



Circle of Seasons Charter School

A member of the Alliance for Public Waldorf

COS FAMILY HANDBOOK

A GUIDE TO THE POLICIES, PROCEDURES, HISTORY, AND CULTURE OF COS

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2025-2026 Family Handbook

WELCOME FROM THE FACULTY AND STAFF

Our highest endeavor must be to develop free human beings who are able to impart purpose and direction to their lives. The need for imagination, a sense of truth, and a feeling of responsibility . . . These three forces are the very nerve of education.

- Rudolf Steiner, Founder of Waldorf Education

Welcome to Circle of Seasons Charter School and our family handbook. We hope that this handbook will facilitate your understanding of the daily rhythms, organization, and policies of the school. Equally important, we hope it will offer you an opportunity to consider how to deepen your own experience at Circle of Seasons Charter School, a member of the Alliance for Public Waldorf Schools. Ultimately, you and your children create the vitality of this community. We invite and encourage you to investigate the forces that inspire this education.

Let us join together in the adventure that is Waldorf Education by building this school—your school and community—to reach its highest potential.

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AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

Inclement Weather: School Closure & Early Dismissals

Families are notified via the *One Call Now* phone messaging system as well as by email when weather conditions necessitate a change in our daily schedule. School closure announcements are made in the morning as soon as conditions have been checked. Please make sure to keep COS up-to-date with your current phone number and email address so we are able to notify your

family.

WFMZ – Channel 69 “StormCenter” also posts COS announcements regarding weather-related events such as delayed openings, early dismissals, or school closures. Families may also wish to sign up for text alerts on the Channel 69 “StormCenter” website: www.wfmz.com/stormcenter

In the case of pending or worsening weather conditions while school is in session, parents will be notified via the *One Call Now* phone messaging system as well as by email if there will be an early dismissal. An announcement will also be posted on “WFMZ’s StormCenter” indicating the time COS will dismiss for the day. The early closing time announced is the dismissal/pickup time for that day.

Because our students come to COS from more than 25 school districts, bus information on weather early dismissal days comes to us separately from each transportation department. Each of our sending school districts makes their own determination of when they will pick up our students, separate from our closing time. We make every effort to get bus information out to families as soon as we possibly can. Please be patient with us and call the main office only if you are making an alternate pickup arrangement for your child as our phone lines are often busy on weather-related early dismissal days.

***** Circle of Seasons Charter School is an independent public school. Decisions regarding delayed openings, school closures, and early dismissals are made independently of Northwestern Lehigh School District and other area school districts.***

- ❖ In the event that your local school district is closed for a weather related reason and Circle of Seasons is open, you are not obligated or required to send your child to school that day. Your child will be legally excused from school. If you reside in a local school district that provides transportation to the charter school and your local school district is closed, there will be no transportation provided to Circle of Seasons that day from that school district.
- ❖ If your local school district has a delayed opening and Circle of Seasons is open at its regular time, you are only legally obligated to have your child[ren] arrive at Circle of Seasons according to the delayed opening schedule of your local district. If your child relies on transportation from your local school district, your child[ren] will be transported to Circle of Seasons following the delayed opening schedule of your local school district.
- ❖ Once the children are at school, if there is pending or worsening weather conditions during school hours, local school districts may begin implementing early dismissal for students who reside in their district. If your child[ren] relies on transportation from your local school district, they will be dismissed at the time announced by your local school district. Different school districts may have different early dismissal times on these kinds of unpredictable days.

Calendar

The updated school calendar can be found on our website: <http://www.circleofseasons.org/calendar>

Reporting Absences

If your student is going to be absent for the day, a parent/guardian should email absent@circleofseasons.org on the day of the absence. Include your child's name, the name of your child's teacher, and the reason for the absence. All student absences must be reported (via email) by 9:00am on the day of the absence. Please do not call the school directly, leave a voicemail, or contact your child's teacher directly to report an absence. If you do not contact the school and your child is absent, you will receive an email from absent@circleofseasons.org requesting the reason for your child's absence. Please refer to the "Attendance Policies and Procedures" for additional attendance information.

Dismissal Changes and Early Pick-Up (prior to 3pm)

Dismissal changes are defined as *end of day, temporary* changes. This is different from a pre-arranged early pick-up for an appointment, etc. For the *end of day, temporary* changes, email dismissalchanges@circleofseasons.org no later than 12:00 pm the same day the change is happening with the following information: child's first and last name, class teacher's name, grade level, your first and last name, *and* what change is being made. Please only use this email for same day changes.

*If you arrive at school to pick up your child and they are already on the bus, DO NOT attempt to remove your child from the bus. Please notify a staff member immediately so that we may hold the bus and retrieve your child. Your child will meet you in the main office where you will sign your child out for the day. The safety of all students is our top priority, and your assistance with this procedure is vital.

For Early Pick-up (prior to 3pm), the parent/guardian should email dismissalchanges@circleofseasons.org as early in the day as possible. Please include your student's name, class teacher, and the time you will be picking them up. Your child will remain in their classroom learning environment until you arrive at COS. Please refer to "Attendance Policies and Procedures" for additional information regarding early departures.

Faculty/Staff

A complete staff list can be found on our [website](#).

**Paper copy of staff directory available upon request.*

Where to go with questions:

I have questions about:	Who do I contact first?	Who else could I speak to?	If I still need more information:
Attendance	Class Teacher	Enrollment & Student Info Coordinator	Dean of Students
Busing	Enrollment & Student Info Coordinator	Home District Busing Company	n/a
Calendar	www.circleofseasons.org	Main Office	Enrollment & Student Info Coordinator
Enrollment	Enrollment & Student Info Coordinator	Principal	
School Events	Class Teachers	Assistant Principal	Main Office
Lunch & Snacks	Class Teachers	School Nurse	School Counselor
Facilities	Director of School Operations	Principal	
Guidance	School Counselor	Class Teacher	Principal
Health & Wellness	Class Teacher	School Nurse	Principal
MTSS	Class Teachers	Academic Intervention Coach & Assessment Lead	Assistant Principal
Events & Fundraising	parentcircle@circleofseasons.org	Foundation	Principal
Positive School Culture & Behaviors	Class Teachers	Dean of Students	Principal
PSSAs	Class Teachers	Academic Intervention Coach & Assessment Lead	Assistant Principal
Special Education	Class Teachers	Special Education Teachers	Director of Special Education or Principal
Student Assistance Program (SAP)	School Counselor	SAP Team members	Principal

Waldorf Curricular Approach	Class Teachers	Waldorf Lead	Assistant Principal
504 Accommodations	Class Teacher	Dean of Students / 504 Coordinator	Principal

We are having a family issue that may be impacting my child's learning.	Class Teacher	School Counselor	Principal
My child is experiencing anxiety at school.	Class Teachers	School Counselor	
My child is experiencing an academic issue.	Class Teachers	Academic Intervention Coach & Assessment Lead	Assistant Principal
I have a question about middle school.	Class Teachers	Middle School Coordinator	School Counselor
My email address or phone number has changed	Class Teacher	Enrollment & Student Info Coordinator	
Social Emotional Learning	SEL Teacher	School Counselor	Class Teachers
Specialist Subject Areas (Fiber Arts, Woodworking, Gardening, Games & Movement, Music)	Specialist Teachers	Assistant Principal	
Strings Program	Strings Teacher	Assistant Principal	

History of Circle of Seasons

Circle of Seasons Charter School (COS) is the only member of the Alliance for Public Waldorf Schools in Pennsylvania. Circle of Seasons Charter School (COS) addresses the PA Common Core State Standards through the mindful implementation of the Core Principles of Public Waldorf Education. COS offers an environment where empathy, wonder, and delight are nurtured; where sensitivity to cultural and ethnic diversity and reverence for nature and humanity are promoted; where a child can learn at his or her own pace and use creativity to solve problems; and where a child's intelligence and worth are not judged solely on test

scores.

Circle of Seasons opened in September 2013, with 110 students in Kindergarten, First, and Second grades. Circle of Seasons continued to add one grade per year up to Grade Eight. We graduated our first Eighth Grade class in 2020. As a public charter school, Circle of Seasons brings together students from rural, suburban and urban communities from more than 28 different school districts.

Our curriculum is built on a foundation of creativity and self-confidence and grows with the child to balance imagination, critical thinking, and academic excellence. This foundation, combined with a focus on ecological and social responsibility, nurtures a sense of delight and wonder about the world, as well as respect for nature and humanity.

Circle of Seasons is in its first founding decade and grows financially stronger each year as enrollment increases with each additional grade added. In 2017, the school purchased a 35-acre property, the site of the former Penn State Lehigh Valley campus. In 2018, the school underwent an extensive renovation project, expanding existing teaching spaces by more than 50%. Circle of Seasons strives to continue the development of our unique campus to support our programming and community.

ORGANIZATION OF THE SCHOOL

Circle of Seasons takes a “whole-child” and arts-integrated approach to learning and provides the kind of educational experience that leading experts have consistently promoted for years. Circle of Seasons holds teaching the core subjects - language arts, math, science, social studies and foreign language - as a priority. Yet this is done in a way in which the arts, physical activity and outdoor exploration are integrated into our daily schedule engaging the child’s head, heart, and hands.

As a member of the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, COS is committed to the core principles of Public Waldorf education, inspiring children holistically in a unique public school environment. Circle of Seasons Charter School is a tuition-free public school.

The Faculty

Our Circle of Seasons faculty works directly with our children and families, overseeing the day-to-day activities of the classrooms, developing the curriculum, and coordinating many of the school’s festivals. The teachers, together with the administration, are responsible for the details involved in the functioning and operation of the school.

The faculty is engaged in an ongoing quest to deeply understand the work and educational philosophies of Rudolf Steiner, which are the basis of Public Waldorf Education. Every effort is made to develop a close and cooperative working relationship in which the faculty, as well as

the children, can learn and grow.

As part of our striving to provide excellence in education for our students, we provide opportunities for the continuous growth and development of our staff through ongoing pedagogical study, staff training, mentoring, and evaluation.

The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is made up of parents and community members and is responsible for the legal and financial well-being of the school. The practice of incorporating trustees in U.S. Waldorf schools, in non-pedagogical areas, has evolved as a legal and practical necessity in formulating the strategic planning, funding, implementing, and governing of a Public Waldorf school. Trustees bring a considerable range of skills, while keeping the long-term goals of the school at heart.

The Administration

The administrative staff handles the necessary day-to-day business activities of coordinating and operating the school. The administrative team carries out the decisions and standing policies made by various governing bodies, and strives to serve the needs of the faculty, students, and families.

Administrative Leadership Team

The Leadership Team is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day creation and implementation of policy and procedures as directed by the Board of Trustees and addressing staff issues that arise in both the administrative and pedagogical realms of the school. This team is also responsible for addressing questions that arise from families, staff and faculty members, and the Board.

The CEO/Principal and Assistant Principal meet weekly with other members of the leadership team. This team is committed to maintaining a culture of collaboration, trust, and openness.

MISSION & VISION

Mission:

Circle of Seasons Charter School ignites a love of learning, kindles excitement and discovery, and instills a deep sense of community and service to the greater world. We foster each individual's creativity, imagination, humanity, and scholarship by cultivating integrated experiences that support students along their developmental journeys, awakening hearts, hands, and minds.

Vision and Core Values:

Circle of Seasons Charter School inspires change in public education by equally valuing intellectual and physical growth, social-emotional learning, connection to the creative, and the freedom, time, and space to do meaningful work.

We awaken and empower each individual to find purpose, honor the diversity of humanity, and foster respect and stewardship of the natural world as actively engaged, globally-minded citizens.

Our entire community invests in the betterment of the whole by nurturing a sense of belonging, creating a space for listening with the intent to understand, and enjoying continual study and self growth.

