



Parent Handbook 2023-2024

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www.colossal-academy.com

MESSAGE FROM THE SCHOOL DIRECTOR

Welcome to Colossal Academy! We are so excited that you have chosen our school to support your child's educational journey. Colossal Academy will provide your child with a well-rounded educational experience where students can thrive academically and personally. Over the course of this year our children will grow in an environment to become self-assured, vibrant students who love to learn. We started with the idea of creating a small, outdoor, place-based environment that would not only support student learning but reignite their desire to learn and become creative thinkers while allowing students to gain more autonomy and self-directed learning. Our curriculum does not rely on textbooks; rather, it is driven by projects and experiences that allow students to show understanding while developing meaningful skills.

We believe in utilizing a customized curriculum that intertwines four educational concepts which will support a learning environment based on action-based learning, nature education, entrepreneurship, and a student-centered approach to learning. The learning experience provided at Colossal Academy will set your child on a path to become a life-long learner with a strong work ethic, a love of nature, and business savvy to match!

Colossal Academy embraces relationships with our families. We are honored to be partners with you in the development of your child. We rely on your communication, energy, support, and involvement to ensure a successful experience for your child.

We are delighted to share the many wonderful things about Colossal Academy and have developed this handbook to orient you on our policies, procedures, resources, and events.

Sincerely,

Shiren Rattigan, M. A, Owner/Educational Curator

MISSION STATEMENT

Colossal Academy aims to teach 21st-Century education that brings together relevant academic skills in a new way. Colossal Academy places the student at the center of their learning whereby teachers teach to the student and not the test utilizing modern techniques and intersectionality of best practices and through a student-centered curriculum in a safe and student-empowered learning environment.

EDUCATION BELIEFS

Colossal Academy believes that all participants can learn through experience and place-based learning. We believe in utilizing a unique curriculum that intertwines four educational concepts which will support a solid learning environment that is based on project-based learning, entrepreneurship, nature education, and a student-centered approach to learning. Our lessons help to create compassionate thinkers who are innovation-ready and eager to change the world.

VISION

A world where every student is inspired to learn, create, participate, navigate, and discern truths ultimately for meaningful community (tangible and digital) contributions.

Our shared mission for the school is to nurture the potential of each child; to celebrate their individuality; and to offer every child the opportunity to lead as well as learn, to teach as well as explore.

COLOSSAL ACADEMY'S COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY

We affirm the uniqueness of each individual way of existing in the world. We are committed to understanding how personal cultural and historic aspects of identity contribute to and enrich our school community

We challenge our learners to interact in a conscious and meaningful way within the academy dynamic. We honor each of our difference while embracing shared values.

We provide a safe environment that encourages the expression of our differences in ways that invite conscious dialogue and education rather than the cause of alienation and marginalization. We encourage inquiry so that we can learn from a diverse range of experiences and points of view.

We are committed to actively working towards anti-racism within our academy stage. We strive to purposefully identify, discuss and challenge issues of race, color, ethnicity, and the impacts they have on students, staff, and families. We acknowledge that bias can be unconscious or unintentional and that racism is the combination of social institutional power plus racial prejudice.

We honor the right of the child to offer or withhold consent to unnecessary touch and believe that body autonomy empowers children to keep their bodies safe.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Colossal Academy admits students of any race, color, religion, creed, gender, disability, national, or ethnic origin, sexual orientation or any other category protected by applicable federal, state, or local law, to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Colossal Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, gender (which includes a person's actual or perceived sex, as well as gender identity expression), age, marital status, disability, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, familial status, presupposing genetic characteristics, actual or perceived domestic violence victim status, unemployment status, caregiver status or any other category protected by applicable federal, state, or local law, in carrying on its educational activities or in the administration of its educational policies admissions policies, employment policies, financial aid programs, and athletic or school-administered programs.

MULTI-AGED CLASSROOM, CURRICULUM, AND TEACHERS

The Multi-aged classroom provides benefits that are readily apparent when visiting and observing the classroom. Younger children in the classroom have an opportunity to observe and imitate the older students as they work. Older students have an opportunity to reinforce their own knowledge by explaining what they are doing and assisting and mentoring younger children. Each child can learn and develop at its own pace within a classroom that accommodates many levels of ability and complexity.

The outdoor classroom has been thoughtfully arranged and offers an inviting space filled with access to nature, wildlife, farm, and city living. Learning materials are both tangible and visible and accessible to each child. There are spaces in the Indoor Yurt (Mongolian Ger) that allows for group activity as well as areas where the student can work on their own. Colossal Academy's space encourages hands-on and experiential learning.

All educators must have a Bachelor's degree in the area of education or a closely related area.

COVID-19 UPDATE

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Colossal Academy curriculum fosters the development of integrative thinkers who see and make connections within and among the disciplines instead of viewing them as "subjects" in isolation. Here, powerful learning experiences are relevant, rigorous, and coherent. Colossal Academy's program transforms learning by supporting and encouraging self-directed reflection, inquiry, and self-assessment. Teachers evaluate progress on a daily basis, keeping careful records of lessons presented and skills and concepts mastered. Our school uses the following tools to gauge student performance and mastery of skills:

Student Developed Portfolios
Progress Reports
Teacher-Made Tests
Annual Standardized Pre-Post Test
Research projects
Oral and Written Presentations
Project-Based Tasks
Curriculum Assessments

HOMEWORK

The school environment is rich with daily experiences in self-motivation and self-organization. Once to twice a week students sit and organize their planners to come up with weekly goals and accomplishments. Students are expected to finish their goals during the school day. If they do not reach their goal it is their responsibility to continue at home after school or over the weekend. Each week they reevaluate and reflect on their previous week's goals and set new goals for the week. Some homework consists of the completion of FLVS module assignments, research, reading, and special projects that can be done at home as a continuation of work started in class.

