

# Curaçao American Preparatory School

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## PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK

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## MISSION

The **C**uraçao **A**merican **P**reparatory **S**chool, a *multicultural and inclusive learning community, strives to engage all learners in a collaborative, dynamic environment. In 21st century classrooms, the school fosters global awareness, individual growth, problem solving and critical thinking.*

## VISION

“Excellence in Education - Inspiring and empowering one learner at a time.”

## BELIEFS

- A well-rounded education addresses the intellectual, moral, physical, aesthetic, and social-emotional development of the learner
- All learners thrive in an equitable environment with high expectations for academic success.
- A strong relationship between home and school is valuable.
- All decisions made are in the best interest of the learner.
- School is a safe and nurturing environment that embraces learning and positive self-esteem.
- Each student is a unique individual with special abilities and needs.
- The school and its stakeholders are committed to fulfill the mission through a process of continuous improvement.
- Change is a constant factor in life. Therefore, education should encourage the development of personal values and thinking processes, which will facilitate their intelligent adaptability to a changing society.

## CORE VALUES

Every CAPS citizen is encouraged to be:

- Reliable
- Reflective
- Ethical
- Creative
- Collaborative
- Compassionate
- Analytical
- A digital citizen
- A motivated learner

## ADMISSIONS

Students applying for admission will be considered on an individual basis. Admissions will be finalized after an admissions interview and all previous school records have been received. Applicants might have to take a screening test in mathematics and English.

All students whose native language is not English will be evaluated for language proficiency prior to English placement.

**NOTE:** All students admitted to CAPS must be living with parents or an authorized adult guardian.

## **LATE ADMISSIONS / SPECIAL ADMISSIONS**

As different school systems have different standards, students entering CAPS throughout the school year, will be tested and monitored for a four week period to adjust grade placement when necessary. If you are applying to high school, only completed high school courses approved by Accreditation standards will be considered for credit.

## **SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS**

On days when school is in session the business office is open from 7:30AM until 3:30PM. An answering machine is used when office personnel are unable to answer the telephone. The Director, members of the administrative team and teachers are available by appointment.

## **SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY**

To protect our students we require all visitors to report to the office upon entering the building. During COVID times all health protocols are observed. Parents who bring books, lunches, etc. to school are asked to bring them to the school office and the Office Coordinator will make sure the student receives them. Please try to keep this to a minimum. Parents are asked not to interrupt classroom instruction after 7:55 AM.

A student can only leave school early once the Early Dismissal Folder in the office has been signed.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Each student is required to have on file in the school office the following information that is collected at or before registration:

- Parent(s) or guardian(s) name(s)
- Complete physical and mailing address
- Home phone number, Parent(s) work phone number and mobile numbers as applicable
- Emergency phone numbers of 2 friends or relatives
- Physician's name and phone number
- Immunization Record
- Any previous school records and reports
- Email address as applicable
- Photo Release Form
- Testing Release Form
- Psychological evaluations
- IEP's (Individual Educational Plan)

## **ARRIVAL TIMES**

Please exercise patience and caution when bringing or picking up students from school. There are many vehicles at school during arrival time and again at dismissal posing a safety caution for all of us.

Therefore during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal times:

1. Use the area in front of the school for pickup and drop off.
2. No parking or leaving your car in the drop off area.
3. Please park across the street if you would like to go into the building.

Students should not arrive at school before 7:30AM and should be picked up promptly at the grade level dismissal time. There is no supervision before 7:30AM or after 3:15. We cannot be responsible for a

student's safety before and after the regular school hours. We have an after school service students can be enrolled in for a special fee. Parents who are habitually late will be charged a late fee of Ang. 5.00 every 15 minutes.

