

**Packer Collegiate Institute**  
**MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK 2011-2012**

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## Message from the Middle School Head

August, 2011

Dear Students and Families,

The handbook that follows represents our best efforts to describe Packer's Middle School program, its policies and procedures. The current version reflects a number of updates that build on a significant revision made in 2008. Please read through this handbook carefully during the first days of school, and let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

On behalf of our entire Middle School faculty, I wish for you all a wonderful year ahead and look forward to working with all of you.

My very best,



Noah Reinhardt  
Middle School Head

## The Middle School Program

Packer's Middle School academic program is centered around four core subjects: English, history, mathematics, and science. In the fifth grade, English and history are taught by the same teacher, as are mathematics and science. In the sixth grade, English and history remain linked, while mathematics and science become discrete subjects. All fifth graders are enrolled in our Frameworks class, which provides students with the organizational and academic skills that will help them be successful throughout their Middle School years. Some of our sixth graders continue to develop these skills in a Linguistics class, while others begin the formal study of a world language, which continues for all students in seventh and eighth grade. All of our students also take classes in computer, health, physical education, theater, dance, vocal and instrumental music, and visual and digital arts.

Each student is a member of an advising group, led by a member of the Middle School faculty. Advisors, along with our Middle School Deans, oversee the academic and social-emotional lives of our students, provide a formal link between home and school and help to structure our Community Service program, in which all Middle School students participate. In addition to their work in their advisory groups, seventh and eighth graders are also required to perform independent community service.

Middle School students can participate in a number of school-sponsored extra-curricular activities. After-school programs are offered in athletics and drama. Middle School sports include soccer, volleyball, baseball, softball, basketball and track, and each year the Middle School puts on two theater productions (one is typically a musical). During the school day, students can elect to join Packer Model Congress, our Middle School Newspaper, *The Pelican Post*, or one or more of the many Middle School clubs, including the Environmental Club, Debate Club, Writers' Club, Math Club, Book Club, and PRIDE (our Middle School Diversity Club) that meet at break or at lunch. With the support of a faculty member, students may also start new clubs around issues or activities of interest. Students interested in student government may run for positions on our fifth/sixth or seventh/eighth grade Student Councils, which work with our faculty and administration to sponsor student events and initiatives on behalf of the student body. Information about the Student Council election process and the responsibilities of elected representatives will be available at the beginning of the school year.

# Academics

## Academic Expectations

The academic program is at the very heart of Packer’s Middle School. Its goal is to excite and inspire our students, introduce them to important information, ideas and knowledge, help them develop critical skills in and across disciplines, build their capacity for creative, abstract thinking, problem solving and independent and collaborative work, and encourage in them a love of learning and an appreciation of scholarship, academic excellence and rigor, so they become thoughtful, informed, curious, engaged, capable, responsible, resourceful students and citizens.

Packer Middle School students are expected to participate actively and appropriately in their classes, to record all assignments in their Planbooks and complete them in a timely fashion, to prepare effectively for quizzes and tests, to keep organized notebooks and supplies, and to seek help from teachers when necessary. Our hope is that this effort, combined with the support offered by parents, teachers, advisors, and our learning skills department, will allow every student in the Middle School to find success and joy in their academic work.

## Homework, Quizzes, Tests & Exams

Homework is an essential part of Packer’s Middle School courses. Assignments are designed to reinforce and extend the learning done in class, build on skills developed, and encourage independence in academic matters. Students are expected to complete all assignments on time and to the best of their ability so that they are prepared to fully participate in classroom activities. When students are absent, it is their responsibility to get and complete missed assignments. All assignments should be posted online, and students should contact their classmates or teachers if they have any questions about any missed material or homework assigned. Students have a day after their return from a short absence to catch up on missed work. Procedures and timelines for making up work after long-term absences or illnesses should be discussed with a student’s Dean.

To help students stay on top of homework assignments, the Middle School Office suggests the following homework guidelines, which we encourage families to discuss as they develop a plan for the academic year:

- Students should record all assignments in their Middle School Planbooks or an approved alternative assignment calendar. Students should also use their Planbooks to keep track of important events, family and after school commitments, holidays and days off, so that they can effectively schedule their time and keep track of long-term assignments.
- Families should establish, where possible, a distraction-free area for students to do homework, study, and keep academic supplies and materials, including a calendar of assignments and commitments.
- Students should arrange with their families to set aside a regular time for doing homework and studying each evening. Fifth and sixth graders should expect one and a half to two hours of work each school night, seventh and eighth graders, two to three hours. Homework and study time should not include watching TV, recreational computer use, or talking on the telephone. On nights when a student’s homework load is lighter than expected, he/she should use the remainder of the time set aside for studying, review, organizing notes and materials, or getting ahead on long-term assignments. Students who find themselves taking longer than the expected time to complete homework assignments should keep a log of their time spent, and speak with their advisor or Dean.
- Students are encouraged to save the last ten minutes of study time for backing up computer files, printing out work, and organizing and packing their backpacks for the following day.
- Parents (particularly those of fifth and sixth grade students) are encouraged to check to make sure all assignments are completed before bedtime.

