

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR AN
EXTRAORDINARY LIFE.



Colorado Rocky Mountain School

Carbondale, CO

SMALL SCHOOL. BIG IMPACT.



CRMS is an ideal learning environment for high school students because of its intentional, research-based programming, deliberate small size, and unrivaled geographic location. **The CRMS experience is designed to address a transformative time in a young adult's life.** On this threshold to adulthood, we understand high school-age students need to feel connected, seen, and heard, in order to fulfill their potential and move into their next phase of life with confidence, competence, and an orientation toward learning and engagement.

CRMS students are connected. Through an integrated curriculum that weaves academics, outdoor adventure, service, and the arts, CRMS students are connected with one another, their teachers, their community, and the larger world. These connections allow students to make authentic and meaningful contributions to their school community, expand their potential, take appropriate risks in a supportive environment, and take their learning to an exceptional level.

CRMS students are empowered and engaged. Every student has our full attention and has the opportunity to be seen in all areas of their CRMS life—academics, athletics, outdoor programming, service, arts, and leadership. Students are known as individuals who are excited about learning and embracing new opportunities. In this environment, students feel confident challenging themselves in any area of the program so they can try, fail, succeed, discover new passions, and ultimately, grow as young adults.

CRMS students have a voice and are encouraged to develop and use it. They lead and contribute to the conversations, and their involvement is valued throughout the program. As a result, they are active participants in their own educational experience. When students are guided through their high school years with attentive adult mentors, they are better prepared to take on the greater independence they naturally seek. At CRMS, all our faculty and staff view it as a privilege to mentor students into their adult roles and prepare them for the challenges of college and life beyond.

Selecting a high school for your child is a significant decision. **Graduates of CRMS are intellectually curious, adventurous, creative, resilient, kind, and confident young adults.** I encourage you to learn more about CRMS and our approach to education by contacting our Admission Office to begin this exciting journey.

My best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Leahy'.

Jeff Leahy
Head of School



COLLEGE PREPARATORY | 100% college acceptance

GRADES 9-12

ENROLLMENT | 60% boarding students and 40% day students

165 STUDENTS

10% INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ENROLLMENT

AVERAGE CLASS SIZE | 12 students

PROJECT-BASED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

MULTIPLE OUTDOOR EXPEDITION OPPORTUNITIES

UNIQUE ART OFFERINGS

SERVICE LEARNING PROJECTS

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Academics are the core of the Colorado Rocky Mountain School program and are the foundation for serving our students.

We create a learning environment in which students discover their potential to excel as individuals, contribute to their communities, and thoughtfully participate in the world we share. We provide a liberal arts education; students pursue a challenging course of study and expand their limits across the curriculum. The CRMS curriculum goes beyond traditional academic courses, into athletics, service work, and travel, weaving connections across disciplines for a fully integrated learning experience. Our student-centered approach and low student-teacher ratio ensures an educational journey tailored to each individual student.



Our curriculum emphasizes rigor, engagement, and depth.

Students pursue mastery of their endeavors, and curious and compassionate exploration of knowledge. **All of our programming informs character development, especially the core values of respect, responsibility, and excellence—through awareness, attitude, and action.** Our students learn to think and act critically, creatively, collaboratively, and ethically through our intentional, balanced curriculum. **CRMS students develop the tools, knowledge, and resolve necessary to succeed in college and beyond, into the shifting demands of adulthood.**

“CRMS students exhibit genuine curiosity, fully engage in academic problem-solving, and demonstrate the initiative to work collaboratively and independently. They graduate with the academic skills and mindset needed to thrive in college and beyond.”

Nancy Draina | Academic Dean



FACT: AVERAGE CLASS SIZE IS 12 STUDENTS | STUDENT TO TEACHER RATIO IS 5:1

Freshman Seminar

We recognize that our incoming freshmen are in a transition time from adolescence to early adulthood. We support them in the classroom, sports, and residential life to develop the skills they need to make this change successfully. Our dedicated freshman faculty team, freshman seminar, structured school day study periods, and evening study halls all work seamlessly together to support independence in their learning, life skills, and character development.

Interim

Our February Interim Program immerses students in rich, hands-on experiential learning opportunities for two full weeks. Interim course offerings have been: **Volcanology in Hawaii, Spanish Immersion in Costa Rica, Marine Biology in Kino Bay, Horse Packing in the Grand Canyon, Ski Building & Entrepreneurship, Open Water SCUBA, Wilderness First Responder Certification, Understanding Sustainable Food Sourcing in the U.S., Navajo Silversmithing: Tradition and Culture, KCRMS Radio: Radio and Podcast Production, and Swiftwater Rescue in Chile.** We offer 14-15 different courses every year.

