



MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

What You Should Know

2011-2012

中美國際學校

**CHINESE AMERICAN
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**

Our Philosophy: A “Whole Child” Approach We are guided by our Mission Statement

The mission of Chinese American International School is to educate students for academic excellence, moral character and international perspective through immersion in American and Chinese culture and language.

We know students in middle school need to feel comfortable and supported, to have fun and be happy, and to be willing to take risks in order to learn. Our programs address the needs of the whole child, rather than a singular focus on academic achievement. Four integral aspects form the foundation of our program: Rigorous Curriculum, Leadership and Character Education, Global Awareness Programs and the Arts. Each element provides a lens, which when viewed together, highlight and develop the child as a unique, whole person.

Social and Emotional Development of Middle School Students

Parents are often worried or confused by changes in their children as they become teenagers. The following information is provided to help parents understand this phase of development. Each teenager is an individual with a unique personality, special interests, likes and dislikes. However, there are also numerous developmental issues that everyone faces during the adolescent years and preadolescent years. The normal feelings and behaviors of the middle school may include:

Movement Towards Independence

- Struggle with sense of identity
- Feeling awkward or strange about one's self and one's body
- Focus on self, alternating between high expectations and poor self-esteem
- Interests and clothing style influenced by peer group
- Moodiness
- Improved ability to use speech to express oneself
- Realization that parents are not perfect; identification of their faults
- Less overt affection shown to parents, with occasional rudeness
- Complaints that parents interfere with independence
- Tendency to return to childish behavior, particularly when stressed

Social and Emotional Development of Middle School Students, continued

Future Interests and Cognitive Changes

- Mostly interested in present, with limited thoughts of the future
- Intellectual interests expand and gain in importance
- Greater ability to do work (physical, mental, emotional)

Sexuality

- Display shyness, blushing and modesty
- Girls typically develop physically sooner than boys
- Increased interest in sex
- Concerns regarding physical and sexual attractiveness to others
- Frequently changing relationships
- Worries about being normal
- Experimentation with sexuality

Morals, Values and Self-Direction

- Rule and limit testing
- Capacity for abstract thought
- Development of ideals and selection of role models
- More consistent evidence of conscience

Young teenagers do vary slightly from the above descriptions, as does each individual, but the feelings and behaviors are, in general, considered normal for each stage of adolescence. (Check the www.aacap.org website for more valuable information.)

As parents and adults responsible for supporting students through this exciting and often trying time, it's good to keep some guidelines in mind:

- Since kids are likely to test limits, boundaries must be clear.
- At the same time, parents can help students feel competent by giving them opportunities to experience independence when appropriate.
- As kids move through adolescence, it's important for them to experience privileges and increased independence. Save some things for them to earn and grow into as they mature.
- Expect that your child will say, "You are the only parent who..." and know that is not true.
- Know that there are times in middle school when kids may be tempted to 'take the easy way out' and in some cases even lie and cheat. It's our job to guide them through the decision-making process to help them choose to do the right and honest thing.

Components of our Program: Bilingual Curriculum, Leadership Skills, Global Awareness, Arts

Bilingual Curriculum

Students learn best when they are held to high expectations while simultaneously being supported and encouraged to take risks in their learning. Our dual immersion program cultivates habits of mind and strong critical thinking skills, while our integrated instruction invites learners to dive into explorations with curiosity and energy. Our teachers set high standards and create systems and lessons that spark the wonder of students and invite them to challenge themselves.

Physical education and the well-being of students are echoed in daily class routines, our health and wellness program, and our outstanding competitive athletic program. Our field trips and outdoor education programs provide real-life experiences to enrich the classroom learning. The integrated use of technology fosters students' creative interactions with information allowing them to go beyond merely reiterating facts.

Leadership

We see our CAIS middle school students as leaders and provide numerous experiences that nurture leadership skills in formal and informal ways. In advisory classes students are guided to prepare for student-led conferences in which they speak with authority, clarity, and the support of textual documents that demonstrate their learning and progress to parents. Cooperative learning groups and formal presentations are other classroom leadership opportunities in which students hone public speaking skills, stating opinions and thoughts in the presence of peers. Student Government and Community Service experiences are more formalized leadership opportunities. Students of all grade levels are welcomed as participants in planning school events and addressing community needs as they arise. Student Government raises money through selling items such as pork buns on Wednesdays to fund middle school dances, spirit days, and donations to disaster relief efforts. Middle school students engage with the community both within CAIS by working with younger students as well as the greater San Francisco community through a variety of service learning projects.

The school year begins with an outdoor education experience. A week of community building is highlighted by day trips designed to challenge students and to invite them to take risks, while building a sense of team and group identity. Ropes courses and cooperative projects develop problem-solving skills as well as empathy, sensitivity, teamwork, and an identity as a member of the middle school.

Leadership, continued

Leadership is also addressed on the personal level through lessons on decision-making and understanding oneself. Each year students participate in a week of health education led by a trained specialist to learn about their bodies, physical, emotional and social development, and decision-making. The learning that takes place over three years in middle school helps prepare students for life as a high school student who will need to make difficult social choices. Students learn to work together and support one another as they meet once a month for middle school assemblies, sharing learning, activities, and school spirit, such as our all middle school spelling bee in January. As a community, fun and celebrations are important to enhancing the experience of tweens and teens in their daily activities.

