



Student Handbook
2011-2012

Creative Minds Philosophy and Mission

We believe in the ability of all students to succeed. Our school is built on the idea that academic achievement comes through a combination of scholarship, critical-thinking and creativity. We want our students to leave Creative Minds with a sense of curiosity about the world as well as the practical tools needed to find lasting success in their communities and lives.

Creative Minds Attendance Standards

Students at Creative Minds are only allowed to miss 6 days of school during any one month or 10 days of school during one semester

You may be dropped from the CM program on the 6th day or the 10th, respectively.

Please call the office in the event of any absence. **(541-344-9712)**

Exceptions may be made due to extenuating circumstances, good grades and/or overall academic performance

Creative Minds Academic Standards

All students must demonstrate academic progress in order to remain in good standing and enrolled at Creative Minds.

If a student earns a grade of F in any class during the semester, he or she will be placed on academic probation for the following semester. The student must raise and maintain all of his or her grade(s) at a "C" level by the close of the probationary period. If the student is unable to perform at this "C" level in all classes by the end of this probation, he or she will be dropped from the Creative Minds Program.

If a student fails 2 or more classes during a single semester at Creative Minds, he or she will be dropped from the program.

Exceptions and Modifications will be made to meet pre-existing IEP benchmark goals.

A little bit about us...

Our idea was to invent a different type of school, small and unique, to help those students who found themselves falling through the cracks of the larger public schools. With this goal in mind, Creative Minds opened its doors in 1996 as a place where struggling students could find success and a place to fit in.

Each of our classes will have no more than five students in it. This allows our students to get the individual attention they need. Nobody will be left behind or have their questions ignored. Learning problems will be noticed and taken care of. Everybody's voice will be heard. And we give our students the freedom to progress according to their differing skill levels.

But remember— Creative Minds is an academic program. We have high educational goals and expectations for our students.

Our middle school was showing great results and so we decided to open a high school program in the spring of 1999. The basic structure was the same but we made minor changes in class-time hours and schedule so that students could meet the Oregon State Standards and credit requirements. But still, we kept to the belief that school could be both fun and challenging.

Creative Minds is a vibrant program that continues to evolve. In 2004, we became a registered GED provider for the Eugene School District. And more recently, in 2005, we were granted accreditation through the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools (Now the Northwest Accreditation Commission.) This distinction allows us to issue our own transferrable high school credits.

But all of this is of the same piece. This way of changing and growing and re-inventing ourselves is what makes Creative Minds strong. As our programs have matured, the type of students who enroll in Creative Minds has transformed as well. Students from five different school systems as well as former home-schoolers have found a place at Creative Minds.

As a student, we want you to feel like you're a part of this community, too. Creative Minds is a place where your voice will be heard.

Daily Schedules:

<u>AM</u>	
1 st Period	9:00-9:45
2 nd Period	9:45-10:30
3 rd Period	10:30-11:15
4 th Period	11:15-12:00

<u>PM</u>	
1 st Period	1:00-1:45
2 nd Period	1:45-2:30
3 rd Period	2:30-3:15
4 th Period	3:15-4:00

Student Expectations (A/K/A the rules)...

These expectations and guidelines are for all of us so that we can be safe, learn, and enjoy being at Creative Minds together. Nobody expects you to be perfect all the time, but we do need you to always give your best effort. **Work on achieving your goals, completing your schoolwork, and being respectful.** Always try your hardest.

1. Attendance

Come to school! You can't miss more than **10** days in the semester or **6** days in a single month. It **doesn't** matter if these absences are excused or unexcused. We might make exceptions if there are reasons for absences that are out of your control. But if you go over the maximum number of absences, you may be placed on an attendance contract after meeting with the Director. If this doesn't work, you may be dropped from the program. And remember, **your parent or guardian needs to call you in when you are going to be absent. The office phone number is 541-344-9712.**

2. Tardiness

Be on time! School starts at **9:00 A.M.** for the morning program and **1:00 P.M.** for the afternoon. If you can't help being late, you need to have a signed note from your parent or guardian or we need a telephone call from them. Sometimes accidents happen but if you're always late, that is a problem. Being tardy affects your school work and your grades and it also disrupts the other people in your class. Frequent tardiness will result in the need for a parent conference with the Director. You will also find yourself making up the time after school.

