

# **CIPLC Student Handbook**

**2016- 2017**



# **CIPLC**

**COLEGIO INTERNACIONAL PUERTO LA CRUZ**

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**CIPLC Mission Statement**

**Inspiring students to develop a lifelong passion for learning and social responsibility while teaching critical thinking and effective communication skills.**

**CIPLC Vision**

**To be the premier provider of an internationally focused education in Latin America.**

## **Bienvenidos and Welcome to CIPLC!**

Dear Students,

Welcome to an exciting new school year at Colegio Internacional Puerto La Cruz. As you start this year, it should be with anticipation of all the new experiences and challenges that will be yours. Students, teachers, administrators, and other personnel at CIPLC all have one thing in common -- we are each an important part of this excellent institution. Whether you are a returning student or are new at CIPLC, you can look forward to finding a beautiful campus, friendly students, and caring adults. Together we will work to make CIPLC the best possible international school.

This handbook has been prepared as a guide to acquaint you with the policies and procedures that need to be followed during the school year. As with any guide, it only serves as a framework for planning your activities. It is not possible to cover every possible situation in great detail.

We give you only the essentials upon which to start. In the absence of specific guidelines for a given situation, you should comply with the spirit of good citizenship, use common sense, and when in doubt, talk with your teachers.

The following pages contain most of the policies and procedures that are used by the staff and administration to maintain an appropriate setting in which the academic and social life of students can flourish. Other items describe procedures normally used by the staff and administration to support school operations. It is the job of our principal to see that these policies are properly implemented and consistently supported in order to carry out the school's philosophy and mission.

The expectations of the CIPLC faculty and administration are high, but so are the rewards. We ask that you live by the **Gecko Guide**; four basic statements about living and working together which govern the behavior of our CIPLC community.

Everyone is expected to:

**Be respectful,  
Be responsible,  
Be safe, and  
Do one's best.**

The entire staff at CIPLC is committed to helping prepare you for whatever lies ahead. Again, welcome to CIPLC. I hope you have an exciting and productive school year.

**David Carlson**  
School Principal

## CIPLC Students:

- Achieve academic excellence through a U.S. style curriculum
- Act with integrity and make responsible choices
- Appreciate cultural and individual differences
- Challenge themselves in a wide variety of co-curricular activities

## **PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION**

We believe CIPLC should provide for all students a quality education in the English language, representative of that found in top international schools around the world. Also, we believe CIPLC should prepare students to enter college or university programs. We further believe that the school should provide its multinational student body with an appreciation of the diverse cultures represented by its members, with a special emphasis on knowledge and understanding of Venezuelan culture and history and the Spanish language.

We recognize that quality education consists of many elements, including the following: academic development, the ability to utilize technology in learning, character development and values education, a program of physical fitness, activities to foster a sense of responsibility toward community, the formation of friendships including those across cultures, and a code of conduct which instills self-respect, self-discipline, and honesty. Underlying the total program should be an appreciation of individual differences. A program combining these elements should prepare our students for college and university programs and for a constructive role in a democratic society.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **COMMUNICATION AND SCHOOL INFORMATION**

School news and information is shared using three methods; during homeroom and advisory classes, using the weekly Gecko Express newsletter, and electronic communications; via the school website, SMS, e-mail, and twitter. Parents of elementary children usually receive all information in their weekly folders. For late-breaking news, the school will use e-mails, SMS, or twitter to communicate. Copies of the Gecko Express and other relevant information are also posted on the school's website ([www.ciplc.org](http://www.ciplc.org)).

## DRESS CODE

The Venezuelan Education Ministry has established a mandatory dress code for all public and private schools in the country. Uniform shirts are available from a local company.

The lower half of the uniform consists of solid navy blue pants (that close with button and zipper) or skirts or hemmed shorts (mid-thigh in length or longer). Blue jeans in nice condition are acceptable. The upper half consists of a solid shirt in these assigned colors:

Pre-School – Kinder	Red knit shirt
1 <sup>st</sup> - 5 <sup>th</sup> grade	White knit shirt
6 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup> grade	Light blue knit shirt
9 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> grade	Beige knit shirt

Any sweater must be navy or dark blue in color. For physical education classes, all students must wear the school's PE uniform. New students will have one week to purchase their uniforms.

Appropriate student dress helps create an attitude and atmosphere conducive to learning and demonstrates the students' pride in themselves and in their school. Student dress must reflect the important and serious purpose of CIPLC. The following are not permitted as a school uniform:

1. Torn, patched or frayed jeans, sweat pants, beach shorts, or athletic shorts.
2. "Flip-flops", high heels, bare feet, torn or cut-up sneakers.
3. Overalls or coveralls.

In addition, the following dress code rules must be observed:

4. Baseball caps may not be worn during classes. No other head coverings are allowed such as stocking caps or bandanas
5. All uniforms must have a school logo, and students must wear their uniform during the entire school day.

## PE UNIFORM

Elementary - White T-shirt with school logo, solid navy pants or shorts, and sneakers.

Secondary – White T-shirt with school logo, solid black or green shorts, and sneakers.

*Leggings, tights, or pants are not acceptable PE attire.*

## ADVISORY PROGRAM

Every student in the middle and high school will have an advisor who will help monitor student progress, relay announcements, and work with students on grade-level activities. Students should inform advisors of any difficulties or problems as early as possible in order to receive assistance.

The purpose of the advisory system is to provide each student with a faculty member who will actively monitor both the academic progress and social development of each student. The advisory program can also provide for time to teach life skills programs such as health education, study skills, college/career counseling, and research skills.

## **COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE**

One of the purposes of the guidance program at CIPLC is to help students achieve maximum growth. The role of the counselor is to assist the individual in the process of clarifying his or her own strengths and weaknesses, possibilities, responsibilities, and potential as a student at CIPLC. This is accomplished through individual counseling and group sessions. The school's counseling services include:

- Scheduling students for appropriate classes through testing and assessment of academic difficulties.
- Discussing graduation requirements.
- Coordinating parent-teacher-counselor conferences and serving on the school's Intervention Team
- Providing orientation programs for incoming students.
- Recommending appropriate grade-level placement.
- Administering self-assessment, interest, and personality tests.
- Providing college counseling.
- Organizing and hosting college fairs.
- Providing career orientation.
- Serving as testing coordinator for SAT, ACT, PSAT, AP, ERB WrAP and MAP.
- Facilitating the completion of student transcripts.