Quizzes and tests are used by teachers to monitor student progress, assess student learning, and to help students synthesize information, consolidate skills, and develop systems for independent study. Quizzes are typically twenty to thirty minutes in length and are administered in the middle of a unit of study. Tests are typically forty to fifty minutes long and are given at the end of unit to assess mastery of the topics covered. While quizzes may be given on any day of the week, test days are scheduled on a grade-wide calendar. Students can expect that teachers will announce tests with one week's notice, that they will provide students with a clear outline of the material to be covered, that no new material will be introduced during the class meeting before a test, and that, with rare exceptions, they will not have more than one test on any given day. Students who receive 50% extended time on assessments due to documented learning issues should schedule their extra time with their teachers prior to a planned assessment.

As with Packer's homework policy around absences, students who miss a quiz or test due to absence are responsible for making it up within a day of their return. Students absent or ill for a prolonged period of time should meet with their Dean upon their return to work out a schedule for making up any missed quizzes or tests.

Cumulative final exams are only given to eighth graders or students enrolled in eighth grade courses at the end of the school year. Final exams typically last two hours, and represent a culmination of the year's work, and count for 10% of a student's grade for the year. Certain days are set aside for exam review, during which time no new material will be introduced to students. Information that describes exam procedures and schedules will be distributed to all students sitting for final exams in advance of the review period.

## **Report Cards, Grades & Grading Policies**

Middle School students receive report cards at the end of each marking period that serve as a formal record of their work for the quarter. Report cards include students' grades, absences, and latenesses for the marking period. After the first and third marking periods, and additionally at teachers' discretion, students' report cards will also include narrative comments and/or skills checklists that detail students' work, progress, and areas for growth. Time is set aside at the end of each quarter for students to meet with their advisors to review their grades and comments, discuss their performance and set goals for the quarter ahead.

Students who are not performing well, have experienced a noticeable drop in their performance in a particular course, or are on Academic Notice will receive interim comments midway through the quarter. Teachers may also elect to use interim reports to communicate progress or notable success with a student's family.

In Packer's Middle School, students receive two grades for each course: one for academic achievement (A-F), and one for work habits (1-4). During the first quarter of fifth grade, students only receive a grade for work habits. Descriptions of Packer's Middle School grading system, as well as the numerical and Grade Point Average (GPA) equivalents of achievement grades, follow below:

### **Middle School Achievement Grades:**

- A: Student consistently produces work that is thorough, thoughtful, accurate, logical and creative.  
Work demonstrates excellent understanding of content and skills.
- B: Student usually produces work that is thorough, thoughtful, accurate, logical and creative.  
Work demonstrates solid understanding of content and skills.
- C: Student produces work that is inconsistent in accuracy and/or thoroughness.  
Work demonstrates limited understanding of content and skills.
- D: Student produces work that is of insufficient scope and accuracy.  
Work does not demonstrate adequate understanding of content and skills.
- F: Student fails to produce work that meets the requirements of the course.

### **Middle School Work Habits Grades:**

- 1: Student always demonstrates a strong interest in learning, initiative, promptness in meeting academic responsibilities and an ability to work well independently and with others.
- 2: Student usually demonstrates an interest in learning, promptness in meeting academic responsibilities and an ability to work well independently and with others.
- 3: Student often demonstrates an approach to learning which appears uninterested or unsustained, a lack of promptness, and/or behavior in the classroom that impacts negatively on learning.
- 4: Student repeatedly demonstrates an inadequate approach to study and to fulfilling classroom expectations.

### **Middle School Grading System:**

<b>Average</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>GPA</b>	
93-100	A	4.0	Students may also receive three other marks on their transcripts: P, Pass (for courses designated pass/fail or for students who have received a pass/fail course waiver); I, Incomplete (for students who have not completed the requirements of a course); ME, Medical Excuse (for students who have not been able to meet the course requirements due to a medical reason). Students who receive an incomplete grade at the end of a marking period typically have one week from the close of the quarter to make up any missed work; otherwise it will become an F on the student's permanent transcript. Special arrangements must be made with a student's Dean prior to the close of the quarter for an extension beyond the five-day grace period. Medical Excuses will only be granted by the Middle School Office in consultation with the School Nurse and/or the Middle School Psychologist.
90-92	A-	3.67	
87-89	B+	3.33	
83-86	B	3.0	
80-82	B-	2.67	
77-79	C+	2.33	
73-76	C	2.0	
70-72	C-	1.67	
67-69	D+	1.33	
63-66	D	1.0	
60-62	D-	.67	
0-59	F	0	

### **Class Attendance**

Because attendance and participation in class are so important, students must make every effort to be present, on time, and engaged in their classes every day. Students who miss more than 25% of any class in any marking period (generally eight classes in a major class or four in a twice-weekly one) are at risk of receiving an incomplete for the quarter. Students at risk of losing credit for a class should immediately meet with their teacher and/or Dean to determine the best course of action.