3. Preparation

Come to school each day with the intention of working hard and doing your best! Some days you might not be in the greatest mood or able to do your best but we understand this. We will work with you to fix what needs to be fixed but don't use this as an excuse when you're just messing up. Take care of yourself and come to school ready to give your best effort.

4. Respect

Be respectful! Be respectful and appropriate toward the other students and your teachers. You shouldn't use bad language and you can't insult people. Don't threaten or bother people. We want you to express yourself but be respectful of other students and the staff of Creative Minds.

5. Dress Code

Use common sense. Your stomach must be covered and you can't wear tank-tops with spaghetti-style straps. Also, no t-shirts, hats or other articles of clothing that promote alcohol, drugs, gang-affiliation, violence, sexual activity or any offensive attitudes. You cannot wear sunglasses in class without a medical reason. We want to see your faces

and engage with you; therefore if you wear a hoodie-type sweatshirt, you can't wear the hood up over your head.

6. Safe Behavior

Creative Minds is a safe place. You can't hit, push or rough-house aggressively. Don't put your hands on other students or the teachers. Threats, aggression and other unsafe behavior will be dealt with seriously and may get you suspended or expelled.

7. School Property

This is your school. Make it a place you want to show your parents and friends. Do not damage or vandalize or steal things. Accidents happen but you're responsible for anything you damage or break. You will be billed for damages.

8. Personal Belongings and Personal Space

You need to respect the property of other students and the property of the teachers and staff. Everyone has the right to not have their things bothered, damaged, or stolen. If you don't have permission, don't touch it! Theft is a crime and it will be handled in a serious manner that the administration feels is appropriate.

Also, you need to respect the personal space of other people around you. If somebody doesn't want to be touched, don't touch or poke them.

9. Campus

Creative Minds is a closed campus. You need to remain on school property until school is out or until you are given permission or accompanied by a staff member. We share this building with a lot of other tenants and certain areas are off-limits to you. This includes the upstairs, the parking lot, and the alley along the east side of the building.

10. Cell-phones, Music Players, Game Devices, Skateboards, etc.

You cannot be a distraction to other students. Cell-phones will not be seen or heard anywhere on campus during school hours. If you take out a cell-phone, it will be confiscated. You may get it back at the end of the day. The same goes with personal stereos and electronic game devices. They are not to be used at all during school hours. And like cell-phones, they will be confiscated. After the first offense, you can get it back at the end of the day. A second offense means that a parent or guardian will have to come in and pick it up for you.

Skateboards, scooters, rollerblades and bikes must be put away when you first get to school. You can't use them inside the building or in the parking lot. There are racks beneath the shelter to lock your bike. Bring a lock.

A special note:

The school phone is for emergencies only. You should arrange for a ride home ahead of time. The phone is not to be used for this purpose.

11. Computer and Internet Use

Computer use is governed by the *Acceptable Use Agreement* that all students must sign prior to enrollment. Simply put, you will not use the Creative Minds computers to look at inappropriate things such as pornography, or violent, racist or drug-related sites. Chat rooms and social-networking sites (MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) are strictly off-limits. If you break the rules, or are caught using software or a “tunneling” site to get around the filtering programs on our machines, your computer privileges might be suspended or revoked for good.

You may not use a teacher’s personal computer without permission!

If you have time before or after school, it’s OK to use your e-mail as long as this does not violate any of the above restrictions on content.

12. Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of community learning. We take a lot of short field trips around the city of Eugene. You are considered to be still in school during a field trip! You need to follow all the rules of Creative Minds and local traffic laws while you’re gone and you need to stay within sight of accompanying staff member(s).

13. Food Policy

Food and drink may be consumed on campus before or after school. However, high-caffeine and high-sugar energy drinks are still against the rules. They’re not good for you and they make it hard to concentrate on school.

Teachers may let you have snacks or drinks in their classrooms but it is up to each teacher. You need to ask before you open something or start to eat or drink. Food and drinks in the classroom is not a right but a privilege and it all must be finished (and cleaned up!) before you leave that classroom.

Chewing gum, too, is at the discretion of the teacher. If a teacher allows you to chew gum, it is only for that class and in that classroom.

Students may not consume sunflower seeds in the shell! This involves spitting and violates the health and safety standards of the school. No un-shelled sunflower seeds.