The counselor is also available to address student problems such as minor behavioral issues. Depending on the situation, the counselor may contact parents and teachers for support and follow-up. When student concerns demand more support than the school's resources can provide, the counselor will help parents and serve as a referral service for locating a psychologist, psychiatrist, speech therapist, or tutor. All counseling matters will be handled confidentially.

## **FIRST AID**

The school employs a full-time health care professional to provide basic first aid and to administer medications upon written request by parents. Up-to-date health and immunization records along with emergency contact information and specific details regarding the health needs of each student must be on file. In the event of a school accident, the doctor/nurse will inform parents of the extent of the accident within a reasonable time. In the event of an extreme emergency, school personnel may be required to make immediate health decisions before a parent can be contacted.

## **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent-Teacher Conferences may be arranged at the request of parents, students, teachers, or counselors. Conferences should be arranged through the office in order to avoid scheduling conflicts with the teacher's classroom duties and to ensure all necessary information can be made available. A conference may include the student, teacher, counselor, specialists, and an administrator if necessary.

Scheduled conferences are held during the school year to discuss student progress. Please refer to the school calendar for the dates and times of these conferences.

## **LINES OF COMMUNICATION AND APPEALS**

Because schools are human institutions, conflicts are inevitable. Our main aim is to create an environment which allows for open, forthright, and beneficial resolution of conflicts. We urge students and parents to communicate problems by

1. Beginning at the level of concern.

For example, if a problem emerges with a teacher or in a particular classroom, ask for an appointment with the teacher. The majority of problems can be easily resolved at this level.

2. Contacting the counselor or principal if the teacher conference has not been satisfactory. Parents may meet privately with either person or include the teacher as they wish.

3. If the matter remains unresolved after meeting with the principal, the issue may then be brought to the attention of the superintendent.

A student or parent who has been unable to resolve a problem following Steps 1 through 3 may then request a meeting with the CIPLC Board of Directors as part of the school's appeals process. The appeal must be made in writing to the President of the Board with a copy submitted to the superintendent. The Board may elect to place the appeal on their next monthly meeting agenda or decide to call a special meeting. Such written appeals must be received at least seven (7) days in advance of a scheduled monthly meeting or before a special meeting can occur. All appeals to the BOD will be held in Executive Session. The decision of the Board of Directors is final.

## **SCHOOL HOURS FOR STUDENTS**

Normal school hours are as follows:

Pre-School	7:50 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.
Pre-Kinder	7:50 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.
Kindergarten	7:50 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Grades 1 to 12	7:50 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Regular attendance is necessary. When students are not in attendance they miss more than just the assignment or information that was given. Not only is the rest of the class affected negatively, but students miss out on the unique contributions that the absent student would have brought to the class. In order for a student to receive credit or a grade for a class, they must be present for 90% of the class periods each semester.

Because students should not be in school when their presence would endanger their health and that of others, students with excused absences will be given the opportunity to reschedule exams and oral presentations when they return to school.

### **Both Excused and Unexcused Absences will Count Against Your Required 90% Attendance**

**For absences which are excused**, students will be given the opportunity to make up missed daily work during a period of time assigned by the teacher. Normally this means that if a student is absent two days, two days will be given to complete missed daily work. For long-term assignments, the teacher has the right to adhere to a given deadline. These expectations will be clearly stated both verbally and in writing to students at the start of each semester.



**For an extension of a long-term deadline, parents must contact the teacher directly before the due date.** Excused absences include: illness, death in the family, family emergency, college interviews, national or international tournaments, and other business related travel out of the family's control. Students will be excused for only two days when they must travel to renew visas unless prior permission is granted by the school administration. For absences that are not emergencies, students must complete a homework sheet before missing school in order to have the absence considered excused. Homework sheets may be picked up from the school secretary.

**For absences which are unexcused,** students will not be given the opportunity to make up missed work and will receive a zero for work assigned/completed during the unexcused absence.

**For pre-arranged absences,** the school policy of 90% attendance per class for each semester is in effect. Trips and extracurricular activities should not put the student in jeopardy of falling below a C average in classes. Students must complete a homework sheet before missing school.

**Pre and Post Holiday Absences** In order to maximize student/teacher contact and prevent loss of teaching opportunities because of partial class attendance there will be no excused absences without a doctor's note or documentation of required travel for the days immediately proceeding and following a school holiday. Prior approval must be obtained.

## **EARLY DEPARTURE FROM SCHOOL**

If a student wishes to be dismissed early on a particular day, advanced written authorization from the parent must be provided to the Administration prior to 9:00 a.m. on that day. Students should complete and return a Pre-Arranged Absence Form available in the school office. After the request is verified and approved by the administration, a pass will be issued to the student and he/she must sign out in the school office before leaving the campus.

Early dismissal on Friday or before school holidays will not be an excused absence except under extenuating circumstances such as required travel.

## **REQUEST FOR ATTENDANCE POLICY WAIVER**

The policy of 90% attendance is meant to cover short-term illnesses, and necessary time off for medical, personal, and family business.

If a student should miss more than 10% of class periods, the School Office will notify the student and parents of loss of credit. If extenuating circumstances, such as extended illness or family emergency, is causing multiple absences, parents should immediately meet with the principal to file for a waiver. Proper documentation such as doctor's recommendations will be required.

## **TARDINESS**

Student tardiness delays the timely start of class and disrupts the focus on learning for all students. If students arrive late to class for any reason, they must obtain an Admit Slip from the office. If a student arrives later than 8:00 a.m., the student must report to an administrator for an Admit Slip, which he/she must present to the teacher for admission to the class. Repeated tardiness will result in disciplinary consequences by the teacher, after-school detention, and referral to the Dean.

