



Germantown Academy  
Middle School  
Handbook  
2022 - 2023

## **Disclaimer**

The provisions of this Middle School Handbook are not to be regarded as a contract between parents/students and Germantown Academy ("GA"). GA reserves the right to change any of the policies, rules, regulations, and standards of conduct at any time as may be necessary in the interest of GA. GA also reserves the right to modify or discontinue any of the services, programs, or activities described in this Handbook. The only contract between parents/students and GA is the Enrollment Agreement. In the event of a conflict between the provisions of the Enrollment Agreement and this Middle School Handbook, the terms of the Enrollment Agreement shall be applied.

This handbook is intended to serve as a guide to help Germantown Academy families with the basic policies and procedures that specifically pertain to the Middle School. The guidelines stated here are written to strengthen and support the lines of communication that are so vital to the operation of our school and to provide for the safety of the Middle School community. Throughout this handbook, the term "parents" means parents or guardians. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the contents. We are hopeful that the handbook will answer many questions you may have about academics, security, discipline, school rules, safety, athletics, and other topics.

Please understand that no set of rules or guidelines can cover every conceivable situation that might arise at a school. The rules, policies, and procedures set forth in this handbook are intended to apply under normal circumstances. However, from time to time, there may be situations that require immediate or nonstandard responses. This handbook does not limit the authority of Germantown Academy to deviate from the normal rules and procedures set forth in this handbook, and to deal with individual circumstances as they arise in the manner deemed most appropriate by the school taking into consideration the best interests of Germantown Academy, its faculty, employees, students or overall school community. The policies also may be revised or updated periodically, even during the school year. You will be advised of any changes as they are made either electronically (email) or by mail. Any student or parent with a question about any handbook policy or statement should feel free to speak with the Head of Middle School and/or Head of School.

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**MISSION: GA  
GERMANTOWN ACADEMY INSPIRES STUDENTS TO BE...**

**Independent in Thought**

A leadership mindset begins with each student having the independence of thought necessary to seek and find the truth in all that he or she reads, sees and hears. We educate GA students to be curious, to ask questions, to listen to and evaluate the viewpoints of others. Our faculty and staff are the guides and coaches for these explorations of ideas, theories, and processes.

**Confident in Expression**

Independent thinkers become self-confident individuals. We, as teachers and staff members, hear expressed time and time again by prospective parents how confidently GA students comport themselves. Instilling confidence is also a goal of our writing, speaking, and performing curricula. Alumni visits around the country remind me that the core of confidence built during GA years holds firm throughout adulthood.

**Compassionate in Spirit**

Effective leadership also involves the ability to care about others, to realize that everyone we meet can teach us something valuable and can learn something of value from us. True compassion is a "suffering with" that enables independent-minded, confident people to recognize that vulnerability is the connecting spirit within us all.

**Collaborative in Action**

Collaborative action is needed to move forward a community, a team, a Belfry production, a choir performance, or a class project, once individual ideas are aired. Active "followership" is part of a meaningful education. Well educated people have learned when and how to dedicate themselves to the support of the whole.

**Honorable in Deed**

The Mission Statement recognizes that absent personal honor, curious, confident, compassionate people will not engender the trust needed to be effective leaders or followers. GA teaches students to hold themselves to the highest of personal standards. To do so successfully, we, as teachers, must be role models of trust-worthy behavior. We want the simple act of entering the school each day to make each of us a better person.

**GERMANTOWN ACADEMY CIVILITY PLEDGE**

In living its Mission, GA pledges to be a community grounded in respect and committed to courtesy.

I agree to adhere to the standards embedded in the Civility Pledge and in the Mission Statement throughout my interactions in the GA community, including curricular, extra-curricular, and social environments by:

1. Honoring GA's mission as an inclusive, diverse community.
  2. Treating all members of GA with respect and civility.
  3. Supporting an educational environment that encourages the development of positive learning attitudes and habits.
  4. Seeking understanding in the spirit of collaboration.
  5. Communicating compassionately and honorably.
- Signs are posted around campus, including the athletics and arts venues, to increase non-community member awareness.



## ACADEMIC LIFE

### Report Periods

The academic year is divided into two semesters, each containing an interim report. Progress reports are issued four times: at the middle and at the end of each semester. Each report contains letter grades. The November and March reports also contain narrative comments—the March comments contain important course placement information. In January and June, comments are written as necessary or at teacher discretion.

The interim grade reflects a student's work to date; it is not a discrete grade used to compute the semester grade.

Parent conference days are held in November and April; conferences in April are student-led.

