



E N C O U R A G E • E M P O W E R • E D U C A T E

*A*t Carolina Day School, we understand that a student's success depends mostly on the student. It's our responsibility to learn about each student, so we can guide them through a learning experience that engages them and supports them. It's not enough to espouse academic excellence. We must empower it in each student individually. We will push them to succeed, but we really want them to push themselves. That's what we call education empowered.

## How students learn is just as important as what students learn.

### From the Head of School

Today's students are preparing for a future that has not yet been defined. While the answer may still be derived from a book, Carolina Day School students understand that posing the right question may be more important than simply finding the answer. Today's learning experience is about students feeling alive with curiosity, with the knowledge that making mistakes actually helps everyone learn. It's about being challenged to stretch beyond what you thought you were capable of. It's about having empathy for others and feeling seen and respected as an individual, knowing there are peers and mentors to support and encourage you. It's about belonging.

At Carolina Day, we prepare our students for an ambitious, purpose-driven life, well past their time here on campus—for a future world with jobs, careers, and challenges that are being developed even as they learn. The entire campus is a classroom, allowing every space to be an opportunity for growth, collaboration, and discovery, and often leads to learning and exploration that extends beyond our campus.

There are many ways to explore Carolina Day, but we hope that you will come to campus for an up close and personal visit. You will be able to see our school in action, and meet our dedicated and talented teachers and the bright, curious, and amazing students who fill their classrooms.

We look forward to sharing all that is special about the Carolina Day School community with you.

—*Stephanie Whitney, Head of School*







empowerment

**em·pow·er·ment** *noun*

the process of becoming stronger and more confident,  
especially in controlling one's life.





Give your children more  
than a good education.  
Give them a good childhood.





Children spend a majority of their childhood in school. And while life outside of school with family and friends can be wonderful, we believe the time they spend with us should be as well.

*A beloved Carolina Day School tradition is the annual Monarch Migration. Every fall Pre-K students join the Hallelujah Seniors (CDS students who have attended since Pre-K) on a joyful, simulated migration to Mexico. The students travel around the Carolina Day campus to dramatize the migration of the monarchs after weeks of watching caterpillars go through metamorphosis and emerge from their chrysalis as butterflies.*





## Your child is known.

When you visit a school, you'll likely see hundreds of children of all shapes and sizes. You may see a lot of orderly groups participating in activities. You may see what appears to be chaos. And you may conclude that it would be very easy for one child, your child, to get lost in the crowd, fall through the cracks or simply not get the attention every child deserves.

At Carolina Day School, one of the core principles of our educational program is *that teachers learn about the students*. We see each child as a long-term project, and we

devote a diverse team of professionals to achieving success. The only way to ensure that is to have a deep understanding of who each child is: personality, strengths and challenges, academic interest areas, extra-curricular activities and how they are developing at every point along the way. And while this approach helps us teach, it also sends a message to each student that they are valued. The people who are in control of a large part of their daily lives truly care. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect. When students know this, they feel free and empowered.

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**I've seen my children develop a curiosity, enthusiasm and love for learning that I always imagined they'd have.**

I think that's because of the teaching and the warmth and kindness that they feel from their teachers.”

~ Paige, parent of children in Pre-K and Kindergarten

**“Because of Carolina Day, our daughter knows how to advocate for herself.** She uses her voice, she speaks to adults with confidence, and knows that she'll be heard—and that what she has to say is valid and important.”

~ Katina, parent of a child attending middle school



*Students' lives are enriched by being part of a close-knit community where meaningful relationships with adults create a safe, caring environment to play, work, and learn.*





*Members of the You Belong Student Advisory Board (YBSAB) gather on campus for a discussion. The YBSAB provides advice to the Head of School on issues impacting student life—their recommendations help to enhance the student experience of belonging at Carolina Day School.*







We begin by ensuring Carolina Day School is a nurturing environment. That nurturing comes from teachers and fellow students. This is a place that our children want to be.

They actually like their teachers. They look forward to seeing their classmates. Because of the atmosphere, the sense of community, and the effective teaching methods we use, our students have a wonderful shared experience for many years.