Advanced Placement

We are intentional in our approach to offering AP courses. As an independent school which values depth and rigor in our coursework, we strike a balance between our AP class offerings, and our own rigorous, highly engaging courses. Our students perform extremely well on the AP exams; and many students also choose non-AP courses, as they have more freedom to pursue the depth of scholarship they seek in an independent education.

Senior Project

Our seniors cultivate their passions and develop their sense of initiative and responsibility by creating, planning, and carrying out a 3-week, independent off-campus project, under the guidance of an adult mentor. Recent senior projects include: Architecture Internship in New York City, Water Law and River Advocacy in Colorado, Rural Medical Clinic Volunteer in Nepal, Great Barrier Reef Ecology and Conservation in Australia, Math Tutor at Island Youth Center in Hawaii, Children's Hospital Volunteer in Denver, Mission Wolf Volunteer in Colorado, Yosemite Search and Rescue in California.



COLLEGE COUNSELING AND PLACEMENT

FACT: 100% OF CRMS STUDENTS ARE ACCEPTED TO 4-YEAR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.

Colorado Rocky Mountain School offers a deliberate and individualized college counseling process to guide students and parents to matriculating to the college of their choice.

We understand well how to prepare your students to present themselves in an application to fully represent who they are at their best. We will help them to find their best fit, and achieve your family’s college goals. CRMS students apply and matriculate to some of the most selective universities and colleges in the world.



“The process of applying to college was daunting, but the college counseling program at CRMS was there to guide and support me. I am at my dream school and CRMS made it accessible, and made the rest of my life’s potential possible. Thank you CRMS!”

Caleigh | Colorado College



“At CRMS, we recognize and celebrate students’ individual strengths. CRMS students transition confidently to college communities that fit their distinctive objectives, with the necessary tools to contribute and succeed.”

Michael Schille
Director of College Counseling



Select list of college acceptance over the last five years:

- Barnard College
- Bates College
- Berklee College of Music
- Boston University
- Bowdoin College
- Brandeis University
- Brown University
- California Polytechnic State University
- Carleton College
- Chapman University
- Colby College
- Colgate University
- Colorado College
- Colorado School of Mines
- Connecticut College
- Dartmouth College
- Davidson College
- Emory University
- Georgetown University
- George Washington University
- Grinnell College
- Middelbury College
- New York University
- Northeastern University
- Oberlin College
- Occidental College
- Pitzer College
- Pomona College
- Princeton University
- Purdue University
- Reed College
- Rhode Island School of Design
- Sarah Lawrence College
- Scripps College
- St. John’s College
- Tufts University
- University of British Columbia
- University of California, Berkeley
- University of Southern California
- University of Colorado, Boulder
- University of Denver
- University of Miami
- University of Michigan
- University of North Carolina
- University of St Andrews
- University of Vermont
- University of Virginia
- University of Washington
- University of Wisconsin–Madison
- Whitman College
- Williams College
- Yale University

OUTDOOR AND SPORTS PROGRAMS

The Outdoor Program is an integral part of the CRMS academic experience and fosters personal growth by challenging students and enhancing their resilience, self-confidence, and problem-solving skills.

All students participate fully in the outdoor program, which serves to develop teamwork and leadership skills. Additionally, outdoor expeditions provide a unique experiential learning opportunity, allowing students to apply academic concepts in real-world settings. Ultimately, these experiences can inspire a lifelong appreciation for the outdoors and a commitment to environmental stewardship.

All students participate in three annual outdoor expedition trips, including:

Wilderness Orientation – this ten-day adventure in the Colorado high country is a required experience for new students.

Fall Trip – for five days in October, students explore the mountains, deserts, and rivers of Colorado and Utah.

Spring Trip – for seven days in April, students once again journey to the beautiful Western wilderness areas.

These trips provide an outdoor classroom, and also an opportunity for transferring skills of leadership, exploration, and camaraderie back into the academic setting. In addition, students may seek out additional expedition opportunities during Interim and weekend program offerings. The average group size per trip is 10-12 students, led by faculty and student-leader guides.

FACT: ALL CRMS STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN SPORTS EVERY QUARTER OF THE YEAR

CRMS Sports

- Rock Climbing
- Whitewater Kayaking
- Mountain Biking
- Horseback Riding
- Soccer
- Cross Country Running
- Trail Running
- Hiking
- Yoga
- Strength & Conditioning
- Snow sports:
- Alpine Skiing
- Freestyle Skiing
- Alpine Freeride Skiing
- Nordic Skiing
- Telemark Skiing
- Backcountry Skiing
- Ski Mountaineering
- Snowboarding
- Snowshoeing

The CRMS sports program empowers students of all abilities and experience levels to participate in a wide variety of sports unique to our mountain setting.