## **BUS SERVICE AND TRANSPORTATION**

The following regulations have been established for the students' safety:

- Obey the instructions of the bus drivers and bus supervisors.
- All school rules and expectations for behavior apply on the bus.
- Bus supervisors will write a report for students who are not following expectations.
- Three bus reports will result in a 5 day suspension from bus transportation during which time parents will be required to find alternative transportation to and from school.
- Be on time at the designated bus stops. Buses will not wait more than two minutes.
- Stay seated with your seatbelts fastened while you are on the bus.
- Students may not change buses, pick-up location, or drop-off locations without written permission from a parent and approval from the administration. Any changes to a child's normal transportation schedule must be received by 12:00 noon or the change may not be approved.
- Non-CIPLC students are not allowed to ride the bus to or from school.
- CIPLC transportation provides a point-to-point service. For security reasons, buses are not permitted to make unscheduled stops along their routes.

## **CANTINA-CAFETERIA SERVICE**

The cantina is maintained for the convenience of our students and staff, and every attempt will be made to provide for well-balanced and appetizing meals. The cantina would appreciate your cooperation with the following:

- Deposit all litter in waste containers.
- Leave the tables and the floor in a clean condition for others.
- Line up in an orderly fashion.
- Wait for your turn in line.
- Pay for your food when it is ordered or pre-pay on a weekly or biweekly basis.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

Though CIPLC provides many school-related activities, our school primarily serves as a place for learning. The following information provides details about grades, honor roll, student schedules, and other academic matters.

### **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

Technology use at CIPLC is a resource to further the educational goals of the school. Students are expected to exercise the same polite, responsible, and respectful behavior on our school network as they do in a classroom or hallway. The access is a privilege, not a right, and entails responsibility. Students will be expected to sign and return an Acceptable Use Policy Agreement during the first week of school, which details expected student behavior.

## GRADING PHILOSOPHY

CIPLC policies on grading are established with the entire program in mind and rely on teachers utilizing their professional judgment for developing quality lessons as well as appropriate assessment tools. CIPLC teachers follow effective teaching practices by providing frequent and consistent student evaluation. Conduct and behavior are not included in the academic portion of student assessment.

## GRADING SCALE AND PROCEDURES

The academic year is divided into four (4) quarters in a school year of 180 days. For secondary students, the report card functions as the unofficial school record, since only the semester grade is posted on the transcript as the official record of a student's performance in a specific course. Based on a 4.0 GPA scale, CIPLC uses the following Grading Scale for assessing student academic performance.

Grade	%	G.P.A.	AP G.P.A.
A+	98 - 100	4.33	5.00
A	94 - 97	4.00	4.67
A-	90 - 93	3.67	4.33
B+	88 - 89	3.33	4.00
B	84 - 87	3.00	3.67
B-	80 - 83	2.67	3.33
C+	78 - 79	2.33	3.00
C	74 - 77	2.00	2.67
C-	70 - 73	1.67	2.33
D+	68 - 69	1.33	2.00
D	64 - 67	1.00	1.67
D-	60 - 63	0.67	1.33
F	59 - 0	0	0

## HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

All students, elementary through high school, should be assigned homework to enhance student learning. Current research suggests that the academic grade level times 10 minutes is an estimate of the average amount of time a student should be studying per night (ie. Grade 7 X 10 = 70 minutes). However, students enrolled in AP courses or other advanced programs can expect a substantially heavier homework load.

## LATE WORK ACCEPTANCE POLICY

One of the primary objectives at CIPLC is to assist students in becoming responsible, independent learners. Core subject teachers believe that a structured late-work policy encourages students to be organized and focus on learning. At the beginning of the school year, each teacher will explain their homework policy with the class. Each student will also receive the teacher's homework policy in writing.

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR HIGH SCHOOL

While the table below represents a minimum standard, students who plan to attend university should speak with the guidance counselor and consider taking 4 credits in the core areas: science, math, and social studies.

In order to receive a diploma from CIPLC, a student must earn a minimum of 27 credits and have attended high school for four years. The High School Program of Studies must include the following:

- 4.0 credits in English (must complete all core English courses)
- 3.0 credits in Science
- 3.0 credits in Mathematics
- 3.0 credits in Social Studies
- 3.0 credits in a Foreign Language
- 1.0 credit in Computer Applications
- 1.0 Graduation by Design/Senior Seminar
- 1.5 credits in Physical Education
- 0.5 credits in Health
- 2.0 credits in Fine Arts\*
- 5.0 credits of Electives

### **EARLY GRADUATION REQUESTS**

CIPLC believes in the value of four years of academic preparation in high school before a student graduates to the academic rigors of university. For this reason, the school makes only rare exceptions to its requirement for a student to earn a minimum of 27 credits during four full years of high school attendance. A parent- or student- request for early graduation must be made at least one semester in advance of a student's proposed graduating year, and both the administration and Board of Directors must approve this request.

Students must meet all graduation requirements in order to participate in graduation exercises and events.

### **FULL-TIME ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENT**

All students are required to be enrolled as full-time students at CIPLC. For secondary students, a full-time schedule consists of 8 scheduled classes. Students requesting an exemption to the full-time schedule must make this request to the administration one semester in advance.

### **TRANSFER STUDENTS**

Transfer students will be placed in the appropriate grade level according to their age and past academic record. Students who transfer to CIPLC during their senior year will be required to meet CIPLC standards for graduation and have transcripts showing full time enrollment for at least 3 years of high school. Since requirements for graduation differ from school to school, CIPLC may issue a diploma based on the student meeting the requirements from their previous school. Only credits posted on an official high school transcript will be counted toward CIPLC graduation credits.

### **GRADE-LEVEL CHANGE REQUEST**

The school follows a careful decision-making process in order to respond to a request for a child to change grade levels or receive special programs and services. Once the administration receives this type of request, the appropriate administrator will arrange for a meeting of an Intervention Team

(IT). All requests will be considered; however, it is extremely rare for a student to change grade levels.

An Intervention Team meeting is composed of the following personnel:

1. Classroom teacher(s)
2. Team Leader
3. School counselor
4. Teacher or outside professional as requested by the IT
5. Administrator

The student criteria examined by CIPLC's Intervention Team may include the following:

1. Age-appropriate placement
2. Parent input based on a Child Information Form
3. Academic performance
4. Social and emotional maturity
5. Classroom teacher assessment and recommendation
6. Academic assessment (CIPLC assessments and/or external standardized testing)
7. Intervention Team discussion and assessment

After the Intervention Team reviews the above information, they will submit a recommendation to the administration for final approval.