Students might also bring home practice work on math facts and should practice reading every night. Most importantly, students are expected to be contributing members of their families, which means taking on responsibility for some household chores, which families may use to supplement learning such as having children help with baking (measuring with fractions) or finding the square footage of the home. It is important for our learners to have ample time to build and develop strong relationships within the home and make connections from theory to practice.

LEARNING SUPPORT

Occasionally a child may evidence the need for special services. These needs may be physical, developmental or psychological. We have been working with children for a long time. We are trained to spot needs that affect the child's ability to learn and socialize successfully in a classroom setting. We will recommend evaluation and professional consultation. The school does not contact or contract for outside services. It is the decision and responsibility of the parents to make those arrangements. We make every attempt to provide space for private tutoring and other services contracted for by parents with other organizations. However, we have limited space. All requests for private tutoring space must be made through the office.

DIAGNOSTIC EVALUATION

In order to provide appropriate classroom support, the school may request that parents seek diagnostic evaluation(s) of their child through outside professional services. This includes psycho-education evaluation, motor-sensory evaluation, language assessment, hearing or vision testing. The school expects parents to honor this request and fully disclose the results in a timely manner. Failure to do so may prevent the school from offering re-enrollment to that child for the following year.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Parents are invited to visit the classroom in order to see first-hand what their child does during the day. This experience is designed to deepen your understanding of your child's development as well as to affirm the educational choice you have made for him/her. Observation time lasts about 30 minutes and must be scheduled with the main office at least one week prior to the visit. All students are under a 6-8 week trial period prior to full acceptance to Colossal Academy.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parent Conferences are held 2 times yearly via Zoom in the fall and spring and also at the request of a parent. Conferences are scheduled at thirty-minute intervals. These meetings are an opportunity for parents and teachers to discuss and share information about the child's program, progress, and experience at school and home.

FAMILY COMMITMENT

Parental support is critical to the success of our school and entire learning community.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Service to others is an important part of our school's philosophy. As a school, we aim to serve those in our immediate neighborhood as well as members of our global community. Each of the classroom communities nurtures an ethic of caring. Students will undertake projects that evolve from students special interests and particular natural disasters. The Village: Parent Squad will help to organize charitable efforts throughout the year. Parents are encouraged to involve their children in these drives and events. We also encourage families to model generosity and to talk with and to read to their children about giving to others.

ADMISSION GUIDELINES

To be considered for enrollment at Colossal Academy, children must be ten years of age. Enrollment preference will be given to families with a firm commitment to our educational philosophy and the siblings of students already enrolled. The one-room school is multi-aged and the school will make every reasonable effort to balance the class with respect to age and gender. All students are under a 6-8 week trial period by which the Lead Educational Curator and the team will determine if Colossal Academy is a good fit.

ENROLLMENT FEE

Each family is charged a non-refundable Enrollment Fee per child. Enrollment will not be accepted for students with an outstanding balance at another school.

REFUND POLICY

Colossal Academy does not offer a refund on any tuition or fees. If for any reason an enrolled student fails to attend or to continue in attendance at Colossal Academy for the contracted school year, 100% of the tuition for the current month remains due and must be paid in full.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

1. McKay Scholarship - Eligibility for the McKay Scholarship is determined by the State of Florida. To qualify for the scholarship, the student must be transferring from a Florida public school with a current IEP or 504 Plan. Applying for the McKay Scholarship Program is the responsibility of the parents. All application deadlines for the scholarship are posted on the website at www.floridaschoolchoice.org.

2. Step Up for Students (SUFS) - SUFS is an income-based scholarship with eligibility determined by the state. Parents may apply and check eligibility requirements online at www.sufs.com. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school of their eligibility for SUFS. Any tuition or fees not covered by the scholarship is the responsibility of the parent or guardian.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Colossal Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

ADMISSION PROCESS

Getting-to-know You meeting, Application and Experience Day are required for consideration. Parents must schedule to attend a private school tour or open house which will allow time to learn the details of the school and give parents the opportunity to determine if the school mission and philosophy are aligned with their wishes for their child's education path. Interested families are encouraged to submit

a completed admissions application accompanied by a \$75 non-refundable application fee.

The school will notify you within 7 business days regarding the admissions decision. If accepted and space is available, the school will issue you a contract. Signed enrollment contract, deposits, and required documents are due back to the office within 10 days to hold your child's spot. If you apply for enrollment and there are no openings, your child will be placed on the waiting list until an opening exists.

WITHDRAWAL

Colossal Academy is dedicated to maintaining a safe, joyous, bully-free classroom environment for the optimum development of all students. Parents of children with disruptive or harmful behavior will be asked to seek professional assistance. The School has the right to suspend or terminate the attendance of any student for reasons set forth in the Parent and Student Handbook (or other published document), for reasons that the School Administration considers detrimental to the School community, student, or to other students of the School, or for the Parent's failure to pay all or any part of the Parent's financial obligations for Student's attendance (including any amounts charged on Student's account with the School).

The school operates on the tuition and fees paid for services. If a family's account is 60 days or more past due, the child will be withdrawn from the program until the account has been brought up to current status. Written notification of intent to withdraw a child shall be made at least 30 days prior to withdrawal.

TUITION

The tuition charged is for the Academic Year. A deposit is due upon enrollment or re-enrollment. This deposit is held on account until the tuition is paid in full. At this point the deposit may be held and applied to next year's deposit for enrollment, applied to your account, or issued as a refund. In the event you withdraw your child from the school mid-year, the deposit is nonrefundable please refer to the enrollment contract for additional information. The school does accept the Step Up for Students and McKay Scholarships.

Each family must select a payment plan on the enrollment contract. If no preference is noted, then the family will be billed under Plan A. If a family would like to change payment plans, the request must be submitted in writing to the School Director and, if at all possible, such requests should be made before the first tuition payment has been made.