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

K-4 & K-5	7:55 AM-1:20 PM Monday through Thursday
Grades 1, 2	7:55 AM-2:05 PM Monday through Thursday
Grades 3-12	7:55 AM-3:00 PM Monday through Thursday
ALL Grades	7:55 AM-1:20 PM on Fridays
Half Days	12:00 PM dismissal

## **TARDINESS**

The school day starts promptly at 7:55 AM. This means students should be in their classroom, in their seat and ready to start before 7:55 AM. A student that arrives even 5 minutes late disrupts the entire class. Tardy students must wait in the lobby to get a tardy sticker to present to the homeroom teacher. Three tardies will be considered one absence. Five absences will be a zero assignment grade for the period which will affect a student's grade point average.

K-4 and K-5 are half-day programs. Please see the discipline list on page 10 for consequences.

## **ATTENDANCE / REPORTING ABSENCES**

Regular attendance is essential to a student's success in school. When a student is absent from school, he/she misses demonstrations and dialogue that cannot be reproduced through completion of make up assignments. Additionally, persistent absenteeism creates genuine hardship for a student and is regarded as a very serious problem.

The following circumstances are the most common reasons for an excused absence:

1. Personal illness
2. Family illness or death in the family
3. Religious beliefs

If a student will be absent, you must call the office and leave word for the teacher. When the student returns he/she is expected to bring a written note to be put in the cumulative folder as a running record. Absent students are responsible for collecting missed assignments and missed notes.

Doctor and Dentist appointments- Parents are asked to make every effort to schedule medical appointments outside of the school day. The school recognizes that this may be difficult and asks to be notified of any school day late arrival and/or early departure.

Students who leave school during the school day need to be signed out of the building by their parents through the school office. Likewise, students entering the building during the school day need to be signed in by their parents.

## **CHANGE OF ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBERS OR EMERGENCY CONTACTS**

It is very important that every student maintains an up-to-date address and telephone record at the school office. Notify the school immediately if you have a change of address, employment, and telephone number, etc. during the school year. Every student must have at least two numbers to contact in the event of an emergency.

## **CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL**

Cancellation of school takes place only during extraordinary circumstances such as equipment failure or public crisis. Every practical means is used to notify parents of an impending cancellation. You may receive notification from one of these sources: school administration, PTA volunteers or by use of a phone tree.

## **COMMUNICATIONS WITH STAFF**

Teachers are available to speak with parents when they are not with students. Please send a note and the student's teacher will contact you for an appointment.

If a conference with a teacher is desired, make a telephone contact to establish a mutually agreeable time for the meeting. Simply showing up at the classroom door is not a means to a productive and successful conference.

On a collective level there is a continual flow of information to parents and students via email, newsletters, calendars of events and handbooks. From time to time the reactions, opinions and requirements of parents are canvassed via discussions, questionnaires or surveys.

## **PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent teacher conferences occur during the first and second semester. This conference time is a very important communication opportunity and it is imperative that parents attend. Conferences can be arranged whenever there is a need at other times during the school year by calling the teacher and requesting a conference. There are also times when a teacher will call you and ask for a conference. This is not done lightly. Teachers want what you want: Success for each student each and every day of school.

## **SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS**

Every student will periodically be taught by a substitute teacher. The most common reason for using substitute teachers occurs when the regular teacher is ill. However, substitutes are also used when regular teachers are on leave for personal business, team planning, professional training, or a family emergency.

## **INTERNS**

CAPS works in close connection with the different universities in The Netherlands and the United State of America. At varied times some student teachers are sent to Curaçao to intern in our classrooms. We feel very privileged to have these students come and work with our students as they provide new and innovative ways to educate students and keep us up-to-date.

## **SUPPLIES**

Regular classroom supplies such as pencils, erasers, glue, scissors, coloring pencils, crayons, notebooks, rulers are included in the fee. Parents are responsible for supplies to be used at home for homework, replacement supplies when the ones handed out at the beginning of the year are lost, and specialty items wanted by the student.