## How do you create the ideal conditions for learning?

To have a successful learning community, it's important for children to develop positive character traits. Honesty, empathy, courtesy, and respect are fostered in every grade and every activity. Encouragement and inclusion are a way of life. Because our students value these aspects of Carolina Day, they are the ones who ensure continuous adoption and preservation. Older students know they are role models, and they take the responsibility seriously. Good behavior and good intentions are simply normal and common.

*Being part of the Wildcat community means we encourage and lift each other up, both in and out of the classroom.*



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**CDS allows students to develop, utilize, and find their purpose by ensuring all students feel seen and heard.** We do this by creating space for curiosity of thought and dialogue, celebrating differences and similarities, and connecting through our personal stories. This allows students to achieve academic excellence and thrive in and outside the classroom.”


~ ELIZABETH GARLAND

*Carolina Day Alumna and Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging*







The background of the page is a photograph. On the left side, there is a wooden fence made of horizontal planks, showing natural wood grain and knots. The rest of the background is filled with out-of-focus green leaves and branches of trees, creating a soft, natural setting.

# The most difficult tests are seldom on paper.

While many schools “teach to the test,” we prepare students for life beyond school. We equip them with the ability to learn, adapt and make good decisions. At Carolina Day School, our students are learning for life.

*As part of the ninth grade experience at Carolina Day, it has long been a tradition to embark on a freshman retreat near the beginning of the school year. The purpose of this retreat is to help students get to know one another in a setting that is outside the halls of the Upper School. This allows students to see one another in a different light, while participating in activities—like climbing an obstacle course—that are designed to strengthen the bonds of community.*





## Academic excellence is a way of life.

*W*e believe the pursuit of knowledge is central to life's purpose. As we become more educated, we are able to interact with other educated people at higher and more enriching levels. A working knowledge of science and the humanities gives us a solid foundation. Then as we discover our personal areas of interest, we can explore them more deeply, developing expertise and mastery. All the while, we can share our thoughts with colleagues. We can ponder and discuss those things which have fascinated scholars for thousands of years. As our intellect flourishes, so does our quality of life, our relationships, our pursuits and our perspective.

At Carolina Day School, we offer a rigorous academic program with incredibly high expectations—not for bragging rights, but for the lifelong benefits our students will experience. We use dynamic methods of instruction and learning that engage students. We are not only focused on the subject matter but also on the act of learning itself.

The learning experience is designed to foster both collaboration and independent study. When students are working as a team, it encourages better individual performance. The camaraderie and supportive atmosphere generates enthusiasm. We also encourage independent study, because it's important for students to have the confidence and desire to pursue subject matter that deeply interests them.





We use student creativity to promote deep immersion in subject matter. While written tests are central to our academic program, we've found allowing students to creatively express what they've learned reaps tremendous benefits. They invest in the information, because they are investing in themselves to create a work of art, a poem, a story, a reenactment, etc. The students are empowered to make the subject relevant to themselves and their classmates.

While the educational experience is intended to inspire and motivate, there is a long-term, structured plan that begins in Pre-K and takes the students on a journey through 8th grade. Students develop academically and socially, building their character and confidence along with their mastery of many fundamentals. When they move into Upper School, they are equipped with a full spectrum of tools for success.

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**Our kids, our graduates, are independent thinkers who relish in asking questions and want to make a meaningful difference in the world—a difference that is unique to each and every one of them.”**

**~ DAVID HERTZINGER**

*Upper School Teacher and Grade 9 Dean*

**“My teachers actually care.**  
It is so obvious that they want you to succeed here. I see my teachers as mentors who are excited to share the world with us.”

**~ Upper School Student**





*(Top) Each division at Carolina Day, including our youngest learners, participates in an annual ceremony of signing the Honor Code and taking the Honor Pledge. We are bound together by a shared commitment to uphold the values of compassion, integrity, and scholarship. (Below) Fifth grade teacher Alicia Cardina leads her students in a creative writing exercise. Our teachers spark curiosity and ignite intellectual pursuit by asking students to question, explore in depth, consider multiple perspectives, and regularly reflect on and evaluate their learning.*



# First impressions are lasting ones.



When children enter school for the first time, they quickly and instinctively form ideas and feelings about learning. Will they find it a positive experience? Will learning new things and developing skills be satisfying? Or will they perceive school as a chore or burden? Will they resist, protest or retreat?