TUITION COLLECTION POLICY

Contracts

Tuition Calculation:

Tuition balances for students in grades K-12 will be paid in ten equal payments. Tuition payments are due on the date specified on the contract and continue every month throughout the school year until May 31. Should students be withdrawn or asked to leave mid-month, they will be responsible for payments made in the month they were enrolled. For example, students who withdraw on February 10 would be responsible for the February month payment.

Special payment options are available upon approval. Upon request, tuition payment due dates may be changed to meet the special needs of a particular family. This change in due date must be approved by the administration of Colossal Academy prior to or at the signing of the tuition contract with Colossal Academy for the coming school year. This date will then be fixed for all ten equal tuition payments. Registration fees are due upon the period specified by Colossal Academy and before the first day that the student starts Colossal Academy.

Families are given a 6 week's grace period for withdrawal without penalty. In the event that a family does leave our school community, they are responsible to give a 30-day notice and complete payment for the month withdrawn.

Students on Step-Up or AAA scholarships should check within the Parent Handbook. Step-up and AAA scholarships are disbursed on quarterly bases. In the event that a student is withdrawn prior to a quarterly disbursement, families are required to meet regarding the payment schedule. If a student withdraws in the middle of the quarter, families are responsible for the unpaid amounts within 10 calendar days. In the event the due amount is not paid, Step-Up and AAA will be notified and families run the risk of permanently losing their scholarship opportunity.

Accounting Procedure

Documentation: All special arrangements must be noted to the Director before the payment plan begins. The Director will then enter the plan into the computer for monthly accuracy.

Late Payments:

For practical purposes, payments received after the 3rd day of the month will be recorded as late. Each family will have the ability to make one late payment per year without being charged a late fee. After that, families will be charged \$50 per month when the payment is late. As long as families make payments on time, no statements will be issued.

Collection Procedure

The Board of Directors of Colossal Academy, believes that it is essential to have families be responsible for their indebtedness. It is for that reason that we will attempt to collect all unpaid tuition in the following manner that we believe holds individuals to accountability and yet is very flexible.

Procedure:

Late tuition with students still enrolled:

1. After the first month the tuition is late parents will receive a notice informing them that their payment is late. Each month the payment is late, the tuition will be charged a \$50 late fee. Families will be encouraged to contact Colossal Academy to work out arrangements if they are having financial difficulties.

2. The second month the tuition is late, parents will receive a notice informing them of the late tuition policy (that after 90 days students will no longer be allowed to attend school). Again they will be encouraged to contact the Center.

3. Warning of expulsion. At the end of the second late month, parents will receive a certified letter noting that if the tuition is not paid by the due date of the following month their children may no longer attend Colossal Academy. A certified letter will be sent stating that their children cannot attend school. Students then fall under the withdrawn student policy. No student may graduate, receive any records for transfer (with the exception of health records), or attend the following school year without payment for the previous year being made in full. This policy will only be adjusted in special circumstances by the Director.

Trial Period and Annual Commitment

Upon enrollment, families will enter into a 6-8 week trial period. This period is designed to ensure that Colossal Academy is a suitable fit for the student's educational needs and the family's expectations. During this trial period, families have the opportunity to evaluate our educational environment and services.

Following the completion of this trial period, it is understood that families are committing to the full academic year at. This commitment includes the responsibility for the payment of the entire year's tuition, as outlined in our tuition schedule and financial agreement signed upon enrollment.

2. Commitment to Year's Tuition

Post the trial period, regardless of the reason for leaving the school, families are obligated to fulfill the payment of the full year's tuition. This policy is in place to ensure the financial stability of our educational programs and the allocation of resources for the entire school year.

3. Exceptional Circumstances

Colossal Academy recognizes that unforeseen circumstances, such as a significant medical or family emergency, may impact a family's ability to continue their commitment. In such exceptional cases, families may apply for a contractual release from their annual tuition obligation.

To be considered for this release, families must provide:

- A formal written request explaining the nature of the emergency.
- Supporting documentation (e.g., medical records, legal documents) as applicable.

Each request will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the school administration. The decision to grant a contractual release will be at the discretion of [School Name], based on the evidence provided and the circumstances surrounding the request.

Withdrawn Student Policy

1. Parents will continue to receive monthly late notices (with cumulative late fees added) for the first six months after attending Colossal Academy that tuition is not paid. Any significant series of payments will delay the process. The last notice will warn parents that the Board will begin the collection process.

2. A staff member will notify the parent of the Board policy and attempt to make arrangements for payment during the 7th month.

3. After 5 months of nonpayment, the Board will send a certified letter, person to person, announcing its intention to submit the bill to a credit reporting agency and begin the collection process.

4. Colossal Academy will hire a credit reporting agency to place the debt on the individual's credit record. For bills over \$100 the following steps will be taken:

- a. File charges for payment with the magistrate's office.
- b. Pursue attachment of liens against personal holdings of families if

settlement is not made to the District Magistrate second judgment.

ONLINE TUITION SYSTEM

All families, regardless of payment plan selected and payment history, must enroll in the QuickBooks. Invoices will be sent via QuickBook.

SCHOOL OPERATIONS

School Hours: 8:30AM- 3:30 PM

Hybrid Students Schedule: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

RELEASE PERMISSION

Colossal Academy is authorized to release a child only to his or her parents or guardian, unless we receive in writing the names of other people permitted to pick up your child. If your child is going home with someone not on our list, such as a friend after school, the School Office must have permission in writing from the parent. Last minute phone calls from a parent for emergency situations are acceptable.

If you are part of a carpool, be sure to notify the driver who is scheduled to pick up your child in the event your child is ill, that he or she is going home with someone else, or that he or she is bringing home a guest.