## **LUNCH**

Each student has a lunch period during the day. Students are encouraged to bring healthy food choices from home. Snacks and drinks are available for purchase in the school cafeteria (pizza on Wednesdays). In order to buy items, a FI.10.00 or FI.25.00 debit card needs to be purchased in the office (before school). Amounts will be crossed off the card as needed.

## **BIRTHDAY TREATS AND PARTY INVITATIONS**

Many students bring birthday treats to school on or near their birthdays. Birthday treats are optional and certainly not required. Please check with your student's teacher. For safety and health reasons (COVID), we can only share individually wrapped treats. Birthdays are celebrated, but with minimal disruption to the school day.

Party invitations will be distributed as a courtesy only if all classmates are to be invited. If a partial class is invited parents MUST distribute invitations outside of school.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are designed to supplement different aspects of the classroom curriculum and to help students explore ideas that flow from their classroom instruction. Parents will receive sufficient advance notices of field trips that will include the trip date, destination and other necessary details. Parents must sign field trip permission forms confirming their knowledge of the trip and approval for participation.

## **GENERAL SCHOOL RULES**

Our goal at CAPS is to create the kind of environment where people value, respect and encourage one another. Just as we continually monitor progress in mathematics and reading we need to monitor and support social and emotional growth by modeling good behavior and using terms such as please, thank you, excuse me, and I'm sorry. Toward this end the following general rules were created to help students learn to work together and get along with each other in school and on the playground.

### Caring for others

- Disrespectful comments, gestures or bad language will not be tolerated
- Respect the rights of others to learn.
- Work and play with others in a way that will not harm them—no wrestling, tackling or play fighting.

### Caring for self

- Solve problems without fighting or hitting.
- Seeking the advice and help of adults when you can't solve a problem.
- Ask questions when you don't understand and after you have listened carefully.

### Caring for things

- Respect the property that belongs to others and that which belongs to all of us at school.
- Keep personal belongings that are stored in the classroom neatly organized.
- Remember to pick up and put away materials when you are finished.
- Clean up after yourself and work with others to make our school a first-rate place.
- Do not waste materials as they cost money and will affect the price of tuition.

## STUDENT CONDUCT

Our goal is to provide a safe, orderly and comfortable atmosphere to insure optimum learning opportunities. Students are expected to respect the rights of others and to use good manners. Each teacher will involve students in developing an understanding of classroom rules that they all agree to follow. Parents will be notified if major problems occur. Inappropriate behavior such as fighting will be addressed by the appropriate administrator. Warnings will be followed by parent contact if needed. Good deeds and conduct occur with greater frequency when they are recognized. To this end, the staff and students will make a special effort to recognize the many acts of kindness.

## DRESS CODE / UNIFORMS

Students should dress appropriately in their polo or P.E. uniform. All students must wear a mandatory CAPS uniform shirt. The shirts are available at school. Gym shoes are required for PE.

The following are not permitted:

- Clothing that advertises the use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs and/or suggests vulgar or anti-social values.
- Hats and caps
- High heels and slippers
- Bottoms shorter than 3 inches above the knee.
- See-through leggings
- Ripped jeans
- Visible undergarments

Students who come to school without their uniform must borrow a uniform for the day. Parents will be billed 5.00 Nafl. for the borrowed uniform. Students who come to school dressed inappropriately will have their parents called for a change of clothes or be sent home.

## HOMEWORK PHILOSOPHY

CAPS believes that homework is an important activity; that contributes to a student's education in a variety of ways.

Some important homework benefits include:

- Developing a student's sense of personal responsibility for their learning
- Establishing necessary study habits
- Reinforcing important skills and knowledge
- Including the parents in the student's education

To better communicate homework practices and procedures, each grade level has reviewed and established the following guidelines. The time allocations for each grade are estimated based on what most students need to devote to their assignments. Parents are encouraged to communicate with their child's teacher concerning specific questions or comments regarding their child's success in completing homework.