- ❖ Preserving Childhood
- ❖ Educating the Whole Human Being
- ❖ Honoring the Individual
- ❖ Enlivening Community
- ❖ Learning through Exploration
- ❖ Embracing Creative Capacities
- ❖ Experiencing Awe & Wonder
- ❖ Practicing Social Justice
- ❖ Fostering Connection to the Natural World
- ❖ Living with Integrity
- ❖ Evoking Joy & Kindness
- ❖ Teaching as an Art

COS DIVERSITY & INCLUSION STATEMENT

Circle of Seasons values and honors diversity and welcomes students, families, and employees from communities of all socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, racial, gender and sexual identities, people of all abilities and neurodiversity, family structures and lived experiences.

Circle of Seasons' community is a rich tapestry woven from the diverse threads of our community members. We strive to create an inclusive environment in which the identities, experiences, and perspectives of individuals and communities are recognized, valued, and honored. As part of this work, we cultivate a shared understanding of diversity and equity within social and historical contexts. We commit ourselves, as a school and community of practice, to reflect, assess, and act upon these values.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Circle of Seasons Charter School ("Charter School") shall not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, age, veteran status, pregnancy, sex, sexual orientation, gender

identity or gender expression, religion, national or ethnic origin, height or weight, marital status, family status, ancestry, mental or physical disability, genetic information, immigration status, or any other classification otherwise protected by applicable state and/or federal laws. Charter School's Board of Trustees recognizes school administration and employees' obligations to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws in providing equal opportunity to all Charter School students. Pursuant to 22 Pa. Code §12.4 and consistent with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (43 P.S. §§ 951 - 963).

Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, veteran status, pregnancy, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, religion, national or ethnic origin, height or weight, marital status, family status, ancestry, mental or physical disability, genetic information, immigration status, or any other classification otherwise protected by law in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, hiring policies, scholarship and aid programs, and other to a free and full public education, nor may a student be subject to disciplinary action on account of race, color, age, pregnancy, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, religion, national or ethnic origin, height or weight, family status, ancestry, mental or physical disability, genetic information, immigration status, or any other classification otherwise protected by law.

Communications and Publications

Regular communication (information and updates) from Circle of Seasons is received electronically. Please keep your email information regularly updated with our Front Office to ensure receipt of this information.

Mandated Reporters

All COS staff are mandated reporters and are required to make a report of suspected abuse when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse or neglect. While anyone may report suspected abuse; mandated reporters are those people who are required by law to report suspected child abuse. Mandated reporters are held to a higher standard of responsibility and may receive serious consequences for not reporting suspected abuse. Pennsylvania's Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) was amended in 2014 and includes all school employees

COS DAILY HAPPENINGS

**Any changes to the drop off and pick-up procedures after the start of the school year will be communicated through the weekly Family Update and/or individual student's classroom teacher communications.*

Drop-off & Pick-up Safety

- ❖ Enter via the Redhaven Street entrance between 8:05-8:35 AM and 3:05-3:35 PM (1:05-1:35 PM on Wednesdays).

- ❖ Exit via the Mohr Lane exit.
- ❖ Children should always enter/exit the vehicle from the curbside/side facing school building. DO NOT let your student(s) out of the car without a COS staff member directing you to do so.
- ❖ Adults should NOT exit the vehicle.
- ❖ Do not pass other cars in the line. If you are finished loading or unloading, you must wait for the cars in front of you to proceed.
- ❖ Cars are not permitted to park in the Fire Lane during arrival or dismissal for any reason.
- ❖ Follow directional signage as you may be directed to queue up in the parking lot to avoid traffic overflowing onto the road.

Additional Reminders

- ❖ There is no supervision for students dropped off prior to 8:15 AM. DO NOT let your student(s) out of the car without a COS staff member directing you to do so.
- ❖ Adults dropping students off should not exit the vehicle. Starting at 8:15 AM, staff will indicate to those arriving by vehicle when students can exit their vehicles to enter school.
- ❖ There are times that the Pennsylvania State Police will be present at COS during the school day, including arrival and dismissal. This is an ongoing effort at the state level to coordinate strong relationships between schools and the local police to support our schools.

Late Arrival - If your child arrives after 8:30 am, you must park your car and escort your child into the office to sign them in.

Pick-up Procedure: 3:15 - 3:30 PM (1:15 - 1:30 PM on Wednesdays)

- ❖ Parent vehicles will enter at the Redhaven Street entrance and line-up in the first tier of the parking lot (closest to the school, not the fire lane.) Starting at 3:15 PM (1:15 PM on Wednesdays,) staff will dismiss students based on the car line order. Parents or designee will place a pick-up placard on their dashboard to assist staff members in calling for the correct children. If you do not have a placard, you will be asked to provide identification to ensure that students are leaving with previously identified adults on the pick-up list. If your student is delayed in leaving the building, you may be asked to pull over into a designated parking space to wait for your student.
- ❖ Late Pick-up/Missed Bus: Students who miss the dismissal bus or who are not picked up by 3:30 PM will be escorted back into the building by a staff member. Parents will be contacted by phone and are required to come to the main entrance to pick up their child. Students who miss the dismissal bus or are not picked up by 3:30 will return to the school building. While we work hard to avoid missed buses, if a child does miss the bus, the parent will be called to arrange pick up at COS. Parents please come in to the front office to pick up your children.

Attire Guidelines

At Circle of Seasons Charter School, we wish to surround the child with an environment

that allows our students to develop and flourish.

Our goal is to develop a healthy school-time environment by guiding children toward appropriate school attire. These guidelines may not cover all situations and teachers may have special needs to address particular attire. Please contact your class teacher(s) if you have any questions about specific articles of clothing. To ensure a safe environment for our children, family support is needed and appreciated by having them:

- ❖ Come well dressed for the weather and/or anticipating the weather.
- ❖ Come wearing comfortable, practical, flat-soled shoes that are firmly attached to the feet.
- ❖ Come wearing clean, simple, in good repair, comfortable, and safe attire that will allow active participation in all school related activities.
- ❖ Refrain from wearing inappropriately revealing clothing. This includes see-through/fishnet fabrics, half shirts/crop-tops, sideless/backless, or strapless shirts/blouses, very short or revealing shorts/skirts.
- ❖ On Games & Movement or P.E. days, please ensure that your child wears clothing appropriate for physical activity, including footwear for movement.
- ❖ To create an environment focused on learning and which provides an inclusive social atmosphere, the children shall follow these recommendations:
 - Circle of Seasons strongly encourages parents to provide clothing and accessories free of printed messages, pictures or images. Clothing and accessories that include printed messages with negative or vulgar messages and/or related images should not be worn to school. Examples of acceptable clothing include patterns, plaids, stripes, simple designs or solids, or school-approved COS logo-wear. This guideline extends to backpacks and lunchboxes. Backpacks and lunchboxes are strongly encouraged to be free from printed messages, pictures, and images.
 - Shoes free of lights and/or wheels and media characters.

*All teachers have the discretion, if they deem a child's clothing to be distracting to the learning environment, to speak with the child's family to discuss the clothing in question.

Outdoor Gear & Extra Clothing

At Circle of Seasons, we go outside in ALL kinds of weather. It is very important that children be dressed appropriately. It is so much easier to learn when you are comfortable! We encourage children to dress in layers of natural fabric as much as possible – too many layers is easier to remedy than too few. All children need the following:

- ❖ A pair of indoor shoes to be left at school – please no slippers or Crocs! An inexpensive pair of slip-on sneakers is perfect!
- ❖ A seasonally appropriate change of clothing
- ❖ 2 extra pairs of socks to be left at school for wet feet
- ❖ Rain pants, raincoat, and boots
- ❖ Sun hat

Once the cold weather begins, your child needs:

- ❖ Snow pants
- ❖ Winter coat
- ❖ Waterproof snow boots or insulated waterproof boots
- ❖ Waterproof gloves or mittens
- ❖ A warm hat

These clothing items should each be labeled with your child's name on the tag and be inside a larger bag also labeled with your child's name.

Electronic Devices

Cell phones, iPods, MP3 Players, or any other electronic devices are not allowed in class. Middle school students are permitted to carry a cell phone to school, but they must remain turned off and in the student's locker or with a staff member for safe keeping during the day. If a cell phone, iPod, MP3 player, or any other personal electronic device is brought to school, Circle of Seasons Charter School takes no liability or financial responsibility for theft, loss, costs, and expenses arising out of any liability or claim of liability for damage to any personal electronic device. Electronic devices may not be seen, heard or used at any time during instructional hours 8:30am 3:30pm, which includes: snack, lunch, passing periods, during class and restroom breaks.

Students who fail to comply with these guidelines will have their personal electronic device confiscated by a teacher, counselor, staff member, or administrator.

The following progressive discipline consequences will take place if a student fails to comply with this policy. A staff member will review the policy with the student at each offense:

- ❖ First occurrence - Confiscation of any personal electronic device; the device will be returned to the student after school.
- ❖ Second occurrence - The device will be confiscated until a parent can pick it up or during a parent conference.
- ❖ Any further violation of this policy will result in confiscation and a parent conference to discuss return of item.

Please refer to "Electronic media use at home" for additional information on non-school related media use.

While COS understands that parents/guardians may send electronic devices with students for use on transportation, please encourage your student to use these devices appropriately.

This includes appropriate use of devices, including content being viewed, not taking photos or videos of transportation or other students, and limited to student's own usage. Students who engage in inappropriate behavior with electronic devices may be asked to cease usage on transportation.

Other Personal Items: Toys, etc.

Circle of Seasons strongly discourages students bringing personal items other than those necessary for instruction to school. Students who fail to comply with these guidelines will have their personal items confiscated by a teacher, counselor, staff member, or administrator.

Circle of Seasons Charter School takes no liability or financial responsibility for theft, loss, costs, and expenses arising out of any liability or claim of liability for damage to any personal item(s).

Lost & Found

Items collected throughout the school will be dropped off in the designated Lost and Found area. All students know where this is and have access to it daily. Please ask at Front Desk if you wish to set up a time to check the Lost & Found. Items will be removed from the school due to storage concerns on an as-needed basis. Notification of upcoming removal and donation of items will be sent to all families via the Family Update so that families/students have ample time to search for missing items.

Circle Time & Main Lesson

It is important that students arrive at school on time to ensure that they do not miss any part of Morning Lesson. This period of devoted academic study includes the core of the curriculum. The class teacher orchestrates this period to be a living and beautiful learning experience that cannot be recreated or 'made-up' at a later time. During this period, one subject is focused upon for several weeks (generally 2-6 weeks) utilizing a block study approach. The Morning Lesson is about two hours long, which allows the teacher to plan a wide variety of activities appealing to multiple intelligences and engaging the head, heart, and hands focused upon the subject of study. The Waldorf curriculum has been likened to an ascending spiral: subjects are revisited several times, and each new exposure affords greater depth and new insights into the subject at hand. Morning Lesson includes a great deal of cross-curricular and multisensory techniques.

Circle of Seasons asks that families do their best to schedule appointments around this Main Lesson period in the day if at all possible. Classroom teachers will share the specific schedule of their classroom so you can identify when your student's Main Lesson block is

during the day. Our youngest grades, 1st through 4th, will start the day with Main Lesson. Other grades Main Lesson blocks may be held at other regularly scheduled times through the day.

Daily Schedule

In the lower grades, Main Lesson often begins with Circle Time, which includes many rhythmic movements and musical activities. During Circle, poems are recited, speech exercises are recited, songs are sung, folk dancing is practiced, games integrating language arts and arithmetic practice, and concentration games are played. The Main Lesson subjects, such as history, language arts, science, and mathematics are taught in blocks of 50-75 minutes per day. During Main Lesson, the children have the opportunity to study one subject extensively.

The day progresses with plenty of outdoor play time, lunch, and specialist classes. Dedicated English Language Arts and Math skills periods are thoughtfully integrated into the daily schedule to help students develop and strengthen essential foundational skills.