## **DROPPING/ADDING COURSES**

A student may change his/her schedule within the first two weeks of a semester with approval from the counselor, principal, and parents.

1. A dropped course will not appear on a student's record if it is dropped within the first two weeks.
2. If the course is dropped before the end of the fifth week of the semester, the dropped course will appear on a student's record as either Dropped Passing or Dropped Failing, but the course will not count in the calculation of a student's Grade Point Average (GPA). Students transferring into CIPLC during a semester will have 5 weeks in which to drop a course without GPA consequences.
3. If a student drops the course after the time limit specified in Point 2 above, the course will appear on a student's record as an F and will be calculated in the student's Grade Point Average posted on the transcript.
4. Exceptions to this policy may be granted in the case of an administrative decision to request a student to drop a course for reasons such as lack of academic foundations or incorrect initial placement in the course.

## **ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM**

The Advanced Placement (AP) Program offers opportunities for qualified students to take challenging courses and possibly earn credits at North American universities while still in high school.

AP exams are administered worldwide in May of each year. Students who plan to take AP courses are encouraged to consult with their teachers and counselor in advance since all AP courses have grade-average requirements and course prerequisites. ***All students enrolled in an AP course will***

**sit for the AP exam.** AP exam fees are payable by the student or parent to the College Board for each exam. Fees must be paid to the CIPLC Business Office by September 1.

## **COURSE CREDITS**

Middle school students who successfully complete Algebra I at CIPLC may receive one high school credit. The course can be recorded on the HS transcript but will not be calculated in the high school GPA. In general, a middle school student may not receive high school credits as a result of enrolling in joint MS/HS classes or in other high school classes due to scheduling conflicts.

## **ELECTIVES**

Students may choose to take elective courses providing that all prerequisites are satisfied in order to meet the credit requirements toward graduation. All one-credit courses are full-year courses. A student may enroll in more than two courses in any department only with recommendation of the administration and teachers.

## **ONLINE LEARNING PLAN - IN THE EVENT OF A SCHOOL CLOSURE**

CIPLC teachers and staff have developed a plan to continue academic learning online in the event that students are not physically able to come to school. This could be due to a school closure of a few days up to one month.

In the event of school closure, parent and students will need to take the following actions:

1. Parent will keep the school informed of current contact information.
2. Plan to have students connected to the internet daily. ECE- Grade 5 parents will need to be in daily contact with the teachers and assist their children with lessons.
3. Go to the school website for instructions, [www.ciplc.org](http://www.ciplc.org).
4. Check for additional updates, which will be sent out via SMS and/or the CIPLC twitter account, @CIPLC.

Teachers will be prepared to:

1. Send emails to all parents/students in their class.  
Teachers have access to parent/student emails through PowerSchool and the school email system.
2. Deliver class content electronically.
3. Receive documents electronically.
4. Give feedback electronically.

Online days are considered to be days of attendance.

## **INDEPENDENT STUDY AND DISTANCE LEARNING**

When deemed necessary or appropriate by the administration, a student will be permitted to enroll in an independent study or distance-learning course. The school counselor and principal must recommend a student's enrollment in an independent study or distance-learning course to the superintendent for final approval.

As part of the process for making a final decision related to a recommendation, the superintendent may consider, but will not be limited to, the following criteria:

1. Enrollment in an independent study or distance learning course will not be granted if CIPLC offers a comparable course that is available to the student;
2. A student may take no more than two (2) independent study or distance learning courses during a given semester;
3. A student must be under the direct supervision of a teacher approved by the superintendent; and
4. A detailed program of studies and evaluation criteria must be developed for the course of study.

Courses taken through the CIPLC Virtual High School (VHS) or K-12 Online programs are not considered independent study or distance learning courses under this policy.

## **TUTORING**

Parents interested in finding a tutor for their children may contact the counselor or principal for a list of suggested tutors. CIPLC teachers may not tutor students for pay during school hours or during their duty time. In addition, teachers may not tutor students enrolled in their own classes, unless specially approved in advance by the administration. Each teacher will offer a time after school at least once a week for additional academic support. Students should check with teachers for the schedule of these sessions.

## **K-12 ONLINE SCHOOL COURSES AND POLICIES**

The K-12 Online ([www.k12.com](http://www.k12.com)) program has a wide variety of accredited, online, high school courses ranging from one-semester survey courses to one-year AP courses in all subject areas. Students enrolled in a K-12 Online course are given one period to work on their class during school hours and are reserved a computer for coursework.

K-12 Online classes add a valuable component to the educational program at CIPLC by offering many classes that would otherwise not be available on-site to our students. This program allows our students to collaborate with other students from all over the world. Students may also be better prepared for university since many colleges and universities now require that some classes within a degree program be taken online.

Students who are most successful in the K-12 Online program generally exhibit the following characteristics:

- Responsible
- Able to do extended self-directed work
- Resourceful
- Positive
- Good communication skills
- Have good keyboarding skills
- Adept at using computers, the Internet, uploading and downloading files
- Hold a GPA of 2.5 or higher

CIPLC understands that some students who do not do well in a face-to-face class may do well in an online environment. Students are accepted based on the following criteria in the following order:

1. Exhibit all or most of the characteristics listed above as needed to succeed. If there is any question about meeting this criteria, a meeting will be held to discuss the potential for student success with the school counselor, an administrator, the K-12 Online Site Coordinator, and if necessary, the parent and student.
2. Parental consent.
3. The requested class is not one that is currently offered at CIPLC as a face-to-face class.
4. Special graduation or scheduling needs.
5. Upper classmen (11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders).
6. Lower classmen (10<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders).

## **TRADITIONAL SENIOR PRIVILEGES**

Seniors at CIPLC have traditionally held the following privileges, which are earned through 4 years of rigorous study, academic success in varied coursework, and service to the local and global community:

- Opportunity to request a study hall if requirements are met (See Study Hall).
- Priority enrollment in electives such as Yearbook and Personal Fitness.
- The privilege to wear an altered uniform shirt or sweatshirt on Fridays to signify senior status (alterations must have prior approval by administration)
- Three days or more sabbatical (depending on the school calendar) prior to graduation and the week following their graduation.