K-5 grade 1 & 2	15 to 30 minutes daily
Grade 3 & 4	30 to 40 minutes daily



Grades 5 & 6                40 to 60 minutes daily  
Grades 7 & 8                60 to 90 minutes daily  
Grades 9-12                90 to 180 minutes daily

These time allocations vary from student to student and do not include time needed to complete assignments not done in class due to distractions.

Two incomplete homework assignments warrant one after school detention.

## **HOMEWORK POLICY**

Students are normally absent for reasons of illness or vacation. When a student is ill, many parents try to make arrangements to pick up the homework so that a student does not fall too far behind. The official policy, however, is that students have the same number of days to make up the homework as the number of days that were missed. For instance, if a student is absent on a Monday or Tuesday, that student has Wednesday or Thursday to make up the work that was missed. The completed homework needs to be sent to the student's teacher no later than first thing on Friday morning.

If a student is going to be out on a family vacation, teachers will not attempt to assign work in advance of the vacation. Instead, a folder will be placed on the student's desk during the absence and all work will be gathered inside the folder. As with absences for illness, the student will have an equal number of days to complete the homework he or she missed. If a student was out for one week, that student has one additional week to complete the homework without penalty.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are issued following the completion of each quarter of the year. A student whose parents are not up to date with payments, will not receive a report card until payments are completed. (Generally report cards are sent home the Friday following the end of the quarter.)

Please carefully review the progress and contact the teacher if you have any questions.

## **ACADEMIC PROBATION.**

When a student's **Grade Point Average** is below 64%, the student is put on academic probation. This means that there is a possibility that the student might not pass the academic year. If his or her grades go up by the next quarter and the grade point average goes up above 60% the student is taken off probation. Students are also able to move to the next grade level as long as they retake the class they failed.

## **ILLNESS, INJURY AND MEDICATION**

In case of illness or injury a student will be cared for temporarily by a member of the school staff. If emergency medical treatment is necessary, the parents will be contacted.

Medications at school will only be administered with a note from the student's doctor.

Headache medication is available in the office. If you do not wish for a student to receive minor headache medication, or if a student is allergic, please notify the office and the student's teacher in writing.

If a student is not feeling well, you will be called and asked to make arrangements to pick the student up ASAP. We do not have an appropriate space to keep students who do not feel well.

## **LEAVING SCHOOL**

Students are not allowed to leave the school campus during school hours for any reason without the knowledge and consent of their teacher. Parents who want to pick up a student during the day are asked to check in at the office and sign the student out of school. Teachers must receive a note from home alerting them to the fact that the student will leave early. This helps them plan for that student to be prepared to leave at the designated time.

Parents must notify the office in writing about changes in pick-up.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Money, jewelry or any other articles of value are turned in to the office. Students are encouraged to ask about these items. Each year many items go unclaimed for lack of a label. Whenever possible, label items so they can be identified and returned. Items not claimed during the two-week time period are given to charity.

## **CELL PHONES, HANDHELD DEVICES, TOYS, ETC.**

All of these items should be left at home. Cell phones **MUST** be turned in to the homeroom teacher at the beginning of the school day and will be returned at the end of the day. Students and parents **MUST** communicate via the office phone. Phones and music devices will be taken away after one warning and kept in the office to be collected by a parent or returned at the end of the week. After a second warning the device will be kept and returned at the end of the semester.

Common sense and consideration is the best guide in determining whether or not to bring personal possessions to school. This extends to money, as students really have no need to carry large sums of money to school. The school will assume **NO** responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of these items under **ANY** circumstances.

## **GUM**

No gum as allowed at school. Students chewing gum are immediately asked to discard it. Repeated abuse of this rule will lead to detention in which students are asked to clean all the school tables.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

When parents become enthusiastically involved in school programs, all children benefit. CAPS, welcomes parent involvement and encourages each parent to find a means of becoming part of the school community. Volunteers are always needed to help at school or with a PTA event. Please check with the principal about working in the classroom or using your skills to help better the school.