We take all of this very seriously. Early childhood education has been shown to have a significant impact on the long-term trajectory of students. That's why Carolina Day School has an individualized approach to understanding the attitude, abilities and maturity of each student. The better we know a child, the better we can ensure their first impressions of learning will put them on a path to success and enjoyment. In fact, if we can help create enthusiastic learners at an early age, the possibilities for these children are limitless.



## **Beyond the fundamentals.**

In grades 1-5, we emphasize the fundamentals of reading, writing and math. It's vital that students continually develop and master these basic skills. As such, we do our best to bring them to life through innovative and creative learning experiences. Students participate in project-based learning to apply their skills as they acquire them. This approach challenges and inspires young minds, giving them a true appreciation of learning that will last a lifetime.

## **Emotional intelligence is key to academic success.**

Children grow at different rates physically, mentally and emotionally. Slower growth is not a negative thing. It's simply something that educators and parents must be aware of, so that no child is at a disadvantage. We leverage the practices of Responsive Classroom and the Yale School of Emotional Intelligence, which help teachers find the most effective ways to create learning environments where children feel safe, happy and ready to engage.





Early adolescence is a metamorphosis.



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**I love Carolina Day for my eighth-grade daughter because she's being challenged.** She's incredibly bright, and everything usually comes easy for her, but her teachers right now are really challenging her, and that is exactly what we want for her right now. The individualized attention affirms that CDS is exactly where we need to be.”

~ Jennifer, Carolina Day School parent

It can be argued that early adolescence is the most important period of a child's education, yet few people realize this. The misconception is similar to looking at the outside of a chrysalis: it doesn't look like much is going on, when, in reality, a caterpillar is becoming a butterfly.





Children have major physical and emotional changes during grades 6-8, but this is also the time for intellectual changes. This is the educational period when students experience their greatest expansion. In early adolescence, our students find their voice and begin to feel empowered.


**Hands-on, real-world,  
collaborative experience.**

At Carolina Day School, we focus on critical thinking and the broadening of perspectives in grades 6-8. Students get a deeper understanding of themselves and the world.

We also introduce mentorship and serious academic collaboration. The faculty help each student see a bigger picture of what they can become and pursue in life.

Grades 6-8 provide the foundation for the rest of a student's academic life. It opens their eyes to a world of possibilities. They begin to see all the paths they can choose to pursue. They develop collegial relationships with faculty who inspire and empower every student to make the most of their education. Students begin to truly push themselves to learn and achieve. This is definitely not a transition period. It is when students spread their wings and take flight.



A photograph of a young person with dark hair, seen from behind, wearing a bright red t-shirt and sitting in a field of tall, dry grass. They are holding binoculars to their eyes, looking out over a vast landscape of rolling mountains under a clear blue sky. A black strap with the word 'VORTEX' is visible across their back.

At a time of life when most young people are focused on how they look in the mirror, our students begin to see themselves in the context of the wider world.

While none of us can avoid our ever-changing appearance as we grow, the broader our perspective of the world, the healthier our self-image becomes. At Carolina Day, we believe the time in grades 6-8 is a period of holistic transformation and individual empowerment. It is the fulcrum we use to elevate our students to a much higher academic and personal level.

*Students hike to the tops of Little and Big Bald Mountains in a bird-banding excursion led by researchers involved in the study of songbirds, raptors and owls. Field trips such as this are great experiences for Carolina Day students, providing inspiration for creative writing, conversations in science, and community building.*









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**You'll never know what you're capable of unless you try.** Get out of that shy shell, lose that too-cool-for-school mentality, and leave your mark on this community. But most importantly, never give up.”

~ D'ANGELO ELLIOTT '19 (pictured at left)

## Learn to take risks.

Empowerment requires confidence and courage. Throughout a student's career at Carolina Day, they develop a self-assuredness based on knowledge, hard work and perspective. By the time they reach Upper School, they are prepared to take the kind of calculated risks that often lead to discovery and achievement. We want them to experience this while they are still in a safe environment, surrounded by encouragement and unwavering support.