Global Awareness

Our class curriculum forms a focus on biculturalism and dual language immersion in the middle school. All teachers welcome opportunities to develop global awareness in our students. Literature and social studies curriculum creates opportunities for middle school students to develop understanding of many perspectives through their study of history and culture. Our advisory program helps students develop skills of empathy as applied to their daily lives. Guest speakers, events, and service learning opportunities support student learning in developing sensitivity for the world and its people, animals, and environments. Service projects take place both inside and outside the curriculum as students in different grade levels address world needs through interest-based projects and responses to world-wide events.

Arts

By the time our students have entered middle school they have a rich and varied background of art education. Teachers build on our incoming sixth graders' artistic skills through classroom projects and in our arts program classes. Students continue to learn specific skills in art, music, drama and dance. We offer six disciplines including Chinese brush painting, Chinese dance, Chinese music, hip hop dance, visual art and Orff music and movement. Three disciplines are taught in Chinese and the three in English. Each trimester all the students in each grade will have two disciplines: one in Chinese and one in English. The following trimester those students have two different disciplines, and the third trimester they take the remaining two for a total of six over the course of the school year. Each discipline meets twice a week for 50 minutes. On the final day of each trimester there will be a Middle School Arts Sharing during the regular arts program class time. All six disciplines will share a representative sample of their work over the trimester. Parents, faculty and lower school students will be invited, as space permits, with priority given to parents.

Academic Program

Students who graduate from CAIS find themselves prepared and ready for the demands of high school. CAIS graduates will:

- Demonstrate written and spoken fluency in Mandarin Chinese and English.
- Exhibit a curiosity that inspires lifelong intellectual and emotional growth.
- Develop independent, critical and creative thinking skills.
- Strive to become a person with a strong sense of personal and social responsibility.
- Act with integrity and compassion.
- Value self, others and the environment.
- Respect diverse views, beliefs and cultures.
- Contribute to local and global communities.
- Honor values of universal respect, equity and justice.

Our program is based on a “whole child” approach that fosters both academic skills and personal skills, allowing students to thrive in the learning environment and also make good choices in their lives. CAIS students graduate ready for the most demanding high school programs. They stand out among their peers thanks to a strong academic foundation, establishing multilingual and multicultural perspectives, intellectual curiosity, confident self-expression and creativity.

CAIS curriculum is based on a foundation of best practices in education and the newest brain research, and is, therefore, a dynamic, growing and changing force. A team of highly qualified middle school teachers employ cutting edge strategies in their instruction. A hands-on, minds-on, interdisciplinary curriculum guides students to apply concepts to the issues in their community and world as well as in their own lives. Mastery of essential concepts and skills combined with support of individual strengths helps students become dedicated and reflective learners. Students think globally and explore multiple perspectives while celebrating differences and harnessing the power of collaboration.

Our Chinese department distinguishes CAIS from all other middle schools. The middle school Chinese department is comprised of three teachers, one for each grade level. Working together, they create meaningful events and experiences that create enjoyment for middle school students as they seek to master Mandarin speech, culture and curriculum. Coursework in Chinese Humanities combines a study of literature, culture, history, geography and common culture and language and complements the same disciplines taught through the English language. In addition to our classroom Chinese Humanities program, students are offered a variety of Chinese arts classes taught in Mandarin.

Sixth Grade

At this time, students undergo cognitive, social-emotional, and physical transitions. They learn and practice the habits of mind essential to succeeding in middle school and outside of the classroom. Students are invited to learn responsibility and organization, master specific study skills and make healthy choices. The daily schedule, classroom environment and behavioral expectations are geared to the needs of early adolescents. Students are guided with a strong hand, a warm smile, and are expected to learn through trial and error.

Highlights of the sixth grade include:

- Student-centered, differentiated curriculum.
- Outdoor Education.
- Weekly advisory sessions focusing on building respect, community, and self-esteem.
- Daily study skills support after each day of curricular classes.
- Arts program including Chinese brush painting, Chinese dance, Chinese music, hip hop, visual art and Orff music and movement.
- Integrated, project-based approach to math and science.
- Emphasis on the writing process in Chinese and English.
- Increased community involvement through clubs, student government and peer counselor program.
- Opportunity to travel to China during spring break.
- Intramural sports and athletic teams.

Seventh Grade

Students journey from concrete thinking to more abstract, conceptual understanding. An interdisciplinary approach guides students through problem solving and critical thinking processes to find meaningful relationships between what they learn and their everyday lives.

Highlights of the seventh grade include:

- Interdisciplinary, bilingual approach to learning.
- Expanded exploratory program choices.
- Extended, interdisciplinary service learning project focusing on issues of poverty and homelessness.
- Weekly advisory sessions on identity development and building community.
- Greater freedom as they move from one class to another throughout the school.
- Opportunity to travel to China during spring break.

Eighth Grade

Students engage in an increasingly collaborative and democratic learning environment emphasizing choice, independence, and intellectual self-reflection. They enjoy opportunities for self-directed inquiry based on their emerging status as bilingual, multicultural individuals.

Highlights of the eighth grade include:

- Inter-disciplinary, bilingual approach to learning.
- Weekly advisory sessions based on developing leadership and skills for balancing a healthy lifestyle and the demands of an interconnected world.
- Outdoor Education.
- Expanded health and wellness curriculum culminating with students designing programs to sustain lifelong physical and emotional health.
- As part of the Orff music and movement curriculum, all students take a leading role in developing and performing in the Winter Program.
- Service learning within San Francisco's Chinese community.
- Exclusive use of the fourth floor open space as a meeting area at lunch time.
- Student Government officers may only be eighth graders.
- Opportunity to participate in an exchange program in Beijing.

