



Middle School Student Handbook

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WELCOME TO THE POTTER'S HOUSE MIDDLE SCHOOL

We are excited about our year together. We look forward to making this place a safe, fun, learning environment for everyone.

As a student, you will learn much this year. Academically, you will learn to read and write, solve math problems, experiment in science, and much more. Socially, you will learn to be a positive participant of a classroom community and grow in relationships with teachers and students. Spiritually, you will learn to deepen your relationship with our Lord and experience what it means to be a disciple of Jesus in service of our King.

A PORTRAIT OF POTTER'S HOUSE GRADUATES

Resilient Followers of Jesus:

Potter's House students will perpetually pursue to become like Jesus by seeking the presence of God in prayer, loving their neighbors through sacrifice, and participating in the beloved community with universal hospitality.

Compassionate Discerners of Truth:

Potter's House students will be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry when journeying with their neighbor towards truth.

Equipped Kingdom Influencers:

Potter's House students will actively contend for the world as highly capable and knowledgeable doers of justice, who love mercy and walk humbly with their God.

Joyful Overcomers of Challenges:

Potter's House students will approach difficulties with grit and perseverance, grounded in humility and thankfulness for the grace of God as expressed in the sacrificial love of Jesus. They will choose joy over despair.

Humble Pursuers of Excellence:

Potter's House students will be active stewards of the minds and bodies that God has given them, continuously pursuing growth in better loving and serving God and their neighbors.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ATTENDANCE/MORNING TARDIES

It is important for you to be here at school when school is in session. When you are absent, you miss the learning that had been planned for you. As a middle school student, it is your responsibility to

check with classmates and teachers for missing work and plan for when things need to be completed.

School begins at 8:25 in the morning, and this is the time that students are expected to be in their classrooms ready to learn. If you are tardy, you will need to check in with the middle school office for a late slip before coming to class. Tardies in the morning will be recorded. Every 4 unexcused tardies will result in a 9th hour to make up for your lost learning time. If you continue to be tardy in the morning, tardy notices will be sent home and a face-to-face parent/guardian conference will be requested to create an action plan for you to arrive at school on time.

WHAT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

We want you to be able to have everything that will help you learn to the best of your ability. Please do not bring anything expensive and valuable. Items that are not necessary for learning should stay at home. We prefer that students do not have electronic devices (including cell phones, cameras, tablets, and earbuds) at school. If parents determine you need a cell phone, it should stay in your locker and be used in the office with permission. Teachers will confiscate electronics and lock them safely in the office for a parent/guardian to pick up at the end of the day.

MEDICATIONS

Any medication needed must be given to the middle school office with written instructions and permission from your parents. Students may not keep medication (including general pain-relievers) in their possession.

TEXTBOOKS AND SUPPLIES

We are pleased to provide some outstanding learning materials for you to use this year including textbooks, literature books, magazines, and limited school supplies such as folders and journals. You will be responsible for all materials you use and will be expected to bring supplies communicated by teachers in the summer. Textbooks will be assigned in some classes (books may be shared). Any school owned supplies and materials damaged or lost will need to be replaced at your expense.

BREAKFAST, LUNCH, AND SNACK

We offer a breakfast and lunch program at no cost. If you choose to eat breakfast here at school, make sure you are here on time at 8:10 to eat before school begins at 8:25. Middle School students will have a mid-morning snack break. Food may only be

eaten in designated classrooms and not in the hallways.

LOCKERS and BACKPACKS

We are pleased to make lockers available to all middle school students. Students may bring their lock to school however they must provide a key/combination to their homeroom teacher. Students will be responsible for keeping lockers clean and organized. While, in general, teachers will respect lockers as your personal space, occasionally teachers may inspect your locker and random checks for cleanliness may take place and administration holds the right to search a backpack or locker with reasonable cause at any time.

MIDDLE SCHOOL FEES

Each student is required to pay a \$50 fee. This fee is added to family tuition statements and covers expenses for planners, materials purchased by teachers for students to use in the classroom, and field trips (not including May Class Trips).

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGIES

All our middle school students will be provided a Chromebook to borrow and use for the school year. You will be instructed in word processing, spreadsheets, presentations, and program applications that support learning in the classroom. You will also be trained and supervised as you learn to gather useful information through a filtered Internet system available in our lab. Parental permission and student agreement forms must be signed for participation. Laptop computers, tablet computers, and other technologies will also be integrated into other classes for various uses, from research to word processing. Any lost or damaged school equipment will result in a fee for replacement.