14. Public Displays of Affection

Creative Minds is a small academic environment. We need to keep our focus on education and minimize distractions. Relationships can’t be allowed to distract us from learning. Kissing, holding hands, sitting on other student’s laps or otherwise touching in an inappropriate manner will not be tolerated.

Creative Minds Discipline Policy

Violations of the Creative Minds rules will result in the student receiving an Incident Report.

5 such write-ups in any semester may result in a suspension and the student will not be allowed to return to CM before attending a behavioral conference involving staff members and the student's parent or guardian.

Subsequent Incident Reports during the same semester may result in the student being dropped from the Creative Minds Academic program.

Instructor and Staff Expectations...

Creative Minds is a school. The education of students is our #1 job and everybody that works here share this responsibility. As staff members, we need to follow the same rules and behaviors that we expect from our students.

Here is a list of rules for our teachers—

1. All staff will have a criminal background check and submit fingerprints to the State of Oregon. Additional information will be forwarded to the Oregon Teachers Standards & Practices Commission.
2. Staff members will be on time. This means showing up at least fifteen minutes before the start of class and starting class on time.
3. Staff members will dress appropriately and professionally.
4. Instructors will develop written lesson plans and a course syllabus. They will also provide clear academic expectations for all graded work.
5. Instructors will maintain and use the CM computerized gradebook. This file will be open to administrative examination. Instructors are also responsible for maintaining a record of student attendance in this same program. Computerized gradebooks will be turned in at the end of each semester and kept on file.

6. Instructors are responsible for the students in their classes. If students are released early from class, they must be supervised.
7. Instructors need to keep their spaces neat and orderly.
8. ***Oregon Law requires all public employees to report suspicions of child abuse to the Department of Human Services (DHS) or a law enforcement agency.*** Any CM employee having reasonable cause to think that a student has suffered abuse, neglect or abandonment must report the incident immediately.
9. Staff members represent Creative Minds and are expected to uphold community standards. Staff and instructors may be terminated for unethical, criminal or other disruptive behaviors.



Other Important Things (CM Policies and the answers to your questions)...

1. What about being admitted to CMAS and school attendance?

Students will be admitted under various criteria. This includes an initial interview with the director of Creative Minds, the student's previous academic & behavioral record, and the student's dedication and commitment.

Students are expected to attend all classes at Creative Minds in which they are enrolled. If a student is to miss school due to illness, doctor or dental appointment, emergency, etc., parent or legal guardian needs to call the school as soon as possible. Too many absences are grounds for dismissal from the program.

Tardiness is harmful to a student's academic progress as well as a disruption to the classroom. Chronic or excessive tardiness is unacceptable and may be grounds for dismissal from the program.

It is the student's responsibility to make up work that was missed. Instructors will communicate with the parents or guardian when the student's academic progress is placed in jeopardy due to excessive absence or tardiness.

Parents and guardians, please note: frequent, multiple absences or tardiness will also affect in-school performance and earned-credit. If a student is more than 25 minutes late to a class, he or she will be marked absent from that particular class.

If a student has an attendance rate of less than 75% for any one class, the student will earn a reduced amount of credit for that class, equal to the rate of attendance. (For example, if the student shows up to first period math class only 60% of the time, he or she can only earn 60% of the credit.) _

2. What about grades?

Creative Minds assigns grades on the letter system (A, B, C, D and F) with the additional marks of (+) or (-) available as well. Students are graded according to their own progress and skill level.

In most cases, **Incompletes** will not be granted. Occasionally, newly arrived students will not have enough evaluated work for the instructor to assign a grade. In this case, a notice of **No Basis for Grade (NBG)** will be assigned.

Please Note: High School students at Creative Minds may see their semester academic credits negatively affected by poor attendance or consistent lack of effort.

3. Is there a dress code?

Creative Minds encourages students in their individuality. However, the clothes you decide to wear cannot be offensive to other people. Clothes that promote violence, gang affiliation, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, pornographic images or words, or that glorify illegal behavior will not be tolerated. Your clothes should not be too revealing.

Students must wear shoes at all times for health and safety reasons.

Students should choose clothing that will fit the day's activities. Clothes should not affect participation. Inappropriate footwear is not an excuse to skip a field trip.

Parents or guardians should be sure that their students are dressed appropriately for the weather conditions.

4. Can I bring a guest to school?

All visitors to Creative Minds must be pre-approved and receive permission from the administration to be on the premises. Visitors must respect the environment of the school and cooperate with all the rules of Creative Minds.

