2nd). Payments may be made online via credit card, or with a check brought to the front office by a parent or guardian. If a family circumstance changes, and payment becomes difficult, please notify the Head of School immediately so that we may work out a plan that can ensure no disruption to your child's education. Failure to pay by the 10th of the month may result in expulsion from the school.

Grading Policy

100-90% A
89-80% B
79-70% C
69-60% D
59-0% F

Make-up Work

Students must complete all make-up work within five days after the student returns to school. Guardians are encouraged to reach out to the teacher if a student is ill or cannot attend school to get the work for the day. It is recommended that guardians and students check with the teacher about any upcoming assignments before leaving school for a known or expected absence. The instructor reserves the right to give more time in cases of extenuating circumstances.

Academic Integrity

We expect all students to come to school each day with a strong desire to maintain academic honesty. If cheating, plagiarism, or other questions arise with regard to academic integrity, a guardian conference will be arranged to discuss measures to prevent future occurrences.

Homework Policy

CREATE believes that children work hard during the day, and they need time and space to allow their brains to process what they have learned. We believe that homework has a very specific purpose, and so it will be given only at very specific times. Please speak with your teacher directly if you have any concerns regarding homework.

Guardians can best help their children with homework by designating a time and comfortable place to work. Guardians should go over the work with the child but not do it for him/her.

Calendar and Daily Schedule

CREATE will follow Lake County Public School District's calendar. We will also close for emergencies (hurricanes, COVID19, etc.) when they close.

The school day for students begins at 8:30 A.M. and ends at 3:00 P.M. The doors open for school at 8:00 A.M. If a student arrives at school before 8:00am, they must be registered for before care. If a student arrives after 8:30, the guardian must come to the office and sign the student in. We do ask all car-riders to be at school no later than 8:25, as we would like to avoid any last minute delays in the carline.

Before Care and After Care

Please reach out to us directly if you are in need of before care and/or after care options so that we can arrange a schedule that works for you. Our typical hours for before care are 7:00-8:00am, and aftercare from 3:00-5:30pm. If a family needs assistance outside of these hours, please contact us so we may explore options together. Our rates for before care and after care are as follows:

One month of before care: \$100

One month of after care: \$150

One month of both: \$225

Hourly rates are not charged, and the cost is applied per month. Daily rates are not available. Full tuition scholarships do not include the cost of before care or after care. If a child is not picked up by 5:30, additional fees may be charged for that day.

Attendance

All students are expected to attend school regularly. If a student is absent from school, an excuse note explaining the absence must be sent with the student when he/she returns to school. This excuse must be from the parent, guardian, or doctor. Unexcused absences are given for any absence without a note. It is the responsibility of the student/guardian to arrange to make up any class work or tests missed.

After 5 unexcused absences, the parent/guardian will be required to have a meeting with the school staff, and continuation of enrollment and any awarded scholarship may be discussed.

Florida law defines "habitual truant" as a student who has 15 or more unexcused absences within 90 calendar days with or without the knowledge or consent of the student's parent or guardian, and who is subject to compulsory school attendance. In all cases, excessive absences may be turned over to the Florida Department of Education.

Tardies

A student is considered tardy to school if they are not in their classroom at 8:30am. 3 unexcused tardies in a 9 week period may result in a guardian meeting with the school staff, and continuation of enrollment and any awarded scholarships may be discussed. All tardy

students are to report to the front office prior to going to class. Any student arriving after 8:35 must have a parent/guardian bring them into the building. If the tardy was for an appointment, please bring a note for our records.

Student Code of Conduct

CREATE Conservatory provides each student with the maximum opportunity to acquire a world-class education. No student has the right to interfere with this opportunity for others with his/her actions, poor manners, or lack of consideration. All rules and regulations are developed and enforced with that thought in mind. There is no outside technology (phones, tablets, etc.) permitted during day-to-day school. Any parent with a specific concern regarding a student's need for a phone should speak with the Head of the School.

Students will not possess, handle, transmit, use or attempt to use any weapons in school buildings, on school grounds, on buses, or at any school-sponsored activity, function, or event. Students who are found to have violated this policy may be permanently expelled. When it is determined that a student has violated this policy, the Head of the School will notify the student's parent or guardian and the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system as required by law.

At CREATE Conservatory, there are five basic rules:

1. We will show respect for others and their possessions.
2. We will keep hands, feet, and other objects to ourselves.
3. We will use acceptable language.
4. We will follow directions.
5. We will not prevent the teacher from teaching or other students from learning.