A Glossary of Terms

Advisory: Middle school students attend advisory once each week, usually on Mondays. Student advisory groups are smaller than normal class groups. Advisory teachers become caring advocates for students and may be either the child's classroom teacher or another staff member. The advisory curriculum covers interpersonal skills, study skills, drug and substance education, technology usage education, and other topics of interest for growing pre-adolescents and teens. Once a month, as part of advisory time, students come together for all middle school assemblies. It is our hope that students will seek help from their advisor when needed as they adapt to life in middle school.

Arts Program: The arts program is the period of time during the day when students participate in arts, enrichment, service learning, or skill-building classes outside of the core classes. We select teachers who are professional teachers and/or professionals in the field in which they teach. Arts program teachers make an effort to coordinate with each other and with classroom teachers to provide continuity within the middle school. Arts classes may be taught for one, two or three trimesters. We attempt to provide variety over the three years students attend CAIS middle school. We also create a balance between student-selected choice and assigned arts activities so students are exposed to a wide range of disciplines. There is a balance of English and Chinese language classes. Students are able to choose classes that foster growth in an area of passion. In the sixth grade, arts program classes may include study skills and meditation, assuring that students will be well-prepared for the demands of our middle school academic program.

The arts program is bilingual: half of the classes are taught in Chinese and the other half in English. Classes include Chinese brush painting, Chinese dance, Chinese music, hip hop, visual art and Orff music and movement.

Arts Program, continued

Middle school students demonstrate their arts program subject knowledge and skills through a variety of performances and exhibits throughout the year, such as the Winter Program in Herbst Theatre, middle school arts sharing planned specifically for arts program class demonstrations and collaborations, and the all-school Chinese New Year Mass Greeting.

During arts program classes, students are exposed to a number of different experiences in the hope that as they grow older they might choose them as major interests in their lives

Athletics: The goals of athletic education are to help young people to develop physically, emotionally, and intellectually. The athletic program at CAIS provides any student who desires to be part of team sports with opportunities to participate as team members in athletic competition with other schools. The desirable outcome of participation includes the development not only of physical skills but also of sportsmanship, citizenship, teamwork, self-discipline, loyalty, tolerance and perseverance.

CAIS is a member of the San Francisco Athletics League (SFAL) and competes with 15 other San Francisco schools throughout the school year in the following sports

- Fall: Cross-country and co-ed volleyball
- Winter: Boys and girls basketball
- Spring: co-ed futsal

Auxiliary Programs: Students are able to continue their participation in our outstanding after school programs. Advanced study in performance and skill classes are taught by our excellent staff. Competitive athletics are also available, as are tutoring, MathCOUNTS and study hall.

Core: The core classes are the grade level classes taught by teachers all year. The core teachers are those teachers who teach English Language Arts (ELA), English Social Studies (ESS), Chinese Humanities, Math, and Science. Core teachers meet regularly as a group, with the addition of the health and wellness teachers who teach students all year, and by grade level to discuss program decisions, curriculum, students and topics in education.

Competitions: As part of our “whole child” approach, we see competition as a healthy part of life. As educators, we work to help students learn to try their best while at the same time encouraging others to be successful. We want our students to excel and at the same time demonstrate teamwork and sportsmanship. We offer several opportunities for competitive participation:

- MathCOUNTS (through Auxiliary Program)
- *San Francisco Chronicle*-sponsored spelling bee
- Mandarin Speech Competition (now offered through Auxiliary Program)
- Various literary competitions (submitted by English Language Arts Teachers)

Discipline: Middle school students test boundaries as they begin to establish their independence. The middle school disciplinary system aims to help students learn from their mistakes and prevent such behavior in the future. We believe that by working together with parents we can ensure make every effort to keep parents informed of disciplinary measures used as they apply to their children.

The root of the word discipline is “to teach.” Our discipline system starts with teaching and supporting students to do the right thing. When students break rules, the consequence is a referral to the Middle School Dean of Student Life, which results in a “yellow card.” Upon receipt of a yellow card, students discuss the incident with the Dean of Student Life, complete a written reflection of their behavior, including how to make amends with any wronged party, and must get the referral signed by a parent and return it to the Dean of Student Life the next day. Students can be given up to three yellow cards before receiving a red card, with consequences and parent involvement increasing with each step. Instead of receiving a fourth yellow card, students receive a red card, which comes with more serious consequences. Students are able to “reset” their behavior by not getting more cards and demonstrating behavioral growth (see Middle School Expectations).

Field Trips: Teachers in the middle school use field trips to augment learning. We are fortunate to be in the center of San Francisco with so many nearby resources. We are cultivating a relationship with the Asian Art Museum and hope to expand on both visiting the site for learning as well as having our students share what they know with the docents and those visiting the museum. The middle school also makes use of the proximity and resource of Chinese cultural areas for learning.

Health & Wellness and PE: Students attend health and wellness classes as part of the PE curriculum. PE meets daily for sixth and seventh graders and for longer periods less frequently as eighth graders. Students walk to the school gym independent of teacher supervision, and thus are expected to maintain appropriate behavior as they walk down the stairs, through the halls and across the street.

Homework: Homework is an important part of the middle school academic program and students are expected to complete homework as assigned. Teachers work together to make sure that large assignments and tests are staggered so that students are not overloaded at the same time by many assignments.