## **FINAL EXAMS FOR GRADES 6-12**

All students in Grades 6-12 sit for semester exams. The exam will count for 10% of the semester grade and should include material covered during the specific semester rather than be cumulative for the entire year. Semester grades, with the exam grade included, are entered on the official school transcript and are used when calculating GPA. Homework should not be assigned to students during final exam week, and teachers should ensure that major projects are also due before exam week begins in order to allow students sufficient time to study for their exams.

Final exams are given during the last week of each semester in Grades 6 – 12. No early exams will be given. Students missing exams first semester will make them up in January, and students missing exams second semester will make them up in August. Students who withdraw during the semester will normally be graded on work completed up to the date of withdrawal and will not have the opportunity to take the semester exam or earn credit for the semester.

## **STUDENT EXAM BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS**

- Sit in your assigned seat and follow teacher instructions about testing conditions.
- Students will not be permitted to use the restroom during the test. Talking and looking around the classroom will not be tolerated
- Cell phones are not permitted during a test. They may be collected or be required to put them to be in your bag. A student found with a phone out during a test will be considered to be cheating.
- Students should have only those materials that are necessary for the test on or around their desks or tables. All extra material must be removed from the testing area.



## EXEMPTION FROM FINAL EXAMS

CIPLC believes that final exams provide students with an excellent opportunity to review major concepts from the semester as well as to familiarize themselves with the rigors of both standardized testing and future college examinations. For this reason, CIPLC recommends that all students prepare and sit for final exams. In special circumstances, and at the teacher's discretion, teachers may allow students in grades 6-12 to be exempt from semester exams if the student holds an "A+" average (98-100) during the entire semester with fewer than 2 absences in that specific class. All exemptions must have prior approval from the principal.

## DISHONESTY IN ACADEMIC WORK/PLAGIARISM

CIPLC defines academic dishonesty as taking answers from others, willingly giving answers to others, or plagiarism in regard to any school assignments or evaluations. Academic dishonesty is a serious offense because it represents a form of stealing, and it has ethical and moral implications. The following consequences are associated with academic dishonesty.

**1<sup>st</sup> Offense** – The test or assignment in which the cheating occurred must be completed satisfactorily as directed by the teacher and the Dean of Students, and parents will be notified by the teacher. The offense is recorded in the student's confidential disciplinary file.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Offense** – The test or assignment in which the cheating occurred must be completed satisfactorily during administrative detention, parents and student will conference with the Dean of Students, and the student will complete a dishonesty/plagiarism assignment as outlined by the principal. The second occurrence is also recorded in the student's permanent disciplinary file.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Offense** – A zero on the test or assignment, a three-day out-of-school suspension, a parent-conference when the student returns to school, and a written contract, which if broken will be reviewed for possible recommendation for student expulsion from school.

## STANDARDIZED TESTING: SAT, ACT, ERB WrAP, AND MAP

- Juniors and Seniors are strongly encouraged to take the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) at least once before graduation. Students may take the SAT as many times as they choose after their 10<sup>th</sup>-grade year. The SAT and the ACT (American College Test) are offered at least twice a year at CIPLC.
- The PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test) is given once per year in October, and is mandatory for the ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade students. If scores are outstanding in 11<sup>th</sup> grade, students who are US citizens may qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Program.
- The actual test and registration dates will be announced and posted as CIPLC receives them.
- External examinations such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), the American College Testing Program (ACT), and Advancement Placement (AP) exams all require the payment of additional fees by parents.
- The Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) is administered to students in Kindergarten through Grade 11 three times per year to monitor student progress.
- The Educational Records Bureau - Writing Assessment Program (ERB-WrAP) test is writing assessment that is given to grades 3-11 each spring.

## **PROGRESS REPORTS, REPORT CARDS AND ON-LINE GRADES**

CIPLC uses PowerSchool for the online reporting of grades for students in grades 3-12. Teachers update their PowerSchool grades every two weeks for review by students and parents. Progress reports are found online for students earning below a C grade at the mid-term of each quarter. At the end of each semester, all students will receive a hardcopy of their semester report.

Parents must obtain parent and student log-in information for PowerSchool from the school registrar.

Students in preschool through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade receive paper copies of report cards in their Thursday folders at the end of each term.

All questions and concerns regarding grades should be addressed to the specific classroom teacher.

## **HONOR ROLLS**

The school recognizes students for high academic achievement during the school year. Honor Roll awards are given at the end of each semester, and subject awards are granted at the end of the school year. Subject awards may honor top academic performers as well as student improvement.

### **Distinguished Honor Roll recipients must meet the following criteria:**

Middle School and High School: semester GPA at 3.80 and above.

Elementary Grades 3-5: all A's on the semester report card in the five core subject areas (language arts, math, science, social studies, and Spanish).

### **Standard Honor Roll recipients must meet the following criteria:**

Middle School and High School: semester GPA from 3.50 – 3.79 (averages are not rounded up to the nearest tenth).

Elementary Grades 3-5: more A's than B's on the semester report card in the five core subject areas.

## **THE NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY AND THE NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY**

The National Honor Society (NHS) and the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) are the premier U.S. organizations established to recognize outstanding high school and middle school students. As more than simply an honor roll, NHS/NJHS serves to acknowledge those students who have demonstrated excellence in a number of areas. For NHS, students are selected based on their demonstration of scholarship, leadership, service, and character. For the NJHS, they are selected based on the qualities listed above as well as citizenship. Both NHS and NJHS are sponsored and supervised by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

At CIPLC, the Anzoátegui Chapter of the National Honor Society serves students in grades 10 through 12, and the Barcelona Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society serves students in grades 6 through 9. The local chapter selection criteria for induction into NHS and NJHS are posted on the school's web site. In addition, selection procedures will be announced in the Gecko Express Newsletter before the selection process begins.