## **PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)**

The PTA is an organization of teachers and parents who work together to support the students. This support is in the form of providing class parties, lunch programs, fundraisers and by purchasing equipment or materials that would not be part of the school's normal budget. At CAPS every parent is a member of the PTA by means of a once a year fee per family. General meetings are announced well in advance by means of flyers sent home with the students or through electronic means.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

Parents, Guardians or eligible students (18 years or older who are self-supporting) shall have access to their records. Information about grades, test scores, evaluations, promotions or counseling services shall be provided. Records kept by the school will contain useful information for setting educational goals, planning instructional programs and evaluating pupil progress. Parents, guardians or eligible students may appeal any disagreement of records to the school director. Parents, guardians or eligible students have the responsibility to provide the school with any information that could be useful in making appropriate educational decisions.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Please note the following offenses and consequences we will abide by as a school. This list is by no means exhaustive.

<b>Offense</b>	<b>Consequence</b>
Aggravated battery	Notify parent – 10 day suspension or expulsion
Arson	Notify parent – 10 day suspension or expulsion
Battery on or threat/intimidation of indiv.	Notify parent – 10 day suspension or expulsion
Bodily harm	Notify parent and police 10 day suspension or expulsion
Bomb threat	Notify parent and police 10 day suspension or expulsion
Breaking/ entering of school property	Notify parent and police 10 day suspension or expulsion
Cheating/ Forgery	Grade zero and possible in school suspension
Computer misuse	Notify parent, loss of privilege, in school suspension
Defiance/disrespect/profanity	Notify parent, 1-3 day suspension
Disorderly conduct	Notify parent, 1-3 day suspension
Disruptive behavior – extensive – (first offense)	Notify parent and in school suspension
Disruptive behavior – extension (second offense)	Notify parent and 1 day suspension
Disruptive behavior – extensive – (third offense)	Notify parent and 3 day suspension
Disruptive behavior – extensive – (fourth offense)	Notify parent and 4-10 day suspension or expulsion
False fire alarms	Notify parent – 10 day suspension or expulsion
Fighting	Notify parent, in school suspension or 1-3 day suspension
Gum	Detention, clean school tables
Harassment	Notify parent and in school suspension
Homework	2 missed assignments, 1 detention
Motor Vehicle theft	Notify parent and police 10 day suspension or expulsion
Plagiarism	Notify parent – a grade of zero for the assignment
Possession , use of tobacco	Notify parent – 3 day suspension
Possession, use of Alcohol	Notify parent – 3 day suspension

Possession, use, sale, distribution of illegal substances or objects.	Notify parent and police 10 day suspension or expulsion
Sexual battery	Notify parent and police immediate expulsion
Sexual harassment	Notify parent, 1-3 day suspension
Tardiness (3 times)	Notify parent – 1 hour detention
Tardiness (more than 3 times)	Notify parent – 1.5 hour detention
Theft, robbery	Notify parent and police 1-5 day suspension or expulsion
Threat of individual	Notify parent and police 1-5 day suspension or expulsion
Vandalism	Notify parent, 1-3 day suspension
Violation of dress code	Notify parent, pick-up and change inappropriate attire

## **EXCLUSION FROM PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL RELATED ACTIVITIES**

The principal has the authority to exclude a student from participating in school related activities if the student's conduct, at school or outside school, is deemed unacceptable.

## **GLOSSARY**

**AGGRAVATED BATTERY:** Means battery when a person intentionally or knowingly causes great bodily harm or permanent disfigurement, or uses a deadly weapon.

**ALCOHOL:** The violation of school policy prohibiting the possession, sale, transfer, distribution or use (or under the Influence) of alcoholic beverages of any amount, including, but not limited to, beer, wine/wine coolers and liquor.

**ARSON:** Setting a fire on/in school property

**BATTERY:** An actual and intentional touching or striking of another person against his/her will or intentionally causing bodily harm to an individual.