5. Creative Minds Policy on Violent Behavior and weapons

Conflicts are an inevitable part of life, but violence and threats of violence are not allowed at Creative Minds. Attempts at conflict resolution will first be made by the students involved in the situation with the aid of an instructor or staff member.

However, students who assault, menace, threaten, harass or cause physical harm to another person will face disciplinary action that may include suspension, expulsion and legal proceedings. This includes bullying and intimidation.

Students may not threaten or physically fight with other students at Creative Minds. Also, students may not engage in rough or aggressive play at school. This includes wrestling, pinching, slapping, punching or kicking, even if it is "just goofing around."

No student, staff or visitor will possess or transport any object that can reasonably be considered a dangerous weapon on school grounds or while participating in a school-sponsored activity. Violation of this policy will result in expulsion from Creative Minds. In accordance with state law, students expelled for a weapons violation will not be allowed to attend public school for one year.

6. Creative Minds Policy on School Searches

Creative Minds recognizes a student's right to privacy. It is the expectation of the school that students, staff and guests will not bring illegal or prohibited items to

school with them. We all must work together to preserve the safety and integrity of this learning environment.

Should a student be observed to have an illegal or prohibited item in his or her possession, a staff member may ask the student to open and reveal the contents of pockets, bag, backpack, or car and surrender any illegal or prohibited items found. This will be done in the presence of a second staff member and, if possible, under conditions of privacy and confidentiality. In minor cases, some surrendered items may be returned to the student at the end of the school day. Other items can be reclaimed by a parent or guardian. However, illegal drugs, firearms, or other warranted items will be turned over to the police. If the police are notified, the school will follow the policy on police investigations.

Should a student refuse to comply with a requested search or to surrender restricted items, the student's parent(s) or guardian will be contacted immediately and asked to pick the student up. Before re-admittance, parent or guardian must give the staff reasonable reassurance that no prohibited items were found. Depending on severity of the situation, student or students may face further disciplinary action.

Partial list of prohibited items:

tobacco products, alcohol, narcotics,
controlled substance, drug
paraphernalia, weapons, pornography

7. Creative Minds Policy on Drugs & Alcohol Possession

The use or possession of alcohol or illegal drugs is absolutely prohibited at all programs of Creative Minds and on any field trip or extra-curricular activity. If a staff member has reasonable suspicion that a student is under the influence or in possession of alcohol or illegal narcotics at school, on school property or at any school-sponsored events, disciplinary action will be taken. Infractions may be punishable by suspension or expulsion.

8. Withdrawal, Suspension, or Expulsion

If a student decides to withdraw from Creative Minds, the parent(s) or legal guardian will sign a withdrawal form which will be dated and placed in the student's file. Credit-eligible students may receive partial academic credit if they attended classes for at least four weeks before withdrawing.

Students may be suspended or expelled from Creative Minds for incidents involving drugs or alcohol, destruction of school property, endangering the physical or emotional safety of other students, or repeated violations of behavioral expectations.

A conference will be held with the school director, the student, and the student's parent(s) or guardian. Upon explanation of the situation and consideration, if a suspension or expulsion is deemed appropriate, reason(s) for the suspension or expulsion will be documented. Consideration of re-admittance will depend on the situation and behavioral change in the student.

Out-of-school suspension is the temporary exclusion from school attendance and is not to exceed 10 days. Before the student can return to school, a conference must occur involving the director, the student, and the parent(s) or legal guardian.

9. What if I leave the school grounds?

Creative Minds is a closed campus. Parental permission is necessary before a student may leave the premises prior to daily dismissal. Students who know in advance they will have to leave school due to medical or dental appointments, athletic events, job interviews, etc., must bring a signed note clearly stating when they will be leaving. Also, they must contact the teachers of classes they will miss and get assignments in advance if possible.

If a student becomes ill at school, she or he may lie down for up to 45 minutes before being asked to decide whether to go home or go back to class. If the student is unable to continue with school, a phone call will be made to a parent, legal guardian, or a previously designated third-party. This adult must then come to school and pick the student up.

10. Can I take my medicine here?

If a student requires prescription medication she or he should inform a staff member, and bring the medications in the original container that shows the prescription. It also needs to be made clear by the parent or guardian whether the student will be responsible for self-medication and if they need a reminder.

