STUDENT HANDBOOK

effective date of July 1, 2021 or earlier

COLUMBIA SCHOOL

Table of Contents

View our HGS Technology Requirements.pdf to learn more about the hardware and software needed for coursework in our program.

Welcome Message

Dear Columbia School Students and Families,

Welcome to the 2022-2023 school year. We are pleased to have you as part of the Columbia School family. We believe a successful education is built on the strong relationship between student, school, and home. We are excited to help your student learn and master grade-level appropriate skills and concepts and strive to develop the habits of a lifelong learner.

We continually examine the work we do to ensure our policies and procedures align with industry best-practices. The procedures and guidelines outlined in this handbook are a result of considerable thought by our staff and with student and school community input.

Please review this handbook with your student. It provides a framework for our learning community and serves as a reference to be used throughout the school year. If you have any questions or comments, please free to contact me at Andy.Wells@hudsonglobalscholars.com.

Sincerely,

Andy Wells

Head of School

Introduction, Educational Mission, and Vision

Columbia School (formerly Virtual Schools of Excellence) has been supporting the K-12 online needs of schools and their students for over a decade. We provide a flexible education solution to help schools get online quickly. Our highly experienced leadership team works with each partner to customize a solution that works for the school, staff, and students. Columbia School is fully-accredited, employs highly qualified teachers who are experts in their field, maintains an extensive course catalog of core subjects and engaging electives, and utilizes sophisticated tools, systems, and supports to ensure academic success.

The mission of Columbia School is to provide school partners and families with high-quality online programs and courses to students worldwide.

Utilizing current and engaging technologies, Columbia School strives to build the foundation for lifelong learners and prepare them to achieve success in schools, colleges, and careers in a global society.

Contact Information

Helpful Links

Help Desk Support

Student Login

Student Services

Administrative Office

729 S. W. Federal Highway
Suite 102
Stuart, Florida 34994

Phone: 1-772-293-9356
Website: www.columbiaschool.com

Head of School

Andy Wells
Andy.Wells@hudsonglobalscholars.com

Academic Policies

We strive for academic excellence and flexible scheduling to meet the needs of all students and families. We do not focus on seat time. Instead, we focus on giving students many opportunities to demonstrate their learning and application of concepts and skills.

Attendance

Attendance is based on your student's login within our learning systems. When your student works independently completing coursework, this counts as attendance. If your student interacts with the teacher, this is also part of attendance.

Your student is expected to do each of the following:
- maintain regular and active communication with their teacher
- check course announcements daily
- read email messages each day
- complete daily lessons, assignments, and assessments (tests and quizzes)
- attend live synchronous sessions (if applicable)

Illness and Emergencies, Vacations, and Days Off

If your student is ill, or your family has an emergency, your student should immediately notify their teacher. It is very important that the teacher is aware of situations that prevent your student from progressing in a course or attending an instructional session. If applicable, synchronous lessons are recorded and available for review at any point during the semester.

Your student has 24/7 access to their courses. Even though your student has access that allows them to work ahead or catch up, your student is expected to complete the course within a specific timeframe. Your student may take days off that align with your school calendar of holidays, or additional days off as needed, but they are still required to complete their coursework within the course start and end dates.

Pacing and Daily Schedule for Asynchronous Instruction

Most courses run 18 weeks per semester. With our program, your student has the ability to move at a faster pace as they work asynchronously (independently). This is a benefit of self-paced and independent online learning. As long as all of the course lessons and activities are completed by the end of the semester, your student will be pacing correctly. Your student may refer to their dashboard to identify their course start and end dates.

The time your student spends working in their courses is determined by the grade level and subject area. Pacing for each student is determined throughout the semester and controlled by the student (or family) since virtual learning allows for flexibility not found in most brick-and-mortar classrooms. Your student is required to complete their independent coursework and have the flexibility to work on their course within their own schedule.

Your student's teacher(s) uses the Course Syllabus to determine appropriate pacing and will communicate timelines and suggested due dates to make sure that the course is completed by the end of the semester. Your student should plan time each day to work in each of their courses, regardless of the number of courses they are taking. You and your student are responsible for keeping track of progress and pace with the use of resources provided by the teacher.

Elementary Students

A typical elementary student will focus on independent coursework at least four hours per day. This time is spent as noted in the table below. Independent coursework includes readings, assignments, assessments (tests and quizzes), discussions, and other course activities needed to complete before the end of the semester. Note: For some students, live sessions are included as part of the instructional program. Attendance at these sessions is in addition to the time spent completing independent coursework.

Typical Elementary Student Day

reading language arts lessons	60-90 min per day (5 days per week)
math lessons	math lessons: 60 min per day (5 days per week)
K/1 science lessons grades 2-5 science lessons	30 min twice per week 30 min per day (5 days per week)
1 social studies lessons grades 2-5 social studies lessons	30 min twice per week 30 min four times per week
electives lessons (art, physical education, music, technology	30 min per week (per course)

Note: If your student is not working in their course each day of the week, and is using a personalized schedule, the times listed in the table above should be used to plan the amount of time needed for each lesson in each of the content areas.