Along with Health and Emergency Forms, you are required to sign permissions that allow your child to participate in field trips, neighborhood excursions off campus for classroom walks, going beyond the school grounds for recess, Physical Education and Discovery Programs, and Elementary “Going Out” field-trip programs where appropriate. The permission waiver information contains details for supervision and

notification. These waivers can be found under the Parent Resources on the school website .

Your child will leave campus and go beyond the school grounds only if these permissions are signed. Going off campus is at your sole discretion to permit.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

The Colossal Academy calendar is posted on the school's website, www.colossal-academy.com/parent.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS | INCLEMENT WEATHER

Inclement weather and disasters may potentially trigger the closing of the school. Our school will abide with the decisions made by the School Board of Broward County. If the Public schools are closed, Colossal Academy will be closed as well. We will make announcements via text message, Remind App, Facebook, Instagram, and school website, as permitted based on conditions.

HEALTH POLICY RECORDS

All records listed below must be submitted to Colossal Academy in order for your child to begin school. If we do not have this information, we will not allow your child to attend class.

1. Emergency Contact Information: This should include emergency phone numbers and emails for parents, who is allowed to pick up your child, and any allergies or other important medical conditions. A request for this information will be emailed to you in the summer.
2. Current FL Health Medical Forms for Child : This includes immunization records and must have your doctor's original signature, not a stamped signature. Our school also requires an Emergency Medical Authorization Form, Registration for Child Receiving Care Away from Home Form, and Travel and Activity Authorization Form.

These forms can be found in the Parent section of our website. Please contact the office with questions.

Guardianship documents are required as appropriate . If necessary for your family situation, please make sure the school knows who has guardianship for your child.

COVID-19

Colossal Academy is committed to the safety of the students, faculty, staff and educators. At this time during outdoor classes, Colossal Academy does not require masks but does request a negative Covid PCR test 72 hours prior to reentry. After breaks (Holiday, Spring Break, Summer Break etc), students and staff are required to provide a negative test to reenter the group dynamic. This ensures a safer space for learning.

Colossal Academy will continue to stay updated with the CDC guidelines and suggestions for social distancing while in doors and on field experiences.

IMMUNIZATION

The state immunization law requires all students to have an immunization record on file for school attendance. If your child is exempt from immunizations, he must have a signed medical or religious exemption on file. In the event of an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease for which you cannot provide proof of immunity of your child, your child will not be allowed to attend school until the risk period ends. All needed immunization records must be on file prior to the child attending school. If your child does not have current immunizations or a signed exemption on file, he will not be allowed to attend classes until the situation has been remedied. It is the parent's responsibility to bring any updated immunization records to the school office.

ABSENCES & ILLNESS

Parents should notify the School when their child is absent by completing the absence form found under the Parent Resources tab on the school website. Please indicate if your child has a communicable disease.

In case of an absence due to a communicable disease or an illness of more than five days' duration, a note from your child's physician is required before the child can be readmitted to the classroom. A child must be free of fever (over 100 degrees Fahrenheit), vomiting, and/or diarrhea for 48 hours before they can return to school. Please be considerate of others in your child's class. Do not send your child to school if they have a fever or are "coming down with something." Children with a colored discharge from the nose should stay home until the discharge is clear in color. If your child becomes ill at school, we will call you to come and take your child home as soon as possible. If your child goes home because of illness, they may not return to school that same day.

Should the school have reason to believe that a child may be ill or display any signs of breathing difficulties, the school has the right to request a medical wellness form completed by a physician.

LICE

If head lice are discovered on a student, we will send that student home and notify all parents in the class that a child with lice has been in the class. We will carefully check all students in the class where lice were found, as well as the classes of that student's siblings. Upon the student's return to school, they will be carefully checked to be certain there are no live or hatching eggs remaining. Colossal Academy has a "no nits policy;" a child who has nits may not return to the classroom.

MEDICATION POLICY

Sometimes it is necessary for a child to take medication during the school day. Prescription medication must be brought to the school office by an adult in the original container (medications may not be sent in a lunch box). A pharmacist will fill the prescription in two containers if requested. The prescription medication must be accompanied by a Medication Authorization Form stating the current date, dosage, and time the medication should be given, dates of administering the medication, and whether the medication should be returned at the end of each day. The Medication Authorization Form must be signed by the physician and parent. Medication Authorization Forms are available online.

Non-prescription, “over-the-counter” medications of any kind (which includes but is not limited to fever reducers, pain medications, cough syrup or drops) cannot be taken at school unless accompanied by a Medication Authorization Form signed by the child’s physician. The medication (in the original container), and the Medication Authorization Form, as described above, should be given to the School Office by an adult.

If your child has a medical condition or allergies and requires routine medications, please contact the School Director to arrange a specific medical treatment plan for your child. For a student who is severely allergic and requires an Epi-pen, please provide one Epi-pen and a Medication Authorization Form. If the Epi-pen is administered, the parent will be notified, and we will call 911. When parents disclose an allergy or food sensitivity to the school, we inform the teachers and indicate the allergy on the snack guidelines. We also include this information on the Snack Reminder notices for parents.

CHILD SAFETY

Parent Notifications: Parents or their authorized emergency contacts will be notified immediately of any accidents, injuries, or illnesses. Behavioral incidents will be communicated on a case-by-case basis, depending on the seriousness of the incident (determined by Lead Staff). You will be contacted either immediately by phone for urgent matters, or at the end of the school day for less serious matters.

Child Abuse & Neglect: All schools, child care centers, physicians and others who work with children are required by law to inform Child Protective Services at the Department of Human Services of any suspected abuse or neglect of children. By law, a suspicion of child abuse generally means that the reporter has “reasonable cause to believe” or “reasonable cause to know or suspect” that a child is being maltreated physically, emotionally or mentally. Employees are trained in identifying abuse and neglect.