### Grades

Grades reflect the quality of a student's work in the course and are based on many factors: tests and quizzes, participation, preparation, classroom contributions, etc. The weight given to each of these will depend upon the nature of the course and the discretion of the teacher. The following are the general grading guidelines for the Middle School:

A	Excellent
B	Good
C	Satisfactory
D	Marginally Passing
F	Failing
I	Incomplete
MEX	Medical Excuse
NG	No Grade

### Failed Courses

If a course is failed for the year and the student cannot repeat the course, the student will be required to complete approved independent work and/or tutoring in order to be promoted to the next course in the sequence. Additionally, re-examination may be required in the summer, if applicable.

### Promotion

An eighth-grade student who fails two courses for the year, earns three end-of-year grades of D+ or below, or earns four or more end-of-year grades of C- or below may not be promoted to the Upper School. Additionally, students placed on Academic Probation during the sixth or seventh grade year may not be promoted to Upper School should they remain on AP at the end of the eighth grade year.

### Academic Probation (AP)

Students who earn three grades of C- or below or two grades below C- may be placed on Academic Probation; students who earn three grades below C- will be placed on academic probation. This determination is made after careful review of the student's progress by their teachers, advisor, Head Advisor, Academic Dean, and Head of Middle School. After the student is placed on AP, a support plan is developed for the student that includes regular communication home about progress. At re-enrollment time, a student on academic probation can expect to have their re-enrollment contract withheld. If improvement is not demonstrated within the time limit established in the support plan, or if the plan is not followed, the student's enrollment at GA may be in jeopardy.

### Assessments

The evaluation of student work includes preparation, class participation, projects, labs, quizzes, tests, and many kinds of written work. Reports and projects are part of the course work in many departments. The quality and consistency of homework are also assessed. Grades are not given on a bell curve – i.e., no predetermined number of A's, B's, etc. is set.

**Quizzes** may be announced or unannounced. They cover a limited amount of material; they do not require longer preparation time than needed to complete a normal assignment; and they are designed to help students master small amounts of information.

**Tests** are designed to help students analyze and synthesize large amounts of information. They are announced at least a week before they are given; they usually occur at the end of a unit or chapter; and they require long-term preparation.

### Late Assignment Policy

The penalty for submitting long-term papers and projects late is up to one full letter grade a day. A teacher may use his or her discretion in applying the policy.

### Retest/Resubmission of Assignments/Re-grading Policy

Individual students may not take a "retest" or "re-quiz" for credit to raise their grade. They may not receive extra-credit for a corrected test. On the other hand, entire classes may be re-tested and/or given permission to do corrections for extra-credit.

## **Math Final Exams**

Final exams are held in June for math classes. Students are expected to take their exams according to the schedule. The exams are 1 ½ hours long. The dress code remains in effect during the examination period. We do not permit exams to leave campus nor can we share electronic copies or images of exams. Families of students who would like to review an exam may contact the teacher, Math Department Head or the MS Office to arrange an appointment.

## **Summer Work/Summer School**

Summer work and summer reading for all students is posted on Veracross in June. Students may be required to strengthen certain skills by attending an approved summer school, receiving tutoring, or completing extra work during the summer so that they are able to begin the next academic year on a solid foundation. All students seeking credit or advancement for enrichment or remedial summer courses must obtain department permission prior to registering for the course.

## **Upper School Language and Math Courses**

Middle School students placed in Upper School Language and Math courses will take final exams in those courses.

## **Technology**

The Middle School has a 1:1 tablet PC program in sixth, seventh, and eighth grade. All Middle School students are issued a tablet PC for use at home and at school throughout the school year. The overall goal of the technology program is to meaningfully integrate technology into the classroom to enhance student engagement and transform learning.

## **Roberts Family Library and Technology Center**

The Roberts Family Library supports the school's commitment to developing lifelong learners by reinforcing a curriculum and teaching skills which lead to independent and critical thinking. Library faculty teach students to gather and use information with confidence and a sense of responsibility. The library provides collections of resources in a variety of formats that have been selected specifically to support the MS curriculum. Assignments incorporating these sources help students to become better readers and to develop research and technology skills. Classroom teachers and library faculty collaborate in guiding students through projects that integrate information problem-solving strategies into the curriculum, providing students with the tools to make informed decisions in a complex world. The fiction collection in the Library is designed to meet the recreational reading needs of Middle School students. Suggestions for additions to our Middle School collection are welcomed and encouraged. The Roberts Family Library is a shared MS/US space and is open from 7:40 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and from 7:40 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. on Friday.