Role of the Learning Coach for Elementary Students

At the elementary level, your student is supported by a learning coach, a trusted adult (parent/guardian), as well as your student's teacher. If your student is working in a brick-and-mortar classroom, the learning coach assists with activities beyond the school day. If your student is learning from home, the learning coach plays an active role in the day-to-day schedule by previewing course content and activities, assisting with readings (for non-readers), navigating the online learning platform, communicating with the teacher via the Message Center, and submitting assignments.

Middle and High School Students

At the middle and high school level, each lesson requires **45-60 minutes per day per course five days per week.** Your student will need to schedule enough time each day for readings, assignments, assessments (tests and quizzes), discussions, and other course activities to complete the course before the end of the semester.

Role of the Learning Coach for Middle and High School Students

At the secondary level, your student will continue to benefit from an involved and supportive learning coach. This trusted adult (parent, guardian) assists the student with their day-to-day schedule of asynchronous work to be completed, answering questions, locating physical materials (as needed), and communicating with the teacher via the Message Center.
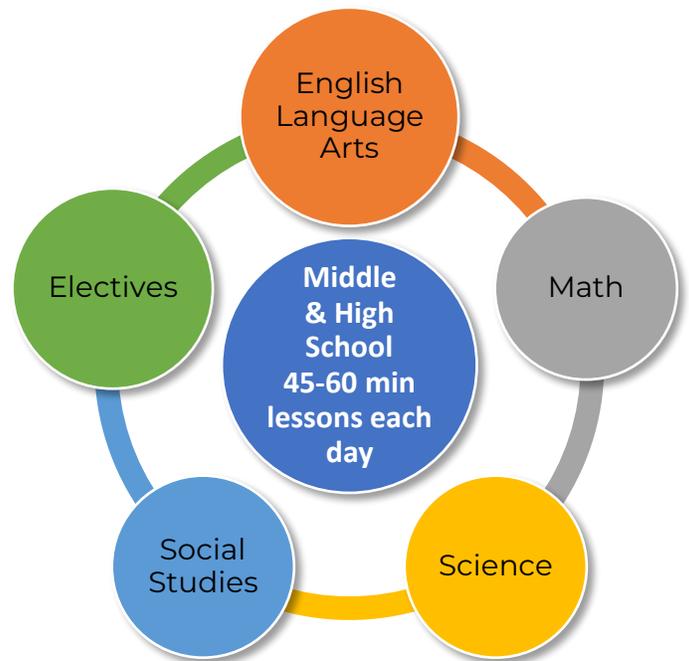
Synchronous (Live) Instruction

For some students, online courses are *enhanced* with live synchronous instruction sessions with the teacher and classmates. These synchronous sessions *do not replace* the asynchronous independent time your student spends in their lessons or completing coursework.

During these synchronous sessions, teachers facilitate:
- targeted instruction for difficult concepts or skills
- enrichment to extend learning from the course
- review for upcoming assessments (tests and quizzes) and assignments
- real-world connections between vocabulary and content and today's world

Role of the Learning Coach with Synchronous Instruction Sessions

At the elementary level, the learning coach is required to be in close proximity during synchronous instruction sessions. At the secondary level, the learning coach may not need to be in the same room as your student; however, the learning coach may be needed to troubleshoot technology issues so your student can communicate and participate fully in the session.

Participation and Internet Etiquette

Participation is required daily in brick-and-mortar classrooms and the same applies for online courses. Your student may communicate with the teacher during live synchronous sessions and/or the My Virtual Campus Message Center. Participation and communication require showing respect to fellow students and the teacher, learning how to navigate in the online learning platform, keeping up-to-date with course announcements, addressing technical problems immediately, and using the Campus Support Help Desk. These demonstrate your student taking ownership for learning and appropriate Internet behaviors.

Appropriate Internet Behavior
Your student is expected to:
- show respect, kindness, and politeness, and always use appropriate language (verbal and/or written)
- avoid bullying behavior
- share links to video conferences, passwords, or login information ONLY with the parent, guardian, or learning coach
- report anything inappropriate immediately to the parent, guardian, or learning coach

If your student attends live synchronous sessions, your student is also expected to:
- attend the session in an open area in the home or in a brick-and-mortar classroom free from distraction and noise. The area should be conductive for learning. For elementary students, the area should also allow the learning coach (parent or guardian) to monitor the synchronous session.
- minimize distracting behaviors during synchronous live sessions such as:
  o annotating on the screen out of turn
  o leaving and entering the live session repeatedly
  o attending the session where there is loud background noise like a television, radio, or someone on the phone
  o avoiding questions and/or comments from a parent/guardian during the live session (Note: Questions and/or comments can be sent to the Campus Support Help Desk or emailed to the teacher through My Virtual Campus.)

Completing Assignments

All assignments for a course are submitted electronically, through the online learning platform, unless otherwise noted by the teacher. Directions are included for each assignment

Some assignments are auto-graded by the learning platform and provide immediate feedback to students. These include multiple choice questions, true/false statements, fill-in-the-blank, drag and drop, etc.