## **ATHLETIC AWARDS**

Athletic awards are presented to students by their coaches at the end-of-year sports banquet. The awards that students can earn are:

- Sportsmanship Award (one boy, one girl)
- Athlete of the Year (one boy, one girl)
- MVP (multiple awards)
- Gecko Guy and Gecko Gal (voted by students)
- Most Improved Athlete (one boy, one girl)

Questions about the criteria for these awards should be addressed to the athletic director.

## **CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

### **MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS AND CONFERENCES**

CIPLC is a member of national and international conferences that provide opportunities for exchanges in sporting competitions, fine arts festivals, knowledge bowls, and professional development opportunities for our teaching staff. CIPLC belongs to Eastern Venezuelan Activities Conference (EVAC), the Venezuelan Association of North American Schools (VANAS), and the Association of American Schools in South America (AASSA).

### **AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

CIPLC offers a number of after-school activities for students of all ages. Students are encouraged to join activities after school as a way to meet new people, make friends, and gain valuable experiences beyond the classroom. While there is a selection process for some of the activities that can allow only a specified number of students, most activities are very inclusive. Even students who have no experience or background in an activity are encouraged to join clubs, activities, and/or athletic teams.

### **SPORTS PROGRAM**

Sports are offered for students at all grade levels. In Grades 1-3 students can participate in basketball, indoor soccer, and roller hockey. Additional sports such as tee-ball, kickball, and jump roping may be offered. In grades 4-5 students can play basketball, soccer, indoor soccer, roller hockey, and possibly softball. At this age level, they can begin competing in the EVAC events and traveling to competitions.

In grades 7-12 students can play volleyball, basketball, soccer, and roller hockey, and may also be able to participate in golf, softball, or track and field. Secondary students can compete in events within the C-EVAC Conference as well as the VANAS, which will require travel to cities such as Maturin, Maracaibo, Valencia, and Caracas.

### **STUDENT COUNCIL**

CIPLC supports an elementary student council as well as a secondary student council. Some of the many activities sponsored by our student councils are spirit days, community service events, fundraisers for charities, and activities that encourage group participation and a sense of community. An additional important function of the student council is to act as a liaison between the faculty, administration, and students. Through the student council, students are encouraged to voice their concerns or suggest improvements to the administration. At the same time, the student council gives students experience in participatory student government. Elections for student council are held early in the first semester of each school year.

## **MODEL UNITED NATIONS**

High school students who are interested in global issues and world affairs may choose to participate in a simulation of the United Nations organization. Students apply to be delegates and serve on the Security Council, World Trade Organization, and the International Court of Justice. Students participate in MUN conferences in various national and international locations as determined by the administration. Some conferences that CIPLC students have attended in the past include SAMUN in Caracas, THIMUN in The Hague, SSUNS in Montreal, CMUNCE in New York and BosMUN in Boston. Students must meet all of the selection criteria in order to be chosen to participate in these conferences. Please see the MUN sponsor for specific selection criteria. CIPLC selects the MUN site based on a variety of factors including the type of conference, number of student participants, cost factors, and school calendar issues.

Middle School students may participate in JMUN. This organization is very similar to the high school organization, and the students may travel to Caracas for a culminating conference. Participation in JMUN will prepare students for further participation in the MUN program in high school.

## **SERVICE LEARNING**

Many service-learning opportunities exist in and out of school, and students are encouraged to participate. CIPLC supports local orphanages and hospitals, and students participate in numerous other community activities. The school encourages students and parents to read the weekly Gecko Express for news about upcoming service learning opportunities.

## **SCHOOL DANCES AND PARTIES**

Parties and dances are held periodically during the year. In order to create a safe and healthy atmosphere at school parties, the following rules apply:

- All school rules apply. Teachers/chaperones reserve the right to check bags, pockets, backpacks, and lockers in order to ensure that rules are being followed.
- Guests will be limited to 1-2 per CIPLC student depending on the specific event, and guests must be age appropriate for the event. For high school events, no guest may be over 19 years old. The hosts must accompany their guests.
- Once a student leaves a party or school event site, he/she will not be re-admitted.

## **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

CIPLC provides each student opportunities to develop his or her talents, capacities, and interests in a school climate reflecting the high standards of good citizenship expected in countries around the world. Effective learning takes place within a positive program of discipline. CIPLC's program will encourage the individual student to develop desirable qualities of self discipline, will hold the student responsible for his or her actions under the supervision of school authorities, and will protect the student from an individual whose behavior or actions disrupt an effective learning program.

The responsibility for the basic behavior development rightfully belongs with the individual and his or her parents. Parents have an obligation to assist the school in promoting and maintaining positive social and moral standards of conduct both on and off campus. Ultimately students must assume responsibility for their own behavior. They are expected to obey all rules and regulations set forth in the CIPLC Student's Rights and Responsibilities.

## **STUDENT'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. It is Your Right:**

To be part of an environment in which you are addressed politely, treated with dignity and respect, and are free from discrimination.

#### **Your Responsibilities Include:**

- Avoiding language and behavior which are offensive to others.
- Respecting the rights of others.
- Using acceptable manners, and appropriate social etiquette.

### **2. It is Your Right:**

To be part of an environment that is free from intimidation, including all forms of physical and verbal abuse.

#### **Your Responsibilities Include:**

- Avoid causing or encouraging bullying, teasing, harassing, or ganging up on others.
- Showing due consideration for others when moving on or around campus.

### **3. It is Your Right:**

To work, learn, and achieve success in an environment which supports your efforts and helps encourage you to successfully reach your goals.

To be able to express your thoughts and to ask questions.

#### **Your Responsibilities Include:**

- Arriving on time to all your classes with all necessary books and supplies, ready to work.
- Being cooperative and displaying a positive attitude.
- Completing all of your assignments and class work within an agreed upon time frame.
- Allowing others to speak and to listen sensitively to what they have to say.
- Accepting and giving opinions which are critical of ideas but never of people.
- Being intellectually honest - no cheating, plagiarism or copying of another student's work.
- Avoiding types of behavior which interfere with or discourage other students from learning effectively.

### **4. It is Your Right:**

To expect that all property and equipment at CIPLC whether personal, shared, or belonging to the school should remain free from damage, abuse, or theft.