Middle School also includes a Main Lesson time, a dedicated 75 minute period of study which focuses deeply upon one area of study that is interwoven with cross curricular connections and the arts. Woven into the day around Main Lesson, the classes participate in Mathematics and English Language Arts skills lessons, special projects, specialist classes, lunch, outdoor recreation, and school service work.

Recess & Outdoor Play

Recess and outdoor play are an important part of the day when children get a chance to experience the world and express themselves on their own. It is usually a joy to observe their play, and we try to interfere as little as possible, only doing so when necessary for students' safety and well-being. Our teachers are aware of what is going on with each of the various groups even as they form, disperse and reform with other groups. This vigilance is important to us as we monitor for safe and cooperative choices. Kind, respectful, and compassionate behavior is expected of everyone on the playground at all times.

At recess, students have the freedom to play energetically or quietly. Each child knows what kind of play they need, and has the capability to seek it out. While we want each child to be able to engage in necessary play, it is our job to minimize dangers and prevent mishaps. Faculty may need to redirect an activity and will do so by stating a positive choice first. For example, "You may run with empty hands" rather than "Do not run while carrying the long poles!" As humans, we will hear verbs and often disregard the "don't" in a sentence. It is crucial for young, playful minds to hear positively-framed play suggestions to help them be successful and safe.

Conversation, rule making, changing rules, friendship agreements, and broken agreements are all a part of not only healthy play, but also social emotional life. Children are expected to dabble in these conversational and play tactics as they learn to get along - but may often be subject to natural consequences when things go wrong. It is the faculty's job to have a sense of the general nature of the children's play. We will intervene as delicately as possible, but necessary nudges in different directions may be needed if we see a problem coming. Other times we will need to intervene and make changes abruptly to play. Our intent is to move from coercion and back to cooperation within the group; we want to avoid stalemates and encourage sharing and listening. Teachers' most important work on the playground is the ability to observe. We stay aware of overall activity. We are watchful for escalating disagreements, behavior that may be unusual or inappropriate, and any students that may seem unhappy or anxious. Overall, we strive to have recess be a positive playing and learning experience for all.

COS YEARLY HAPPENINGS

Festivals

Festivals are a strong feature of Circle of Seasons' character and an integral part of 'classroom life' and serve as an opportunity for the entire school community to join together in seasonal celebrations. Planning and working together in anticipation of the festival and celebrating during the festival creates bonds among the entire community. The festivals serve as an important bridge between home life and school life. Some festivals are celebrated with just the school community while others are open to specific grade communities or the entire community.

Our festival schedule includes:

Rose Ceremony - August, school day celebration, faculty & students

Day of Courage - September, school day celebration, students & faculty

Lantern Walk - November, community celebration for families of grades K-2

Winter Spiral - December, school day celebration, students & faculty

Winter Faire - January, open to public

May Faire - May, open to public

For each event students and staff gather to celebrate through song, movement, poems and stories. In the days leading up to it, and following these occasions, the content of the Festival is kept alive through various activities within the classroom. In this way the ceremony itself is simply the highlight of a Festival Season. Many other festivals and events may take place in individual classrooms that focus around the curriculum in that grade.

Through the cycle of the festivals we also give our attention to the tangible world around us and to elements of the daily environment in which we live and work in order to rediscover

processes and patterns of the natural world that might reflect our own humanness and renew our sense of belonging.

Block Rotations

Circle of Seasons utilizes the block approach to teaching. This means that one area is studied in depth for several weeks. When Rudolf Steiner inaugurated the first Waldorf school, he established the “main lesson”—a two-hour class during which all academic subjects except for foreign languages would be taught. The subjects taught in the main lesson were studied for a block of time lasting from two to six weeks. Teaching in main lesson blocks has become one of the distinguishing features of Waldorf education. Block teaching allows teachers to cover the curriculum intensively and economically, and it provides the students with the fullest possible immersion in a subject. The students’ experience of the subject is further deepened by allowing the subject to “go to sleep,” before being “reawakened” later in the year or in the following year. Through this process of forgetting and remembering, students return to a subject with new interest and new insights. The time between the main lesson blocks in a subject allows students’ concepts to develop gradually and to mature. Knowledge needs time to take root, blossom, and bear fruit. The main lesson block assures that students have sufficient time to experience a living process of learning.

Family Rhythms

Rhythm is everywhere: heartbeat, breath, the rising sun. Every Waldorf class also has a rhythm...children begin their day in the same way each morning, a specific song or verse signals the next transition, periods of academic work are followed by periods of play. The steady flow of the day allows the child to be fully present in whatever they are doing...there is no worry about “what happens next” because they know what happens. A rhythm is not a schedule, it is not rigid or complicated. “Every day I get off the bus, have a snack and talk about my day,” “Every night I take a bath, hear a story, and am tucked into bed,” these are examples of rhythm. Families can enhance the educational experience of their children by understanding the rhythms of the day. Children flourish in environments that are loving, orderly, and predictable. With an external sense of order and routine, children feel comfortable living in the moment. Just knowing what is expected at different intervals in the day can help children feel secure in the world. Once established they provide a sense of security for the child and establish a foundation from which he or she may grow.

Circle of Seasons wants our community families to be able to enjoy all the seasons of the year together. In a typical year, our school year schedule strives to have extended breaks in fall, winter, spring, and summer. During these times, students are encouraged to spend time outdoors and teachers in upper grades may assign work to complete. Families of lower grades students should read together daily as they should throughout the year and explore their home surroundings.

We encourage families to consider how rhythm can support them in creating a balanced home life.

These other home activities support the work of the school:

- ❖ Regular bedtime
- ❖ Eating a healthy breakfast
- ❖ Reading to your child and/or encouraging daily reading
- ❖ Household or yard chores
- ❖ Outdoor play
- ❖ Gardening
- ❖ Indoor creative play
- ❖ Hobbies
- ❖ Cooking
- ❖ Nature hikes and walks
- ❖ Picnics, community, or religious activities
- ❖ Volunteer or community projects
- ❖ Providing a quiet, uncluttered space and time set aside for homework, when necessary

ATTENDANCE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

All Board of Trustees approved policies can be found at <https://www.circleofseasons.org/policies>

Attendance Policies and Procedures

Circle of Seasons Charter School requires that students enrolled attend school regularly in accordance with state laws. The educational program offered by Circle of Seasons Charter School is predicated upon the presence of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation in order for students to achieve academic standards and consistent educational progress.

Attendance shall be required of all students enrolled in Circle of Seasons Charter School during the days and hours that school is in session, except when an administrator or teacher may excuse a student for temporary absences pursuant to school policy, when receiving satisfactory evidence of mental, physical, or other urgent reasons that may reasonably cause the student's absence. *Please see Attendance Policy for additional information about excused and unlawful absences, including information on Student Attendance Improvement Plans (SAIP).*

An **Extended Absence Request Form** is available online (or in the school office) and must be submitted to the building administrator at least five (5) school days prior to the requested trip. These forms can be submitted earlier but please note that any absences accumulated between the submission of the form/subsequent approval to the travel days requested could impact the approval of the educational trip request. Educational trips shall be discouraged during the first

and last week of the school term and during the PSSA testing window. Any extended absence requests will be considered unlawful during the PSSA window. All school work and tests missed during an approved trip(s) shall be made up at the initiation of the student and the reasonable convenience of the teacher.

The charter school does not discriminate against students with physical or mental disabilities. Parents of students with disabilities that are or may affect the student's school attendance should contact the Director of Special Education to determine whether accommodations are necessary.

Absent Excuse Requirement

Parents/Guardians must submit an excuse or medical note to absent@circleofseasons.org within 3 days of an absence. If an excuse or medical note is not submitted within 3 days of the student's return to school from the absence, the absence will be considered unexcused.

Make-Up Work: Students and/or guardians should speak to class teachers regarding makeup work.

If your child is absent from school for more than three (3) consecutive days, a valid note from a healthcare practitioner will be required that describes the nature of, or identifies the specific diagnosis of, your child's prolonged illness. Students who have accrued three (3) or more unexcused absences during any school year are subject to attendance law consequences.

A student is considered absent if they are not physically participating in instruction or instruction-related activities on school grounds or at an approved off-grounds location for at least half the school day. Each day a student is absent for 50 percent or more of a school day is to be counted as an absence.

Release of Students from School

Teachers shall not release students from school during the school day without the prior approval of the CEO/Principal or her designee and a written note, if possible, from the parent/guardian. No student will be released during the school day to go with any adult other than the parent and/or guardian of the child or an individual who has been previously authorized by the parent/guardian to pick up the child unless the charter school has received written (preferred) or verbal communication from a parent/guardian that the student may be released to the individual.

Tardy/Early Departures

Unexcused tardy is used for arrivals without a doctor's note up until 11:45am. Early departures from school will be used for departures prior to the end of the school day. Unexcused early departures will be considered those without a doctor's excuse note. Departures prior to 11:45am with no return to school or arrivals at school after 11:45am will be counted as an absence. These late arrivals/early departures will accumulate in a student's overall attendance. Unlawful designation will be utilized depending on reason.

After three (3) Tardy/Early Departure unlawful designations, actions may be taken, including a Student Tardy Improvement Plan and/or a meeting with the CEO/Principal or designee.

Chronic Absenteeism

Regular attendance is essential to a student's success, and chronic absences, even when excused, can have a detrimental effect on academic performance. Once a student has reached ten (10) absences, regardless of whether absences have been designated as lawful/excused or unlawful/unexcused:

- ❖ For each subsequent absence (which shall include absences due to illness and medical appointments, and personal reasons) the parent/guardian must submit a medical note from the student's healthcare provider affirming that the student was medically excused from attending school on the dates missed.

Illness at School

If a student is dismissed from school during school hours for health-related reasons by a certified school nurse, registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, or a school administrator/designee employed by the charter school, the student's absence from school shall be deemed excused. No further documentation shall be required for that day. COS school nurse recommendations regarding return to school date will be honored when a student is past 10 absences for the school year.

Attendance and Other School Related Events

If your student is not in attendance at school that day for illness or other reason(s), he/she may not attend any school events held that day/evening (i.e. concerts, clubs, activities, etc.)

Education of Homeless and Unaccompanied Youth

The McKinney–Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act guarantees free and appropriate public education for homeless children and youth. [B.E.C.42U.S.C.11431](#) outlines procedures for determining eligibility, school placement, enrollment, and resources.

McKinney-Vento Act At-a-Glance:

What is the definition of “homeless youth” under McKinney-Vento?

- ❖ “Homeless” is defined as “anyone lacking fixed, adequate, regular nighttime residence.”

What Situations Fit this definition?

- ❖ Staying in home other people due to unavailable housing, financial hardship, or similar circumstances
- ❖ Living in Motels, hotels, trailer parks (in some instances—examples: leaking roof, no heat, etc.), public places, or camp grounds due to unavailable suitable housing options
- ❖ Living in a Emergency Shelter Or Transitional Housing
- ❖ Unaccompanied (not living indirect care of legal parent or guardian) or runaway youth
- ❖ Refugee and migrant youth

How does McKinney-Vento help these students?

- ❖ The law makes sure that these students receive a free and suitable public education by removing barriers to school enrollment and full, basic, daily participation in school activities, which include:
 - Immediate enrollment (within the guidelines of the Charter)
 - Free and Reduced School Lunch ○ Help from school with any necessary enrollment documents
 - Help from school setting up transportation service (if the student qualifies)
 - Help from school with basic school supplies
 - Help from school with any basic clothing needs

Where can I find more information for Pennsylvania?

- ❖ You can visit the [PDE Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness](#) site
- ❖ Contact the school's Homeless Liaison: Jillian Jenkins, School Counselor at 610-285-6267

PETS

The school is not liable for personal pets on the campus. We ask that personal pets remain at home. Service animals are welcome on the campus. Please speak to a staff member if you need a service animal present while visiting the school, so that you may be accommodated. All pets present on campus must be leashed or otherwise contained in a pet carrier.