*Students in Dan Chase's Upper School math class collaborate to solve math problems to open the next lock in a breakout box.*

Our Upper School has an intellectual yet relaxed atmosphere, where classrooms and hallways are filled with energy, collaboration is strong and balanced with individual academic pursuits. Because of the caring community we've cultivated here at Carolina Day, students have the freedom and ease to push themselves, even if they might fail. This results in a tremendous amount of growth, culminating in a speech (called a Bell Talk) by each senior, given to the student body and faculty. When you see these amazing speeches, you can't help but be filled with hope for the future.

There is a reason for all of this. Before our students graduate, they must be prepared to take charge of their futures, so they can thrive in an increasingly complex global environment. They will likely encounter obstacles and setbacks. That's why we want to arm them with a resilience that will enable them to keep moving forward, keep learning, keep taking risks.

### **Communication is key to collaboration.**

While education is often a solitary pursuit, if our students are going to succeed in the world, they must be able to work with others. Collaboration is an important element in any work situation, and the ability to communicate clearly and effectively is essential. That's why Carolina Day School emphasizes verbal and written communication skills at every stage of the journey.

This ability to communicate turns these confident, intelligent young people into leaders and doers. Our students enter the world with fully developed voices and purpose. Whatever paths they choose to pursue in life, they will be able to express their ideas, formulate valid arguments and advocate for themselves and others.



**Over \$4.7 million in merit scholarships was offered to the Class of 2021.**





Learning differences, not disadvantages.



“ It’s so nice to be in a place that recognizes our child’s gifts and supports what challenges her. We are grateful every single day for Key School.”

~ Marla, parent of a child attending Key School at Carolina Day



**K**ey School, our nationally-recognized school within a school, was created to help students with dyslexia reach their potential as learners and highlight their many gifts. Our teachers are expertly trained in the highly regarded Orton-Gillingham multisensory approach, which is based on decades of research and practice. Our intensive program is available for grades 2-8, and although each family's Key journey is unique to them and their children, on average our students transition into other learning environments after two to three years.

**What we do at Key School:**

- Close the gap between academic performance and student potential.
- Develop new neural pathways for reading, writing, and spelling through individualized multisensory instruction.
- Build a deep understanding of math concepts through multisensory math instruction.
- Foster a learning culture that is intellectually engaging and promotes curiosity, perseverance, resiliency, and a growth mindset.
- Provide a comprehensive college preparatory curriculum while preparing students to apply new tools and strategies across learning environments, enabling them to succeed in their transition to other schools.
- Inspire life-long success by developing skills needed for critical thinking, independence, self-advocacy, organization, planning, and time management.



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**Whatever personal challenge you have to overcome, you must be brave enough to accept that you are different.**

Believe in yourself, and use everything you can, including the obstacles, to propel you along the road to success.”

**~ SIR RICHARD BRANSON**

*Founder of Virgin Group and Friend to Key School*

*(Opposite page-Top) Key Lower School students practice multisensory math. (Below) Small classes in the Key School allow teachers to provide highly individualized attention for students in subjects like language comprehension.*





## Everyone wins.

In sports, there are finish lines and final whistles. Teams win and lose. Yet at Carolina Day School, we make sure that the experience has a positive impact on the lives of every child. Valuable lessons are learned, regardless of the outcome of competition. Character traits like perseverance, honor and humility are developed. No, we don't hand out participation trophies. We stress sportsmanship, character development and positive attitudes no matter the outcome of a contest. And that will stay with our students long after scores are forgotten and ribbons fade.

All that said, we do have a stocked trophy cabinet. We have one of the most successful independent school athletic programs in the North Carolina Independent Schools Athletic Association (NCISAA) with more than 100 state and individual titles. We have earned respect across the NCISAA for doing things the "right" way. We prepare and support student-athletes with aspirations to play at the collegiate

level. Over the past five years, more than 40 Wildcats have committed to play college sports.

Athletics are an integral part of the CDS experience, an important way through which our students grow and learn. We've proven that a school can be highly competitive without excluding children from the transformative experience of sports. We encourage students to





# sportsmanship

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**Physical education is more than fun and games. Students learn how to work through challenges, problem solve, be a good teammate, build self-confidence, and develop other life skills.”**

**~ TAUNI BUTTERFIELD, Carolina Day School Athletic Director**

be part of a team and if a student wants to participate, they are on a team.