#### **Your Responsibilities Include:**

- Treating all property with respect and using it in an appropriate manner.
- To avoid using or touching property which belongs to other people without their permission.
- Compensating owners for property damaged due to your inappropriate use.

### **5. It is Your Right:**

To be able to spend your day at CIPLC in a friendly, clean, and safe environment.

#### **Your Responsibilities Include:**

- Placing litter in appropriate containers and cleaning up your table after lunch.
- Refraining from bringing dangerous articles to school.
- Helping to keep any non-prescription drugs, alcohol, or tobacco away from the CIPLC campus.

## **6. It is Your Right:**

To be a member of a school which is highly valued by parents and the wider community.

### **Your Responsibilities Include:**

- Obeying all Venezuelan laws.
- Behaving in an appropriate manner when off campus.
- Not smoking or consuming alcoholic drinks off campus during school sponsored activities.
- Complying with the CIPLC dress policy and generally behaving in a manner which engenders pride in our school and in the achievements of its students.

## **7. It is Your Right:**

To have any disputes involving you settled within a reasonable time frame and in a fair and rational manner.

### **Your Responsibilities Include:**

- Allowing all members involved in a dispute to state their case and be listened to.
- An obligation to seek assistance from a teacher or administrator, if you feel that a dispute cannot be resolved amicably.
- Accepting with good grace the final decision of the arbitrating member of staff.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

The rules and regulations for students are defined throughout this handbook. Students and parents should be thoroughly familiar with the school's expectations of behavior. Failure to adhere to the rules and regulations will result in one of the following disciplinary actions. These consequences are progressive in nature; however the administration may skip a step depending on the severity of the incident. A behavioral and/or academic contract may be implemented at any step.

1. Meeting: With teacher, counselor, or administrator. Parents may be asked to attend and will receive notification by teacher or administrator (with further disciplinary action if deemed appropriate by administration).
2. Detention: During or after the school day for a time and length determined by the administration to be appropriate for the infraction(s).
3. In-School Suspension: A student may be given an in-school suspension for up to ten (10) days for breaking a school or classroom rule. This means that the student may attend classes, but spend any non-classroom time in the school office or be kept in the school office without attending class. The student would also be ineligible for participation in any school activities or social events during this time. All class work must remain current and full credit will be received. The parent/guardian will be notified of an in-school suspension decision.
4. Out-of-School Suspension: The principal may suspend a student from school for serious behavioral problems or habitual infractions. The parent will be notified of an out-of-school suspension decision. Before re-admittance, a conference with at least one parent, the student, and an administrator will be held. While the student would be responsible for maintaining school work, they will be ineligible for the making up of graded assessments missed during the suspension period.

5. Expulsion: Administration may recommend to the Board of Directors that a student be expelled depending on the severity of a student infraction or series of repeated infractions.

Depending on the severity of an infraction, a student may be subject to disciplinary consequences at any of the above five levels. CIPLC reserves the right to suspend or expel any student from school if a student cannot adapt to school surroundings, and/or presents a disciplinary or student safety problem of a serious and/or continual nature.

## **ACADEMIC PROBATION AND BEHAVIOR PROBATION**

A student is placed on academic probation when they receive one or more "F's" and/or two or more "D" grades on a progress report or at the end of the quarter. A student is placed on behavior probation by the administration in the event of a serious disciplinary incident or as a result of repeated behavioral infractions.

When a student is placed on academic or behavior probation, a parent conference will be held with the student's core teachers and/or the counselor. This conference will result in developing a plan to improve the student's achievement and performance.

A student placed on academic or behavior probation for two full quarters may be asked to withdraw from school.

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

CIPLC offers a wide variety of extracurricular activities in order to allow students multiple opportunities to explore their passions and interests. At CIPLC our highest priority is academic success, therefore in order to be eligible to participate in ANY extracurricular activities at CIPLC, students must maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA from the preceding quarter (Student Council officers must maintain a minimum 2.5 GPA). Students receiving one or more "F's" or more than one "D" grade on a progress report or at the end of the quarter will be placed on Academic Risk Intervention (ARI). Students on ARI are prohibited from participating in extracurricular activities, but may appeal to the principal in writing with their parents' permission. If permission to participate is granted, students will be subject to weekly grade monitoring. (See Student Athlete Progress Monitoring Sheet).

Coaches and sponsors have a great deal of responsibility and their primary concern is the safety and well being of the students in their care. Therefore, coaches and sponsors reserve the right to suspend a student from participating in activities for any of the following reasons: poor sportsmanship, poor attendance to practice, or inappropriate behavior during practices or games.

A student may also be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities if placed on behavioral probation by the administration in the event of a serious disciplinary incident or as a result of repeated behavior infractions.

A student placed on ARI or behavioral probation once the season/activity has started may still practice if they can demonstrate academic responsibility, but they may not participate in any games, tournaments, or special events for a period of 2 weeks. After the two-week time period, the grades and/or conduct will be re-evaluated. If suitable improvement is determined by the grade-level team, the student may be eligible to resume full participation.

## **ACADEMIC RISK INTERVENTION (ARI)**

Students who experience academic difficulties, defined as receiving an “F” or multiple “D’s” on a progress report, will be placed on Academic Risk Intervention (ARI). ARI is an opportunity for the student, parent, and school to come together with the purpose of helping the student succeed. For all students on ARI, a parent conference will be held with the student, principal, and/or the counselor. The purpose of this conference is to develop an Academic Improvement Plan aimed at success in the student’s achievement and performance. Students on ARI are required to attend Mandatory Mondays each week from 3:15 to 4:15 during which their current status on school work and other academic obligations will be reviewed. Students can also use this time to work with their subject teachers or take advantage of supervised study. Students are on ARI for the entire quarter, and are removed from this obligation if the next quarter’s grades do not contain any Fs or more than one D.

A student placed on Academic Risk Intervention or behavioral probation for two full quarters will have their case reviewed by the administration and the grade level team and a recommendation will be made regarding the student’s continuance at CIPLC.