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO

Please refrain from taking photos or videos during class plays, festivals, and assemblies where children are performing. These activities are meant to be lived in the present. During shared experiences with your child, photos and videos are welcome. Photos taken at COS should not be uploaded to public domains without permission. A photography release form is filled out upon enrollment. If you wish to update that form, please notify the front office to complete a new form.

TRANSPORTATION AUDIO/VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

The use of a video/audio recording on bus transportation varies by school district. It is intended to assist the administration, contractors, and drivers in observing behavior, preventing violation

of bus rules, school rules, regulations, district policies and Pennsylvania law, and utilizing and/or dispensing such surveillance when required for disciplinary, civil and/or criminal matters.

Video/Audio recorders may be placed on any and all buses or schools. All students are subject to being videotaped on the school bus or at school at any time.

The video/audio media are intended for use with respect to issues relating to safety and behavior on the bus and at school. Video/audio media are not intended for general viewing by a student, employee, parent/guardian, or public and shall not be made available for general viewing purposes. In the event that a video/audio media needs to be accessed, COS works with the school district to make such requests.

ACCEPTABLE INTERNET USAGE

The Board of Trustees has adopted an Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy (815) and an Internet Safety Policy Pursuant to the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) Policy (815A). Please refer to www.circleofseasons.org and the Board of Trustees page to access all current Board of Trustees policies.

LAND STEWARDSHIP GUIDELINES

These are the overall guidelines and processes we wish to uphold with regard to any volunteers caring for the land. COS wishes to actively support organic, biodynamic farming and gardening practices.

COS thanks you for your continued stewardship, service, and volunteerism with these provisions in mind:

- ❖ Create a safe and natural environment.
- ❖ Any chemicals being used on the land must be approved prior to use. In general, the school takes a strong stand in discouraging the use of toxic weed killers, pesticides, and manufactured fertilizers on the school, especially the garden areas. All volunteers must have approval from the school administration before using any chemicals on the property.
- ❖ Board of Trustees Policy 716 addresses use of pesticides on campus. If you would like to be notified of planned or emergency applications of pesticides, please send an electronic communication to aduke@circleofseasons.org.
- ❖ Care and respect for natural growth cycles.
- ❖ Tree limbs and shrubs that require trimming or pruning should be reported to the Facilities Manager. COS strives to use informed, consistent, and careful management of trees and landscape.
- ❖ Encourage waste reduction, recycling, and composting.
- ❖ COS seeks better, more effective ways to collect campus-wide recycling and composting

in addition to reducing the amount of waste we produce in our operations.

- ❖ Reduction: Families are encouraged to use reusable containers for water, lunch and events.
- ❖ Recycling: Blue recycling bins are present in multiple locations throughout the school. We encourage awareness of and involvement in proper recycling practices.
- ❖ Composting: Compostable materials are collected in individual classrooms which are emptied into the compost bins by students daily.
- ❖ COS appreciates your input, suggestions, and awareness of handling all waste and recycling when participating in class meetings, festivals, and other campus events. With everyone's help, awareness, and participation COS can continue to improve land stewardship.

STUDENT SERVICES

Child Find Process

Circle of Seasons Charter School has a Child Find process enabling us to identify students who may be in need of specially designed instruction. In accordance with 22 Pa Code Section 711, which directs Charter Schools to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and implementing its regulations that relate to assistance to states for the education of children with disabilities, and Section 504 and its implementing regulations that relate to nondiscrimination on the basis of handicap in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance, Circle of Seasons Charter School provides a free, appropriate, public education ("FAPE") to its IDEA eligible students and/or those who meet the criteria for a Section 504 Agreement. To qualify for Special Education Services at Circle of Seasons Charter School, as an eligible student, the child must be of school age, in need of specially-designed instruction, and meet the eligibility criteria for one or more of the following disabilities, as set forth in 22 Pa Code Section 711.3(b)(1): Autism; Deaf-Blindness; Deafness; Emotional disturbance; Hearing impairment; Intellectual Disability; Multiple disabilities; Orthopedic impairment; Other health impairment; Specific Learning Disability; Speech or Language Impairment; Traumatic brain injury; Visual Impairment.

Our Child Find process consists of universal screening, classroom instruction and assessment, periodic benchmark assessments and data analysis through our Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) process.

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)

As part of our Child Find process, COS has a Multi-tiered Systems of Support Team (MTSS), comprised of the Instructional Assistant Principal, school counselor, special education and intervention teachers, MTSS Academic Coordinator, Director of Student Support Services and the Principal/CEO, who collaborate with teachers, parents and specialists to identify and provide extra support to students who are struggling in the classroom. The core features of this

approach includes: expectations for high quality instruction in general education classrooms; a universal, classroom-based process to identify need for additional support; a collaborative, team-based approach to development, implementation, and evaluation of alternative interventions; an increasingly intense, multi-tiered application of an array of instruction matched to individual needs; continuous monitoring of progress to determine the impact of interventions; and the expectation of parent involvement throughout the process.

The MTSS team meets regularly, utilizing the MTSS process by logging and monitoring student interventions. The MTSS team analyzes data gathered from the classroom teacher and parent(s) based upon the student's particular area of need. Needs addressed by the MTSS team include reading, mathematics, and behavior intervention, as well as related service areas of speech and occupational therapy. Each time the team meets, they review student progress and the plan to move the student forward.

If you believe that your child may be in need of screening and/or evaluation, send your request in writing directly to your child's teacher and the Director of Student Support Services. All information gathered about your child is subject to the confidentiality provisions contained in federal and state laws.

Special Education Evaluation Process

If a child is referred for an evaluation, the following steps will be taken:

Evaluation Request Meeting

The parent requests an evaluation OR the MTSS team initiates the referral to discuss concerns about the student's lack of progress.

Consent

The parent consents to the evaluation via signing the Permission To Evaluate (PTE) form.

Evaluation

The multidisciplinary team has 60 days from the date of the receipt of the PTE consent to complete the evaluation.

Evaluation Review

The multidisciplinary team, including the parents, meet to review the results of the multidisciplinary comprehensive evaluation and determine if the child is eligible for supports and services. If the student is eligible, the team will formulate an individual education plan (IEP) or 504 plan, which must be placed into effect 30 days from the date that the evaluation was completed.

504 Meeting

The multidisciplinary team meets with the parents to develop a 504 that addresses the identified needs of the student. A finalized plan with accommodations is the result of that meeting.

IEP Meeting

The multidisciplinary team meets with the parents to develop an IEP that addresses the

identified needs of the student. A Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP) is issued by COS to implement the plan.

Annual Review & Reevaluation

The student's IEP must be reviewed and revised as necessary at a minimum of once per year. A Reevaluation Report must be conducted at least once every 3 years, unless parental consent to the reevaluation is waived, OR the student is identified with an intellectual disability (where the reevaluation report must be conducted within 2 years.)

POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE & DISCIPLINE

School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS)

SWPBIS is a multi-tiered system of support that provides COS students and staff a consistent, established approach to behavior that is culture-based while relying on a data-driven decision making framework. The multi-tiered social, emotional, behavioral, and mental health supports needed for our school to continue to be a safe and effective learning environment for all students and staff are continually emphasized across all areas of our K-8 programming through a consistent message about COS expectations.

COS is using SWPBIS to achieve positive outcomes through understanding both our social emotional *and* behavioral data by providing a continuum of practices to support students and staff through the various support systems we have put in place to help student success.

Our SWPBIS approach focuses on the following:

Be respectful.

Be safe.

Be brave.

More information will be available on the COS website and in teacher/parent communications in the upcoming school year.

Discipline

The central tenets of our school discipline policy are safety, respect, and responsibility. School rules and consequences will be developmentally appropriate. They should maintain a balance between respecting individual freedom and having clearly defined standards that serve our educational environment. Discipline actions are proactive and provide opportunities for learning healthy social interaction skills. Consequences should be logical, non-shaming, and foster opportunities for restitution, learning, and forgiveness.

The ultimate goal of our behavior/discipline policy and procedures is the development of

self discipline in our students, fostering the emerging ability of our students to recognize and demonstrate respectful, non-disruptive, and responsible behavior, to monitor their own actions, and to behave in ways that promote a safe and healthy school community.

Kindergarten

In the Circle of Seasons kindergarten classrooms, the teachers strive to create a consistent daily schedule which allows the child to know, out of habit and routine, what is expected of them at any given time. The teachers also model ways of resolving conflicts among the children. When required, problematic behavior will initially be re-directed. If the inappropriate behavior continues, the teacher may continue to redirect the child, give verbal warnings, or be asked to “take a break” - a period of time spent working away from peers until the teacher feels that the child is ready to rejoin classmates. Students intentionally hurting other students or staff will be sent out of the classroom and may meet with the Assistant Deans of Students or other designated member of the administrative team. The teacher, Assistant Deans, or other designated staff will contact parents/guardians (Refer to chart below regarding contact).

Serious misbehaviors, hitting, biting, or other aggressive behaviors result in:

- ❖ Phone call home from the teacher
- ❖ Meeting with the teacher and parent/guardians, who will work with the student to correct this behavior in certain circumstances
- ❖ Administrative interventions that follow the COS Behavior Guidelines designed for Grades

Grades

COS is committed to creating a safe and nurturing learning environment for every child. Our approach encourages us to consider the developmental stage of a child, particularly in how we communicate expectations and provide consequences. Discipline at Circle of Seasons in the grades classrooms is to be considered an aspect of social guidance and student accountability with a focus on providing classrooms conducive to learning and promoting character development (i.e. to cultivate the values of COS). The purposes of disciplinary consequences are these:

- ❖ Increase of self-control
- ❖ Creation of community (both individual involvement and group/collective)
- ❖ Focus on empathy and structure within the school community

In order for a discipline program to be consistent and effective, parents and guardians are expected to support teachers and administrators. When a Circle of Seasons student chooses not to follow the rules and guidelines of the classroom, playground, or other school property, a choice

will be made for the student by the adult responsible for the supervision of the children (i.e. the teacher, school support staff, or administrator.) At times, removal from the group is necessary to protect the student, other students, and/or the learning environment of the school. This removal is necessary when a student:

- ❖ Puts another student/other students or the teacher/staff member in danger
- ❖ Pushes beyond the limits of respect in speech or actions
- ❖ Has a continued and chronic lack of responsibility
- ❖ Has chronic misbehavior
- ❖ Participates in creating an unsafe learning environment
- ❖ Causes direct harm to another COS community member (i.e. staff or student)

Behavior/Discipline Guidelines

At COS, we use a Responsive Classroom (K-5)/Developmental Designs (6-8) approach. Both are evidence-based approaches to teaching that focuses on engaging academics, positive community, effective management, and developmental awareness. Responsive Classroom/Developmental Designs methods approach teaching with the belief that integrating academic and social emotional skills creates an environment where students can do their best learning. Responsive Classroom/Developmental Designs serves as the foundation for classroom management.

When a child exhibits inappropriate behavior, consequences should be appropriate to the behavior exhibited. For example, if property is damaged, it can be replaced or repaired; if someone is hurt, apologies and amends must be offered; if time is wasted, free time may be used to make it up, etc.

More serious, repeated behaviors (confirmed/identified acts of bullying, defiant behavior, willful disruption) are given firm consequences (including suspension) while the cause of the behavior is investigated and support for the student is put into place. The goal is to change the offending behavior while protecting the emotional and physical safety of all of the children. Grades teachers use classroom meetings, instructional and literary examples, and a variety of techniques (role playing, conflict resolution, pedagogical stories, etc.) to address these social problems.

Discipline Procedures for COS

Our approach is to encourage, teach, and focus on positive behavior and positive community building, knowing that putting our attention on children's highest potential will draw out their best behavior. While working from a positive, appreciative model, we realize that there are times when a child's behavior may become disruptive or when rules are not followed. At these times, the following procedures will be followed:

Discipline Levels for Grades and Middle School *

*Discipline concerns in Kindergarten will be addressed on a case by case basis, as

developmentally appropriate. The discipline levels may be used if deemed appropriate and frequent or repeated behaviors are a concern.