Other assignments are teacher-graded as students need to provide a written response that the teacher needs to read (i.e., response to a prompt, presentations, worksheets, practice problems, labs, essays, artwork or images, voice recordings, multimedia presentations, discussions., etc.). Teachers will provide feedback and the student's grade within 24-business hours (Monday through Friday excluding U.S. holidays) of the student's submission.

Redoing an Assignment

Our program is self-paced and allows students to work on their own schedule. This allows them time to review content and relevant course material prior to submitting assignments. In some situations, students may want to redo an assignment to improve their demonstration of learning. **Students can redo teacher-graded assignments one time.** The request to redo an assignment that has been graded by the teacher should be sent to the teacher via the Message Center in My Virtual Campus. In the message, students must include the name of the course, the exact name of the assignment, and the topic or module where it is located.

If students are unsure if they can redo an assignment, they should create a Campus Support Help Desk ticket. The ticket should include the name of the course, assignment title, and the reason that the student is making this request.

Completing Assessments

All assessments (tests, quizzes, exams, course final) are submitted electronically, through the online learning platform, unless otherwise noted by the teacher. Most assessments are auto-graded by the learning platform and provide immediate feedback to students; however, some assessments include several teacher-graded questions. When there is a combination of auto-graded and teacher-graded, students will receive feedback on the auto-graded assessment items and will get feedback from their teachers on the teacher-graded items within 24-business hours (Monday through Friday excluding U.S. holidays) of the student's submission. The assessment final score is not determined until the auto-graded and teacher-graded questions have been graded.

Redoing an Assessment

The following provides guidance for requests for redoing an assessment.

Course Exams, Tests, and Finals
- Students are not allowed to redo any exams, tests, or finals.

Quizzes:
- Students in grades K-8 are allowed to retake a quiz one time. Requests should be sent to the teacher via the Message Center in My Virtual Campus. In this message, students must include the name of their course, the exact name of the quiz, and the topic or module where it is located.
- High school students are not allowed to retake any quizzes.

If students are unsure if they can redo an assessment, they should create a Campus Support Help Desk ticket. The ticket should include the name of the assessment and the reason that the student is making this request.

Dropping a Course

No one begins a course with the goal of dropping it; however, it is each student's responsibility to understand when it might become necessary to consider unenrolling from a course. After several weeks in a course, a serious and compelling reason is required to drop the course. Serious and compelling reasons may include, but are not limited to:

1. documented and significant change in work hours leaving your student unable to complete a course
2. documented and severe physical/mental illness/injury to your student or student's family

Requests for withdrawals are made using the Change Request form. The Head of School, or Program Manager, will review the information provided in the form including the following:
- reason for the drop
- requested drop date

Once approved, the Registrar is notified, and the student's enrollment is updated.

Cancellations/Refunds

The school may request to cancel or reassign a student's enrollment within ten (10) calendar days after the enrollment is completed or access to the course is provided (whichever is earlier). When this happens, the school will be issued a credit for future enrollment. No refunds will be issued.

End-of-Semester Extensions

Extensions are for students who cannot complete a course in the allotted semester timeframe. Extensions allow your student an opportunity to complete the remaining assignments independently, without live instruction sessions, during an additional two weeks per semester course. Extensions are requested by the person who enrolled your student through the Help Desk Support system and should be made at least 14 calendar days prior the course end date. The Head of School or Program Manager will review the request and will update the Help Desk ticket accordingly.

Incomplete Grades

Your student will be assigned an Incomplete if they have not completed their course assignments, and the course final, if applicable, by the end of the semester.

Under emergency/special circumstances, and with the approval of the school administrator, your student may request an Incomplete grade at the end of the semester. If an Incomplete grade is given by the teacher, incomplete course assignments must be completed within two weeks to receive a final grade and course credit.

Grading Scale and Grade Weights

Grade scales and grade weights inform teachers and students about overall achievement in a course. Columbia School uses the following grading scale for all student work.

Percent	Letter Grade	Non-Weighted	Weighted (Honors)	Weighted (AP & Dual Enrollment)
89 – 100	A	4.00	4.50	5.00
79 – 88	B	3.00	3.50	4.00
69 – 78	C	2.00	2.50	3.00
59 – 68	D	1.00	1.50	2.00
Below 59	F	0.00	0.00	0.00

Grade weights vary based on subject area, grade level, and specific contend standards. Shown below are general guidelines used for grade weights.

High School Core, K-12 Religion, and English Language Learner Courses Note: Not all courses contain a final. When there is no final in the course, the overall grade calculation is determined based on the other categories.		
Grade Category	Description	Percentage of Overall Grade
quizzes and tests	auto-scored and teacher-graded	30%
assignments, presentations, labs, essays, artwork, discussions, and participation	auto-scored and teacher-graded	50%
course final	auto-scored and teacher-graded	20%

K-12 Electives and K-8 Core Courses Note: Not all courses contain a final. When there is no final in the course, the overall grade calculation is determined based on the other categories.		
Grade Category	Description	Percentage of Overall Grade
quizzes and tests	auto-scored and teacher-graded	40%
assignments, presentations, labs, essays, artwork, discussions, and participation	auto-scored and teacher-graded	40%
course final	auto-scored and teacher-graded	20%

Awarding High School Credit

To receive credit for a high school course, your student must pass each half credit (0.5) course by completing the course lessons and activities, the final exam, and earning a final grade of 60 percent or greater. Incomplete final exams will be assigned 0%.