## **Beard Center for Innovation**

The Beard Center for Innovation is a multi-use educational space designed for classroom teaching, collaboration, project based learning and design thinking exercises. It is a flexible environment for a range of learning in two discrete spaces: the Maker Space for prototyping and design, and the Innovation Lab (iLab) for collaboration and group learning exercises. Innovation at GA honors the traditions of independent school curriculum while providing access to 21st Century skills that support the work being done in all disciplines at all grade levels. Programming in the BCI is designed to have at its core a partnership between students and faculty where students take ownership of their own educational journey, engaging in a growth mindset and ways of working that builds confidence and grit.

## **The Planbook & Veracross**

We believe strongly that there is tremendous value in our students learning how to use a planbook as an organizational and educational tool, as well as to help students learn important lessons of responsibility for their learning. All students are given a planbook at the start of school, and they are expected to use it to record assignments, assessment dates, teacher meetings, and other important information. Additionally, nightly assignments are posted on faculty homepages in Veracross.

## **Middle School Homework Policy**

The purpose of homework in the Middle School is to meaningfully support the teaching and learning process that occurs during class. Each homework assignment typically serves one or more of the following purposes:

1. To reinforce and practice material, concepts, and skills taught in class
2. To engage content in preparation for a lesson, lab, or discussion
3. To reflect on a learning experience
4. To prepare for formal assessments of knowledge and understanding

The Middle School encourages balance among the rigorous expectations of the academic program, the demands of extracurricular participation, and the pace of modern family living. The Middle School seeks to teach and empower students to develop the skills, habits, and attitudes to manage those often-competing priorities. Doing so enables middle school students to develop a sense of self-discipline, self-reliance, personal responsibility, personal accountability, independent thinking, and self-advocacy.



## **The Middle School Homework Guidelines**

The Middle School aims to keep the student at the core of homework management and completion. This means the student is responsible for the following:

- Making every effort to complete assigned homework and submit it when requested
- Checking email daily
- Using the planbook and Veracross to record and check homework assignments
- Obtaining missed assignments (short-term absence) from classmates or Veracross
- Notifying teachers in advance if unclear, unsure, or unprepared regarding homework

Students and parents can expect time spent on homework at home to vary based on the following factors:

- Effectively using in-class and study hall time allotted for homework
- Spending focused time on the work without frequent interruptions or distractions
- Effectively planning (chunking-out) long-term assignments
- Establishing a habit of spaced preparation as opposed to “cramming” for major tests, quizzes, projects, and presentations at the last minute

Parent/guardian involvement is most helpful when the following occurs:

- Child has a regular time and quiet area for work to be done
- Child has proper materials for completing assignments
- The work is completed by the child with minimal correction or assistance by parent(s)
- Child is encouraged to meet with the teacher for guidance (taking longer than necessary, not understanding subject matter)
- Contacting teacher or advisor if, on a consistent basis, the child is experiencing significant stress, is working past their regular bedtime, or is consistently spending over 1.5 hours a night cumulatively on homework
- Reminding child to clean out backpack and locker on a regular basis

The Middle School will:

- Ensure that students will not have more than two tests on a given day
- Encourage students to communicate with teachers during break, before and after school, and other appropriate times to discuss homework concerns
- Communicate with student (then parent/guardian) if a pattern of late, missing, or incomplete homework develops
- Assign students to after-school study hall if a pattern of late, missing, or incomplete homework continues
- Consult with the Academic Support Team as needed if pattern of late, missing, or incomplete homework persists
- Not assign homework over major breaks and in accordance with the One-School Religious Holiday Policy. Flexibility will be extended for major dates and holidays, concerts, trips, etc.

## **Homework Policies Over Long Weekends:**

### **Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break, Spring Break**

Assignments both short and long-term are not due the day after Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break, and Spring Break. Tests and quizzes are not given the day following these breaks.

### **Labor Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, and Memorial Day**

Homework may be assigned over these weekends, but tests and quizzes are not given the day following.

## **Study Halls**

Middle School students are assigned several study halls per seven-day rotation and are supervised during this time by a faculty member. Study Halls provide time for the completion of homework assignments, quiet reading, review, and research.

## **Assemblies/Weekly Meetings/Class Meetings**

Assemblies, all-school meetings, and grade-level meetings are held regularly throughout the school year.

All-school meetings give students and faculty opportunities to perform, present their work, or lead a discussion about items of community interest and concern. Assemblies usually offer the opportunity to enjoy longer presentations by individuals or outside groups. Student, parent, and faculty suggestions for performers and speakers are always welcome.

## **Break**

Break is from 10:05am-10:20am. Snacks are available for purchase at school and students are welcome to bring a snack from home. Students may eat in designated locations which are communicated annually and are responsible for cleaning up after themselves. Students may only eat in a classroom with teacher permission and supervision.