This conduct code was developed to make students, parents, and staff aware of the behavioral expectations for students while attending classes, school-sponsored activities, and when riding on transportation.

Any consistent and pervasive violations of our code of conduct will result in a guardian conference to discuss next steps to prevent future occurrences. Our goal is for all students to be successful, happy, and safe at CREATE. We believe communication with guardians and the creation of a joint plan is usually the best option for moving forward with behaviors that are unacceptable. School detention/suspension/expulsion will always be a last resort.

Student Dress Code

CREATE has no required school uniform. All students should come to school dressed comfortably in clothes that don't restrict movement. While we take every effort to be cautious when creating art, it is possible that students may get paint/glue/general messes on their clothing from time to time. Please dress your student accordingly.

All clothing should be the appropriate fit and size. No profane language or images that may be offensive may be worn on campus. Both shoulders must be covered by a shirt. Pants must be worn at the waistline. Belts may be worn, but are not encouraged for children in lower primary

grades due to restroom concerns. Skirts and dresses are allowed, but students should wear legging shorts or pants under them, as we crawl, run, and play often. All bottoms should be fingertip length. Shoes should be closed-toe and heel (no flip-flops or sandals allowed for day-to-day classes).

Students are permitted to wear fun and creative clothing as long as it does not become a distraction in the classroom.

Campus Visits and Meetings

All visitors are required to report directly to the front office with a photo ID to sign in. There are no exceptions to this rule at any point.

All guardians are required to set up classroom visits prior to arrival with the teacher.

Guardians are welcomed and encouraged to come for lunch with their student. During this time, however, guardians may only eat lunch in the company of their student. We ask that when guardians come visit, the bringing of takeout food be kept to a minimum. Food should only ever be brought for your student. Providing meals to other students will not be permitted.

Lunches

All students are to bring their lunch each day. There is no refrigeration option available for students. We ask that lunches be nutritious, and provide fuel for your student to move and think for the afternoon. Having said that, we've all gone through the "I will only eat a chocolate chip cookie" phase, and we understand that treats are sometimes necessary. Please try to keep "junk food" and candy to a minimum.

Guardians coming to visit students may bring lunch, however, only for their student. Guardians must sign in at the office, and may only sit with their child during this time.

Volunteers

We welcome and encourage volunteers at CREATE. Building a strong relationship with you and your family is a key part of our mission. Unlike many organizations, we have no *required* volunteer hours. We feel guardians should give time to our school if and when they feel moved to do so. Volunteer options include: morning and afternoon carline, classroom readers and guest supporters, art presenters, and much more!

All volunteers must arrange their visit with the classroom teacher or Head of School before arriving. All volunteers must sign in at the front office prior to entering the classrooms. Additionally, if a guardian wishes to volunteer for any event, or help outside of the classroom in any way, please contact us. We never say no to help of any kind, and we welcome a close relationship with each of you!

Drop-Off and Dismissal Procedures

All students must be dropped off at school via motor vehicle. Cars are to enter the parking lot through Morningside Drive, move along the perimeter of the lot, and then stop at one of the designated drop-off/pick-up stations. All cars must turn RIGHT onto Radio Road after drop-off/pick-up. There are no exceptions to this policy.

While in carline, parents are asked to not use their cell phones. It is paramount for everyone's safety that parents pay full attention to their surroundings. Students are only allowed to exit on the driver's side of the vehicle for safety reasons.

If your car does not have a placard during pick-up, you **MUST** come into the school office with a photo ID. No exceptions will be made to this rule. Children will only be released to a person whose name is on the allowable pick-up list and whose name matches the ID presented.

All students are expected to proceed safely into the building without running or yelling.

Parent/Guardian/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled each year, however, a guardian may request a conference at any point. These conferences must be arranged by contacting your teacher. Frequent communication between the school and the home is strongly encouraged.

School Parties

CREATE recognizes there is much to celebrate throughout the year. Teachers will be in touch with parents as early as possible to plan special holiday parties and events.

Students with a birthday may bring in treats for their classroom. Please arrange this with the teacher **the week before** so they may plan accordingly, and you can receive a classroom allergy list. Any items brought in must be compliant with the classroom allergy list.