### **Academic Integrity**

It is expected that each student will do his/her own work. Cheating on quizzes, tests, or exams, copying another person's work, or passing off another person's work as one's own are strictly forbidden. Students must make every effort to credit the source of any quote, idea, interpretation, or image that they use in their work, whether directly borrowed, paraphrased, or summarized. Failing to do so is plagiarism, which a serious academic offense. Students will have ongoing opportunities to discuss plagiarism with their classroom teachers throughout the school year. Parents and tutors working with students should monitor their support so that the work students submit remains their own.

Cheating or plagiarism typically result in failure on the specific exam, test, or assignment, and a half-day suspension from school. Consequences for cheating will apply to both the student who copies another's work as well as to the student who knowingly provides work to be copied.

## Academic Issues

Students who are struggling in their classes should seek support from their classroom teachers and advisors, who will work together with them, and if necessary, their parents and the Middle School psychologist, learning specialists, and deans to try to help them be more successful. Students who continue to struggle academically may be recommended for outside support, summer work, or in rare cases, an alternative school.

In any marking period, sixth, seventh or eighth graders who earn below a B average (calculated at a GPA lower than a 3.0) and/or who earn two or more Work Habits grades of 3 and/or 4 will be placed on Academic Notice for the quarter following. When a student is placed on Academic Notice, his/her Dean will contact his/her parents and advisor, and together with the student and a learning specialist, will develop and maintain a plan to improve the student's academic performance. This may include a weekly meeting with a member of the Learning Skills department and/or weekly progress reports sent home. If a student is placed on Academic Notice for two or more marking periods in a given calendar year, his/her parents will be asked to meet with the Middle School Head, and his/her contract may be held for the following year.

While Work Habits marks do not enter into the calculation of a student's overall average, they are taken seriously by Packer's Middle School. A student who earns a 3 or 4 in any course is expected to meet with his/her teacher and Dean and establish a plan to improve his/her approach to the class before the end of the next marking period.

## Academic Awards

Students can qualify for a number of different awards while in Packer's Middle School. Honor Roll and Dean's List are awarded at the end of each quarter; all other major academic awards are given out at the end of the year.

- **The Honor Roll** is earned by having a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.50 or higher during a quarter and no Work Habits marks below a 2.
- **The Dean's List** is earned by having at least an A- average (GPA of 3.67 or better), nothing lower than an A- in any subject that meets four times per week, and no Work Habits marks below a 2.
- **The Seventh and Eighth Grade Class Prizes** are based on cumulative GPA, individual character, and contribution to the Packer Community. Awardees must show sincerity and commitment to the pursuit of academic excellence.
- **The Tasso Vairamides Award** was established by the parents of Tasso Vairamides, a former Packer student tragically killed in 1987. Income from the Fund provides a scholarship awarded each year to a seventh grader who has shown special ability in the arts and sciences.
- **The Khalid Borde Award** is a celebratory tribute to the life of Khalid Borde ('07) who died in the Fall of 2003. Recipients typify the congeniality, fun, kindness, manners, spirit, positive energy, and light for which Khalid was loved and admired.
- **The Merit Award** was established to recognize outstanding contribution to the Packer community by members of the seventh and eighth grades.
- **The Community Service Award** is awarded to recognize outstanding service, not only to the Packer community, but also to the larger community as well.
- **The Citizenship Award** is voted on by students and faculty and awarded to a seventh or eighth grader who embodies values of empathy, kindness, service, citizenship, and community.

# Community Standards

## General Expectations

Packer's Middle School is a community grounded in four core values: *respect, responsibility, honesty* and *care*. Every member of the Middle School is expected to act in a way that demonstrates respect for themselves, for others, for our environment, and for our community. Middle School students are expected to be respectful, responsible, honest, caring, courteous, thoughtful, curious and brave. This expectation holds true not only from the time students arrive at Packer to the time they go home, but at after-school events, on school trips, or any time they interact with other members of the Packer community or represent Packer inside or outside of school.

## Language

Along with our actions, our behavior and our work, the way that we communicate defines us and demonstrates who we are and what we believe in. With that in mind, Packer Middle School students are expected to communicate, whether in person, on the phone, in writing, electronically or online, in an appropriate manner, and will be held responsible for the choices they make, both inside and outside of school. Inappropriate language includes but is not limited to that which is mean, harmful, demeaning, violent, threatening, obscene, racist, sexist, homophobic, or prejudiced, that which is in conflict with the community standards outlined herein, or makes others feel uncomfortable, unwelcome or excluded from the Packer community.

## Appearance and Apparel

While Packer has no formal dress code, students are expected to look presentable and dress appropriately for school. Shoes must always be worn, and clothing must cover what it is designed to cover (e.g. no exposed undergarments, breasts, bellies or bottoms), allow students to fully participate in daily activities, and not (by its presence or absence) distract students or their classmates from their work at school. At school or school-sponsored activities, students should not wear clothing that is too short, too tight or too revealing, nor printed with inappropriate language or images that in any way depict or promote behavior or items (e.g. weapons, drugs, alcohol or cigarettes) which do not belong in a school setting. Students dressed inappropriately for school will be asked to change into more suitable attire. Students who repeatedly have issues dressing appropriately at school will meet with their Dean, who will contact their parents. As a general rule, in Chapel and in class, hats and hoods are typically not permitted.