**BOMB/EXPLOSIVE:** Any Chemical compound, mixture, or device, of which the primary purpose is to function by explosion. The term “explosion” is defined as rapid buildup of gases that overcome the structural or material resistance of its container and a blast.

**BREAKING/ENTERING:** The unlawful entry into a building or other structure or vehicle with the intent to commit a felony or theft.

**CHEATING:** The act of or intent to fraudulently deceive.

**COMPUTER MISUSE:** Inappropriate use including, but not limited to, breaking into restricted accounts or networks, modifying files without permission, illegally copying software and entering or distributing inappropriate or unauthorized files (e.g. Pornographic files); vandalism of computer equipment.

**CONTINUOUS DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR:** Behavior that disrupts a classroom or school, continually engaging in behavior, which jeopardizes the health, safety and welfare of others on campus, or school sponsored transportation. When a pattern of disruptive behavior has been documented by a third out of school suspension, a letter from the principal will be sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s). Once a “continuous disruptive letter” has been issued, further out of school suspensions may result in a referral for change of placement or expulsion.

**CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE:** Any medication, drug or substance that is regulated by law. Prescribed medications must be registered and distributed by school personnel using school board procedures.

**DEFIANCE:** Blatant refusal to follow legitimate and reasonable directive.

**DETENTION:** Supervised before/after school or weekend study hall or other activity.

**DISRESPECT:** Gross display of a lack of respect, regard or esteem toward a school board employee or agent.

**DISORDERLY CONDUCT:** Any act, which substantially disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function, behavior substantially disrupting the orderly learning environment or poses a threat to the health, safety and/or welfare of students and/or staff.

**DRUGS:** (excluding alcohol): Violation of the Board's prohibition of the possession, sale, transfer, distribution, use or being under the influence of controlled substances excluding alcohol: drugs which require a physician's prescription or the possession of which is prohibited by law. Also prohibited are the sale or distribution of any substance represented by the student to be a controlled substance, the use of any legal substance to attain a mood-altering effect and the possession of any equipment or device for preparing or taking drugs.

**EXPULSION:** The removal of the right and obligation of a student to attend CAPS for a period of time not to exceed the remainder of the term or school year and one additional year of attendance.

**FIGHTING:** A physical altercation between two or more students where contact is made.

**FIREARMS:** Violation of the school prohibition of firearms of any kind (operable or inoperable, loaded or unloaded). Included in this list are pellet or BB guns and starter pistols. (See Weapons)

**FORGERY:** The making of false or misleading written communication with the intent to deceive.

**HARASSMENT:** Using repeated unwelcome remarks to annoy, demean, or ridicule another.

**IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION:** The temporary removal of a student from the student's regular school program and placement in an alternative program, under the supervision of school personnel, for a period not to exceed (10) school days.

**MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT:** The theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle, including, but not limited to, cars, trucks, motorcycles, and mopeds.

**OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION:** The temporary removal of a student from all classes of instruction on public school grounds and all other school-sponsored activities, except as authorized by the principal/designee for a period not to exceed ten (10) school days.

**PLAGIARISM:** To steal or pass off the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source.

**PROFANITY:** Disrespectful language or gestures that are deemed vile, vulgar or debasing.

**RESTITUTION:** Restoring or paying for damaged or stolen property.

**ROBBERY/EXTORTION** (using force): the taking, or attempting to take, anything of value under confrontational circumstances from the control, custody or care of another person by force, or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear.

**SEXUAL BATTERY** (Includes attempted) Any sexual act directed against another person, forcibly and/or against the person's will, or not forcibly or against the person's will, where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her youth or because of temporary or permanent mental incapacity.

**The Administration at CAPS reserves the right to search any student's cubby, backpack, cell phone or pockets when there is enough suspicion to warrant such a search.**

**Changes to the Handbook will be made when appropriate and the school community will be informed about these changes.**