Employee Screening: All employees are subject to criminal screening through the State Police, and fingerprinted as mandated by the State of Florida. Potential

employees are required to interview, and provide references. All volunteers are screened for abuse and child neglect.

Body Safety: All Staff have received abuse prevention training, and follow the 5 safety steps: 1. Know the Warning Signs 2. Control Access through Screening 3. Monitor all Programs 4. Be aware of Children's Behavior 5. Communicate your concerns.

Harassment: All children must be free from harassment and bullying in our school. Children may not be cruel and/or abusive to each other in any way in our environment. If you believe an incident of harassment has occurred with your child, please report it immediately via email to admin@colossal-academy.com. The school will investigate and take appropriate action.

Weapons: Colossal Academy is a private property. No weapons of any sort are allowed on our campus. Any individual who is found to have brought a weapon on campus (regardless of a license to carry), will be prohibited from being on the campus in the future. The local police may be contacted.

COMMUNICATION

Nearly all communication coming from the school will be disseminated electronically. It is essential that we have your email address and updated mobile number. Please be sure to keep us current if that address changes. Please make certain to read the biweekly electronic newsletter as it contains important information about your child's classroom as well as school-wide information.

VOICEMAIL

The main telephone numbers 754-444-9929 and 954-612-3379 have voicemail and text capabilities. We check messages regularly throughout the day. After 4:30 PM texts and voicemails will be answered the following school day.

EMAIL

In our ongoing efforts to be more conscientious in the use of resources, nearly all communication between the school and home will be made electronically. All regular correspondence from Colossal Highlights (electronic newsletter) or other email communication from us please inform the office or email your correct email address to hello@colossal-academy.com

WEBSITE

General information, the calendar of events, and other useful links can be found at our site: www.colossal-academy.com

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER (Colossal Highlights)

You will receive the school's eNews electronically every other week. This important communication provides information on school-wide activities, events, updates, and volunteer opportunities, as well as information on the specific activities of your child's classroom. Please be sure to notify the office if you are not receiving the eNews. Please be sure to provide the office with your updated email address.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media can serve as a bridge between the school and the broader community. The school provides information about school events as well as other items of interest to the community via an active Facebook and Instagram page. We encourage you to Like and follow our page, and to share our information with your community of family and friends.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS-CONTACT INFORMATION

Whenever you change your address, home phone, work phone or emergency notification information, please notify the school office directly. Please do not rely on your child's teacher to update the office. Please alert the office via email hello@colossal-academy.com. Alerting the office is the only way to guarantee information is updated and documented throughout the school. This includes our Family Information Sheet, billing, mailing lists, and classroom files. Both the office and the teacher emergency records need to be up-to-date.

PROBLEM RESOLUTION

We believe that open communication and supportive relationships between home and school are imperative for the full development of the child. However, we know that we are all human and things don't always go perfectly to everyone's satisfaction. Occasionally there might be issues, misunderstandings, conflicts, or communication confusion between parents and the school. If you have questions or concerns that you want to address, please email hello@colossal-academy.com . You may schedule a meeting if you wish. At some point, the Lead Teacher may feel a need to meet with you about your child's development. If so, she will arrange a meeting time with you that is convenient for all parties.

DISCIPLINE

Our goal is to develop self-discipline for each child. The root word of discipline is disciple. It means to lead forth. We seek to lead students to cooperative behavior and membership in a productive, loving and caring classroom community. We all help each other grow. Methods of discipline used in the classroom include

- Modeling desired behavior by adults
- Teaching Social Emotional-Learning and conflict resolution strategies
- Problem-solving skills that teach children "to use their words, not their hands"
- Careful classroom structure and ground rules
- Clear and consistent communications of behavioral expectations by all teachers
- Giving the child opportunities to make good choices regarding his/ her behavior
- Redirection to an appropriate activity
- Working with peers to have a group meeting to discuss problems and possible solutions.
- Sitting down quietly to rethink one's actions.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the vision, goals, and beliefs of Colossal Academy. Accordingly, students are prohibited from engaging in behavior

(1) that obstructs, disrupts, or interferes with any educational, administrative, disciplinary or other activity sponsored or approved by Colossal Academy

(2) that endangers or threatens the safety of any person or

(3) that inflicts or threatens to inflict damage on property of Colossal Academy, Colossal Academy's experts, guest speakers, teachers, faculty, students or others. Students who fail to abide by these general behavioral expectations will be subject to appropriate discipline.

Behaviors listed in the Behavior Rubric may result in one or more of the following consequences:

- The student may be isolated from other students in the case of harm to themselves or others.
- The student's parents will be informed by means of a telephone call and/or incident report sent home, of inappropriate behavior.
- Parents, student, teacher and director will meet to discuss student's behavior and to design a behavior plan to change that behavior.
- Parents may be required to make use of off-campus counseling/intervention for their students.
- The student will make restitution for damages, if appropriate.
- The student may be suspended from school premises and activities.
- For repeated or serious violations, the student may be recommended for expulsion. Administration may involve police. Legal action may be taken.

In the event that additional support is needed to help your child achieve success in our classroom, the school will communicate our concerns with you. We have found that in this time of a child's life—the first experiences in a classroom setting—problems may arise that were not evident previously. Colossal Academy will make recommendations and provide as much support as possible to each family and child.

REDIRECTION/BEHAVIOR PLAN (in any order)

An action plan for behavior improvement which identifies the behavior that needs to be changed and the goals that, when reached, will identify a successful change. This generally involves the student, teacher, director and parents, and includes follow-up meetings.

NOTIFICATION VIA EMAIL: A communication email that goes home, which will be considered a reminder to the student and a “heads-up” to the parent or guardian that a minor behavior change is needed.