## Technology

Because technology plays such a significant role in students' lives and Packer Middle School students are given access to a tremendous number of technological resources, both inside and outside of school, it is critical that students understand and appreciate the responsibilities that come with this level of access and opportunity. Each student who is issued a computer as part of Packer's laptop program signs an Appropriate Use Policy that details the expectations for technology use by members of Packer's community. By signing the Policy (AUP), students formally accept its guidelines and agree to follow the expectations stated therein. The major principles of Packer's AUP are as follows:

- Students are expected to take care of their laptops and make every effort not to damage another person's laptop, or any hardware and software they use while at Packer.
- Students are required to keep their passwords secret and respect the privacy of other student, teacher and school computers, as well as the security of school networks and programs. Under no circumstances may a student access or use another person's password, email, fileserver, or computer account, or impersonate another person or use his/her identity online, with or without permission.
- Students are expected to keep their computer files organized and battery charged, to back up their work, and to regularly check their school email accounts and course conferences.

- Students are forbidden to access online content, or to download, print, display, or distribute material that would be inappropriate in an educational setting (e.g. sexual, violent, hateful, etc.).
- Students may not use the school network to download or share non school-related files and may not use the school files server to store personal files, including music, videos, photographs, or games.
- During class, students are expected to use their computers only for work pertinent to that class.

In addition to the guidelines for technology usage established in Packer's AUP, Packer Middle School students are held to two additional standards as members of our digital community:

- At school, Middle School students are expected to use their laptops only for school-related purposes. Except in the context of school-related assignments or projects or activities, Middle School students may not listen to music, watch videos, play video games, or use their computers or the school network for recreational purposes, including social networking, text or video chatting. This rule holds before school, during school, at break, at lunch, and after school.
- When Middle School students use their laptops, Packer's network, email system and/or when they communicate or represent themselves electronically or online, it is expected that they will do so in a manner consistent with Packer's Middle School Community Standards. This holds at all times, whether at school or not.

Consequences for a student's failure to follow Packer's Appropriate Use Policy or our Middle School expectations for technology usage will result in a warning, detention or loss of privileges, or in the case of a serious violation of policy or a repeated offense, suspension or dismissal from school.

Students who need to print out work or need tech support should visit the Tech Center before and after school, at break or at lunch. Only in the event of an emergency will students be allowed to visit the Tech Center during class hours. In these circumstances, students must bring written permission from a classroom teacher to a member of Packer's IT staff.

Middle School students may not use iPods or other music players, or any video or video game systems at Packer during the school day, unless with the specific permission of a faculty member. Students may not use their cell phones while at school, except in the Middle School Office, or in the front hall before or after school. Phones and other technological devices should be turned off during the day and left in students' backpacks or lockers. Students who keep these items out in public will be asked to put them properly away, or to give them to the Middle School Office, where they will be held until the end of the school day. Parents who need to get a message to their children during the school day should do so by calling the Middle School Office.

## **Lockers, Backpacks, and Personal Items**

Advisors will provide students with their locker numbers and combinations on the first day of school. This information will also be held in the Middle School Office. Students are expected to use their lockers at the beginning and end of each day, and, if needed, at break and at lunch. At minimum, students should keep their coats, jackets, extra clothes, personal items, and any books and materials not needed for class safely locked in their lockers. No student should ever share his/her locker combination with another student, go into another student's locker or backpack, or disturb another community member's belongings in any way.

Students are expected to have their backpacks with them or locked in their lockers while at school. During Chapel, at break and at lunch, students may leave their backpacks in the designated areas in the North Hall or on the second floor of the Middle School. Students should pay particular care to place their backpacks down in a neat, organized fashion to minimize the potential for damage to the contents of theirs and the other backpacks around them. Backpacks may not be left unattended at any other times or in any other locations without the express permission of a member of the faculty. Jackets, clothing and other personal items must be kept in students' lockers, and may not be left out in the designated backpack areas. Musical instruments are to be kept in the instrument storage racks or instrument lockers assigned by Packer's music department. Items left unattended in non-designated spaces or times will be brought to the Middle School Office or placed in the lost and found. Students retrieving items from the Middle School Office will receive a warning notice.

Packer's Middle School Lost and Found is located at the very end of the hallway that leads from the Commons, near the fire doors. Students are encouraged to bring all found items to this area and to check there regularly for any lost items. Advising groups will be expected to visit Lost and Found before winter, spring, and summer breaks, after which points all items that remain will be donated to charity.