We emphasize teamwork and development of the students' own abilities to the highest level they desire. All students participate in a sport at least two days per week, and discover passions they can enjoy for a lifetime, from rock climbing, mountain biking, and kayaking to alpine and Nordic skiing, to horseback riding and hiking.



SERVICE

Community service is a way of life at Colorado Rocky Mountain School.

Young adults are motivated to go beyond personal achievement to become productive, engaged members of society. When students take on contributing roles, they gain confidence and understand how to engage in a purposeful manner with the larger world. CRMS graduates truly exemplify the vision held by John and Ann Holden when they founded CRMS in 1953: that a successful student recognizes the value in serving oneself and others and pursues excellence in every corner. On and off campus, every student experience is designed to be meaningful. Academics, wilderness adventures, physical work, community service, and residential life all integrate to give our students a comprehensive education.



FACT: WE GROW OVER 15,000 POUNDS OF FRESH, LOCAL, ORGANIC PRODUCE A YEAR FOR OUR STUDENTS AND FACULTY TO ENJOY IN OUR DINING HALL EVERY DAY.



FACT: CRMS STUDENTS PERFORM OVER 10,000 HOURS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE EACH YEAR.

Service Opportunities

Wilderness Orientation

New students begin the year with a ten-day backpacking Wilderness Orientation in the nearby mountains. The first three days of the trip are devoted to service with the U.S. Forest Service. All service is completed by individual trip groups, not only to help the Forest Service and their trails, but also to help build a sense of teamwork and camaraderie before heading deeper into the wilderness for seven days together. With CRMS providing over 2,000 hours of USFS labor each year, it is clear that we take our community service seriously.

Household Jobs

Household Jobs have been a part of student life since the school’s inception. By performing Household Jobs, the community contributes to the vital task of keeping the campus clean and tidy. Students perform Household Jobs two times a week.

Scholarship Work Day

Scholarship Work Day is an annual event that was initiated by students in 1965 to raise funds to help make a Colorado Rocky Mountain School education available to all students, regardless of their economic status. One full day each fall, teams of CRMS students and faculty engage in local community projects. Scholarship Work Day exemplifies CRMS’s values of respect, responsibility, and contributing to the world we share.

Service Crews

- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Bike Shop | English in Action | Organic Gardening | Ski Videography |
| Blacksmithing | Ethics Bowl | Peer Tutoring | Trip Logistics |
| Ceramics | Equine Therapy | Ranch Work | What You Do Matters |
| Climbing Wall | Glassblowing | Service Squad | Woodworking |
| Route Setting | Literary Magazine | Ski Tuning | Yearbook |
| Culinary | | | |



THE ARTS

FACT: OUR STUDENTS CREATE THE GLASSWARE AND MUGS FOR OUR DINING HALL IN OUR GLASSBLOWING AND CERAMICS STUDIOS.

All of our students access a diverse array of extraordinary arts on our campus.

We offer glassblowing, silversmithing, and blacksmithing, in addition to the traditional high school art curriculum. Each art has its own dedicated studio, enthusiastic teachers, and time for students to pursue their artistic passions. Our faculty are practicing artists and encourage creative exploration of different mediums and engagement with the community, contributing to a broad liberal arts education.

Our program extends beyond the classroom and into our service crews, open studios, and performance opportunities at Coffee House, All School Meeting, concerts, and off campus at local venues.

Some of our students attend design and art colleges on their way to a profession in the arts, while others discover a new side of themselves here in the creative realm and apply those lessons to the rest of their learning and lives.

Arts Offerings at CRMS

- Music
- Glassblowing
- Drama
- Photography
- Advanced Digital Arts
- Silversmithing
- Drawing and Painting
- Blacksmithing
- Ceramics
- Videography
- Woodworking



STUDENT LIFE

Community doesn't just happen — it's intentionally built.

The culture on campus provides space for all students to engage in multiple aspects of the program, learn to their potential, and feel a sense of belonging.

CRMS students come from diverse backgrounds—geographically, culturally, and socioeconomically. They are often described as friendly, open-minded, curious, motivated, and adventurous. These attributes are integrated into the CRMS experience from trips and service crews to advisor groups and leadership positions. Our students are exposed to a wide variety of situations and people in ways that support their development into contributing community members.

Students and faculty often remark that the CRMS community is by far one of the most special and impactful pieces of the overall experience here.



Leadership

Agenda (our elected student government), Admission Team, Policy Panel, Discipline Committee, Wilderness Assistants, Dorm Heads, Outdoor Trip Leadership, Household Job Captains, Student Clubs – if you are interested in leadership, we provide a wide array of opportunities to influence and better our community.