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY**

All students have a right to attend school in an environment conducive to learning. The use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs interferes with both effective learning and the healthy development of children and adolescents. CIPLC recognizes that abusive behavior is often indicative of personal and/or social problems in a student’s life. Therefore, CIPLC has a fundamental, legal, and ethical obligation to prevent drug use, to maintain a drug-free educational environment, to provide preventive education, and to encourage the assistance of professional help when necessary and feasible.

The school prohibits the possession, consumption, purchase, and/or distribution of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, controlled dangerous substances, and/or other intoxicants within school buildings or upon school property, including school buses. This rule also applies to students on school trips, and at any venue on school-related or sponsored functions, trips, or events off-campus.

Any member of the staff who has reason to suspect that a student is in possession, or under the influence of controlled dangerous substances, alcohol, or other intoxicants on school property, on a school bus, or while participating in any school-sponsored activity, whether on school property or at sites off school property, must report this information to the school administration.

With written parent permission, a student may bring prescription or over-the-counter medication to school, but this medication must be kept in the Health Office and may be taken only under the direct supervision of CIPLC health personnel.

## **DRUGS AND ALCOHOL**

The sale of drugs or alcohol will result in an immediate administrative recommendation to the Board of Directors for expulsion and could result in the notification of the appropriate Venezuelan legal authorities.

A student who possesses, consumes, purchases, and/or distributes, or is under the influence of a drug or alcohol at school or during a school-sponsored event will be immediately suspended for a time and length determined by the Administration. Other potential disciplinary actions may include but



not be limited to participation in mandatory counseling and/or substance abuse treatment programs or recommendation to the Board of Directors for student expulsion from CIPLC.

## **TOBACCO**

The school prohibits the possession or use of tobacco products by students on campus, on the school bus, or at any venue where school-sponsored activities occur.

**First Offense:** The student is suspended on the day of the infraction and the next school day. A letter is issued to the students and parents, to be signed by a parent and returned to the administration by the student upon his/her arrival at school.

**Second Offense:** The student is suspended on the day of the infraction and the next three school days. Communication with the parent will be in the form of a telephone call and a letter sent home with the student, which shall be signed by the parent and returned to the administrator. Upon the student's re-entry to school, the parent must accompany the student for a conference with the administration.

**Third Offense:** The student is suspended on the day of the infraction for an indefinite time, and a recommendation for expulsion may be submitted to the BOD.

## **CO-CURRICULAR TRIPS AWAY FROM SCHOOL**

Permission slips signed by a parent or legal guardian are required, and must be turned in, before participation in the activity. Any student traveling apart from the group (team, club, class, etc.) must have the approval of the coach/sponsor and have written permission from their parents, properly dated and signed, relieving the school of all responsibility.

Throughout the duration of all school-sponsored trips and outings, all CIPLC rules and expectations for student behavior on campus apply to co-curricular activities as well. Teachers/chaperones reserve the right to check bags, pockets, backpacks, and lockers in order to ensure that rules are being followed.

For overnight trips, parents will need to have a notarized document prepared at their own expense for the sponsor to carry as proof of the parent's permission to allow the student to travel.

## **CLOSED CAMPUS**

As a top priority, CIPLC has a responsibility to ensure for the health, safety, and well being of all students while on campus. For this reason, no pupil is permitted to leave school grounds during the school day except when accompanied by a parent or with (written or verbal) parental approval as confirmed and approved by an administrator or designee. A student who leaves the school campus without permission will be considered as skipping school and is subject to disciplinary consequences.

## **VISITORS TO CAMPUS**

Student visitors are welcome at CIPLC. The following guidelines apply to guests:

1. Prior approval is obtained by requesting a visitor's pass from the appropriate administrator.
2. The guest obeys all school rules and policies.

3. Student hosts take responsibility for seeing that their guest fulfills CIPLC regulations.
4. Guests do not disrupt the normal learning process.
5. Visitors are age-appropriate to the classes they will be visiting. Students above high-school age have limited visiting privileges that are defined by administration.

All visitors are required to check in at the school office upon arrival. CIPLC generally allows only two days of visitation per student. Student visitors are not allowed to use school transportation.

## **TEXTBOOKS AND EQUIPMENT**

The teachers issue textbooks, and the student is responsible for their safekeeping and care. Lost or damaged textbooks must be reported to the teacher. Lost books must be paid for and charges will include the actual replacement cost plus shipping and customs charges. A replacement book is issued on presentation of an office receipt that verifies payment of replacement costs. Money will be credited if the book is later recovered.

### **LOST BOOKS**

Replacement cost plus 25% for shipping, handling, and customs.

### **DAMAGED BOOKS**

A new textbook should be usable for 5 years. Teacher should rate a book's condition on checkout and return based on the following scale: New, Good, Fair, Poor, Unusable. Normal usage would mean the book could drop one category: from Good to Fair, for example. If a book drops more than one category in a school year, a charge of 25% will be assessed for each category drop over one step. For example, a drop from New to Poor would result in a charge of 50% of the book's replacement value.

Students are also responsible for paying for the replacement of the loss or damage of school equipment. Prices will be charged according to replacement cost plus shipping, handling, and customs duties.

Students will not be issued final report cards or transcripts until all fines are paid.

## STUDENT AND PARENT AGREEMENT

### SIGNATURE PAGE

This handbook has been prepared as a guide to acquaint you with the policies and procedures to be followed during the up and coming school year. As with any guide, it serves as a framework for planning your activities. It is not possible to cover every situation in great detail.

We give you only the essentials upon which to start. In the absence of specific guidelines for a given situation, you should comply with the spirit of good citizenship, use common sense, and when in doubt, talk with your teachers.

The preceding pages contain the policies and procedures used by the staff and administration for maintaining an appropriate setting in which the academic and social life of students can flourish. Other items describe procedures that are normally used by the staff and administration to support school operations. It is all of our responsibility to see that these policies are properly implemented and consistently supported in order to carry out the school's philosophy and mission.

Parents, please read through the policies in the handbook and have a discussion with your child about what you will need to do as family to support these guidelines.

By signing below you are letting the school know that you have read this handbook and that you understand and agree to your responsibilities to help maintain a positive and productive environment at CIPLC.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

***Please print this page, sign it, and return it to the grade level teacher or advisor.***