DRESS CODE

The Potter's House has high standards for its students in areas of academic performance, behavior, and appearance. Our students should always represent themselves and the school in a positive manner. We also desire to promote an atmosphere that is conducive to learning and does not distract from the purpose of the school in any way.

TOPS

- Button-down dress shirts with a collar or polo-style shirt must be a solid color. Logos must be smaller than 2x2 inches. Shirts may be short or long-sleeved.
- Cardigan, crew neck, or quarter zip (non-athletic)

- TPH Dress Code Puma gear with logo on left chest purchased through one of the approved TPH Dress Code websites.
- Cold-weather wear: Students must wear a dress code polo shirt under all cold-weather wear. No full zippers or hoods on cold-weather wear. Must be a solid color.

BOTTOMS

- Relaxed-fit khaki, navy blue, or black pants.
- Female students have the option of wearing skirts that extend to their longest fingertip (with navy, light blue, black, or white leggings for cold weather).
- Khaki, navy blue, or black shorts that extend to the longest fingertip may be worn August-October and Spring Break- June.
- NOT PERMITTED: Jean material of any color (including black), skintight pants, athletic pants, cargo pants, yoga pants, sweatpants, jeggings, leggings or pants with drawstrings.

SHOES

- Closed-toe shoes only, such as athletic and casual shoes. No outdoor winter boots, rain boots, or slides are permitted.

***There will be certain days throughout the school year when students will be expected and invited to wear different clothing. Those days will be communicated with students and home in a timely manner.

***Students not in dress code will be asked to go to the office to change into clothes provided at school. If they are unable to find clothing that fits, they will be asked to call home for a change of clothes to be brought to school. If students are unable to do so, they will receive a detention.

ACADEMICS

OUR SCHOOL WEEK

Each of you will be given a weekly schedule to follow. Keep this schedule with you at all times! This will help you keep track of where to go and when you need to be there.

MATH

We use teacher, student, and parent input, test scores, and learning style preferences to determine which math class will give students the best opportunity for success. Math in Focus for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade, 7th and 8th grade Algebra and 8th grade Geometry are offered.

SPANISH

We have an excellent Spanish program that we provide for all TPH students. Classes are full of various learning experiences to give you a true taste of Hispanic cultures. Students will progress through a specific grade-level curriculum two times a week. 8th grade students have an opportunity to earn high school credit based on test results.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

Our PE program is designed to develop personal fitness and skill. It is an exciting program that meets twice a week and looks at students' abilities and challenges them for proper growth and development.

MUSIC PROGRAM

All our middle school students can elect to be part of band, choir, or strings class to develop and enjoy their musical gifts and skills.

REPORT CARDS AND GRADES

We hope you will always give your best to achieve as much as possible. Every trimester (twelve weeks), a report card will be sent home that explains your academic progress in all areas. Progress reports will also be sent home periodically throughout each trimester. In addition to this, parents will be able to login and view grades for core classes on TADS throughout the year.

By giving grades each trimester, teachers are communicating with you and with your family about how well you understand the content of the class and how much effort you are putting into your learning. Δ passing final grade in all your core classes (reading, writing, social studies, math, and science) is necessary to pass to the next grade level. Teachers will expect your best work and will give their best to help you learn and earn the best grades that you are capable of.

HOMEWORK

Learning doesn't end at 3:30 p.m. You will have the opportunity to continue learning at home every night.

We want to give you every opportunity to develop good study habits, personal responsibility for learning, and time for extended learning necessary for you to be successful. We also want your parents to be involved as much as possible in your learning.

Students should expect between 60 and 80 minutes of homework each night. Reading, math, and other projects will be the homework focus. Other classes will occasionally have work to be completed at home also. Our goal will be to have each of you adhere to the homeroom teachers' standard of accountability concerning homework. Accumulating incomplete or late homework will result in 9th hours. 9th hours are an hour after school, offered twice a week, for students to complete homework.

ELS, REMEDIAL READING, AND MATH

We are thankful to provide support to students who would benefit from teachers working with you one-on-one or in a small group setting. These teachers will work with you to help you better understand your work and be successful in completing assignments.

ACADEMIC HONESTY, WORKING TOGETHER, AND PLAGIARISM

There are times at school when teachers will encourage you to work together and to share ideas. There are other times when you will be asked to do your own work. Teachers will do their best to be clear in their expectations on assignments. Sharing ideas when you are expected to do your own work is cheating. Using others' words and ideas when you are expected to write something by yourself is plagiarism. Cheating and plagiarism often result in having to do work over and receive less credit for that work. Repeated cheating or plagiarism will require administrative review.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Students who have one or more failing grades for core classes (Math and ELA) at the end of the school year and/or students who miss a significant number of school days will be required to make up for their missed learning time through our Summer School program. (Decisions will be made in conversation with parents/guardians.)