INCIDENT REPORT: Report documenting the details of an incident involving a student’s breach of the Code of Behavior and the follow up action. This report is filled out by the adult(s) and sent home on the day of the event. Names of the other students are not by law allowed to be included in the report. A follow-up call to the parent/guardian will be made by the teacher.

If the incident resulted in injury to another child an incident report will be sent home to inform that child’s family, as well.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: Students will be given specific duties in and around the farm, during free time, before or after school, which might include picking up trash, emptying recycle bins, sweeping or raking, or assisting younger children with their work.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION: This form of suspension will result in a temporary exclusion from classes and school. Parents will be notified and asked to meet with the Director and faculty, if this is warranted. Students assigned to out-of-school suspension must complete all work assigned by the teachers and must return the completed work to the teacher on the day they return. Before returning to school, the student and parent(s) will be required to meet with the Director, again, to discuss a behavior modification plan, the Code of Conduct and to sign a readmission contract. Students who are suspended are not allowed to be on school property for the duration of the suspension. Notice of these suspensions become a part of a

student’s educational record. Suspension may be assigned for not more than nine school days.

EXPULSION: Expulsion is the permanent withdrawal of the privilege of attending school at Colossal Academy.

CLASSROOM/PLAYGROUND BEHAVIOR RUBRIC Consistent with the general behavior expectations, the following specified behaviors are prohibited. This includes buses and school sponsored activities. Final disciplinary decisions will be made by the administration taking into consideration the age of the student, past incidents, the nature of the incident, and special needs that students may have.

BEHAVIOR	FIRST TIME	SECOND TIME	THIRD TIME
LEVEL ONE Chewing gum, inappropriate or off task behavior that could include loud talking or attention seeking, not following safety rules on the farm or in the classroom. Habitual tardiness, disregard for school uniforms, swearing, Mis-use of technology	Verbal warning	Written warning (email) goes home.	Third incident: Student/teacher class parents, Second email goes home, and/or inside lunch/recess Additional incident: Student calls parent, Incident report written; inside lunch/recess Behavior plan developed with student, teacher, parent and director. Additional incidents after the behavior plan has been drafted and agreed upon by all parties will lead to expulsion.
LEVEL TWO Breach of cyber rules and policies, cheating or plagiarizing on class work or tests, bullying or teaching of another classmate, harassment with or	Student may be required to call parent(s). Incident report is written and plagiarism or harm reduction course required	1-3 days until behavior plan is developed with student, parents and director. Plan monitored to check for progress. School activities such as	3-9 days in or out-of school suspension. The Student may re-enter school after meeting with the parent during which a behavior plan contract is

<p>without sexual undertones, rudeness or disrespect of staff or to the adult in charge, continued disruptive behavior in class, carelessness with one's body or an object in one's control leading to minor injury of another student, repetitive noncompliance with a procedure, repetitive off task behavior, leaving a class or campus without permission, swearing at adults.</p>		<p>field trips may be restricted</p>	<p>developed and signed by the student and parents.</p>
<p>LEVEL THREE Aggressive behavior: Unnecessary roughness during indoor/outdoor activities, hitting, grabbing, inappropriate physical contact, kicking, pinching, slapping, interfering with another's belongings, obscene gestures or threatening looks, purposely throwing an object, putting self or others at risk, repetitive disruption of class, continued teaching, bullying, blatant disrespect of staff or adult in charge, possession or solicitation of weapons, prescription drugs, drugs of any type, or any illegal substances. Level 3 swearing</p>	<p>Student shall be isolated from other students. Parents called for an immediate meeting with the directors. Police could be called. Suspension or Expulsion.</p>	<p>Expulsion.</p>	

<p>LEVEL FOUR Any action or illegal behavior that could result in harming self or others (re: tobacco, alcohol, fire arms, drugs.) Severe hitting, threats of violence, severe harassment/bullying.</p>	<p>Student isolated from other students until meeting with parents, teacher and director. Legal authorities may be called in. Expulsion.</p>		

Cyberbullying Policy

At Colossal Academy, we are committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and nurturing learning environment for all our students. In the digital age, this commitment extends beyond the physical boundaries of our school. We recognize the importance of addressing the challenges posed by cyberbullying and are dedicated to promoting positive cybercitizenship among our students.

1. Policy Overview

Cyberbullying, the use of electronic communication to bully, harass, or intimidate others, is strictly prohibited in our school community. This policy applies not only during school hours and on school property but also to incidents that occur outside school hours which have a direct and negative impact on the school culture and the well-being of our students.

2. Alignment with Florida Laws

In accordance with Florida laws, our school takes seriously any cyberbullying incidents that affect the safety and emotional well-being of our students. We understand that actions online, especially those that harm others, can have significant real-world consequences.

3. Consequences and Support

While we have a zero-tolerance approach to cyberbullying, our focus is not solely punitive. We believe in educating our students about the responsible use of technology and the importance of digital citizenship. Consequences for cyberbullying will align with our school's discipline policies, but our approach will always be geared towards learning, understanding, and growth.

We aim to support both the victim and the perpetrator in understanding the impact of their actions and in learning healthier ways to interact. Our goal is to transform negative behaviors into opportunities for positive development and empathy-building.

4. Zero Cellphone Policy

To further support a cyberbullying-free environment, [School Name] is a zero cellphone school. This policy is in place to encourage face-to-face interactions and to minimize distractions and opportunities for cyberbullying during school hours. We believe that by reducing reliance on digital communication within school, we can foster a more inclusive and engaged community.

5. Encouraging Positive Cybercitizenship

We encourage parents and guardians to join us in educating our children about the responsible use of technology. Discussions at home about the power of words, online behaviors, and digital footprints can reinforce the values of kindness, respect, and empathy.

Together, we can create a community where all students feel safe, valued, and empowered to reach their full potential, both in the real world and online.