Promotion

To be promoted to the next grade, students in kindergarten through grade seven must earn a passing grade in each of their semester-length core courses: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

To be promoted to the high school level, eighth grade students must earn passing grades in all semester-length middle school or higher-level courses in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

A student typically finishes high school before or during the calendar year in which they turn nineteen (19) years old. Students who cannot meet graduation requirements as outlined below, prior to the end of the school year during which they attain the age of twenty (20) in the fall semester of that year, shall not be permitted to attend beyond that academic year unless special arrangements have been made with the Head of School and the school administrator.

To be eligible to receive a diploma from Columbia School, your student must:
- complete the required number of credits for high school graduation
- earn a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale
- meet any other additional graduation requirements required by specific programs of study or to meet the entrance requirements of the student's chosen college or university
- finalize all financial obligations so no additional money is owed

Transfer Credits

As part of the enrollment process, full-time and dual diploma students in grades 6-12 must submit unofficial transcripts from prior schools. Counselors analyze previously earned credits and determine which credits will transfer to Columbia School.

Dual Enrollment

Some students at Columbia School are enrolled in a two- or four-year university to take college courses and earn college credit while still in high school. Your student is not eligible for dual enrollment during their first semester of high school and the counselor at Columbia School will be able to assist your student with high school graduation requirements as they apply with the Dual Enrollment program.

International Enrollment for Five-Credit or Six-Credit Dual Diploma Program

No matter where your student lives, they may be enrolled in Columbia School. Some benefits for taking part in the international enrollment program include the following:

- earning a U.S. high school diploma and transcript showing a rigorous academic program and meeting the standards for receiving a diploma from an accredited institution while simultaneously earning a high school diploma from your student's home country
- receiving career coaching, infusion in an American educational system, and preparation for college and careers
- participating in online and blended learning through which your student earns a minimum of five-credit hours over an extended period concurrently with their regular program of studies

Condensed Semester

If your student is taking courses during a condensed semester, such as during the summer, they will not have the typical 18 weeks to complete all course activities. Therefore, they will need to spend significantly more time on their lessons and activities each day to complete all required coursework during the condensed semester. **A rule of thumb for scheduling coursework is to complete each week's lessons within a single day**. This will allow your student to complete an entire course in 18 days rather than 18 weeks if they dedicate a minimum of five hours per day to each course.

Academic Integrity, Plagiarism, and Cheating

Columbia School students are expected to maintain high levels of academic integrity, a commitment to active learning, and regular participation in class. Behavior in and out of the classroom defines who your student really is. Your student should work hard to develop their own ideas, put them into action, and celebrate their own achievements!

A professional musician or artist expects their creative words, or intellectual property, to be respected and purchased rather than stolen or shared without permission. In the same way, your student is expected to abide by this same promise—the work they do is theirs and only theirs, the ideas they share are original and their own, and they have made every effort to cite sources when they find the content they want to include in their written work. To learn more about proper citation, refer to the [Excelsior College OWL website.](#)

Columbia School requires **original work** from all students and in so doing, prohibits plagiarism from others and cheating. Your student shall be expected to properly cite the origin of work that is not your student's own. If content, other than commonly known facts, is not properly cited, attributed, or credited, the work may be determined to be plagiarized. Teachers regularly check for plagiarism when reviewing submissions and providing your student with feedback on their assignments.

There may be instances in which some students demonstrate academic misconduct or inappropriate behaviors. These may include any of the following:

- plagiarism
- cheating
- fabrication or copying someone else's work
- assisting another student with copying or misrepresenting intellectual property
- completing work by someone other than the student
- behaving inappropriately online or in a classroom
- being hurtful or misusing computer or other forms of social media and technology

Academic integrity is a promise that makes learning fair and equal among all classmates. If your student copies work from another student, it is unfair to everyone else who worked independently to complete a task. Each completed assignment should be a true reflection of your student's own capabilities. Your student should want to be part of an academic conversation with their own ideas to share rather than restating what someone else has already said.

Definition of Academic Integrity

Academic integrity means:

- working independently on all assignments unless your student receives permission from their teacher to work with another student
- properly punctuating and citing all ideas from others they wish to use to support their own ideas
- contacting their instructors for help in avoiding plagiarism

Cheating is the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work using dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating. Plagiarism is the use of distinctive ideas or works belonging to another person without providing adequate acknowledgement of that person's contribution. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to the following:

- a student who submits work completed by or copied (in full or in part) from another person. This includes classmates, friends, parents/guardians, siblings, etc.
- a student who submits work copied (in full or in part) and pasted from the Internet. This includes exact sentences, paragraphs, videos, logos, images, templates, etc.
- a student who submits work that reflects the ideas of another person, regardless of whether students use the other person's exact words
- a student who allows others to copy their work
- a student who uses translation tools without prior teacher approval to complete assignments in World Languages courses

Consequences for Academic Infractions

First Offense
- The student may be given a zero on the assignment and, at the teacher's discretion, may be given the opportunity to complete the assignment again.
- The teacher will follow up with the student and parent/guardian via assignment feedback and a message through the My Virtual Campus Message Center describing the infraction and how to not repeat this same behavior.