Report Cards

Report cards are sent out after the end of each nine-week grading period. Guardians will receive two copies of each report card. One may be kept, and one report card must be signed by the guardian. Students shall return the signed report card to school as soon as possible. A signature does not denote agreement or disagreement with the grades. The signature is the school's way of knowing that the parents have seen the report card. If parents have questions concerning the report card, they may call the school office and request a conference with their child's teacher(s). Progress Reports are also sent home in the middle of the nine-week grading period.

Emergency Plans, Drills, and Procedures

CREATE takes every possible measure to ensure students feel safe and prepared during the unlikely event of an emergency. We also believe in making all required drills as minimally traumatic as possible. Parents will be notified before drills occur so that you may speak with your child however you wish, in detail, prior to the event. All teachers will be ALICE training informed and receive extensive safety training for our location.

Fire, tornado, intruder, and earthquake drills are held at regular intervals throughout the school year. These drills are to be taken seriously. Talking and running are prohibited. Teachers discuss and practice proper procedures with their classes. Evacuation routes are posted in each classroom.

Medication Policy

Parents should make every effort to have medication times set for time periods outside of school hours. When this is not possible, school staff may assist in the administration of medication during school hours, subject to the following rules:

- (1) All medication must be brought to school by a responsible adult, so please do not send any medication with your child. Medication should be given to the appropriate, designated school official, who will count and record the number or amount received.
- (2) All medication must be brought to school in the original, pharmacy- labeled container. The container shall display:
 - (A) student's name
 - (B) prescription number
 - (C) medication name and dosage
 - (D) administration route or other directions
 - (E) date
 - (F) licensed prescriber's name
 - (G) pharmacy name, address, and phone number
- (3) Over-the-counter drugs to include lotions, salves, and ointments, Tylenol, cough medicines, etc. shall:
 - (A) Require an order from a licensed prescriber
 - (B) Be provided in an unopened container with the manufacturer's original label with the ingredients listed. The student's name must be affixed to the container.
- (4) Medications will be kept in a locked space, and in an area designated by the Head of School, and will be dispensed in the office. Emergency medicines (i.e. asthma inhalers, EPI-Pens, etc.) may be kept by the student if deemed necessary by the parent and medical professional.
- (5) Unused medication not picked up by the parent will be discarded after 14 days from last use, or at the end of the school year.
- (6) A Medication administration record is utilized for all students receiving medication at school.

Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Policy

CREATE Conservatory Inc. does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to, hiring and firing of staff, selection of volunteers and vendors, and provision of services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our staff, clients, volunteers, subcontractors, vendors, and clients.

CREATE Conservatory Inc. is an equal opportunity employer. We will not discriminate and will take measures to ensure against discrimination in employment, recruitment, compensation, termination, upgrading, promotions, and other conditions of employment against any employee

or job applicant on the bases of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

Board of Directors

CREATE will hold its Board of Directors meetings on the first Wednesday of each month (with the exception of holidays) at 7:00 p.m. Guardians are always welcomed to attend the board meetings – especially if their child is presenting to the Board. Any meeting attendee wishing to make comments must fill out a comment card prior to the start of the board meeting. Guardians will speak in the order in which they have signed in.

Student Harassment

CREATE Conservatory seeks to provide a learning environment free from any form of harassment or intimidation toward and between students. Therefore, we will not tolerate harassment in any form and will take all necessary and appropriate action to eliminate it, up to and including expulsion from CREATE Conservatory.

Harassment or intimidation can arise from a broad range of physical or verbal behaviors which can include, but is not limited to, the following: physical or mental abuse, racial/ethnic/religious commentary, or discriminating remarks which are offensive or objectionable to the recipient or which cause the recipient discomfort, humiliation or which interfere with the recipient's academic performance. It is the responsibility of administrators, staff members, and all students to ensure that these prohibited activities do not occur.

Any student who believes that he/she has been the subject of prohibited harassment should immediately report the incident to the teacher. If the student is not comfortable discussing the incident with the teacher, he/she may tell any other staff member, including the Head of the School. All complaints will be investigated in a timely manner.

Summary

CREATE is excited to begin the school year with you! We believe in putting the best interest of all children first, and we are excited to be a part of the team of people who help you raise your children.

The expectations contained in this handbook are not all-inclusive, meaning that they do not cover each and every situation which may arise. However, when those situations do arise, they will be dealt with in a comparable manner. This handbook will occasionally be updated, and the most recent version will be available on our website, or by hard copy as requested.

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