## **Forbidden Items, Activities & Behaviors**

In addition to the behavioral expectations, and the specific rules and procedures indicated elsewhere in this Handbook, there are a number of rules that all Middle School students must follow while members of the Packer community:

- Packer Middle School students are absolutely forbidden to bring illicit drugs, alcohol, tobacco, matches, lighters, weapons, or firearms to school or on any school-sponsored event or trip, or to be in possession or under the influence of any of these items while at school or a school-related function.
- Students may not, under any circumstances, provoke, engage in, or threaten violence, or participate in any activity that carries the explicit threat of danger to themselves or others.
- Packer students are forbidden to engage in any behavior with the intent or effect of intimidating, bullying or harassing another member of the school community.
- Packer students are prohibited from intentionally defacing or damaging school property, and will be held responsible (financially and otherwise) for property that is damaged, whether purposely, or by reckless or thoughtless behavior.
- Under no circumstances should students go into the locker or backpack or another student, or take, remove, steal or damage the belongings of another member of the Packer community.
- Indecency, sexual conduct, overtly sexual language or behavior, or possession or distribution of sexual images, recordings, or content are not permitted at school or while under school supervision. While physical contact between and among students is certainly allowed, students should be aware of the intensity and duration of their physical interactions with their peers, so as not to contribute to behavior that is overly sexualized or inappropriate in a school setting.
- Gum is not permitted at Packer and may not be chewed in the classrooms, hallways, or in the Garden.
- Other than when using the bathroom, there should be no time when Middle School students are in unsupervised areas of the building.

## **Discipline Issues**

### **General Infractions:**

Students whose behavior falls outside school expectations (e.g. disruptive conduct in class or in Chapel, use of inappropriate language, unsafe or unruly behavior in the Garden or hallways, recreational computer use at school) will be given a Break detention later that morning (if the incident occurs before Break), or the next school day (if the incident occurs after Break). Students given a Break detention will need to report to the detention room at Break, and should plan on doing schoolwork or quiet reading. Students who arrive late to a Break detention will need to serve the remainder of that detention and an additional detention. Students who miss a scheduled detention will need to make it up during the following two Breaks. When a student is given a Break detention, his/her advisor and parents will be contacted.

If a student is given three or more disciplinary detentions in any given quarter, a meeting will be called with the student, his/her parents, advisor, and Dean, and he/she will be placed on Disciplinary Notice for the remainder of the quarter and the quarter following. A student on Disciplinary Notice will need to develop a plan to improve his/her behavior with his/her advisor and Dean and risks having his/her contract held for the following year.

### **Significant Issues:**

Students whose behavior represents a significant breach of conduct will be asked to meet with his/her Dean and/or the Head of the Middle School, and an appropriate course of action will be determined. An official record will be kept of any student who is sent to the Middle School Office for disciplinary reasons, and his/her parents and advisor will be contacted. Consequences for significant violations of

Packer's Middle School Community Standards and behavioral expectations may include suspension from school, being placed on Disciplinary Notice, or, in rare and serious circumstances, dismissal from Packer.

## **Behavior Guidelines**

What follows is a list of more specific expectations for Middle School students before, during, and after school. These rules have been established to help Packer provide students with a safe, supportive environment for learning, and it is expected that students will follow them.

### **Before School**

The school building opens at 7:30 AM. Students arriving early to school may be in the Commons, the Blackburne Library or (weather permitting) the Garden, as long as there is adult supervision. Middle School Students are not allowed anywhere else in the building before 8:00 AM unless they are participating in an activity (5/6 Basketball, e.g.), have a pre-arranged meeting with a faculty member, or are visiting the Tech Center to print documents or to receive technical support. Middle School students may not congregate on the upper level of the Commons, as it is reserved for faculty and Upper School student seating. Particular care should be given to Lower School students arriving for early-morning drop off, and for whom a section of the Commons is reserved from 7:50 AM – 8:00 AM.

At 8:00 AM, Middle School students are allowed into the Middle School building. Students should stop at their lockers before they go to advising, Chapel, or their first period class.

### **Homeroom/Advising**

It is expected that all students will arrive on time to homeroom, where advisors take attendance, give any important announcements, and lead any activities for the day. Students are expected to have finished their homework, printed out their work, and organized themselves for the day before homeroom begins so that they can fully participate in advising activities. From time to time, instead of a normal homeroom period, advising groups will gather in a designated location for a graderoom, special activity or event.

### **Chapel**

Chapel is where we meet together as a whole community and where we mark important events and rites of passage. As the Chapel is the most formal space in the school, students are expected to show appropriate respect for the space and for the activities that take place within it. In Chapel, students should sit up straight, and may not put their feet on the pews, wear hoods or hats (except for religious purposes or when given special permission), eat or drink, speak during an announcement or performance, or behave in any way that interrupts or interferes with the Chapel program. There are designated seats for each grade in Chapel, and students are typically asked to sit with their advising group. Students who arrive to Chapel late should enter, sit quietly on the side and make sure that their advisor knows they are there. Once in Chapel, it is expected that all students will stay for the entirety of the program. If a student needs to leave for any reason, he/she should check in with a supervising member of the faculty.