Level I Behaviors

(Level I is Teacher-Managed Behaviors)

*Contact with parent/guardian will come from staff involved.

Disrespect

- ❖ Talking back
- ❖ Mocking
- ❖ Note Passing
- ❖ Inappropriate voice level
- ❖ Inappropriate language/comments
- ❖ Disruption
 - Out of seat
 - Calling out
- ❖ Talking or non-verbally communicating with classmate at inappropriate time
- ❖ Emotional dysregulation
- ❖ Noisemaking
- ❖ Defiance
 - Noncompliance with classroom instructions
 - Incomplete work or not working

Actions teacher should take for Level I Behaviors

*Teacher could use behavioral documentation form to track behaviors in class, if necessary

*At this level, there will be no administration action

- ❖ Remind (refer to class agreements or rules)
- ❖ Redirect
- ❖ Relocate to another place in the room (i.e. Take a break)
- ❖ Reflect: what changes could be made/what needs of the student could be met?
 - (i.e. Role play, skill practice, Check in and Go process, Check in and Stay process)
- ❖ Restore/mend: are there actions the student can/should take?
- ❖ Logical Consequence(s)
- ❖ Outline of supports & coping strategies

Level II Behaviors

(Level II is Teacher and/or Administration Managed Behaviors)

*Contact to parent/guardian will come from staff involved.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Repeated Level I behavior ❖ Disrespect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Chronic disruptive behaviors ➤ Put-downs/low level teasing ➤ Name calling ➤ ❖ First offense of behavior that could become bullying or sexual harassment ❖ Minor vandalism ❖ Disruption <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Chronic (multiple days) disruptive behaviors ❖ Defiance ❖ Dishonesty ❖ Failing to follow rules/directions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Physical Contact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ (Unintentional or begins as play) ➤ Invading others personal space (bodies and belongings) ➤ Wrestling or horseplay with another student ➤ Physical Harm: Pushing, shoving, kicking, grabbing, jumping on, butting in line, biting (with no mark) ❖ Emotional harm (i.e. repeated hurtful language, start of bullying, low level harassment, etc.) <p>(Not a sequential list—action & sequence are based on the circumstances)</p>
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Actions teacher should take for Level II Behaviors

*Accompanied by Behavioral Documentation Form

- ❖ Student meeting
- ❖ Take a break outside class or in another classroom (supervised as appropriate)
- ❖ Loss of free time
- ❖ Logical consequence(s)
- ❖ Notify parent/guardian
- ❖ Meet with parent(s)/guardian(s)
- ❖ Reparative action(Restore/Mend)
- ❖ Observable tracking system to inform students when expectations are or are not being met
- ❖ Response, support or meeting with Deans of Student or other designated School Administrator
- ❖ Additional classroom supports (i.e. teacher noticing, proximity to student, etc.)
- ❖ Identify supports and coping strategies
- ❖ Possible MTSS Referral
- ❖ Possible Counselor Referral
- ❖ Possible SAP Referral
- ❖ Referral to outside resources

If the disruption is severe or persistent, it becomes a Level III behavior and should be referred to an administrator for Level III action

Level III Behaviors

(Level III is Administration-Managed Behaviors)

*Contact to parent/guardian will come from staff involved and may also come from administrator.

- ❖ Repeated Level II Behaviors (Must be documented)
- ❖ Chronic disrespectful, disruptive, or defiant behavior directed toward someone (adult or child) or something including:
 - Repeated talking out
 - Refusal to follow rules or redirection
 - Non-compliance
 - Disruptions
 - Inappropriate voice level
 - Arguing
 - Inappropriate or rude gestures
 - Disrespectful language
 - Threats
 - Abusive language
 - Walking/running away while the adult is talking
 -
- ❖ Leaving supervised area
- ❖ Vandalism
- ❖ Petty theft or theft

- ❖ Physical Contact or Aggression (with intent):
 - Hitting, pushing, shoving, pinching, kicking, grabbing, tripping, slapping, punching, spitting, hair pulling, biting, throwing objects, throwing objects, etc.
 -
- ❖ Fighting/ physically hurting another person (not severe assault, which is Level IV)
- ❖ Verbal, relational or online aggression:

Note: Depending on circumstances, certain behaviors may result in more severe consequences than those listed for each step. *Steps can be skipped depending on severity of behavior.*

Actions administrator should take for Level III Behaviors

* Accompanied by Behavioral Documentation Form

First Out of Classroom Referral: Steps taken depend on circumstances. Some of these behaviors may move directly to removal from class and/or suspension is behavior warrants it:

- ❖ Meeting with an administrator
- ❖ Attempt to understand needs behind behavior and find ways to meet needs while also meeting needs of teacher and rest of class
- ❖ Review in-class steps/agreements, calm warning, clear instructions
- ❖ Temporary removal from class/activity
- ❖ Repair damage(s)
- ❖ Address harm to individuals
- ❖ Reiteration of supports & coping strategies
- ❖ Possible conflict mediation
- ❖ Possible MTSS referral
- ❖ Possible counselor referral
- ❖ Possible SAP referral
- ❖ Contact parents to inform and enlist support

Second Out of Classroom Referral

Steps taken depend on circumstances. Includes above consequences.

Possible team meeting with parents, student, teacher, other relevant staff, and administration

- ❖ Behavior contract specifying what student needs to do, and the consequences if agreement is not followed
- ❖ Possible student suspension (1-2 days)

Third Out of Classroom Referral (steps taken depend on circumstances):

- ❖ Possible student suspension (1-2 days)
- ❖ Meet again, review and revise contract/agreement as needed
- ❖ Counselor referral
- ❖ SAP referral
- ❖ *Intimidation/Bullying
- ❖ *Harassment, including sexual (repeated behavior, despite warning)
- ❖ *Cyberbullying
- ❖ Teasing, taunting, name calling, insulting, verbal threats, intimidation, inappropriate or rude gestures, rumor spreading, planned exclusion, social alienation, cruel notes or online posts, etc.

*Reports of bullying or harassment include separate investigative process.

Fourth Out of Classroom Referral (steps taken depend on circumstances):

- ❖ Includes above consequence
- ❖ Possible suspension (1-5 days)
- ❖ Possible meeting to discuss school placement

If all efforts fail and the student continues to present conditions that interfere with another's rights to physical and emotional safety and an environment that allows others to learn, then expulsion procedures may be initiated.

Level IV Behaviors

(Level VI is Administration Managed Behaviors)

**This LEVEL can only be determined by administrator*

**Contact with parent/guardian will come directly from the Administrator in Level IV*

Illegal activities:

- ❖ drugs/alcohol use or possession
- ❖ Assault, sexual assault or abuse
- ❖ Fighting/Physical Aggression (Intent)
- ❖ Severe physical acts: Hitting, pushing, shoving, kicking, grabbing, tripping, slapping, punching, spitting, hair pulling, biting, throwing objects, throwing objects with intent to do harm

- ❖ Weapons/Dangerous Items
- ❖ Theft of items of value
- ❖ Major damage to property
- ❖ Repeated incidents of racial, ethnic, sexual, or religious harassment, slurs or intimidation

Actions the Administration should take for Level IV behaviors

*** Accompanied by Behavioral Documentation Form**

- ❖ Includes above consequences from Level III
- ❖ Possible notification of law enforcement officials
- ❖ Parent/Student/Administrator/Teacher Conference
- ❖ SAP referral
- ❖ Possible suspension (1-5 days)
- ❖ Possible expulsion (Refer to Board of Trustees Policy 263 and 263A)
- ❖ Possible Board hearing to determine student status

Our goal is to create a safe school culture of trust and mutual respect that supports learning for all students and is proactive to support all students, thus eliminating or significantly decreasing the need for extreme discipline measures such as suspension and expulsion.

Behavior Documentation Form

Level III or Level IV Behaviors: If a student's behavior is categorized as a Level III or Level IV (or recurring Level I or Level II), the referral process as outlined above is warranted. A behavior documentation form is to be completed by the classroom teacher and/or staff member who directly responded to the behavior. The staff member and/or Assistant Deans of Students will follow up with a phone call and/or other communication to the child's family. A copy of this form will be made to the parent/guardian(s) who will be asked to sign and return the form. The referral will state the nature of the behavior concern and the relevant consequence(s) for the child. A copy of the form will be maintained by the Assistant Deans of Students.

Suspension

Suspension will be imposed when a student's presence causes a safety risk or direct harm to persons or property. A student may be suspended in-school or suspended from attending school and school activities for a period of time from one to five school days. Both student and parents are informed (by phone, a copy of the behavioral documentation form, and/or in-person conference) of the reasons and terms of the suspension. Where applicable, students are expected to keep up on class work during the suspension. Students and a parent/guardian will be expected to attend a re-entry meeting upon return from suspension. Depending on circumstances, there are times when this re-entry meeting may be permitted to occur with the

student only.

Expulsion

Students who violate specific behavior expectations or have accumulated suspensions of over fifteen days in a school year may be recommended to the Circle of Seasons Board of Trustees for expulsion. Expulsion is the complete exclusion from Circle of Seasons Charter School immediately and for any future time. Refer to Board of Trustees Policy 263 and 263A.

Bullying/Anti-Bullying

At Circle of Seasons, one of our goals is to help all students develop an understanding of the differences between developmentally-typical behavior, rough play, and destructive bullying behavior. Bullying is the repeated intentional aggressive behavior from one person towards another which involves a difference in the balance of power. Harassment or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment. Please refer to Circle of Seasons Anti-Bullying Policy for additional information and specific definitions.

COS expects students to conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, staff, and volunteers.

Consequences for a student who commits an act of harassment or bullying shall be unique to the individual incident and will vary in method and severity according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, and the student's history of problem behaviors and performance. Remedial measures shall be designed to: correct the problem behavior; prevent another occurrence of this behavior; and protect the victim of the act.

COS requires the CEO/Principal and/or the CEO/Principal's designee to be responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations of this policy. All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the CEO/Principal's designee. All other members of the community, including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors, are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy. Reports may be anonymous but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

COS shall incorporate information regarding the policy against harassment or bullying into our annual school employee professional development.

Title IX

At Circle of Seasons, we strive to create an equitable and welcoming learning environment for all students. As stated in our school's vision, we honor the diversity of humanity and thus believe wholeheartedly in the spirit of Title IX.

The US Department of Education defines Title IX as follows:

Title IX protects people from discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. Title IX states that:

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. ("[Title IX and Sex Discrimination](#)")

In response, Circle of Seasons has adopted the following non-discrimination policy:

Circle of Seasons Charter School values diversity and welcomes students and families, and talented faculty and staff, from diverse backgrounds. COS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, veteran status, pregnancy, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, religion, national or ethnic origin, height or weight, marital status, family status, ancestry, mental or physical disability, or any protected class that may be required by law in its employment practices, educational policies, programs, activities, or other school administered programs. Questions or concerns regarding this or other policies should be directed to the administration. ([Policy 103](#))

Please see the Circle of Seasons website (<https://www.circleofseasons.org/title-ix>) for additional information and the Title IX Coordinator's contact information.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAP)

The Student Assistance Program (SAP) is a system of early intervention for students who are experiencing barriers to successful learning or personal growth. At risk students may be exhibiting signs of emotional or behavioral concerns, or substance use. Our team of SAP members is trained and certified to identify barriers, gather objective data, implement school based programming, and make recommendations to help families access support from outside agencies. The team does not diagnose or provide treatment, but working from student strengths, develops a comprehensive plan to address student needs. Parent and guardian permission is necessary to begin services, and active parental participation is integral to the success of SAP interventions.

Referrals to the Student Assistance Program can be made by anyone in our school community with a concern about a student. Referrals can be submitted by parents, teachers, and students. Referrals can be made anonymously by using the paper referral system at COS. Referral forms can be accessed through the link on the school website or at the COS front desk. Please

submit forms in the locked gray box near the front desk.

