

FAQ's

Pilares de Esperanza

1- What if my child doesn't have a Passport and How do we get there?

No problem, just send your child to Carolina Springs see <http://www.Carolinasprings.com> in South Carolina for the PASSPORT applications and fees and They will also ESCORT your child to Pilares de Esperanza in Costa Rica once he/she has his/her Passport. We anticipate that the time required will be around 60 days as they also get your child acclimated to the program. You will still be required to provide the airfare into Atlanta and then onto Costa Rica later.

The cost of flying the child first to Atlanta for this first phase process at Carolina Springs then on to Costa Rica is typically no more than a direct round ticket from any major city in the U.S to Atlanta (typically around \$500 to \$600 dollars) you simply book the ticket as a round trip to San Jose Costa Rica (SJO) with a stopover in Atlanta (ATL) with the continuation of the flight on to SJO Costa Rica in a couple of months the program will provide transport to and from Carolina springs and if you have any questions on these flight options we suggest you call Oasis Travel and speak to Brenda, Marilynn or Pam at 435-628-1712 and they will be happy to make all necessary arrangements for you. You should coordinate travel information with Denise at CSA at 864-992-7774 or carolinaspr@wctel.net

Will my child be safe while in Pilares de Esperanza?

YES, The following are FOUR of the ways that Pilares de Esperanza is fiscalized and held to a quality of control.

- a- They are visited EVERYDAY by the Local **Police** Department of Orotina.
- b- Students are interviewed periodically by the **United States Embassy** to make sure that they are safe and healthy.
- c- There is a **Child Protective Service** in Costa Rica called PANI that checks on the students as well.
- d- The **Program hires Independent Consultants** and also sends representatives periodically to do inspections and assure the quality of program that is being offered.
- e- The School has to qualify for a independent Health Permit with the **Costa Rican Ministry of Health**.
- f- The **Grievance Committee** is an internal control on staff and students. Those students that feel they have been treated unfairly can file a Grievance and it will be reviewed by the Committee (the Director chairs this Committee) on Tuesday and Thursday at 10:00 am. This is taken very seriously.

2- What if my kid gets sick?

Pilares de Esperanza actually has a full-time Registered Nurse on campus at all times. They are constantly checking up on the students and making sure that everyone is healthy. Their visits are free of charge to parents. **They administer medicines**; give shots,

stitches, and schedule appointments for students to meet with the doctors or hospital if necessary. Their office is located in the Medical infirmary and can be reached at Ext. 21.

3- Are their professionals on Staff at PILARES DE ESPERANZA?

YES, we have the following General Doctor, Psychologist, Dentist/Orthodontist that are on staff and therefore save parents transportation fees as well.

a- The General Doctor, Edgar Leguizamon visits the facility EVERY TUESDAY and THURSDAY. He is also available in case of emergencies.

b- Students can also receive counseling from the Psychologist that comes EVERY WEDNESDAY. These visits have a cost of \$75

c- Dr. Maria Rivera is an experienced Dentist and Orthodontist that comes to the facility EVERY WEDNESDAY. We have purchased the chair, X-Ray machine, compressors, etc... so she is able to perform nearly all procedures on campus. She also can continue the care of braces.

4- Do Staff members receive regular training?

It is a requirement for ALL staff to attend the daily training meetings. Plus, they are also tested daily as to the rules and regulations of the company. Staff is also provided with seminar training every 8 weeks, so that they understand what the parents and students are going through. Staff is provided with Training Manuals and Employee Manuals to help clarify the Academy's expectation of them. They are trained to be Friendly but Firm, and Respectful with the students.

5- What is the Academic system like?

Pilares de Esperanza is accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools. This means that the credits your child earns at PILARES DE ESPERANZA will be transferable to other high schools in the United States. The Academic system is a self paced program that allows student to progress at his/her own pace. On an average, students complete 2 years of schooling for every 1 year they are at PILARES DE ESPERANZA. It's the schools goal that the students graduate from both the program and high school. Students are required to achieve either A's or B's as passing grades, so you can anticipate that your son or daughter will become an honor student while in our program.

6- Does PILARES DE ESPERANZA offer additional help to students who struggle academically?

YES, while PILARES DE ESPERANZA does not have trained Special Education teacher on staff, there is additional help available. Student who are ahead of their peers or who have already graduated are given the opportunity to help tutor their peers. This has proven to be very effective to the slower learners or those with Dyslexia at no additional cost to parents.

7- What are the facilities like?

Pilares de Esperanza was a modern adventure hotel when we purchased the 35 acre beauty. The schoolhouse is located on an island in the middle of a large pond. There are many types of wildlife observed on the premises; Macaws, Parrots, Sloth's, Iguanas and

Monkeys. As part of our campus we also have a swimming pool, basketball court, and a soccer field.

8- Are the students required physical education?

Students are required to participate in ONE HOUR of physical education where they either run, swim, play basketball, soccer, aerobics or simple games.

9- Are there NA classes offered?

YES, besides the program structure and seminars that are provided by both Carolina Springs and Pillars schools that address self-limiting beliefs and behaviors, Pilares de Esperanza also hosts NA classes each Monday and Thursday for interested students. Attendance to these classes is optional, which seems to help with the sincerity and seriousness of those attending. Parents located in the states have helped provide the necessary information and packets.

10- Will my child be able to see certain sites in Costa Rica?

YES, your child will be exposed and immersed in the wonderful culture of Costa Rica! Off campus activities are reserved for Upper-Level students (Level 4-6) are allowed to leave campus for activities. The following are activities that are currently being offered at PILARES DE ESPERANZA:

- a- Snorkeling
- b- Sport fishing
- c- Running on the beach
- d- S'mores and bonfires on the beach
- e- Movies in San Jose
- f- Karaoke
- g- Dancing
- h- Service projects
- i- Turtle museums
- j- Visit volcanoes
- k- Involved in local culture activities

11- Are the students taught Spanish?

YES, each student is required to attend ONE HOUR of Spanish class per day; however, the true learning comes by practicing with our Staff members. We have noticed that the students have experienced significant growth and learning with Spanish. Most students are able to converse after 4 months.

12- How politically stable is Costa Rica?

It is said that Costa Rica is the most stable of all Central American countries. In fact, it is so safe in Costa Rica that the Government doesn't have a military. They spend their military budget monies on education. This, among other reasons, explains why the literacy rate in Costa Rica is 97%. They hold free elections and there is not internal strife.