At home, students synthesize and apply mastered skills and knowledge as well as practice what they have learned at school. Students should be able to work independently on homework, although parents may provide oversight to be sure students are on task and maintain reasonable work schedules.

Homework, continued

Although homework is posted on the Veracross student information system, our online school information system, all students should fill out and bring home their daily homework planner so parents can see what nightly homework has been assigned. Parents can also help students create calendars that allow everyone to know when assignments are due. The planner is also useful in helping ensure students bring home the necessary materials for that evening's work. Parents can support students by providing a quiet work space, study materials such as dictionary, pencils, pens, computer, paper and art pencils, and good lighting. Most studies indicate that for many reasons computers should be in a public space within the home so parents can supervise student computer activity. Students must follow CAIS guidelines at all time when using a computer, whether at home or at school.

Brain research tells us that adequate sleep is essential for student health and learning; parents may want to restrict after school activities to allow students to be able to complete homework and still get a full night's sleep (8-9 hours for adolescents). If homework is taking significantly more than two hours (an average of one to three, depending on the student) nightly, parents should contact teachers to enlist their help in management of the homework load. No child should ever be up past 10:00 p.m. doing homework.

Independent Study (IS): At the beginning of the year, students participate in study skills classes during the IS part of the school day. Independent study (IS) teachers participate, and the learning specialists who lead the classes work with sixth grade teachers to create a uniform approach to study skills that will support the sixth graders. Students are assigned to independent study classes in which they are able to sit quietly and read for pleasure or work on homework assignments. Grade level teachers are available during that time in order to meet with students who need help with assignments or short-term tutoring. Students may also ask for a library pass during independent study or use a school computer with supervision. Independent Study teachers support students with study skills and organizational skills.

Sixth and seventh grade independent study classes meet daily, while eighth grade students attend three times a week for longer periods of time in order to accommodate work that requires more time. Middle school students should report to their independent study room during the designated IS time, and core teachers request students they need or ask if students need help that day. During the first trimester of sixth grade students are taught the meaning of "independent" and the need to plan for independent study period and bring all necessary materials so that the period is a time of learning. Students are expected to maintain calm, quiet demeanor as they move through the halls from one classroom to the other.

Interdisciplinary: Brain research tells us that humans learn best when information is presented within a rich context rather than as isolated facts. Interdisciplinary instruction combines approaches and topic into meaningful units, and is used as the model for many middle school lessons. For example, rather than studying world geography as succinct concepts, students may study the geography of Greece and Rome in the context of the historical and cultural aspects of those cultures that were impacted by unique geographical features of those areas. Teachers balance "skill-building" activities with lessons that give meaningful context to salient skills.

Li Sumin and Yih Aichu Chinese Library—Third Floor (Third through Eighth Grade)

This library, located on the third floor, is open to students in third through eighth grade. The library is shared with the students, parents, faculty and staff of CAIS and French American International School. The library also provides online databases and subscribes to 50 periodicals in French, English, Spanish and Mandarin. Computers are available to access the card catalog, research on the Internet or use a CD-ROM program. Students, parents, faculty and staff are invited to use the library for research and to check out books, or to just read during library hours. Librarians from both schools are always ready to answer questions and help locate information.

Library Rules

- No backpacks are permitted in the library. They may be left in the corridor outside the library.
- No cards, gum, candy, food, or drinks are permitted in the library.
- When finished with a book, or leaving the library, students should place books on a library cart.
- Damaging or removing materials or disturbing others in the library will result in removal from the library or revocation of privileges.

Circulation Policy

- Students and parents may borrow up to six items. Books and periodicals are loaned for two-week periods. They may be renewed twice if no other requests exist for the items.
- The borrower named on the loan record is responsible for the return of the material by the date due. Students with overdue items will be required to bring their library accounts up to date before renewing or checking out additional items.
- The borrower is responsible for paying to replace any items lost or returned to the library damaged.
- Videos may be checked out on Thursday or Fridays and are due the following Monday.
- Circulating encyclopedia volumes are loaned on an overnight basis. These are the only reference materials that may be checked out.
- All library materials must be returned by the end of the year or families will be billed. In addition, students will not receive their yearbook until all outstanding books and materials have been returned or paid for including library, text books, as well as PE materials.

Use of Computers in the Library

Internet workstations are available for use during regular library hours, but the student and his or her parents must sign the Technology and Internet Use Student Contract to use them. Copies are available from the Technology Coordinator.

The Internet may only be used for educational and/or school projects. Games, game sites and online chatting are forbidden.

Only middle school and high school students are allowed to access email from school computers for school-related subjects.

Copy Machine and Printer

The copy machine and printer may be used for making copies that do not infringe upon the Copyright Act.

MathCOUNTS: Students have the opportunity to work in an after school math program that focuses on math enrichment as well as preparation for the statewide MathCOUNTS Competition in which some of the students participate. There is a sixth grade level competition, although students who are ready for the seventh grade level can participate with our seventh/eighth grade group. Students hone thinking skills in this extracurricular activity taught by two of our math teachers.

Outdoor Education: At CAIS we value outdoor education as a way to help our students develop an appreciation for green environments and to provide for them the richness a green environment has to offer. Additionally, each grade level participates in a multiple-day retreat designed to enhance community-building, expand leadership skills, and to augment and support our curriculum. Teachers will describe the specific experiences to parents during middle school orientation each year as they will be developed on a yearly basis.

Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences: When students enter middle school, parent-teacher conferences transition to a new level. Middle school students lead the conference in the presence of grade level teachers and parents. Students prepare for a week prior to the conference by selecting work that represents their current level of achievement, their interests and their growth in order to create a learning portfolio. During parent-teacher conferences, middle school students hone their leadership skills as they present their learning portfolio to their parents in the presence of their team of teachers. Teachers elaborate on student skills and work with parents to both celebrate student achievement and create webs of support for those who need it.

School Exchange and Study Program: CAIS offers a wonderful opportunity for students to apply their language skills and their understanding of Chinese culture during the exchange and study program offered for sixth, seventh and eighth grade students. The sixth and seventh grade program includes a two-week visit throughout China, while the eighth grade program incorporates an exchange with cooperating schools during the spring. The students at the cooperating school also visit CAIS. During the exchange, both groups of students experience home stays with their host families. More information on exchanges and summer study tours is available through our Auxiliary Department, which manages these programs.

Service Learning: As part of our leadership focus in the middle school we encourage students to look beyond themselves and help address the needs of the community. Through acts of service students experience personal growth while benefiting the world around them. Teachers integrate “social action” projects in class as part of our curriculum. For example, the science department is creating a unit with a global perspective about water and pollution, while the English and social studies teachers have created a unit that brings focus to San Francisco’s homeless population.

On a daily basis throughout CAIS we honor a “green” curriculum. Students sort their trash, recycling and composting and are mindful of not wasting resources. CAIS offers many family opportunities for volunteering in the San Francisco area, and we encourage middle school students to participate in these opportunities. We have a relationship with First Baptist Church, our landlords at our pre-k Waller Campus, and are required to help with their food outreach program. Middle school students are required to volunteer once during the year on Wednesday afternoon to set up their food service. Middle school students are also offered opportunities to participate in service at CAIS. Opportunities include the Holiday Faire, tutoring, and volunteering at events and fundraisers. Sixth grade advisory will focus on service learning and seventh and eighth grade students will practice service learning as part of the enrichment classes.

Spelling Bee: All of our students participate in preparation for the National Spelling Bee Competition, hosted by the *San Francisco Chronicle* and one student is selected to compete at the next level of competition in a city-wide event. The winner of the city-wide event participates in a national level competition in Washington, D.C. Participation in competitions of all types enables students to celebrate the accomplishments of others and to accept failure as a part of life without trauma.

Study Skills: Students must learn specific skills related to independent learning as they move through their academic careers. The sixth grade students learn study skills during the first weeks of school as part of Independent Study. Grace Huang and Ann Linn, our Learning Specialists, are the instructors. Study skills include but are not limited to:

- Using the daily planner. Writing so parents can read it.
- Taking notes.
- Creating study guides.
- Knowing the difference between studying and reviewing for a test.
- Creating study supports such as flash cards.
- Using multiple methods for learning.
- Time management.
- Creating a space for learning.
- Learning to focus.

Technology (Technology Use Contract to be signed): CAIS curriculum engages students in the use of technology, word processing and other software programs. Elementary students are taught the skills they need during computer instruction classes, and during middle school students apply the skills they have learned in meaning-filled classroom activities. In order for students to use any school computer we must have a computer use contract on file with our Technology Coordinator. Contracts will be distributed both directly to parents and also in class at the beginning of each school year. Parents and students will need to discuss each topic, initial the statement, and sign the contract before it is returned to school. Students are taught that computer searches require specific training to assure accurate information, and that the use of technology comes with responsibilities.

Middle school students make use of the computer lab, classroom computers and dedicated middle school laptop carts. Many classrooms are equipped with SMART boards, interactive computer-enhanced whiteboards. Students also make use of our library and are encouraged to use print as well as Internet resources.

Schedules

Sample of Daily Schedule

Sixth grade		Seventh grade		Eighth grade	
8:00-9:05	Math/Science or Chinese Humanities	8:00-9:37	Math or Chinese Humanities	8:00-9:37	English Social Studies or English Language Arts
9:05-9:25	Break	9:40-9:50 Break		9:40-9:50 Break	
9:25-11:10	Chinese Humanities or English Humanities	9:53-11:30 English Social Studies or English Language Arts		9:53-11:30 Chinese Humanities or Math or Science	
11:15-11:40	Lunch	11:30-12:00	Lunch	11:30-12:00	Lunch
11:45-1:10	English Humanities or Chinese Humanities	12:05-12:55	Independent Study or Health and Wellness (PE)	12:05-12:55	Independent Study or Health and Wellness (PE)
1:15-1:45	Health and Wellness (PE)	1:00-1:47	Advisory	1:00-1:47	Advisory
1:50-2:30	Arts Program	1:50-2:37	Arts Program	1:50-2:37	Math or Chinese Humanities
2:35-2:55	Advisory	2:40-3:30	Arts Program	2:40-3:30	Independent Study or Arts Program
2:45-3:30	Independent Study				

Student Services

Student Support Team

Teachers and support staff meet weekly by grade levels to discuss the behavior and academic success of all students. Should an instance occur where it is determined that a student is in need of additional service, our Student Support Team comes together to create an action plan. In addition to the family, the team consists of the division director, the teachers, the assistant head of academics and the following support personnel:

Learning Specialists

When concerns regarding a child's progress are identified, the learning specialists assess the child to determine that child's specific needs. The specialists communicate with parents and teachers concerning assessments, findings and recommendations. This ensures that everyone working with the child has the same information and agrees on one plan of action. When necessary, the learning specialists will also recommend further outside testing. The learning specialists also provide training for teachers to enhance their expertise.

