



Colorado Timberline Academy Fact-sheet

Head of School:

Daniel J. Coey, Director

The School

Colorado Timberline Academy was founded in 1975 by Claire Raines, Robert Therrell, and Joseph Maceyak, who evolved their ideas about education while teaching at another private school. These ideas included the belief that a small community, centered on learning and work and situated in a beautiful mountain setting, could provide special opportunities for students and faculty members to grow.

The CTA community is located on 50 acres 12 miles north of Durango, in the picturesque Animas Valley. Directly to the north of the campus are the peaks of the San Juan Mountains, one of the most spectacular ranges in Colorado. These mountains provide an outstanding resource that the community uses for backpacking trips, rock-climbing, mountain-biking, and skiing. Durango is also located close to the dramatic desert country of Utah and Arizona.

The Academy is governed by the Director and faculty with the guidance of a Board of Trustees. The board consists of parents, alumni, and faculty and welcomes objective participation from citizens, such as businesspeople, who have no direct connection with the school. Operating expenses for 1999-2000 were approximately \$760,000, and Annual Giving supported about 2 percent of those expenses. The Academy has no endowment.

Colorado Timberline Academy is in good standing with the Colorado Department of Education

Academic Program

Rather than requiring a specific number of credits in various academic areas, CTA requires that students reach seven basic academic goals and focus on two of them. The eight goals are in the areas of mathematics, English, history, science, arts, psychology and philosophy, foreign languages. To graduate, students must prove by passing certain tests, writing certain papers, and accomplishing certain tasks that they are proficient at the levels of each of the seven goals.

The curriculum is designed to be equivalent to a four-year high school program. Because students work at differing rates, some students are able to graduate in fewer than four years. The time it takes students to meet the goals will be influenced by their background and motivation. Depending on their academic background, students who transfer to CTA from another school may be able to reach some of the goals almost immediately or may need extra time in order to reach them. Although credits are not required for graduation, CTA keeps records of transferable Carnegie units so that students who wish to transfer to other schools will have the proper number of credits.

Another unusual aspect of the CTA academic program is the use of a block scheduling system that divides the academic year into seven 4- or 5-week blocks. A student registers for three

academic classes during a block, and classes meet for 1½ hours each day. This scheduling leads to greater concentration on a smaller number of subjects.

Although traditional letter grades are used, they are supplemented by written evaluations that describe all aspects of a student's performance and are sent out seven times a year. These evaluations provide a complete description of progress and effort, and the school believes they are more helpful than letter grades alone.

Faculty and Advisers

The faculty consists of 11 teachers (6 men and 5 women). Many have master's degrees. Most faculty members live on campus. The faculty members share in all aspects of the school, including weekend activities, sports and recreation, and maintenance and improvements. Close faculty-student relationships are characteristic of the community.

College Placement

Each student selects a faculty member to act as his or her adviser. This adviser is the student's chief contact for academic counseling. In addition, the Academic Dean serves in the official capacity of college counselor. The PSAT is offered at CTA, and students are given assistance in preparing for the SAT, and with the college application process.

Eight of the 9 members of the class of 2000 are attending college. They are attending, among other schools, Alfred University, American University, Colorado State University, Fort Lewis, and Lewis & Clark.

Student Body and Conduct

The student body consists of 40 boarding boys and girls and 2 day students. At CTA, students are not separated by grade level. Students vary in age from 13 to 19; the majority are between 16 and 18. Students come from many parts of the United States and abroad.

The faculty determines most of the campus rules at the beginning of the year. Disciplinary decisions are made by the faculty or by the entire community, depending on the rules violated.

Academic Facilities

In the 1930s, a hot springs resort was developed on the land that is now the CTA campus. The lodge building is now the main classroom facility, containing several small rooms, the library, the computer system, the dining area, and the central meeting room. The old bathhouse to the south of the lodge is the foreign language, science, and arts building, containing a science lab and a darkroom.

Boarding and General Facilities

Students are housed in fifteen small log cabins, most holding 2 students. These cabins were originally tourist facilities at the resort. Two additional dormitory buildings, each housing 5 students in private rooms were added to the campus. A duplex cabin was recently built to hold 4 students

Athletics

CTA emphasizes the sports most appropriate to mountain towns. Soccer, mountain-biking, kayaking, rock-climbing, frisbee golf and softball are popular in the warm weather. Skiing, both downhill and cross-country, and snow-boarding are the main activities during the winter months.