We appreciate your support and cooperation in upholding these values and policies. If you have any questions or need guidance on discussing these topics with your child, please do not hesitate to contact us.

SCHOOL LUNCH

Parents are responsible for sending their child with lunch and several snacks daily. Students should not share food because of allergy restrictions. When including a drink, please choose 100% juice, milk, or water. Please include the utensils your child will need in order to eat their lunch. In an effort to be a responsible community we ask that parents try to employ reusable containers, washable utensils, and cloth napkins rather than disposables. We ask that families be mindful of not packing snacks with sugar as a main ingredient.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Students are recognized on their special day with a special treat and recognition on their birthday. Any treats that are brought to share with classmates must be presented at the end of the day before pickup.

CULTURAL CELEBRATIONS AND HOLIDAYS

Colossal Academy is non-sectarian and non-denominational and with all due respect recognizes that, though many holidays cross cultural boundaries, some of our families either do not observe or do not observe in the same way. We acknowledge that understanding these differences and appreciating the richness within our community is paramount to our children's education. Though most holidays are part of the culture and heritage of the majority of our students, we recognize that all do not observe each holiday or do not observe them in the same way. We recognize, however, that understanding a variety of holidays enriches the classroom and cultural awareness of the students so please contact your child's teacher if you would like to share elements of your culture with the class.

ARRIVAL/ DISMISSAL

Drop off is at 8:30. Late drop offs are acceptable until 9:30. After 9:30 students should continue with assignments and progress on their school work goals for the week outside of school.

Emergency Preparedness

GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY OR CRISIS

- FIRST RESPONSE – A notice and procedures will be posted on the school's website (www.colossal-academy.com) and emailed if possible. Follow instructions carefully.
 - In some emergencies (a fire, for example) the children may be walked to a safe location where you can pick them up. Information will be posted on the website and disseminated by way of our text notification system.
 - If we are required to “shelter in place” on Campus, we have provisions and are completely prepared to do so.
 - In some cases, FEMA may tell you not to leave your building or location, or we may be told to allow no one to enter our location. Please know that your child's well-being and safety are our only priority.
 - Your child will never be left without an adult. If you are unable to pick up your child during a crisis or emergency, they will be safely cared for until you can be reunited.
 - You keeping all records up to date in our office is critical—including cell phone numbers, email, and those individuals you allow to pick up your child. Consider carefully your list of those to whom we can release your child in a crisis/emergency.

CLOTHING & SHOES, SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Farm days: Long sleeve shirt, long pants, hat, protective eyeglasses, fully-charged computer, closed-toe shoes, bug spray, sun protection, headphones, refillable water bottle, mask

Surf days: Swimwear, sunglasses, hat, sun protection (reef-friendly), change of clothes

Skate days: Closed-toe shoes, skateboard, helmet, protective gear

Field Trip: Colossal Academy Field Trip shirt, water bottle lunches (when required)

All clothing should be weather appropriate for being active outside comfortably.

Children must wear athletic shoes (sneakers).

CELLPHONES

Students should not use their phones with the exemption of classroom assignments.

FIELD TRIP POLICIES

Field trips are planned with the teachers to support and complement the curriculum. Consent and Waiver forms for leaving campus are completed by the parents as part of the emergency contact information request during the summer. Permission from the parents is required for participation in the trips. Families will be notified 5 days in advance of each trip. Rules for car seat and seatbelt safety are followed. Children must be properly seated.

DRESS CODE FOR SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS

Colossal Academy Shirts must be worn.

Tops: Colossal T-Shirt only.

[Links for purchase of shirts.](#)

Bottoms: Long or Short Pants, No fray or cut ends.

Footwear: Closed Toe Shoes unless it is a beach trip

WEATHER APPROPRIATE

Please send your child to school with outerwear and clothing that's appropriate for the climate of the day. Weather permitting we will go outside several times throughout the day (except for the coldest/hottest of days or when it is raining), so please dress children appropriately. In the winter, students may need a light sweater and hat. All clothing must be labeled. Do not send an umbrella with your child. On sunny days, we ask that parents be responsible for applying sunscreen at home.

PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Colossal Academy sometimes uses videos and photographs as teaching aids, and also for use in our printed and online publicity. We will not name or tag any child in a photograph. By allowing us to take any images you grant the Colossal Academy full rights to use the images resulting from the photography/video filming, and any reproductions or adaptations of the images for fundraising, publicity or other purposes to help achieve the group's aims. This might include (but not limited to), the right to use them in our printed and online publicity, social media, press releases and funding applications.

Because of the growing popularity of social media and the corresponding increase in potential issues surrounding its use, please see our guidelines below:

The main aim of school photography, video and social media policy is to keep everyone within the school safe and within the law.

Our policy is divided into three separate sections directed at staff, parents/guardians and pupils.

Staff requirements include:

- Not accepting friend requests from current pupils, or ex-pupils under the age of 18.
- Notifying the parents/guardians if a child sends a friend request.
- Use extreme caution when corresponding with parents/guardians via social media, and preferably using a school email address instead.
- Do not discuss anything to do with school, pupils or other staff members, or posting photos of school events
- Be respectful, polite and patient, when engaging in conversations on our company's behalf. They should be extra careful when making declarations or promises towards customers and stakeholders.
- All social media communication must be approved by the School Director.

For parents/guardians, requirements include:

- Not posting photos, videos or comments that include other children at the school

- Raising queries, concerns and complaints directly with the school rather than posting them on social media – whether on their own pages, in closed groups (e.g. groups set up for school parents to communicate with each other) or on the school's pages
- Not posting anything malicious about the school or any member of the school community

Children are required to:

- Not join any social networking sites if they are below the permitted age (13 for most sites including Facebook and Instagram)
- Ask permission from parents/guardians to join any of our social media groups.
- Not make inappropriate comments (including in private messages) about the school, teachers or other children
- Not post photos, videos or comments that include other children at the school
-

How we enforce our policy If parents/guardians infringe a rule such as posting photos including other pupils, you will be contacted by the school and asked to remove the content.