Second Offense
- The student may be given a zero on the assignment and, at the teacher's discretion, may NOT be given the opportunity to complete the assignment again.
- The student, parent/guardian, and school counselor/administrator will be sent a message/email notifying them of the offense, the action taken, and the consequence.
- The message will be stored in the student's profile in the My Virtual Campus communication records.

Third Offense
- The student may be given a zero on the assignment and may NOT be given the opportunity to complete the assignment again.
- The student, parent/guardian, and school counselor/administrator will be sent a message/email notifying them of the offense, the action taken, and the consequence.
- The message will be stored in the student's profile in the My Virtual Campus communication records.
- The student, parent/guardian, and school counselor/administrator will have a conference (via phone or in person), and the incident will be formally documented in writing and stored in the student's profile in the My Virtual Campus communication records.

Fourth Offense
- The student may be given a zero on the assignment and may NOT be given the opportunity to complete the assignment again.
- The student, parent/guardian, and school counselor/administrator will be sent a message/email notifying them of the offense, the action taken, and the consequence.
- Communication will be stored in the student's profile in the My Virtual Campus communication records.
- The school administration may recommend a suspension, temporarily making a student inactive or blocking a student's permission to log on to and/or use parts of Student Information System and Learning Management System or may be removed from the course without a refund or credit.

Accommodations Available for Students

The design of our courses naturally offers student accommodations and support in various ways:

Asynchronous Accommodations

Option to work through a course at your student's own pace so long as your student completes all required assignments before the semester end date.

- ability to review all prior lessons for reinforcement
- unlimited time on assignments as deemed necessary by the teacher and the Learning Management System
- opportunity for assignment retries upon student and/or guardian request and teacher approval
- variety of learning tools including the SpeechStream®/TextHelp® feature, note-taking through the study guide or the learning management system, etc. <u>Note</u>: Learning tools may differ based on the course content and lesson resources.

Synchronous Accommodations

- option to reply in chat
- option to have camera turned on/off
- flexibility to stand and move around
- recorded lessons for review by your student

As a private school, Columbia School is not legally required to meet the needs of a public-school developed Individualized Education Plan (IEP), a 504 plan for students with disabilities who do not need or qualify for special education services, or a Response to Intervention/Multitiered System of Support plan (RTI/MTSS); however, to meet the needs of enrolled students, we will make every effort in good faith to meet the needs of our students based upon accommodations available within our learning management platforms.

Students who are identified by their prior school or other approved professional with a gifted Educational Plan (EP), or students identified by staff as being capable of working at an accelerated level, may be placed in honors or advanced placement (AP) courses.

## Documentation of Learning Accommodations

Parents/Guardians and school administrators are encouraged to provide documentation of learning accommodations with the Head of School via the My Virtual Campus Message Center. This information will be communicated with teachers, so students receive appropriate support available within our program throughout the school year.

English Language Learners (ELLs)

As part of its core offering, Columbia School offers international students the opportunity to enroll in any of its online high schools and/or programs and participate in a range of offerings (e.g., single course enrollments, dual diploma programs, full-time enrollment, and university pathway programs). One of the criteria for success in these courses/programs is English proficiency of B1 or greater on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) scale or its equivalent (see image below).
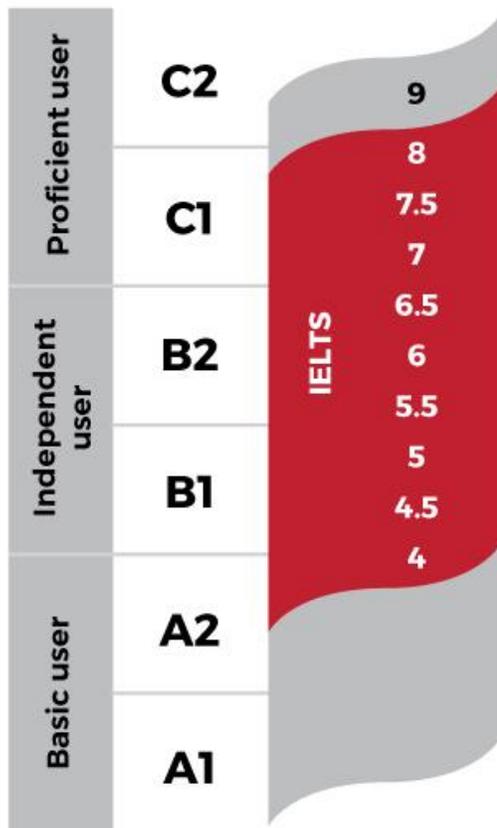
While some middle and high students outside of the U.S. have achieved an English proficiency of B1 or greater and meet the criteria, many have not and need an English language learning experience that will advance their English proficiency. Students enrolling in ELL courses start their journey by completing a placement test aligned to the CEFR to measure the student's preparedness for instruction. The ELL courses are designed to help students develop their English language proficiency skills to advance into and be successful in high school courses and programs as well as in their progression into U.S. colleges and universities.