Advisory

All of our students are members of a small advisory group of 6–8 students and an advisor; advisors serve as advocates for their advisees in all areas of their school life and meet multiple times every week. This means every student has built-in connections with an encouraging adult and caring peers throughout their career here, resulting in a highly supportive environment.

All School Meeting

Gathering each week in the Barn for All School Meeting is a favorite tradition. Meetings include student performances, a Senior speech, announcements, time for gratitude and accountability, and the ever-important Braj community award. These meetings reflect the values and actions that we live by as a school community.

Awards and Recognition

Honor Roll, Holden Citizen, Academic Award, and Community Award– it may be for grades, citizenship, or simply being kind – we recognize and honor our students.

RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM

Our residential program strikes a balance between nurturing and supporting students living away from home, and giving them opportunities to develop their independence and expand their life skills – all while making friends for life.

We modulate the expectations according to age and grade, giving developmentally appropriate responsibilities as students are ready. **Our students learn to self-advocate, collaborate, resolve conflict, and live independently.** Our boarding students benefit from having a structured study period on weekday evenings, and their peers and teachers available to help with projects or homework on a nightly basis. Dorm life is filled with fun activities throughout the year, including birthday celebrations, Miercoles (a Wednesday evening community activity), dorm olympics, and more.

Since our faculty all live on campus and also serve as dorm parents, trip leaders, and athletic coaches, they become close mentors for students and a familial atmosphere organically develops among students and faculty alike.

Weekends at CRMS

Weekends are packed with fun activities and led by CRMS faculty, ranging from outdoor adventures such as peak ascents, biking, whitewater kayaking, climbing, and backcountry ski hut trips, visits to local hot springs, movies, bowling, lawn games, art and craft projects, to fly tying, cookie baking, shopping and so much more. The Roaring Fork Valley has so much to offer our students. They can be as busy as they like, or are free to catch up on schoolwork, rest, or socialize.



“The community here is kind and inclusive. Everyone feels like they are here to succeed. As a new student this year, everyone I’ve met has made an effort to meet me and get to know me.”

Stewart | Student

MOUNTAIN CAMPUS

Colorado Rocky Mountain School is located in the heart of the majestic West on the outskirts of Carbondale (elevation 6,100 feet), which is a vibrant and charming small mountain town located 30 miles from Aspen, CO. The school’s vast 300-plus acre property sits in the shadow of 13,000-foot Mount Sopris at the confluence of two rivers. Carbondale is a unique blend of small community charm and world-renowned outdoor recreational offerings – the ideal setting for the CRMS program.

The campus is 30 minutes by car to Aspen Airport, 1 hour to Eagle/Vail Airport, 1.5 hours to Grand Junction Airport, and 3 hours to Denver International Airport.

FACT: THE CRMS CAMPUS SITS AT THE CONFLUENCE OF TWO OF THE MOST SCENIC RIVERS IN COLORADO: THE CRYSTAL AND THE ROARING FORK, BOTH WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE OF CAMPUS, ALLOW AVID PADDLERS AND FISHERMEN PLENTY OF OPPORTUNITY TO ACCESS THE WATER.



ARE YOU READY FOR THE NEXT STEP?

We are looking for students who are excited about learning, want to be engaged in their school community, are seeking adventure, and who are kind, thoughtful, and open-minded.

If CRMS sounds like a place you want to be, we want to connect with you.

Applying to CRMS:

1. Open an online application account through our website at: www.crms.org/apply
2. Complete the student and parent questionnaires
3. Request three teacher recommendations
4. Submit a school transcript
5. Register for and take the Secondary School Admission Test (SSAT)
(Applicants whose native language is not English should submit results from a TOEFL, Duolingo, or IELTS test.)
6. Visit campus and interview with an Admission Officer
(Video conference interviews are available if an in-person visit is not possible.)

Priority application deadline is January 15th.

(Applications submitted after the posted deadline will be reviewed on a rolling basis depending on space availability.)



“CRMS represents the things we value as a family: strong community, growing a good person, academic excellence, and outdoor adventure. We believe our daughter will absolutely thrive in this environment.”

– Parent of a Boarding Student

Tuition Assistance

An independent school education can require a significant financial investment, but at CRMS we aim to make the school accessible through a generous tuition assistance program. Through the school’s commitment to need-based aid, CRMS offers institutional grants and several payment plan options to help families make this a reality for their student. CRMS uses Clarity Financial Aid (www.clarityschools.com) to process tuition assistance applications. In addition to completing an application, families are also required to submit supporting financial documentation from the previous two years. Detailed information about the tuition assistance program can be found on our website.





LET THE ADVENTURE BEGIN.



CRMS.ORG