For more information, please contact one of our Student Assistance Program team members at 610-285-6267.

Safe to Say Something (S2SS)

Safe2Say Something is a youth violence prevention program run by the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General. The program teaches youth and adults how to recognize warning signs and signals, especially within social media, from individuals who may be a threat to themselves or others. S2SS is a mandated program for 6th-8th grades and students and staff are trained during the school year on how to access the reporting program, if needed. Information is provided to families prior to the training for the middle school students.

For more information, please contact our School Counselor at 610-285-626

STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health and Safety Guidelines

Refer to the COS website for updated Health and Safety Guidelines throughout the academic year.

Medications

Medications may be needed by students during the day. In order for a medication to be given, a written doctor's order and parent signature must be obtained. All medications must come to school in the original container with the prescription and child's information printed on it. A student may not transport a medication. Medication must be brought to school by a parent.

Throat lozenges/cough drops can be self-administered with supervision from the class teacher. Rescue inhalers may be self-administered under the supervision of the class teacher provided a doctor's order is on file in the health room, and the doctor has given permission for the student to self-administer.

All COS staff are trained to administer epipen/Auvi Q yearly and are able to administer to any student in the event of an emergency.

For field trips, a substitute nurse may be secured for the trip to administer medication during the trip. If not, a parent may attend to administer medication, or a form must be filled out for the child to self-administer under teacher supervision.

Illness Guidelines

If your child is exhibiting symptoms of a fever (over 100 degrees) they will be required to be fever free (unmedicated) for 24 hours before returning to school. Other symptoms such as vomiting or diarrhea also have a 24 hour period after the last instance for the child to return to school.

If your child is diagnosed with a contagious illness, please notify the school nurse as soon as possible. Illnesses including diphtheria, measles, mumps, rubella, varivax, pertussis, strep infections, conjunctivitis, scabies, ringworm, impetigo, pediculosis, tuberculosis, etc. should be reported upon diagnosis.

Sunscreen, Insect Repellent, & Tick Checks

Sun protection begins at home - during the warm months at the beginning and end of the school year, we ask that sunscreen be applied at home before arriving at school. A sun hat, baseball cap, and/or a pair of sunglasses are also appropriate for outdoor time. We ask that sunscreen not be sent in for the child's class teacher to apply, as this adds time and additional disruption to transition times.

Sunscreen and Insect Repellent Application at School

In October 2018, the Pennsylvania School Code was amended to include a section on Sun Protection Measures for Students. Section 1414.10 states that a school entity shall allow the application of sunscreen during school hours, at a school-sponsored activity, or while under the supervision of school personnel. Review the full legislation, which is available on the Pennsylvania General Assembly's website: www.legis.state.pa.us.

This school code allows for the use of non-aerosol topical sunscreen product by students in school if:

- ❖ The product is approved by the Food and Drug Administration.
- ❖ The parent/guardian must submit a form allowing the student to use the topical sunscreen (this form is titled *Parent/Guardian Form Non-Aerosol Topical Sunscreen and Insect Repellent Use*)
- ❖ The student (4th grade and older) must submit a form (included on the Parent/Guardian Form on page 2) stating that they are aware of the proper use and safety precautions of the product and will handle it appropriately.

Parents/guardians may choose to supply their child with non-aerosol topical sunscreen and/or non-aerosol insect repellent at COS, if it is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Parents/guardians must complete and submit our information form in order for their child to apply sunscreen and bug spray during school hours, at a school-sponsored activity, or while under the supervision of school personnel.

Tick checks are performed regularly by the students during the warm months, since our curriculum takes us frequently outdoors and into the wooded areas of our campus. Teachers show the students how to check for ticks on themselves and how to help a classmate check their hair. (Hats are a great preventative measure.) If a tick is found attached to a student, they are sent to the health room for evaluation and tick removal.

Head Lice

At any time during the school year, the school nurse may examine any student for head lice. If active infestation (untreated nits or active lice) is identified, Parent/guardian(s) will be immediately contacted. The school nurse will provide information to the parent/guardian regarding treatment and may examine the student's school-aged siblings and other close contacts. Students found with nits will be permitted to return to school upon providing proof to the school nurse that the student has been treated for the lice. This may result in a 24 hour excused absence for the student to provide ample time for treatment.

To verify that treatment was effective, students must be checked by the school nurse to determine there is no evidence of active infestation prior to returning to class or riding on the school bus. If there is continued evidence of active infestation, the student may not return to class. If found to be lice free, the student can return to the classroom.

Physical Activity Integration

At COS, physical activity and movement are a standard, everyday part of our curriculum. We fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity throughout the day and combined with learning. Physical activity is integrated into subject lessons and included between lessons. Movement is used as a regular part of academic instruction to promote deeper learning and memory. Part of this process includes regular participation in movement, games, and dance. Please make sure that your child is sent to school in clothing and footwear that allows for comfortable participation in movement.

Healthy, Safe, and Sustainable Meals

Circle of Seasons values environmental stewardship which highlights the importance of our connectedness with our natural world. In an effort to educate our students to be interested in stewardship and respectful of the environment, Circle of Seasons requests that the packaging you send with your child's snacks and lunch be either recyclable and/or reusable so that we can reduce the amount of trash going into our waste stream. Even if the items you are sending in your child's lunch are "recyclable," please avoid sending bottles, cans, glass or anything that can be

tossed into our recycling containers. While these containers are certainly better than non recyclable options, using containers that can be refilled not only significantly cuts the cost of your food bill, but also reduces the amount of waste (recyclable or not) that we need to tend to on our school grounds.

In addition to a packed lunch, all children and staff are asked to bring a refillable water bottle to school every day for consumption throughout the day. Please avoid sending plastic, disposable water bottles. Please do not send bottles of sweetened drinks or juices in place of water.

Nurturing our bodies as well as our minds is important at Circle of Seasons. The following guidelines have been developed to support the health and wellness of students and faculty.

- ❖ Kindergarten staff will serve nutrient-dense, whole foods for snack time.
- ❖ Circle of Seasons will not provide candy or conventional sweets, except as a part of a community festival or celebration. Students are strongly discouraged from bringing candy or conventional sweets in lunches or for celebrations. There are many traditional alternatives which we will use to honor students on birthdays and for holiday celebrations.
- ❖ Parents who send lunches and/or snacks with their children are asked to follow the Circle of Seasons Food Guidelines. Healthy, well-balanced meals provide essential nutrition for children's brains and bodies to perform optimally. Candy, soda, desserts and other foods high in sugar or caffeine are highly discouraged in school lunches or snacks.
- ❖ To support healthy eating habits, food rewards or punishments are not to be used for academic or behavioral performance.

SNACKS & LUNCHES

Some classes are asked to bring a snack to school every day. Snacks are asked to follow the guidelines below, which includes suggestions and ideas for healthy snacks. Snacks and lunches should avoid sugar, should contain something substantive (protein source), and should be free from packaging. Teachers may send gentle reminders to parents if snack and lunch guidelines become an issue, including information on the importance of adequate nutrition for mental and physical development and emotional stability throughout the day.

Snack and Lunch Guidelines

Although sharing is a natural inclination, students are not permitted to share snacks with others. There may be children with dairy, egg, food dye, gluten allergies or intolerances that other children are not aware of.

Ideas for Snacks:

- ❖ Whole fruits (apples, bananas)

- ❖ Carrot sticks or other cut veggies
- ❖ Granola or other bars
- ❖ Any other snack that can be eaten without utensils, dips, or excessive packaging

Lunch Time: Pack It In, Pack It Out!

In an effort to minimize the amount of trash our school produces each week, Circle of Seasons is striving to implement a pack it in, pack it out initiative. 'Pack it in. Pack it out' means that any trash or recycling produced by your child's lunch will return home with your child in their lunch container. Compostable scraps will continue to be collected as usual. A better alternative to returning the trash home is to find ways to pack lunches utilizing reusable containers. It is often more economical to buy in bulk and send portions of food in reusable containers.

Safe Food Environment

- ❖ A healthy and safe school environment is necessary for promoting and sustaining the nutritional, physical and emotional health of its students and staff.
- ❖ Circle of Seasons provides a clean and safe space for students to enjoy their meals.
- ❖ Meals are served in a pleasant environment that provides sufficient time for eating, while fostering good eating habits, enjoyment of meals, good manners and respect for others. Staff educates students on the importance of cleanliness and hand washing. Convenient access to hand washing facilities and restrooms are provided.
- ❖ Safe drinking water sources are available for students to get water at meals and throughout the day. Students are asked to bring a water bottle from home to keep in the classroom and use for drinks throughout the day.
- ❖ Class teachers develop schedules for washing water bottles on a weekly basis as part of their chore routine.

Food Safety and Classroom Environment

Circle of Seasons Charter School takes food allergies and the protection of children with food allergies seriously.

Family Responsibility

- ❖ Notify the school of the child's allergies
 - ❖ Work with the school team to develop a plan that accommodates the child's needs throughout the school including in the classroom, in the cafeteria, during after school activities, school activities, and on the school bus, as well as a Food Allergy Action Plan
 - ❖ Provide written medications and replace medications after use or upon expiration
- Educate the child in the self-management of their food allergy including:
- Safe and unsafe foods
 - Strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe foods
 - Symptoms of allergic reactions

- How and when to tell an adult they may be having an allergy-related problem ○
How to read food labels (with an age-appropriate approach)
- Preview policies/procedures with school staff, the child's physician, and the child (if age appropriate) after a reaction
- Provide emergency contact information

Student Responsibility

- ❖ Should not trade food with others
- ❖ Should not eat anything with unknown ingredients or known to contain any allergen.
Should be proactive in the care and management of their food allergies and reactions based on their developmental level
- ❖ Should notify an adult immediately if they eat something they believe may contain the food to which they are allergic

Circle of Seasons Charter School follows applicable federal laws including ADA, IDEA, Section 504, and FERPA and any state laws or district policies that apply. We review health records submitted by families and include food-allergic students in school activities. COS has a core team of school professionals who work with the family and students (when appropriate) to establish a prevention plan. We assure that all staff who interact with the student on a regular basis understand food allergy, can recognize symptoms, know what to do in an emergency.

Special Dietary Concerns

If a child has special dietary issues, parents are asked to make this known to the school nurse and class teacher. Any severe allergies or other dietary concerns that may need to be accounted for in the classroom or broader school community, will be addressed through consultation between the administration, school nurse, teachers, and parents.

Birthdays

Circle of Seasons recognizes the importance of acknowledging and celebrating student birthdays. Furthermore, the School would like to actively share in the joy and wonder of each child's life and individuality by learning about the events in his/her life, including family members, friendships, and favorite activities, rather than focusing on foods or trinkets that a child may bring into school for a party.

Participation in any such classroom birthday recognition or any related celebration activities are completely optional choices for each student. To protect the health and safety of students, to eliminate the financial burden on families, to protect the educational learning time in classrooms, and to respect the rights of parents in choosing what their children consume while at school, Circle of Seasons Charter School has adopted Birthday Celebration Guidelines which solely focus on the essence and uniqueness of each child and not upon birthday treats or parties. Birthday recognition, timing, and any related activities are at the discretion of each classroom

teacher (and will look unique in Kindergarten as well as in individual grades classrooms.) Social and personal growth is encouraged via the sharing of student life/histories/timelines, favorite books and/or hobbies.

Emergency Drills (Fire alarm and lockdown drills)

Fire Drills are performed on a monthly basis as required by state law. They may be announced or unannounced and may occur at any point during the school day, but are generally scheduled to cause the least amount of disruption to the learning day. The students are led silently by a teacher to a designated point outside the school and attendance is taken. Students out of the classroom and not under the immediate supervision of a teacher or staff member are instructed to join the nearest class so that their teacher may be notified of their location.

Emergency Drills are uncomfortable but necessary tools to help keep our students safe. At COS we have three types of drills: Lock Out, Shelter in Place, and Lock Down. These drills are explained carefully to the students in ways appropriate to their age levels before they are performed with no intent of instilling fear.