Level group	Level group name	Level	Level name	Description
A	Basic user	A1	Breakthrough or beginner	• Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. • Can introduce themselves and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people they know and things they have. • Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.
		A2	Waystage or elementary	• Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). • Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. • Can describe in simple terms aspects of their background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
B	Independent user	B1	Threshold or intermediate	• Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. • Can deal with most situations likely to arise while travelling in an area where the language is spoken. • Can produce simple connected text on topics that are familiar or of personal interest. • Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
		B2	Vantage or upper intermediate	• Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in their field of specialization. • Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. • Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
C	Proficient user	C1	Effective operational proficiency or advanced	• Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer clauses, and recognize implicit meaning. • Can express ideas fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. • Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. • Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
		C2	Mastery or proficiency	• Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. • Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. • Can express themselves spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in the most complex situations.

Zero Tolerance Policy

Columbia School has zero tolerance for crime and victimization. This policy ensures that we provide a safe and supportive online learning environment for all students and staff, regardless of economic status, race, or disability. Specific behavior that poses a serious threat to school safety will be dealt with severely and swiftly, including expulsion or referral to law enforcement agencies. We will follow the requirements defined by law for all applicable offenses. The Zero Tolerance Policy is not intended to be applied to petty acts of misconduct and misdemeanors.

Student violations regarding infringement of safety and general well-being of our students will be reported to the local school and will have consequences as governed by the local school.

Withdrawal Requests

Only the parent, guardian, or school administrator who enrolls a student may withdrawal the student from Columbia School. Requests for withdrawals are made using the Change Request form.

Release of Academic Records

Columbia School will provide educational records, including official high school transcripts, and letters of recommendation to third parties such as post-secondary institutions, scholarship committees, and/or potential employers, only with prior written approval from the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s), or from the student if he or she is age 18 or older or an emancipated minor.
- Requests for records and transcripts should be made using the **Official Transcript Request link in My Virtual Campus**.
- Official transcripts contain school signatures and raised seals.
- Official transcripts are sent in a sealed envelope. For international students, the transcripts are sent in one group. For domestic students, the mailing goes directly to your student.

Course Catalog and Accreditations

Our academic program provides a comprehensive offering of core and elective courses for grades K through 12. Most courses do not have prerequisites or associated required physical materials; however, those that do are listed below the course descriptions in the Course Catalog. For courses that do have prerequisites, your student must fulfill the prerequisite before enrolling in the course. Generally, Semester A must be completed before beginning Semester B, although in some cases, Semester A and Semester B may be taken simultaneously. Contact the Head of School for clarification.

Accreditation

Based on a set of rigorous research-based standards and evidence-based criteria, the accreditation process examines the whole institution–its policies, programs, practices, learning conditions, and cultural context to determine how well the parts work together to carry out the institution's vision and meet the needs of every learner. Accreditation isn't about passing a one-time inspection. Rather, accreditation recognizes education providers that demonstrate and sustain their commitments to continuous improvement and better learner outcomes.

Columbia School has been awarded accreditation by the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), the Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), the regional accrediting agencies that span the Cognia™ (formerly AdvancED) global network.

Columbia School offers NCAA-approved curriculum (school code 102805). The National Collegiate Athletic Association supports student athletes at more than 1,200 institutions across North America. The NCAA® does not endorse or affiliate with our services. Parents and guardians of prospective student-athletes should ensure

that programs follow NCAA bylaws. The NCAA website has the most current and accurate information about NCAA rules and regulations.

Columbia School is registered with The College Board (SAT, PSAT/NMSQT), whose mission is to connect students to college success and opportunity. Our school code is 102805. Columbia School does not have a physical location for taking the Advanced Placement exams. Arrangements must be made with the student's home school to determine the location, dates, and times when the exam is available.

All Columbia School courses approved to fulfill A-G subject requirements for admission to universities in the University of California system are included in the course catalog.

Expectations of Teachers
Highly Engaged and Responsive Teacher

We believe an essential component of an effective online educational experience is a highly engaged teacher who continuously supports, monitors, and enhances students' progress and performance throughout their coursework. At the core of our instructional framework is an asynchronous self-paced experience that is facilitated by a trained, supportive teacher. Teachers engage with students in a variety of research-based best practices and protocols to individually connect with students, support and personalize students' instructional experience, and facilitate overall progress and performance. In addition to the core asynchronous practices and protocols, live synchronous support and instruction is offered in some of our instructional models to further enhance and support students' educational experience. These synchronous sessions create additional student-to-student and student-to-teacher experiences that enhance the overall instructional environment.

Messaging and Communication

Students attending Columbia School will receive contact from their teacher within 24-business hours (Monday through Friday excluding U.S. holidays) of their start date via the Message Center in My Virtual Campus.

Students, guardians, and teachers will communicate via the My Virtual Campus Message Center. Weekly messaging regarding course skills, concepts, and progression will be used to keep students and families informed throughout the school year. To stay current with all communications, students and guardians are expected to check their My Virtual Campus dashboard and My Virtual Campus Message Center regularly for important information from their teachers. Communication does not occur outside of the My Virtual Campus dashboard.