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Each day, the expectation is that students are ready to learn: to be Prompt, Prepared, Productive, and Polite. Students earn a behavior mark by not meeting the expectation of one of the four P’s (our day-to-day values)

- Not being prompt
- Not being prepared
- Not being productive (e.g., disruption, instigation)
- Not being polite (e.g., disrespect, roasting, not following directions)

Students will earn a behavior detention (tracked on the online Behavior Board) by

- One warning and two behaviors in one class (classroom teacher follows up with parents)
- Four behaviors in a day (Dean of Students follows up with parents)
- Six behaviors in a week (Dean of Students follows up with parents)

If students do not regain self-control after correction, they may be sent to

- The Dean of Students with work to do.
- Students demonstrating significant, dysregulated behavior will be escorted to a safe place by The Dean of Students.
- After these steps, students will take part in a restorative process with Dean of Students

The following detention to suspension scale will also inform administrative action. Accumulated detentions in a 4 week period will result in additional consequences by the scale below.

Detentions	Suspension consequences
3	1 day in school isolation
6	2 days out of school; reinstatement mtg with parents; behavior plan
9	3 days out of school; reinstatement mtg with parents; behavior plan
12	5 days out of school; reinstatement mtg with parents; behavior plan; possible dismissal from school.

Additional behavioral guidelines are found in the Student Code of Conduct.

OTHER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

MORNING PROGRAM

We offer the opportunity for students to come before school and participate in a wellness program in the gym.

SPORTS PROGRAM

Our 7th & 8th grade students will have the opportunity to participate in interscholastic sports. Boys will practice and compete in soccer, cross country, basketball, track and field, and baseball. Girls will compete in volleyball, cross country, basketball, track and field, soccer, and softball.

8th GRADE CAREER AWARENESS

As an 8th grade student, you will participate in several career seminars given by professionals in our community. Through these seminars, you will be encouraged to reflect on your talents and interests to develop your own career goals. These seminars will help you to discern some important information regarding various careers.

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON CLASSES

In addition to the core curriculum at The Potter's House, you are encouraged to enroll in our Wednesday afternoon program and may not leave school without signed parent permission. We are fortunate to network with various art programs throughout the city for Wednesday classes. Each class meets for one academic calendar trimester. You will have the opportunity to register for a different class each trimester. Students will be able to go off-campus for some classes, and you will be responsible for giving your best cooperation as representatives of The Potter's House.

DISCIPLESHIP PROGRAM

We believe it is important for our students to grow in their personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Our weekly Discipleship Program is where we learn from parents and community members about how to be with Jesus, become like Jesus, and do what Jesus did. We will learn and practice spiritual disciplines (such as memorizing verses and journaling) and build spiritual character. You also will be part of a small group with peers and mentors that will give you an opportunity to learn, discuss, and practice personal Christian living.

FIELD TRIPS

We are privileged to schedule many learning experiences away from The Potter's House throughout the school year. Each activity will have a specific learning purpose, and your commitment to giving your best will always be expected. This includes exemplary behavior and focused

engagement. School rules and procedures apply to all field trips.

**Personal expenses may be involved, but we will endeavor to keep costs as low as possible.*

CLASS TRIPS AND FUNDRAISERS

Our class trips are a unique opportunity as well as a learning requirement. It is a privilege for us to be able to plan these trips for our students. Each of these trips has been planned according to the guidelines given to us by our school board. We are committed to providing an extended learning experience away from school that all will enjoy.

Since these trips are a special privilege, students are expected to also earn their trip by demonstrating responsibility in their academics and behavior. If students are unable to go on their trip, they are still expected to attend school during the time their class is gone unless prior arrangements have been communicated. Since the school plans these trips well in advance, student payments toward class trips in general cannot be refunded with cancellations.

Our purpose is to provide a quality learning opportunity that is positive for everyone. Parental support, involvement, and encouragement are appreciated. Parents should communicate with us any questions or concerns they may have regarding your participation with us for these valuable trips:

8th grade: Washington D.C. \$700

7th grade: Chicago \$250

6th grade: Shipshewana \$65

Students may choose to participate in any (or all) fundraisers planned to help them earn money for their class trips. Students are not required to participate in fundraisers. If students earn more money than is needed for their trip, teachers will determine how much of their extra money can be used for spending money during the trip and/or carried over for a future trip.

A student account accurately records all monies earned through fundraising. A calendar of fundraising events will be established and distributed to all students. Parents willing to help with any projects are greatly appreciated.