- If parents/guardians continue to break the rules, schools may ultimately ban cameras, phones and videos from school events. This may seem an extreme move – especially if you know that the parents or guardians of other children in your child's class are happy to have photos posted on Facebook - but in some cases, identifying a child who is the subject of safeguarding (e.g. a child who has been adopted or fostered, or who has an injunction against a family member) could put them at risk. This means it's essential that we uphold our policy through whatever means possible.

If a parent/guardian is accused of making malicious comments about the school or a teacher on social media, the parent/guardian will be invited to a meeting with the school. If the parent/guardian has a reasonable complaint, this should be addressed through contacting the office – but we can request that the offensive comments are removed. If the parent/guardian refuses, the Colossal Academy can escalate the matter by reporting it to the social networking site or the local authority or they can seek legal advice. Comments that are threatening, abusive, racist, sexist or that could be seen as a hate crime can be reported to the police as online harassment.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTERS /INTERNET AND CELL PHONES POLICY

This policy outlines the acceptable use of computers and of safe internet access for students. Parents should review this policy with students.

Computer Guidelines: Computers are used to promote the development of technological skills and to support learning in other areas through the vast array of research tools and resources available in the internet. Colossal Academy, maintains a filtering system restricting access to inappropriate content, including obscene visual depictions, child pornography, and other sites that are harmful to minors. Activity in the classroom is closely monitored.

Colossal Academy is educating minors about appropriate online behavior outside of school, including interactions with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

Internet Guidelines:

1. All internet/technology use during school hours, on Colossal Academy premises, field trips, or using Colossal Academy hardware/software must be in support of education and research, consistent with the educational objectives of Colossal Academy. Students must have a documented reason to access the internet, with a topic or subject to be researched; it must be related to an assignment.
2. Colossal Academy internet system has a limited educational purpose and is not intended to serve as a public access service or public forum. Colossal Academy places restrictions on its use to assure that use of Colossal Academy's computer system is in accord with its limited educational purpose. Student's use of Colossal Academy's computers, network and internet services will be governed by this policy, the related guidelines and the student disciplinary process.
3. Students will not be allowed to access social media for personal use, including email, chat rooms, instant messaging and other forms of direct electronic

communications. They will be permitted to access social media for educational use in accordance with their teacher's approved plan for such use. Students are not permitted to use personal cell phones at school or on field trips.

4. Students can not access their mobile devices during the school day and should not be brought to school. Parents may call the school office and request a message be relayed to their child. Phones must be turned off and stored out of sight during school hours. Phones may not be used to talk, take pictures, play games, record or text during school hours, including recesses.

5. Colossal Academy is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen phones, CD players, iPods or electronic gaming devices, CD players, iPods or electronic gaming devices, which are not permitted at school.

6. Network and Internet access is provided as a tool for education. Colossal Academy reserves the right to monitor and review any usage of the computer network and internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage.

7. Behavior that is specifically and globally forbidden by this policy includes:
Hacking - defined as any activity that includes illicit or unwarranted access to third-party sites.
Disclosure - use and dissemination of personal information regarding minors.

8. Staff members shall provide instruction for their students regarding appropriate technology use and online safety security.

9. Colossal Academy does not sanction any use of the internet that is not authorized by or conducted strictly in compliance with this policy and its accompanying guidelines.

10. Users who disregard this policy and its accompanying guidelines may have their use privileges suspended or revoked and disciplinary action taken against them.

11. Users granted access to the internet through the Colossal Academy's computers assume personal responsibility and liability, both civil and criminal for uses of the internet not authorized by this policy.

12. Colossal Academy Designates the Head of School as the administrator responsible for initiating, implementing and enforcing this policy.

It is impossible to guarantee students will not gain access through the internet to information and communications that they and/or their parents/guardians may find inappropriate, offensive and objectionable or controversial. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) assume risk by consenting to allow their child to participate in the use of the internet.

Colossal Academy students must follow these rules:

1. They will only use the internet and computers with the teacher's permission and for the purpose that the teacher has requested.

2. When using information from the Internet, I will rephrase it in my own words and cite the source .

3. They will not enter inappropriate or hurtful language into the computer.

4. They will stay safe on the internet by making sure that they never share personal information, like their full name, address or telephone number. If anyone on the internet tries to meet with them, they will refuse and tell their parents or teachers.

5. They will let their teacher know immediately if they see anything on the internet that is inappropriate or that makes them uncomfortable.

6.They will respect the school computer equipment. They will be sure to take good care of the equipment they use and will not change any desktops, controls or anyone else's files.

7. They will not use their own passwords that have been given to them by the teacher.
8. They will not put any disks or CD's into the computer unless they are approved by the teacher.
9. They will only download information onto school computers under the direction of the teacher.
10. They will not buy or sell anything using the school computers.
11. They understand that they will only be able to use school computers if they follow these rules.
- 12 They understand that they may not use their phone at school or on school field trips.

HANDBOOK REVISION POLICY

Colossal Academy reserves the right at its sole discretion to amend its policies, programs and/or guidelines, including the contents of this Handbook, at any time with or without prior notice.

Revision Date

This document was last revised on Jun 20, 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF PARENT HANDBOOK

I _____ (Parent / Guardian Name) have received and read the Colossal Academy Parent Handbook. I understand the policies/guidelines and procedures given to me and agree to adhere to all school policies. Please note: Colossal Academy policies and procedures are subject to change to reflect the needs

of the program, children and families we serve. We may also make changes or modifications in our policies if required by our licensing agencies. Colossal Academy will inform parents of changes taking place whenever possible in a timely manner. .

Signature _____

Date_____