Classes are scheduled Tuesday through Saturday, with Sunday and Monday set aside as the weekend, so that students can take advantage of less crowded downhill ski slopes at the Purgatory ski area. The school provides transportation to the slopes on Sunday and Monday. If there is interest, ski and snowboard teams can be formed. These teams are coached by the Purgatory staff and have participated in competitions in the Rockies.

Extracurricular Opportunities

CTA plans three major trips each year. A backpacking trip to the Weminuche Wilderness Area, adjacent to Durango, begins the year for the entire community; in the fall there is a one-week trip to a desert environment in southern Utah, and in the spring small groups of students take trips to a variety of areas. Spring trips have included river-rafting, hiking in the Grand Canyon, mountain-biking, and houseboating on Lake Powell.

CTA has a strong drama program that produces at least two plays a year. The school yearbook, including all photography and layout, is produced by students and faculty. Photography, in general, is a popular activity at CTA. The Academy encourages students to develop their own hobbies and activities.

Daily Life

Breakfast begins at 7:30. The first class is held from 8:30 to 10. Teachers and students participate in a daily maintenance of the facilities between 10 and 10:30. The second class meets from 11 to 12:30. Lunch lasts from 12:30 to 1:30, and the third class meets from 1:30 to 3. A period is set aside three afternoons a week for athletics and arts and crafts. These classes meet at 3:30 and last varying amounts of time. There are scheduled study halls Monday through Friday from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.

With parental permission, students may sign out and leave campus after classes. They must return by 9:30 on weeknights and by 11:30 on weekends.

The entire community meets Tuesday evenings for announcements and to discuss concerns and issues. Dress at CTA is informal. Saturday night dinners are usually more formal events.

Weekend Life

On weekends, students may sign out during the day to go to town, to go skiing, to go hiking, or to take part in a similar activity. Overnight sign-out is at the discretion of parents. Weekend activities are planned by the duty faculty and interested students. These varied activities might include skiing, bowling, soaking at local hot springs, trips to town and to the movies, and softball games. Day trips are sometimes planned to such places as Mesa Verde National Park and Navajo Lake. Faculty members accompany students on overnight trips throughout the year that might include camping, a ski trip to Telluride, a Denver Broncos or Colorado Rockies game in Denver, a cookout and slumber party at a faculty member's off-campus home, or a weekend in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Costs and Financial Aid

Tuition, room, and board for the 2000-01 school year were \$22,000. A \$2000 deposit is due upon acceptance. One refundable deposit of \$500, to be used in case of damage to property and for books and supplies, is required, as well. All fees are payable before the school year begins, but an installment plan, for which there is a late-payment fee, permits payment to be made in two installments. Some spring trips and personal skills require extra money, but such trips are optional.

A few scholarships are available and are awarded on the basis of need.

Admissions Information

CTA seeks students who excel in an area- in academics, athletics, or the arts. The Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, or national or ethnic background.

The following is a general description of the types of students who experience success at CTA: the high achiever who wants the support, structure, and challenge of a small school to reach his or her potential; the average achiever who wants to improve performance through closer personal attention from teachers; the underachieving yet capable student who needs daily structure to provide an incentive for success; and all students who enjoy a wide variety of outdoor activities and experiences.

Applicants are expected to submit, in addition to the application form, transcripts of previous grades and four letters of recommendation from teachers, friends, and employers. No test scores are required. The Academy requires applicants to visit the campus for an interview.

Application Timetable

Initial inquiries are welcome at any time. Application forms can be obtained and interviews can be scheduled by writing or calling the CTA office, which is open from 9 to 4, Monday through Saturday during the academic year, and from 9 to 3, Monday through Friday during the summer. There is a \$25 application fee. Applications are reviewed as they are completed. In most cases, decisions are reached within a few weeks. Final acceptance occurs when the Academy receives the \$2000 deposit.

CTA occasionally has openings during the course of the year and, if space is available, will accept new students at the beginning of any block.

Admissions Correspondence

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