Middle School Counselor

CAIS has one middle school counselor who provides brief, solution-focused, problem-solving counseling to all middle school students. The middle school counselor may work with students individually, in small groups, and in the classroom to assist students in addressing personal and social issues that arise from growth changes as well as individual circumstances. After assessing the student's needs, the middle school counselor may recommend to the parents additional outside referrals. The counselor meets with students based on self, teacher, or parent referral. The middle school counselor is also available for parent information regarding parenting skills and family issues. All referrals made to outside personnel are confidential except in cases of child abuse or unless revealed to the parent that the entire team will make use of information given by a support person outside of our community. The middle school counselor creates and supports the advisory curriculum which includes growth and development, drug and substance abuse education and internet awareness.

Assessment and Testing (test policies, SSAT, PSSAT, ERB)

Each teacher uses class observations, projects, reports and homework to measure how a student is doing. Our middle school makes use of portfolios as a place to collect and reflect on student progress throughout the year (see Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences). Additionally, students participate in many formal testing opportunities. Following winter break, middle school students take ERB CTP 4 tests provided by the Educational Reference Bureau (ERB) for third through eighth grades. At selected grades, students also take Chinese proficiency tests such as OPI (Oral Proficiency Interview). These tests serve two purposes:

Student Needs: The results are used by teachers to gain additional insight to the needs of individual students. The information will be used along with the results of teacher developed assessment tools to identify the needs of individual students.

Program Evaluation: The results are used to help us evaluate the overall quality of our program. Information gained is used in determining where adjustments in the program would be beneficial for the students.

The middle school program also offers the opportunity for students to take the PSSAT and SSAT tests at CAIS. We offer test preparation for students on campus. (See high school counseling).

Student Behavior and Expectations

Middle School Behavior Expectations

The faculty and administration at CAIS care deeply and are committed to the success of all students; we strive to make ourselves available to support students in many ways. We are also committed to creating an environment in which all students feel safe and comfortable to be themselves. We believe it is the responsibility of us all - faculty, staff, and parents - to work together to ensure that students understand and adapt to school guidelines and are successful in the CAIS middle school program.

School is a place for learning and growing - academically, socially, emotionally - and middle school students are expected to come to school each day ready to engage. Although middle school can be a difficult time for students as they are dealing with changing bodies, relationships, priorities and pressures, behavior must conform to common standards that allow all members of the community to feel safe and facilitate learning. We view discipline in the literal sense of the word: to teach. Our goal is to help students become the best they can be. Students who exhibit concerning behaviors or academic patterns will receive consequences for the behaviors, and are always afforded the opportunity to mend any broken relationships. If a pattern of misbehavior emerges, parents will be called in to collaborate with the student and school in creating a more detailed plan to help the student get back on the right track. Advisory classes provide an opportunity for students to explore issues and challenges, and our middle school counselor and Middle School Dean of Student Life are always available to talk with students, parents and faculty.

Attendance

Middle school students are expected to attend class and arrive to classes with punctuality. Students who miss school to attend family trips added to school vacations may have to pay for tutoring in our after school program if they fall behind. Faculty cannot be expected to create assignments for students who miss school for reasons other than illness.

Moving through the School

We are grateful to have a large and varied building environment, and yet the layout of the building creates challenges for middle school students. Schedules are tight and classes are in session most of the day. In addition, students cover a lot of ground each day, making full use of our building, often with no adult supervision during transit times.

We expect students to move through the halls and stairways quietly and with enough awareness of their own physical space to keep the transit safe for all. In addition, elevators are reserved for students with medical issues who have a pass, or accompanied by adults. To keep from receiving a yellow card, it's best to understand the parameters of travel. While yellow cards are the result of many kinds of infractions, travel-related problems are the most common, especially during the first few months of the school year.

Maintaining a Safe Environment

As part of maintaining a safe environment, students are expected to listen and follow instructions from all faculty and staff members. In addition, students are not to bring items on campus that can jeopardize the safety of other students or adults. These include, but are not limited to, items such as weapons, devices that are intended to be used as weapons and drugs or drug-related materials. Students found with or using those types of items will face disciplinary action that can result in serious consequences up to and including dismissal from school.

Money, Mobile Phones and Other Electronic Devices

We discourage students from bringing large sums of money, mobile or smart phones and other entertainment electronic devices (including but not limited to iPod, iPad, and game devices) on campus. If students do bring them on campus there are two important rules for students to understand:

- The devices cannot be used in a way that interferes with learning or the atmosphere of the school. Phone usage during school hours is not permitted except in the case of an emergency with administrative approval. Electronic games are not permitted during school. Earphones also interfere with the learning process because they isolate students and reduce their ability to participate fully in the educational process. Therefore, earphones are not permitted except when authorized by a teacher. Devices used in the above-mentioned ways or in any way determined as interfering with school activities can be confiscated and given to the Middle School Dean of Student Life or Middle School Director. These devices will only be returned to a parent.
- The school assumes no responsibility for devices or money brought to school. These items are valuable and students should not leave them unattended at any time. Educational electronic devices such as PDAs, laptop computers and electronic dictionaries may be used in school to enhance learning. Students are responsible for these valuable tools and the school cannot assume responsibility for them. Students should not leave them unattended at any time.

We do have fundraisers that occasionally require students to bring money to school. We do not expect that children will need to bring more than \$5 to school at any one time with the exception of money for Scholastic Book Fair purchases.