11. What about the computers?

Access to Creative Mind's electronic network is provided under the guidelines included in our Acceptable Use Policy. We want to insure that students and their parent/guardian are aware of this policy. We have two requirements that the student must fulfill before they are allowed access to the network:

- To insure that students and parents know the guidelines of the policy, we require the student return a signed Network Access Permission form.
- Teachers will give students instructions regarding appropriate use of the Internet. After that training, student will sign an Acceptance Form. This form reinforces the student's knowledge of the rules.

Students may find material on the Internet that parents consider objectionable. Creative Minds will work to safeguard students from these situations, but we recommend parents have a discussion with their children about values and safe activities inherent with using the Internet. School guidelines prohibit access to material that is inappropriate in the school environment. Students working independently on projects are responsible for obeying school guidelines.

12. Infectious Disease

Consistent with OAR 581-022-1440, CM will maintain age-appropriate plan of instruction about infectious diseases, including HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B as part of health education curriculum.

13. Non-Discrimination Policy

Creative Minds Alternative School admits students of any race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. CM does not discriminate on the basis or race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in educational policies or programs.



Options for High School Students at CM...

Upon enrollment at Creative Minds, high school students will choose one of four academic options to pursue. This is the course track and goal that the student will be working toward. CM Academic Standards apply for all four options.

The offered programs are as follows:

- 1) **High School Completion**— the student will graduate and earn a high school diploma through Creative Minds Alternative School. Must earn extra-curricular credits to remain eligible for the completion program.
- 2) **High School Transition**— the student will use Creative Minds as a stepping stone to ease back into the public school system.
- 3) **Credit Recovery**— the student will attend Creative Minds for a brief period in order to make up a few missing graduation credits from his or her referring high school.
- 4) **GED Preparation**— the student must meet all requirements for this prep course and will attend Creative Minds to find assistance in review and study. If enrolled in this option, the student must maintain an attendance rate of 90% and continue to make steady progress toward completion of the GED test series in order to remain eligible.

An extra note about High School Completion...

High school students at Creative Minds attend school for three hours a day. This is half the seat time available at a traditional school and the credits available per semester are thus halved as well. A full year at Creative Minds Alternative School, if completed successfully, will earn the student 4 high school credits.

To receive a diploma, an incoming student needs to earn 24 credits. Therefore, if enrolled in the High School Completion Program, the student must be prepared to earn credits outside of the slotted class time.

We encourage internships, volunteering, apprenticeships, participation in structured sporting events, after-school jobs and courses of independent (but monitored) study. All must be pre-approved.

This is a part of the HS Completion Program and the student engaged in this track will be self-motivated and dedicated.

Assistance and guidance for these students will be offered through the Creative Minds Mentoring Program.

This calendar is subject to change as the school year unfolds...

Creative Minds School 2011-2012 Calendar 1st Semester

September

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			1	2
5 Labor Day	6 in-service	7 in-service	8 in-service	9 1st Day! ☺
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

October

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14 in-service
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

November

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10 Mid-Term	11 Veteran's Day
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24 Thanksgiving	
28	29	30		

December

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
	Winter		Break	
	Winter		Break	

January

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2	3	4 Classes Resume	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16 MLK Day	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26 Semester Ends	27 Grading Day
30 in-service	31 2 nd Semester			

* No School

Creative Minds School
2011-2012 Calendar
2nd Semester

January

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30 in-service	31 2 nd Semester			

February

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20 President Day	21	22	23	24
27	28	29		

March

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	Spring		Break	

April

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13 Mid-Term
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

May

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28 Memorial Day	29	30	31	

June

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19 Last Day!	20 in-Service	21 in-Service	22

* No School



Creative Minds Alternative School

1115 Pearl Street • Eugene, OR 97401

Tel: 541- 344-9712

Your son or daughter has enrolled in Creative Minds Alternative School.

In order to be successful and to help support our learning environment, your child will need to understand and abide by certain rules and policies as laid out in the Creative Minds Student Handbook.

To assist your child, we ask that you look over the handbook with your student. Talk about our expectations and help your child agree to respect them.

Please sign, date and detach the bottom portion of this page and have your child bring it back to school.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. The number for the main office is 541-344-9712.

Thank you,

The Creative Minds Staff

Date: _____

I have read and discussed the Creative Minds Student handbook with my child. We understand the policies as they apply to us.

_____ (signature of parent or guardian)

_____ (signature of CM student)