Lock Out - Performed in the event of a concern outside the school building or on the school grounds, such as a loose animal. Classes who are outdoors come inside, external doors are locked, and there is no entry or exit to the building by either adults or students permitted during the drill. The school day inside continues as normal.

Shelter in Place - Performed when there may be a medical concern inside the building which requires the hallways to be clear or a weather related concern that requires students to follow other instructions specific to the event. Teachers and students are directed to return to or remain in their classrooms or other safe spaces and close classroom doors. Learning continues inside. Classes outside remain outside unless otherwise specified.

Lock Down - Performed in the event of a concern inside the school building. Classroom doors are closed and locked, windows are covered, classroom lights are turned off, and teachers and students are moved silently to an out of sight location in the classroom for the duration of the drill. Classes outside the building may move to a predetermined, out of sight location.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS AT HOME

Establishing Rhythm

Rhythm is an important part of the balance we work toward creating here at COS. Please refer to the “A Year in the Life” section for more information on establishing rhythm.

Electronic Media Use at Home

As children grow, they are creating a library of experiences. This is a library they will draw on throughout their lives: for comfort, for inspiration, for knowledge. This library contains everything they have learned about how the world works: What do I do when I’m angry? How does it feel right before the rain starts falling? How can I solve this problem? In addition, the resonance created by media images can prevent children from being fully immersed in and able to interact with the world around them. Authentic experience provides the foundation for imaginative thinking and meaningful relationships. It promotes initiative and fosters pride in both accomplishment and effort.

Circle of Seasons recognizes the importance of technology in our society and is committed to preparing students for the technological demands of high school and beyond. Technology is gradually integrated into our curriculum, allowing students to reap the benefits of the modern world while preserving their library of experience. We ask parents to support this healthy development by limiting media exposure as much as possible, especially for the youngest children. We request that clothing and other items featuring media images remain at home. We seek this year, perhaps more than ever, to find a balance with the use of technology that will be necessary for our learning experiences and our engagement in our student’s growing worlds.

Developmental Overview

Our goal for each child is that he or she becomes the very best he or she can be. It is our mission to help “develop free human beings who are able themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives” (Rudolf Steiner). In order to do this, we draw from Rudolf Steiner’s theory of child development. Steiner divides childhood into three distinct stages, each one dominated by a specific characteristic.

From birth to age 7, the child is motivated by will. Children learn to master their bodies: from complete dependency to strong physical beings able to run, climb, tie shoes, etc... All this movement is a manifestation of the child’s will – they accomplish new things every day without direct instruction. As teachers and parents, we model meaningful work, always holding space for the child who wants to help. This strengthens their ability to harness their will and use it to intentionally complete a task. We help them find a rhythm between work and play. As unstructured play meets society, children learn about how to interact with one another and the world around them.

Age 7 to 14 is characterized by feeling. Children are suddenly aware of their rapidly changing emotions – moving from joy to sadness and back in minutes is not uncommon. The imagination takes on a life of its own and dominates play; games expand beyond the familiar “I’m the mom and you’re the dad” to “I am the knight and you are the dragon.” For this reason, most lessons

are taught through story. Bringing academics through the lens of story allows children to relate deeply to the lesson and create meaningful relationships with the material. Stories of people who do good in the world, real or imagined, strengthen the child's vision of ethical and moral behavior.

As children enter the 14–21 year stage of development, they are increasingly brought into the realm of thought. In their younger years children typically accept the vision of the world that is presented to them. Now children begin to question, they are able to think critically and evaluate the world around them. Abstract ideas are attainable and interesting. At this age, teachers take care to bring messages of hope. Stories of revolution, aiding the downtrodden, and standing up for others are presented to strengthen the idealism and search for truth characteristic of this age. The idea that one may be of service to the world is also introduced through independent or class opportunities for volunteerism.

Unstructured & Outdoor Play

Waldorf education has long embraced the importance of play in children's lives and current research supports this belief – but all play is not created equal. Children need long stretches of unstructured time outside. In addition to building strong bodies, play has a critical role in developing creativity, regulating emotions, making plans and solving problems. Children learn conflict resolution, and self-advocacy. More recess has been linked to higher academic performance. Circle of Seasons encourages each child's development by offering recess every day, multiple times a day in the younger grades. Please include outside free play as a regular home activity.

Literacy at Home

Literacy is the ability to understand and interact with written materials. Decoding, sounding out words, or “reading” is clearly essential to literacy. In Waldorf schools, formal reading instruction begins later than in most traditional public schools. By the time formal reading is taught, children have a strong foundation of literacy skills that help them in learning to decode and their brain development allows for visual mental picturing while reading. Waldorf kindergartens build this foundation through storytelling, verse, songs, movement, and finger games.

Families should contribute to this foundation by reading with their children at home. Reading helps children develop language and listening skills. It promotes curiosity and sparks imagination. Reading expands vocabulary exponentially and...it is fun! Reading to your child 20 minutes a day significantly increases their chances of academic success. If this is a new practice for your family, consider committing to 5 minutes a day, slowly increasing your reading time each week.

Homework

At Circle of Seasons, the development of the child is the guiding force behind all we do – and homework is no exception. In the early years, Kindergarten through 2nd grade, the children are doing much of their learning by being present in the world. Their only homework during this time is to play outside and read daily with a familiar adult. As they enter 3rd and 4th grade,

students are ready to begin making bridges between learning at home and learning at school. Parents can expect to see spelling words and home-based projects during these years. By 5th grade homework begins to assume a more traditional framework. Students will receive some homework in specialty subjects in addition to their main lesson work. Middle school brings increased responsibility, both in the quantity and depth of homework assignments. Students are encouraged to satisfy their own curiosity about the world around them. In every grade, teachers are mindful that students' homework assignments still allow time for breathing room. After a busy day at school, unstructured time is essential. We ask parents to be mindful of this when scheduling extra-curricular activities.

PROGRAM SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Kindergarten Curriculum Overview

Social & Emotional: Manners, Gratitude, Respect, Care of others, Listening skills, Self-control, Self-care, Wonder, Good habits, Rhythm, Empathy, Aesthetic appreciation, Confidence, Flexible thinking

Physical: Fine motor skills, Gross motor skills, Coordination

Language: Imagination, Vocabulary, Story structure, Recitation, Phonemic Awareness, Rhyming

Mathematics: One-on-one correspondence, Counting, Sorting, Planning, Sequencing

Home Surroundings: Observational skills, Sensory stimulation, Snack preparation, Nature study, Care of environment, World culture and festivals, Community studies

Grade 1 Curriculum Overview

Language Arts: Fairytales from around the world, Upper and lowercase letters, Phonological & phonemic awareness, Alliterative verses and tongue twisters, Word families, Kid writing, Writing and reading, Speech work

Mathematics: Counting to 100, The four processes, Roman and Arabic numerals, Number riddles, Patterns

Nature, Science & Social Studies: Seasonal stories/songs/poems, Nature walks, My home and surroundings

Artistic Work: Main lesson illustration, Form Drawing, Watercolor painting and drawing, Beeswax modeling, Dramatic Production

Specialty Subject: Gardening, Games & Movement, Fiber Arts, Music, World Language, Guidance

Grade 2 Curriculum Overview

Language Arts: Fables/legends/stories of saints & heroes, Upper and lowercase letters in print and cursive, Alliterative verses, tongue twisters, seasonal songs, Introduction to punctuation and grammar, Writing composition, Phonics and spelling instruction, Speech work

Mathematics: Reading, writing, and ordering numbers to 1000, Place value, Regrouping, Number patterns, Multiplication tables and division, Mental arithmetic, Reading graphs

Nature, Science & Social Studies: Seasonal stories and songs, Recitation of poems about nature, Nature walks, Exploration of community

Artistic Work: Form Drawing, Watercolor painting, Drawing, Beeswax modeling, Dramatic Production

Specialty Subject: Games & Movement, Fiber Arts, Music, World Language, Gardening

Grade 3 Curriculum Overview

Language Arts: Hebrew, Native American, and Creation stories, Cursive writing, Grammar, Spelling, Reading groups, Speech work

Mathematics: Counting to 10,000, Regrouping in subtraction and addition, Long division, Measurement, Distance, Volume, Money, Time, Multiplication tables

Nature, Science & Social Studies: Farming & Gardening, Habitats and house building, Professions, Cooking, Fibers

Artistic Work: Form Drawing, Watercolor painting, Beeswax modeling, Drawing, Dramatic production

Specialty Subject: Games & Movement, Fiber Arts, Music, World Language, Gardening

Grade 4 Curriculum Overview

Language Arts: Norse Mythology, Native American Legends, Grammar, conventions and spelling, Reading groups, Poetry writing, Book reports, Letter writing, Composition, Speech work, Dictionary skills, Story Elements

Mathematics: Fractions, Long division, Double-digit multiplication, Mastery of multiplication tables and fact fluency, Word problems, Mental arithmetic, Geometry

Social Studies: Local Geography, Pennsylvania History (including biographies of famous individuals,) State Government, Map-making, Orienteering

Science: Comparative anatomy, Habitat, Food chain, Basic organization of species groups, Animal Research project

Artistic Work: Form Drawing, Watercolor painting, Modeling (beeswax or clay,) Drama

Specialty Subject: Fiber Arts, Games & Movement, Music, World Language, Strings, Gardening

Grade 5 Curriculum Overview

Language Arts: Ancient mythology, legends from India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Japan, China, and Greece; Grammar, punctuation, spelling; Original compositions; Research projects; Letter writing; Book reports; Speech work

Mathematics: Fractions and decimals, Basic geometric measurement, Triple-digit multiplication, Long division with double-digit divisors, Word problems and mental arithmetic

Social Studies: North American geography, Biographies of historical figures such as Pythagoras or Alexander the Great
Mapmaking

Science: Flowering plants: monocotyledons and dicotyledons, Lower orders of plants, Coniferous and deciduous trees, Stages of plant life, Relationship between insects and flowering plants

Artistic Work: Freehand geometric drawing, Watercolor, Clay modeling, Drawings inspired by Greek and Egyptian forms, Dramatic production

Specialty Subject: Fiber Arts, Games & Movement, Music, World Language, Strings, Woodworking, Gardening, Fine Arts

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Grade 6 Curriculum Overview

Language Arts: Tales of Chivalry, Arthurian legend and Celtic myth -Poetry, ballads -Compositions, Short-story writing, Dictation and debate, Sentence, paragraph and essay structures, Conditional mood, Book reports/project

Mathematics: Business math: Percentage Money, Mathematical sentences, Interest, Profit/loss Ratio, Proportion, Exchange, Estimation, Averages, Pre-Algebra, Metric system, Mathematician biographies

Social Studies: The rise and fall of the Roman Empire, Monasticism and the rise of the church; Feudalism and the Crusades; Additional biographies; History is explored through architecture, art, literature, speech, and government; South American Geography; Mapmaking

Science: Physics: Sound, Light, Heat, Magnetism, Static Electricity

Geology: Minerals, Crystals, Gems, Metals, Earthquakes, Volcanoes, Astronomy

Artistic Work: Geometric drawing, Watercolor painting: Landscapes and color contrasts; Clay modeling; Roman-style relief

Specialty Subjects: Gardening, Fine Arts, Games & Movement, Fiber Arts, Choir, Foreign Language, Orchestra, Wind & String Instruments, Woodworking

Grade 7 Curriculum Overview

Language Arts: Historical novels and biographies; Tales of adventure and discovery; Stories of tribal life; Ballads, legends, and folktales; Dictation and debate; Sentence structure; Creative writing; Note taking and synthesis; Comparative essay writing

Mathematics: Introduction to Algebra Equations and Integers; Graphing; Exponents and roots; Estimation and situation problems; Geometric Theorems; Area; Perimeter; Volume; Fibonacci sequence; Pre-Algebra