### **Homeroom Study Hall (HRSH) Periods**

If an activity is not held during Open Period on Wednesdays, and/or if students are not participating in Encore Arts or Music during fourth period on Fridays, Middle School students have Homeroom Study Hall (HRSH). During HRSH, students assemble in their designated advising group locations, where they may work on school assignments or read independently. Advisors are available during HRSH periods to meet with their advisees.

## **Classrooms**

At the beginning of the year, teachers share their Course Expectations with their classes, which outline the rules and structures specific to their courses. Some expectations, however, are consistent across all classes in Packer's Middle School. In every class, students are expected to arrive on time with the appropriate materials, participate actively and appropriately in class discussions and activities, record assignments in their Planbook, take care of classroom materials, supplies, and equipment, straighten up at the end of the class, and complete all assigned homework. If there ever is a reason beyond a student's control why he/she is late to class, unprepared, without his/her homework, or unable to participate in the day's activity, the student is expected to bring his/her classroom teacher a signed note of explanation. Unless specifically given permission otherwise, during class, students are not allowed to eat or drink, wear hats or hoods, engage in non-class related activities, or print documents to a school printer.

## **Hallways**

Middle School students have five minutes of passing time between classes. It is expected that students will use this time to get from class to class, and to go to the bathroom or their lockers if necessary. During passing time, students should not congregate, run, or engage in horseplay in the hallways or on the stairs, and are expected not to stand in or block the hallways, doorways or stairways. Special care must be taken around the ledges on the second and third floors of the Middle School, which may not be leaned or climbed on, and upon which nothing may be placed at any time. As a general rule, in the hallways, students should not behave in a way that is dangerous, distracting or otherwise counter to the work of school. Middle School students should be respectful of adults, older students, and visitors in the hallways, and particularly sensitive of and careful around younger children throughout the building. To be sensitive to Lower School students working, except in emergencies, Middle School students may not use the Lower School Hallway on the second floor.

## **Elevators**

Middle School students may only use the school elevators with an elevator pass from the nurse or when accompanied by a member of the faculty. Students with documentation from the nurse should carry the pass with them at all times. If an injured student needs assistance with heavy or awkward items, the nurse should indicate this on the elevator pass, which will permit another student to accompany him/her on the elevator for this purpose only.

## **Break & Lunch**

Break and lunch are intended to provide students with time to eat, relax, play outside, make a locker stop, meet with teachers, get work done, print documents, get tech support, and/or participate in clubs and activities. During break and lunch, students are allowed in the Garden, the Commons, the Blackburne Library, the Tech Center, and the North Hall of the Middle School building (the one closest to the Commons). At lunchtime, there is also a designated study hall available for students in one Middle School classroom. Adults will be on duty in each of these locations to supervise these spaces and to help make sure that students are appropriately behaved. During these times, students may not be in other parts of the building unless under the supervision of a member of the faculty.

In case of rain or bad weather, a gym (typically the 4<sup>th</sup> floor gym) will usually be available for Middle School students at break and lunch. The South Hall may also be opened by the faculty member supervising the North Hall for students wishing to watch or play ping-pong.

Students eating in or purchasing food from Packer are expected to wait respectfully in line, use the appropriate entrance and exit, be considerate of the other children and adults using the space, and polite to the kitchen staff and cashiers. Students with lunchtime commitments (clubs, teacher meetings, etc.) may ask to move to the front of the line. Students who abuse this privilege will be sent to the Middle School Office and given a break detention. Food and drink should not be consumed in line or before it has been

purchased. Middle School students should only eat or drink while sitting at a table in the Commons or on the Patio. Food and beverages may not be taken out of these designated areas unless a student is meeting with a teacher who has given him or her specific permission to eat during their meeting. Whether students eat in the Commons, on the Patio, or in a classroom with a teacher, they are responsible for cleaning up their own mess, throwing out their garbage, returning their cafeteria trays to the appropriate place in the Commons, and making sure their area is clean. In general, Middle School students should not sit, eat, or congregate in the upper level of the Commons, the Atrium or the Student Center, where priority is given to Upper School students and faculty.

There will always be at least one adult on duty in the Commons to help with crowd control, general order and cleanliness. Advising groups will be scheduled to help clean the Commons at the end of the fifth/sixth and seventh/eighth lunch periods. The faculty member on duty in the Commons at lunch will have a calendar of the advising group rotation and will supervise students as they wipe off the tables, throw out any garbage, and recycle any bottles or cans left behind.

Typically, eighth graders are allowed out to lunch twice a week throughout the year, and seventh graders, once a week during the second semester. Out-to-lunch privileges require parental approval and the permission of the Middle School Office. This privilege is contingent upon good academic standing, excellent behavior, and adherence to the guidelines established by the Seventh/Eighth Grade Dean.

## **The Garden**

Supervision is provided for Middle School students in the Garden before school, at break, at lunch, and after school, weather permitting. Students are not allowed in the Garden at any time without faculty supervision. In the Garden, Middle School students may play in the central area, the basketball courts, the pathways, and the Imagination Station, and may sit on the stairs and any of the benches or play structures throughout. Students are not allowed in any planted area, or on scaffoldings, sheds, trees, fire escapes, or in the Mushroom Village. Middle School students must always give special consideration to Upper and Lower School students who often share the Garden throughout the school day.