Grading and Feedback

Each teacher will grade submitted work within 24 business hours (Monday through Friday). Timely, specific, and actionable feedback will be provided to your student on their teacher-graded assignments. Auto-graded assignments offer instant feedback to your student.

Progress Monitoring

Monitoring of student performance and pace helps ensure your student succeeds with their studies. Columbia School students should refer to the pacing bar on the student dashboard in My Virtual Campus to learn about the number of assignments they have completed, assignments still left to complete, and the number of days remaining in the course before the end of the semester.
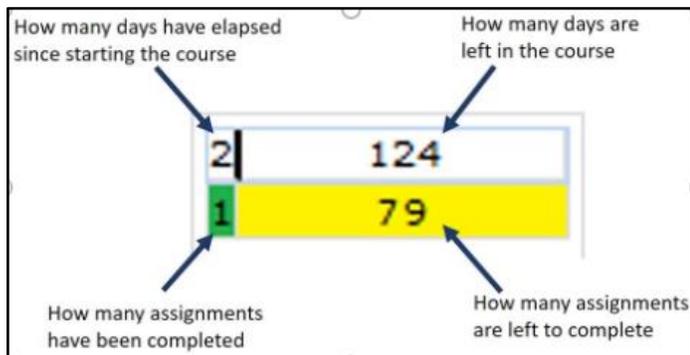
Expectations of Families
Parent, Guardian, or Learning Coach

In addition to a well-trained and responsive teacher, the family helps to support the student learning during and beyond the school year. To assist students with their pacing and performance, we expect our families to:

- maintain contact with teachers and school support staff through the Message Center in My Virtual Campus
- check for asynchronous progress and performance updates through the Pacing Bar (referred to in the previous section)
- assist the student with creating a daily and weekly asynchronous work schedule to ensure that lessons, assignments, and assessments are completed in a timely manner
- notify the teacher of concerns or questions via the Message Center in My Virtual Campus
- maintain accuracy of student records for home address, phone number, email address, and other pertinent communication tools (Note: If changes need to be made, use the Campus Support ticketing system to request updates to a student's profile in My Virtual Campus.)
- ensure student participation in synchronous learning and required assessments (tests and quizzes)
- be in close proximity of students in K-5 during live synchronous sessions (if applicable)
- observe the synchronous class from the student's device but not enter the synchronous class as a separate participant

Sharing of Personal Contact Information

For privacy reasons and student safety, we are unable to share personal contact information amongst students or parents. Additionally, we cannot facilitate the sharing of information for a student or family.

We understand that some students may want to communicate with other students outside of the course. We encourage parents or guardians to research clubs or groups within your local area or online to ensure they are safe and provide monitored activities for same-aged students with similar interests.

Digital Citizenship, Internet Etiquette, & AUP

An Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is designed to ensure that your student, the teachers, and families have a complete set of guidelines for appropriate behaviors and use of online resources. Maintaining the security and confidentiality of student data information and protecting Columbia School is a paramount concern of the school. Users who do not comply with this Policy are subject to discipline including, without limitation, revocation of technology usage, up to and including, termination at the discretion of the Head of School.

Technology provides students with unique and powerful ways to enhance learning. Columbia School supports the use of technology for this purpose and is pleased to offer access to cloud-based networks and platforms.

- One of the technology goals of Columbia School is to ensure that each user's interactions with technology contribute positively to the learning environment both at school and in the community. Negative use of technology that degrades or defames other users, or members of our community is unacceptable.
- Columbia School also recognizes that users have widespread access to both technology and the Internet; therefore, use of personal devices and connectivity is considered to be included in this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

Access

Access to the Columbia School network is a privilege, not a right. The use of technology whether owned by Columbia School or devices supplied by the user entails personal responsibility. It is expected that users will comply with Columbia School rules, act in a responsible manner, and will honor the terms and conditions set by the teacher, and Columbia School. Failure to comply with such terms and conditions may result in temporary or permanent loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action, as necessary. Students will be held accountable for their actions and are encouraged to report any accidental inappropriate use immediately to their teacher or school administration.

With the increased usage of free educational applications on the Internet, digital storage areas, containing less sensitive user information, may or may not be located on property of Columbia School. Therefore, users should not expect that files and communication are private. Columbia School reserves the right to monitor users' online activities and to access, review, copy, and store or delete any electronic communication or files and disclose them to others as it deems necessary. Users should have no expectation of privacy regarding their use of Columbia School property, network and/or Internet access or files, including email.

Columbia School has a private and secure system for sensitive school records. This system will be managed by Columbia School, the office staff, and administration. All devices are subject to search and seizure on demand per Columbia School policies.

Terms and Conditions

Below are examples of inappropriate activity, and Columbia School reserves the right to take immediate action regarding activities: 1) that create security and/or safety issues for the Columbia School network, users, network, or computer resources; 2) that expend Columbia School resources on content it determines lacks legitimate educational content/purpose; or 3) other activities as determined by Columbia School as inappropriate.