Social Studies: Late Middle Ages; Renaissance to 1700; The Age of Discovery and Exploration from 1400; Biographies; Geography and resources of Africa and Europe; Research project

Science: Inorganic chemistry: Combustion, Oxidation, Formation of gasses, Metals and Non-metals, Chemical transformation, Acids/Bases, Salts; Human physiology; The nine systems; Nutrition, Hygiene, First Aid; Physics: Static electricity, Currents, Circuit, Generators; Electric Fields; Mechanics

Artistic Work: Geometric Drawing, Renaissance, Wet and dry techniques, Perspective Drawing, Clay Modeling

Specialty Subjects: Fine Arts, Physical Education, Woodworking, Chorus, Foreign Language, Orchestra, Wind & String Instruments

Grade 8 Curriculum Overview

Language Arts: Texts from influential writers, Epic and dramatic poetry, Folklore and poems from around the world, Novels, Grammar and syntax, Newspaper articles and editorials, Skits and play writing, Note taking/Journaling, Weekly oral news reporting

Mathematics: Geometry: Polygons, Angles, Area/Volume, Pythagorean Theorem, Polyhedra
Algebra: Order of operations, Radicals, Polynomials, Exponents, Linear and Quadratic Equations, Factoring;
Statistics: Mean, Median, Mode, Quartiles, Interquartile Range, Mean, Absolute deviations, Probability, Graphing
Computers: basic coding in Linux and Python; Problem solving techniques

Social Studies: 1700 to the present, American History, World Economy, Biographies, Geography of Asia, Australia and Antarctica, World Geography, Studies may also include the philosophies of Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, and Shintoism

Science: Organic Chemistry: Proteins, fats, sugars, starches, Nitrogen Cycle Plant structure, Human Physiology; Physics, Sound, Heat, Optics, Current Electricity, Hydraulics, Aerodynamics, Meteorology, Climatology

Artistic Work: 3-D Geometry, Charcoal Drawing, Bamboo, Ink Brush, and Landscape Painting, Calligraphy, Clay Modeling

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Circle of Seasons offers a multitude of opportunities for parent involvement. We count on you to be our partners in helping to shape our students. It is through our partnership that we are able to establish healthy rhythms, healthy social lives, and healthy attitudes toward the complex work the students undertake. Please see the section on ‘Parent Clearances for Field Trips and Volunteering’ regarding requirements to volunteer in classrooms and attend field trips.

Adjustment to School

Whether it be the beginning of the first school year ever, or the dawning of a new term after break, it can take time to adjust back to the rhythm of a school day and week. It is crucial that parents help set their children up for success by establishing good sleep/wake habits, meal times, structured time for homework and/or play, and appropriate clothing guidelines for the weather. It is especially helpful if parents are able to consider the negative effects of overscheduling their children. Students need time to gather themselves after an arduous day - whether it be filled with learning about numbers in First Grade, or how to apply them in complex algorithms in Seventh Grade. Students need time to *play* and time set aside for them to *read* and to complete homework when grade appropriate.

Parent Evenings

Parent Nights are held two to four times throughout the school year by the class teachers. These evenings are specific to the curriculum blocks being taught by your child’s class teacher. They offer a lovely forum for parents to come together to get to know one another, ask questions, and enjoy a little social time learning about the work going on inside the classroom. Often parents may have the opportunity to try out some recent circle songs or games as well as watercolor painting or form drawing to try their own hands at the children’s work. These evenings are *highly encouraged* for parents to attend to enrich their understanding of the curriculum that their child is currently engaged in and to increase their feeling of community.

Parent Education

Parent involvement at COS is essential for a thriving, supportively-engaged school community. The educational experiences of the children and the community is strengthened through ongoing parent education opportunities. These opportunities can be incredibly helpful to parents in assisting you to understand the specific terminology we use at school, and the

methods you may be seeing or hearing about. The school highly encourages parents and guardians to participate in these enrichment opportunities which will include specific Waldorf approaches as well as relevant community and national speakers/presenters.

Class Visitation

Should a parent desire to visit their child's class, they will need to make sure to plan in advance and plan to actively participate. Teachers may offer a "day in the life" experience for parents to attend, but parents may also ask their class teacher for a "day in the life" experience should they feel the need for one. These experiences can be very enlightening and exciting as parents undertake the work their child does on a daily basis. Parents will begin their day in circle, undertake main lesson work, attend specials, and be encouraged to play.

Parents can also visit in another capacity, as they help to volunteer for small reading groups, assist to set up watercolor painting, or support other things for which class teachers may seek help. Please look for emails from your class teacher seeking help with various activities throughout the school year.

Chaperone Clearances for Field Trips and Volunteering

Volunteers at Circle of Seasons need three clearances completed and on file with COS before they can volunteer for field trips or regular volunteer work in the school or classroom. Once all three of these clearances are on file with COS you will be able to volunteer in the school, classroom, and on field trips. All three of these clearances are required, because COS wishes to hold our school to a higher standard of safety.

- 1. Pennsylvania Criminal Background Check**
- 2. Pennsylvania Child Abuse Clearance**
- 3. Federal Background Check/Fingerprinting**

Parent Circle

Circle of Seasons' Parent Circle is a dedicated group of volunteers that help make some of the school's dreams come to fruition through community events. This group of volunteers has meetings once a month in which they plan upcoming fundraising efforts and coordinate large school events such as MayFaire and WinterFaire. Parent Circle offers plentiful opportunities for involvement through fundraising, planning, filling grant requests from teachers, and supporting the work of the school. If you are interested in being a part of Parent Circle, please contact parentcircle@circleofseasons.org.

STUDENT REPORTS

Parent Teacher Conferences

Circle of Seasons K-8 teachers look forward to meeting with parents and/or guardians twice a year to discuss students' progress and growth. This is a wonderful opportunity to peruse the children's beautiful main lesson book pages, admire their watercolor paintings and artwork, and discuss any questions and concerns. Grades teachers communicate directly to families regarding how and when to sign up for a parent-teacher conference. Conferences are held in the Fall and Spring of every year. The Circle of Seasons yearly school calendar will reflect the dates scheduled for parent-teacher conferences each year.

Progress Reports and Year-End Narratives

Progress reports and year-end narratives are lovingly completed by classroom teachers each year. Progress reports are provided and reviewed at each parent-teacher conference with the parents and/or guardians and the class teacher twice a year. They provide an overview of each child's academic progress, strengths and weaknesses, and also address opportunities for growth in each child. Year-end narratives are in-depth reports written by each classroom teacher that give a detailed description of each child and their growth over the course of a full academic year. These reports discuss everything from social interactions to academic outcomes. Narratives are for parent/guardian eyes and it is recommended only to share areas of growth and positive remarks written by the teacher directly with the child. While grades K-5 complete progress reports twice a year, the Middle School sends home progress reports and report cards in addition to a narrative at the end of the year. Year-end narratives are mailed out to families following the end of each academic year.

Assessments: Internal and External

Our Waldorf approach to assessment is based on the individual teacher-student relationship and the teacher's knowledge of each child. Our teachers offer Parent Evenings to provide information about our program and answer questions about particular milestones observed within each grade. We offer Parent Teacher Conferences in the fall and spring to give teachers and parents the opportunity to discuss each individual child's progress and development in a variety of areas including social-emotional development, literacy, problem-solving, movement, and awareness. Our progress reports and end-of-year narratives tell the story of your child's journey through the weeks and months of learning at each grade level. We believe these narratives offer an in-depth picture of each child's developing skills and talents.

As a public school we are also required to participate in annual testing at the state level. Each year we participate in the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) testing in April and early May. Specific testing windows are provided in an Annual Assessment Letter which is sent out to families in September of each school year.

The class teachers at Circle of Seasons regularly assess student progress informally and formally to determine what is taught in morning and afternoon lessons. Circle of Seasons also uses results from internal benchmark assessments as additional information to inform specific literacy and math skills needed by groups of children.

Benchmarking is done three times per school year – in fall, winter, and spring – monitoring the progress of our students over the course of time and development. Specific COS Benchmark Testing Windows for each school year are provided in the Annual Assessment Letter which is sent out to families in September of each school year. In addition, teachers progress monitor students in between benchmarking windows to ensure students are continuing to grow and address any changing academic needs.

Assessments by Grade Level

Please refer to the Annual Assessment Letter, distributed via email at the start of each school year.

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment website

[PA System of School Assessment Link](#)

COS is confident that our well-rounded Waldorf educational program combined with reasonable public school expectations will result in young people who graduate from COS with confidence in themselves and understanding of their capacities, ready to take hold of their lives in their next learning environment. It is important work to educate and support all of our children as they unfold their potentials, find themselves and their strengths.

ENROLLMENT

Admissions and Enrollment Policy

COS adheres to state law which requires our admission to the charter school be open to Northwestern Lehigh School District by lottery or criteria and subsequently by lottery or criteria to all residents outside of the Northwestern Lehigh SD (see below for more details). Each child must have an application submitted on his/her behalf. Applications do not guarantee a spot in any grade. Admission to the school shall be open to any resident of Pennsylvania.

If you would like to enroll your child for the current school year, or if you would like to learn more about Circle of Seasons Charter School, please contact: Student Services Manager/Registrar at 610-285-6267 or enrollment@circleofseasons.org.

Kindergarten and Grades Enrollment

To be eligible for enrollment a potential kindergartner must turn 5 years old on or before August 1st in order to start school in the current year.

In the event that COS has more applicants than seats available in any grade, a lottery will be held. Applicants' names will be drawn randomly. Parents and/or guardians will be contacted with their child's number/position on the waiting list. If a seat becomes available and your child is next in line, COS will notify you by phone and email.

Children are given seats in a grade or placed on the waiting list by lottery in the following order:

1. Siblings of current students enrolled in the upcoming school year who reside in the Northwestern Lehigh School District
2. Siblings of current students enrolled in the upcoming school year who reside in any school district
3. Children who reside in Northwestern Lehigh School District
4. Children who reside in other school districts (Pennsylvania only)

Please Note: A child's place on the waitlist for the current school year does not carry over to the following school year. Application for students who are not currently enrolled is required each year during the Enrollment Period in order to participate in the lottery.

If your child receives a seat at Circle of Seasons Charter School, you will receive a "Public Charter School Enrollment Notification" form along with other important enrollment documents. The Public Charter School Enrollment Notification form is the form the Pennsylvania Department of Education recognizes as your child's official enrollment in the charter school. Please refer to the Admissions of Student- Lottery Process Policy for additional information. Updated enrollment information can be found at <http://www.circleofseasons.org/enrollment>.

How to Withdraw

When a child is to be withdrawn from Circle of Seasons Charter School, the parent shall contact the Student Services Manager/Registrar to request a withdrawal form. When the form is completed, it is returned to the Student Services Manager/Registrar. This request for withdrawal will then be reported to relevant staff. The parent shall then register the child at the new school.

A student is considered formally withdrawn from COS when COS receives 1). A Records Request from the new school/school district or 2). When a COS Withdraw Form is received by the Student Services Manager/Registrar. COS does not release a student's records until an official Records Release has been requested from the new school where the student has registered.

Transition to High School

As COS is a Kindergarten through 8th grade program, every student will be transitioning to a new high school after 8th grade graduation. Students will be guided through the process of transitioning to high school throughout the student's middle school tenure. COS staff will work closely with students and their families during this process. Parents and families are ultimately

responsible for making and finalizing these decisions and our middle school staff is available to support this transition. Please contact our school counselor with questions about the transition to high school.

Maintaining Enrollment

Each year, students who are already enrolled at Circle of Seasons will continue to be enrolled for the following year. If your student will not remain at Circle of Seasons, please follow the “How to Withdraw” procedures as outlined above.

RECOMMENDED READING AND RESOURCES

Please visit our website to learn more about our Public Waldorf education. Additional information can be found under the Waldorf Information menu on our homepage at <http://www.circleofseasons.org/waldorf-information>.