To minimize the potential for injuries in the Garden, only foam soccer balls and footballs may be used, and basketballs, rubber balls and wiffle balls may only be used in designated areas. Frisbees, baseballs, roller skates, hockey sticks and other non-soft sports equipment are not permitted in the Garden, nor is tackle football, snowball throwing, or any other game or activity that the supervising faculty member considers dangerous or inappropriate. Students may only play one game at a time in the central area of the Garden and must share the basketball courts responsibly. Unless otherwise indicated, (at a picnic, for example) food and drink are not allowed in the Garden. Behavior not in accordance with Garden rules will result in sitting out from play, being sent in from the Garden, or in more serious cases, losing Garden privileges and facing disciplinary consequences.

## **Gyms, Locker Rooms & Bathrooms**

Rules for using Packer's gymnasiums are set by physical education teachers and coaches. Generally speaking, no street shoes (with marking soles) are allowed, and students in grade six and above must change into gym clothes for gym classes. Lockers are provided for all students who are changing for gym, and include pre-set combination locks.

Students changing for gym classes or after school sports are expected to use the gym locker rooms. A physical education teacher or coach should be in the locker room to supervise. Students are expected to have the appropriate change of clothing, to use their own locker, to lock up all of their belongings, and to respect other students' privacy and property. Backpacks or other items should not be left out on the locker room benches, floors, or in unlocked or open lockers. Locker room issues or thefts should be reported to the adult in charge, or if necessary, to the Middle School Office.

Students are expected to use bathrooms before or after class, at break, or at lunch. Bathrooms are expected to be kept clean, and are not meant to serve as meeting or social places for students at any time before, during, or after school. Any issues in or with school bathrooms should be reported immediately to any Middle School teacher or directly to the Middle School Office.

## **After School Hours**

Middle School students are allowed to remain at Packer until 6:00 PM. Students participating in after-school classes, sports, music, or theater are expected to follow the rules set up by the faculty members overseeing those activities. Students waiting for classes, rehearsals, performances, practices or games should follow the general after-school rules. At no time after school may Middle School students socialize or gather in unsupervised areas. After 3:30 PM, students not working in the designated study hall room, or under the supervision of a teacher are not allowed in the Middle School building.

Students who stay at Packer after school but are not involved in an after-school activity are allowed to be in the Garden, the Commons, or the Library from 3:15 PM - 4:30 PM. Students who need to print documents or need tech support are also allowed to visit the Tech Center during this time. After 4:30 PM, Middle School students not involved in an activity must either work in the Library or the Middle School room designated as a quiet study hall. Middle School students staying after school must be particularly sensitive to the older and younger students, as well as the many parents, caretakers and faculty members that are in the building. Supervision after school is provided by a separate after-school staff, and it is expected that students will follow the rules and guidelines that they put in place. Students who are not able to follow the after-school rules will not be allowed to stay at Packer after school hours.

Students remaining at Packer after school will be permitted to sign out between 3:15 PM and 3:30 PM. Students wishing to leave and return to the building at a later time will need specific permission from a parent or a supervising member of the faculty.

## **Special Events & Field Trips**

It is expected that students will be on their very best behavior at special events or when traveling in a group with Packer. It is at these times that students are being most closely watched by people outside of Packer, and therefore it is each student's responsibility to represent Packer to the best of his or her ability. Students' ability to participate in special events and trips will be determined by their ability to behave themselves appropriately during these times. Questions about appropriate behavior should be directed to activity or trip leaders, or to the Middle School Office.

## **Outside of Packer**

Packer Middle School students are expected to exercise good judgment in the decisions they make and to consider the impact of their actions, even when not at Packer. This is especially, though not exclusively true, in students' interactions with other members of the Packer Middle School community. Because students' behavior, whether inside or outside of school, does reflect on Packer, and can have a significant impact on life at school, there are times when it is appropriate and important for Packer to respond to incidents that may occur outside of school and beyond school hours. Students and families are encouraged to contact the Middle School Office when concerns arise, and the school will do its best to determine whether intervention is appropriate or necessary, and if so, what should be done.

# **Additional Policies and Procedures**

## **Lateness, Absences, & Early Dismissals**

Students are expected to arrive at Packer by 8:00 AM so that after stopping at their locker, they are able to arrive on time for advising (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday), Chapel (Wednesday), or first period (Friday) at 8:10 AM. Late arrivals are recorded and submitted to the Middle School Office. Students who arrive after 8:25 AM must sign in with the Middle School Office upon their arrival. Three late arrivals will result in a detention and a notice sent home. Multiple detentions due to lateness will result in a meeting with the student, his/her family, and the Middle School Office, to determine the appropriate course of action and consequences. Excused latenesses will be recorded as such.