Leaving Campus

Students may not leave campus during the school day. If you must pick up your child for an appointment, the student will be sent to the first floor by the reception area and you will need to meet your child there. A permission slip signed by a parent or an email is required to release a student before the end of school. Students must remain on campus for lunch. At the end of the day, students who leave campus may not return unless accompanied by an authorized adult.

Lockers

Students should keep their lockers clean at all time and are expected to respect the privacy of each locker. The school administration may need to access student lockers when necessary. The Middle School Director keeps duplicate keys and locker combinations in her office. If access is required, the school administration may, as it feels necessary, use the combination, the key, or cut the lock.

Bullying and Teasing Policy/Harassment

CAIS is committed to providing a safe environment as a necessary condition for students to learn and prosper. The faculty recognizes that parents are the first and primary teachers, and aim to work as partners with parents guiding each child's development. Relationships between students are an important aspect of our school environment. One area of special concern in student relationships is bullying and teasing. Bullying is repeated harassment which is done with the intent to frighten and/or harm. Bullying can be either physical or verbal abuse. Teasing is verbal harassment with the intent to upset.

Guidance, Education, Counseling and Consequences in the Middle School

Our objective is to ensure that all of our students attain academic excellence as well as the ability to work cooperatively in the greater community. In order to meet the latter goal, we expect that faculty, administrators, staff and parents will model courteous interactions. As a faculty, we also give our students direct instruction in how to effectively and non-violently solve social conflicts.

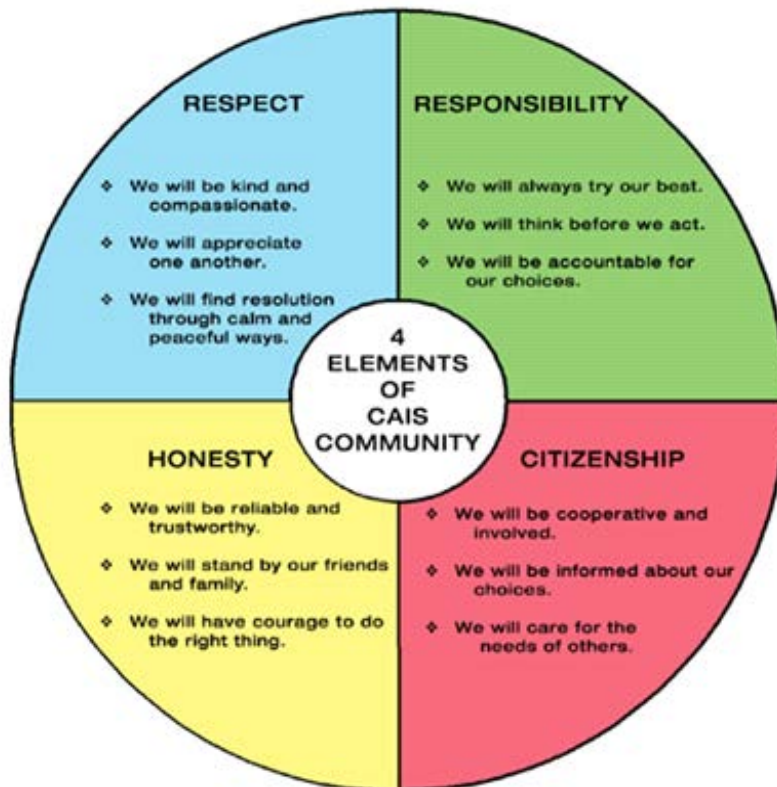
We have a three-pronged approach to dealing with bullying and teasing. The first part of our approach is prevention through education. In collaboration with the faculty and division directors, the middle school counselor visits student classrooms and discuss, in developmentally appropriate ways, why the children should not tease or bully. Through role play and discussion we also give the children tools to use should they encounter a bully. Small group sessions also may be held with the counselor and middle school director to address topics such as gossip or exclusion. Through meetings, workshops and written communication, we educate the teachers and parents in our community to give consistent, effective support to students around these topics.

The second part of our bullying and teasing policy is counseling. If children are found to repeatedly tease or bully other students, the school counselor will be asked to intervene. In collaboration with the child's parents and teachers, the counselor will assess the child's needs, focusing on the reasons behind the bullying in addition to educating on why such behavior is not acceptable. The middle school counselor may meet with the child one-on-one, suggest a small group workshop series for the child and/or make recommendations for the classroom or home. In some cases the school counselor may refer the child or the family to outside counseling and support services.

The final part of our bullying and teasing policy is providing consequences. While our goal is to proactively educate children about how to avoid bullying and teasing, we will take such acts very seriously and act immediately if they occur. Consequences will consider both the severity of the incident and whether or not it is the child's first offense. Consequences may include: missed free time; reflective writing on how the student will behave differently in the future, signed by a parent; after school detentions (during which time students complete acts of service for the school community); in-house and at-home suspension. After repeated interventions, if students demonstrate through their behavior that they are not able to follow CAIS community norms, they may be expelled.

CAIS Middle School Community Code

Our philosophy of conduct and consequences is based on our strong belief that character counts. Each member of our community has the right to feel safe and respected in a caring environment where core ethical values are the foundations of learning. Expectations for student conduct are defined by the four elements of the CAIS middle school community, our CAIS Community Code:



CAIS Middle School Community Code, continued

Once a teacher has exhausted his/her classroom consequences, or witnesses student behavior that is not in accordance with the four elements, they may choose to refer a child to the Middle School Dean of Student Life. The referral lists behaviors that are not in harmony with our CAIS community code of ethics:

Disruptive in class

打擾上課

Disrespectful of staff

對教職員無禮

Disrespectful of peers

對同學無禮

Unacceptable language

使用粗俗語言

Disrespectful of school property

破壞學校口物

Chronic tardiness

連續遲到

Cheating

作弊

Left school grounds

無故離開學校

Name calling/threatening language

取笑, 威脅

Possession of banned materials

攜帶禁止物品到校

Or any other behavior that breaks the spirit of our ethical expectations for behavior.