1. Violating any state or federal law or municipal ordinance, such as: Accessing or transmitting inappropriate pictures of any kind, obscene depictions, harmful materials, materials that encourage others to violate the law, confidential information, or copyrighted materials.
2. Criminal activities that can be punished under law.
3. Frequent damage to equipment causing need to replace/repair more than a total of two (2) times.
4. Selling or purchasing illegal items or substances.
5. Obtaining and/or using anonymous email sites, spamming, spreading viruses.
6. Causing harm to others or damage to their property.
7. Using profane, abusive, or impolite language; threatening, harassing, or making damaging or false statements about others or accessing, transmitting, or downloading offensive, harassing, or disparaging materials.
8. Deleting, copying, modifying, or forging other Users' names, emails, files, or data, disguising one's identity, impersonating other users, or sending anonymous email.
9. Damaging computer equipment, files, data, or the network in any way, including intentionally accessing, transmitting, or downloading computer viruses or other harmful files or programs, or disrupting any computer system performance.
10. Using any by Columbia School computer/mobile device to pursue "hacking," internal or external to Hudson Global Scholars, or attempting to access information protected by privacy laws.
11. Accessing, transmitting, or downloading large files, including "chain letters" or any type of "pyramid schemes."
12. Using web sites, email, networks, or other technology for political uses or personal gain.
13. Users must not intentionally access, create, store, or transmit material that may be deemed to be offensive, indecent, obscene, intimidating, or hostile; or that harasses, insults or attacks others.
14. Advertising, promoting non-Hudson Global Scholars sites or commercial efforts and events.
15. Users must adhere to all copyright laws.
16. Users are not permitted to use the network for non-academic related bandwidth intensive activities such as network games or transmission of large audio/video files or serving as a host for such activities.
17. Use of Columbia School resources are for educational purposes, only.

Discipline and Due Process for Students

All students enrolled in Columbia School are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the rules for the school, and parents are expected to cooperate with the school staff in helping students to maintain the standards of appropriate and ethical behaviors.

- Students that receive warnings from the school will have a conference (via phone or in person) with their parent/guardian(s) and the school administrator(s), and the incident will be formally documented in writing. If deemed necessary, the school administrator may opt to remove the student from live synchronous sessions.
- If behavior is deemed serious in nature, the Head of School may recommend a suspension, temporarily making a student inactive or blocking a student's permission to log on to and/or use parts of My Virtual Campus and Learning Management System.

Cyber Safety and Cyberbullying

Despite every effort for supervision and filtering, all users and parents/guardians are advised that access to the network may include the potential for access to content inappropriate for school-aged students. Every user must take responsibility for their use of the network and make every effort to avoid those types of content. Every user must report security or network problems to a teacher, administrator, or system administrator.

Personal Safety: Your student should never reveal personal information such as home address or telephone number to anyone besides the teacher, the school administrator, and the Head of School.

Confidentiality of User Information: Personally identifiable information concerning your student may not be disclosed or used in any way on the Internet without the permission of a parent or guardian. Your student should never give out private or confidential information about themselves or others on the Internet.

Active Restriction Measures: Columbia School will utilize filtering software or other technologies to prevent users from accessing visual depictions that are (1) obscene, (2) inappropriate, or (3) harmful to minors. Attempts to circumvent or 'get around' the content filter is strictly prohibited and will be considered a violation of this policy. Columbia School will also monitor the online activities of users through direct observation and/or other technological means.

Interactive Web Tools

Technology provides an abundance of opportunities for your student to utilize interactive tools and sites on public websites that benefit learning, communication, and social interaction. From time to time, teachers may recommend and use public interactive sites that, to the best of their knowledge are legitimate and safe. As the site is "public" and the teacher, school, and Columbia School is not in control of it, your student must use their discretion when accessing information, storing, and displaying work on the site.

Use of Interactive Web Tools

Online communication is critical to your student's learning of 21st century skills. Tools such as blogging, podcasting, and chatting offer an authentic, real-world vehicle for student expression. Student safety is the primary responsibility of teachers and learning coaches.

Therefore, teachers and learning coaches need to ensure the use of documents, curriculum, classroom blogs, student email, podcast projects, email chat features, or other web interactive tools follow all established Internet safety guidelines including:

- Users using documents, blogs, podcasts, or other web tools are expected to act safely by keeping ALL personal information out of their posts.
- Users should NEVER post personal information on the web (including, but not limited to, last names, personal details such as address or phone numbers, or photographs).
- Users should NEVER, under any circumstances, agree to physically meet someone they have met over the Internet, and should immediately report anyone trying to meet with them and/or any other suspicious behavior.
- Any personal blog created in class is directly linked to the class blog which is typically linked to the student profile and therefore must follow these blogging guidelines. In addition to following the information above about not sharing too much personal information (in the profile or in any posts/comments made), students need to realize that anywhere they use the blog login it links back to the class blog. Therefore, anywhere that login is used (posting to a separate personal blog, commenting on someone else's blog, etc.), the account should be treated the same as a school blog and should follow these guidelines.
- Users should never link to web sites from their blog or blog comments without reading the entire article to make sure it is appropriate for a school setting.
- Users using such tools agree to not share their username or password with anyone besides their teachers and parents and treat Web posting spaces as classroom spaces. Speech that is inappropriate for class is also inappropriate for a blog.
- Users who do not abide by these terms and conditions may lose their opportunity to take part in the project and/or be subject to consequences appropriate to misuse.