Students are expected to attend school every day. If a student must be absent, his/her family should notify the Middle School Office in writing as soon as the absence is planned, detailing the date(s) of and reason for the anticipated absence. The student will receive a form to take to each of his/her teachers, indicating the days of the upcoming absence. *In the event of an illness or an unanticipated absence, a student's parents should contact the Middle School Office by telephone (718.250.0260).* Students are advised to make every effort to keep up with their schoolwork during absences and are responsible for making up any missed work, quizzes, or tests. Arrangements for making up missed work due to extended absences or illnesses should be coordinated with the student's Dean.

On occasion, students need to leave school early. The procedure for early dismissal follows that for planned absences: parents send a note to the Middle School Office, students receive a form to give to their teachers, and students are responsible for making up any missed work, quizzes, or tests. Before a student leaves the building in the middle of the day, he/she must sign out in the Middle School Office. Students returning to Packer before the end of the school day must sign back in with the Middle School Office before returning to class.

In all cases, absence from part or all of a school day may affect a student's ability to participate in after school activities, including but not limited to theater productions, music performances, athletic games, or other school-sponsored events. While specific policies govern individual activities, as a general Middle School rule, when a student is absent from more than half of a school day, he/she may not participate in a school-sponsored event or activity that afternoon or evening.

## **Guests Visiting School**

Middle School students are allowed to have visitors for the day with permission from their parents, their classroom teachers and the approval of the Middle School Office. If a student would like to bring a guest to Packer, he/she should bring a note from home to the Middle School Office, where he/she can pick up a Visitor Form to be signed by the teacher of each class the guest will be visiting. Once the form is complete, the Middle School Office will issue a Guest Pass, to be presented to security upon arrival in the morning. Students should expect to introduce their guests to their classmates and teachers at the beginning of each class period and are responsible for them throughout the school day. Non-Packer students are not allowed at Packer without a Guest Pass or specific permission from the Middle School Office. Guests are expected to follow all school rules while visiting Packer and will be asked to leave should there be any issue with their visit.

## **Sickness, Medical Issues & the Nurse's Office**

No student may attend school or participate in school trips or activities without a current and complete medical form on file with the Nurse's Office.

Students should not come to school or will be sent home if they are not well enough to participate in the regular school program, if they have an illness that is contagious (generally within 48 hours of the first administration of antibiotics), if they have an elevated fever, a continuous cough, runny nose, stomachache or headache, if they are vomiting, have diarrhea, an unexplained rash, infection, or swelling, or if they or one of their family members has contracted lice. The School Nurse must also be notified if a child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease (strep throat, chicken pox, mono, flu etc.)

Students that have chronic conditions that do not prevent them from being at school, or who return to school following a mobility-limiting injury (sprains, fractures, etc.) or an illness that requires follow-up must provide the Nurse's Office with specific, detailed doctor's orders that indicate the child's pertinent medical history, and what if any treatment (medicine, ice, rest, etc.), accommodations (crutches, elevator pass, etc.), and/or activity limitations (dance, gym, sports, etc.) need to be put into place. Students returning to Packer after a mobility-limiting injury must report to the School Nurse on their first day back at school. On their first day on crutches, Middle School children may only attend school for a half-day.

Because Middle School students may not carry any prescription medication on campus, the School Nurse must administer all Middle School prescription medications. Families of students with doctor's orders for medication administration during the school day need to provide the School Nurse with a current prescription, clear directions for administration, and any pertinent medical information or history. Families of students who need medication during a class trip should contact the School Nurse in advance of the field trip day to make appropriate plans. Children with chronic illnesses may keep a full set of back-up medication in the Nurse's Office in labeled prescription bottles with a copy of the prescription on file. Inhalers and epi-pens, for students with asthma and severe allergies, are kept in the Nurse's Office and also in students' backpacks.

Students who become ill or injured while at school must see the School Nurse. For all non-urgent issues, students are expected to visit the School Nurse during break or lunch. The Nurse keeps a number of over-the-counter medications at Packer and is able to administer them to students whose parents have given consent on the Packer health forms. If a student is significantly ill or injured, the School Nurse will contact the student's family and provide a Medical Dismissal slip so that the student may leave the building. Depending on the severity of the illness or injury, the School Nurse will determine if the student will be sent home, will wait for a pickup, or will be brought to a medical facility.

When medical or emotional concerns arise for a student, a family should contact the school nurse, psychologist or the student's advisor or Dean, who will work together with the family to best support the student. If a student is not well enough to be at school, or if he/she could be in any way a danger to himself/herself and/or others, he/she will need to stay at home and be cleared by appropriate medical personnel before being able to return to school.

If it is determined that a student is not well enough to regularly attend and participate in his/her classes, or that his/her visits to nursing are significantly interfering with his/her class participation or attendance, his/her parents will be contacted and invited to meet with the student's Dean and any other appropriate Packer personnel to determine the best course of action. While Packer can accommodate normal absences, illnesses and medical limitations and conditions, in some serious circumstances, it may be necessary for a family to find another schooling option, until the student can, or in case he/she can not, more fully participate in our program.