CAIS Middle School Disciplinary System

Students who are referred to the Middle School Dean of Student Life for disciplinary action may receive yellow or red cards, indicating the behavior sanctions consequence. Each card has a corresponding set of outcomes, as noted below.

One referral = one yellow card; Four yellow cards = one red card.

However, students may be given a red card for fighting, bullying, or other serious behavior. If students accumulate cards, consequences will accrue. **After four weeks with no cards being issued, the student's record is cleared.**

First yellow card

- Meeting with Middle School Dean of Student Life
- Written reflection
- Reparation for behavior
- Parent notified
- Referral must be signed by parent and returned the next day.

Second yellow card

- Meeting with Middle School Dean of Student Life
- Written reflection
- Reparation for behavior
- Referral must be signed by parent and returned the next day
- Parent called
- Written reflection
- Lunch detention, after school detention or other consequence

Third yellow card

- Meeting with Middle School Dean of Student Life
- Written reflection
- Reparation for behavior
- Referral must be signed by parent and returned the next day
- Parent conference
- Lunch detention, after school detention or other consequences
- Behavior contract created

Fourth yellow card (one red card, four-week "red card status" begins)

- Meeting with Middle School Dean of Student Life
- Written reflection
- Reparation for behavior
- Referral must be signed by parent and returned the next day
- Parent conference with Middle School Director
- Multiple detentions, suspension, or other
- Behavior contract revised
- Student is not eligible for any special school privileges such as dances or field trips.
- Student remains on "red card status" for four weeks. If no further referrals occur, the student's record is cleared.

If a student receives a yellow card while on "red card" status, any appropriate consequence may be assigned, such as

- Multiple detentions
- In-school suspension
- Home suspension
- Offense is recorded on permanent record
- Expulsion

Health and Illness

Health Education

Just as students in fifth grade participate in health education with a health consultant, sixth graders continue lessons. Health education lessons are provided for students until they graduate, preparing them for life and decision-making in high school environments. Health education takes place just after winter break, and is part of the science curriculum. Parents will be invited to an evening event during the week prior to the student classes and will receive the curriculum so they will be able to discuss the topics with their children.

Policies

For the healthy well being of our students and staff, we ask that students do not come to school if they show signs of illness. Students who are not feeling well cannot concentrate in class and can potentially spread illness to other students and staff. We encourage students who are not feeling well to stay at home and rest until they feel ready to return to school.

In accordance with school policies and federal and state regulations, the following below is important information that you need to know.

Immunizations

The State of California requires that the school have an immunization record for each child on file. Please check with your physician to see if your child's immunizations are current. Middle school is often a time during which specific immunizations are required. If the school's records show an immunization history that is not current with their age, parents will be notified immediately. You are given ten days to rectify the situation and provide documentation. If this is not done within this time-frame the student will not be allowed to attend school until immunizations are current. Exemptions to this rule may be made only by the school Registrar. Call 865-6093 for information about exemptions.

Medications

If your child requires medication during the school day, you must send a signed note giving the school permission to administer medication. A health aide is available on campus to administer medication and provide first aid. Prescription medication must be in the prescription bottle, with instructions from the doctor as to the dosage required. This bottle should be given to the health aide, who will be responsible for seeing that the child takes the prescribed dosage during the day. Over-the-counter medication must be handled in the same way. Under no circumstances may a student self-administer medication at school.

Infectious Illnesses

Refer to Family Handbook for detailed information.

FAQ New Middle School Students:

- **What happens if I forget where I am going?**
Schedules are posted on a bulletin board near the Middle School Dean of Student Life's office. Everyone forgets sometimes and students often use the bulletin board to remember. It's also good to keep a schedule in your binder and locker.
- **Will older students tease me?**
Activities during the first week of school will build community and help you get to know other students. However, if you encounter any teasing please tell a teacher or the Middle School Dean of Student Life immediately.
- **What if I have a problem? Who do I go to?**
The great thing about CAIS is that there are so many people available to help you. All of the teachers will want to help you, especially your grade level teachers. You can also talk our Middle School Dean of Student Life, Middle School Director, or Middle School Counselor. In fact, every student should feel comfortable asking any adult on campus for help.
- **What if I forget my books or homework? Will I get in trouble?**
Teachers are always ready to help you. All new sixth graders get a "grace period" for the first few weeks. This means that while there is homework, it is not graded. Grading, homework and other systems are just getting established and everyone expects students to ease into the transition.
- **What if I can't finish all of my homework?**
If you work for two to three hours and are not finished, have your parents contact the teacher; no one wants you to stay up past bedtime!

Helpful advice: When in doubt, ASK!! There are many people around who are happy to answer your questions; Middle School Dean of Student Life, Mike Friedman, any of the middle school teachers, middle school counselor Sarah Voynow Berman and Middle School Director, Elizabeth Larose.



ONE COMMUNITY

大家庭

Main Campus
150 Oak Street
San Francisco, CA 94102

Pre-Kindergarten Campus
42/52 Waller Street
San Francisco, CA 94102