At Carolina Day, we have a strong physical education curriculum. The activities at each grade level are age-appropriate and allow the students to perform comfortably and experience success at their own level. The goals of the curriculum are to improve

individual performance, maintain good health and fitness through exercise, and develop a lifelong positive attitude toward physical activities. We also understand that exercise promotes good cognitive and emotional development, which can enhance academic performance. We believe our approach to educating the whole child sets Carolina Day apart.



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As an artist, it's especially important to continue to expand your understanding of humans—and in that, of human art, and human history, and human experience of the world. That involves sciences, and art, and theater, and history. **It's just so important to keep your eyes open. The more you understand something, the more fascinating it becomes, and the more you appreciate it as well.**

~ SOPHIA PEREDA-ECHEVERRY '21



Art is a world unto itself.  
Our students are natives.

Art exists in many forms—from paintings to performance. We want our students to begin to develop an appreciation of art, which they can continue to expand on their own throughout their lives.

Carolina Day School combines music, theatre and visual art to create a comprehensive and exciting introduction to the world of fine arts for all students. We provide formal training to teach the techniques and discipline necessary to communicate through artistic media, while also allowing students the freedom to explore their creative instincts.


Our vibrant arts program enriches our learning environment as it encourages students to reflect and become open-minded critics, to appreciate alternative forms of self-expression and to articulate ideas in a variety of creative ways.











## If you want children to learn science, teach them about art.

Music, visual arts and performing arts give students opportunities for self-expression and developing a greater appreciation of creativity. Participation in the arts also trains them to focus, analyze and interpret. As a result, art turns students into better thinkers.

*Our music program provides an essential aspect of the balanced curriculum, with all students involved in activities that represent a wide range of musical processes, including moving, speaking, singing, listening, playing notation, creating, and improvising. Here an Upper School student performs in front of a live audience at an on-campus event called “Salon Rouge”.*









They will be a part of our school for 15 years.  
Our school will be a part of them forever.

Our students leave Carolina Day School with a tremendous amount of knowledge. They are prepared to enter college and succeed. But if we've done our job, they will continue to educate and push themselves for the rest of their lives. Learning will be a natural function of daily life. And the values we have instilled in them will guide them to use their abilities for the good of society.

#### How do you create a lifelong learner?

We teach students to be curious and to question. If we can cultivate that trait, the learning possibilities become endless. While we instruct and guide students, our primary objective is to empower them to learn, explore and grow on their own. To do this, teachers utilize methods that maximize student engagement in the subject matter.

For example, one method requires students to immerse themselves into the subject matter. It begins with a Research phase, where students are able to pull and organize information from various reliable sources, including class lectures, textbooks, articles, documentaries

and podcasts. This is followed by the Creative phase, where students create something that expresses what they've learned. This could be a written essay, a work of art, a skit, or whatever else a student can use to demonstrate a real mastery of the subject matter. Each creative piece is presented to the class, so students are able to see and hear a variety of perspectives on what could have been a mundane subject. This creative work is scored along with written tests. In every case, students reflect on what aspects of the learning process worked best for them, which are important lessons that will last a lifetime.

*(Top left) Every senior gives a Bell Talk, and it's amazing to see. It's not just the words, it's the self-confidence, poise and presence that is so impressive. For many people, public speaking is a frightening proposition, but for our seniors, it is a rite of passage. (Top right) "Carolina Day was the first academic place where I felt free," reflects CDS alumna Prestina Smith '06 on her experiences at CDS and her path to a career in science.*





## Our graduates are well prepared.

According to data compiled by college tracking, Carolina Day School graduates complete their freshman year of college with higher GPAs on average than graduates of other schools in our region, both private and public.

*Students take pride in their school, contributing to its betterment. Here, upperclassmen plant perennials on campus.*





CAROLINA  
DAY SCHOOL

To learn more about Carolina Day School and how our students are learning for life,  
visit our website at [carolinaday.org](http://carolinaday.org) or call **828-407-4442**.