## **Guests**

Students may invite outside guests to most school events (plays, dances, concerts, sporting events, etc.). They also may bring guests on campus to spend a day, provided that a parent notifies the MS office and provided that such guests are introduced to their advisor and to each class teacher. Guests should dress appropriately and follow all community rules.

## **Lost and Found**

Books and other items found in the Middle School will be put in the Lost and Found on the first floor of the Middle School. There is also a Lost and Found in the athletic area and outside of the Dining Hall. While we do our best to return lost items, periodically lost items will be given away or discarded.

Because lost valuables and large sums of cash are always a source of distress, students should not bring items of value, such as jewelry, to school. All belongings should be kept in a safe place and lockers should always be locked. Labeling all books, materials, and outerwear with your name will help these items get returned quickly.

## **Inclement Weather**

If the school is to be closed because of inclement weather or other emergencies, the school closing identification number (353) will be announced on radio stations and will also be posted on GA's homepage <http://www.germantownacademy.org>. This day will be skipped in the day rotation and the day of the return to school will be as published in the yearly calendar or plan book. If there is a possibility of bad weather, students should plan to bring home any books they might need for the next several days.

If a test is scheduled for the "snow day," it will be given on the first day back, even if a student has other tests scheduled. The same is true for all assigned work.

## **Weather Related Delayed Openings**

On days when there is a delayed opening due to weather, a special schedule is used which allows for all scheduled classes to meet.

## **SERVICE AND FUNDRAISING POLICY**

Germantown Academy is dedicated to raising awareness of the significance of service most specifically through its Community Service Organization. CSO engages in a variety of activities designed to reach out directly to people in need and, at the same time, work with organizations whose mission is to provide vital services to the less fortunate.

It is the goal of Germantown Academy to direct the energy of students toward service and/or product drives rather than fundraising. However, as a pre-kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade institution, it is not feasible for all age groups to provide service at the location of the organizations. As a result, the following guidelines have been created to maintain some of GA's traditional programs and permit a few minimal fundraising activities conducted by the CSO organization.

### **School-wide policy**

Since GA does not grant permission for individually organized fundraisers, the CSO in the three divisions collaborates to identify a few worthy charities each year that focus primarily on student initiative as the vehicle for raising funds.

Each year the entire school participates in the Holiday Program and asks students to bring in a gift for a child in need.

GA will consider other fundraisers when the cause touches so many hearts that the community cries out for action, such as a local, national or world crisis. If all three of the school's divisions wish to contribute to such a cause, a proposal from the CSO faculty advisors must be made to the Heads of Schools. When fundraisers like this do take place, we ask that the amount requested be kept to a minimum to reinforce that the students give of themselves.

Service activities and product drives that include multiple divisions must meet the guidelines of this policy and must be approved first by the CSO faculty advisors and the Heads of Schools.

### **Division Policy**

The Middle School does not engage in large-scale fundraisers and individually organized fundraising activities will not be granted permission.

The Middle School focuses its CSO activities on the gathering of products such as collections of food, clothing and other goods. The CSO students will coordinate and work these fundraisers and will select the charitable organization to receive the proceeds with the permission and direction of the Middle School CSO advisors and the Middle School Administration.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICIES**

The Middle School building is open from 7:50am - 3:00pm. School begins at 8:00am. Students with permission to stay past 3pm will be required to report to the Roberts Family Library or Korman family Pavilion. Use of the gyms or other areas of the school are not permitted without the supervision of a GA faculty member or coach.

### **Communicating Absences/Lateness:**

There is an all-school Absentee/Late phone line: 267-405-7900. Please call this number BEFORE 8:30am on the day that your child will be late or absent.

### **Absences/Lateness**

#### **Excused:**

- Illness (more than 4 consecutive days out of school requires physician's note)
- Religious holidays/instruction
- Medical appointments
- Funerals
- Family emergencies
- Approved Personal Use: family celebrations and non-school sponsored educational tours or trips, up to 3 school days over the entire school year, may be considered excused with a prior written request and approval from the Division Head (see below). In special circumstances, additional days may be approved by the Division Head for co-curricular activities such as performing arts and athletics.

#### **Unexcused:**

- Personal Use: family celebrations and non-school sponsored educational tours/trips without prior written request and administrative approval, or that extend beyond 3 school days over the entire year.

To request approval for up to 3 excused personal use days over the year, parents must email the Head of Middle School, Head Advisor for the grade, and the child's advisor with as much notice as possible, and at least 3 days in advance. Personal use days that do not receive prior approval will be unexcused absences. School policy allows for 10 missed days during the school year before academic placement may be impacted, and 15 missed days during the school year before re-enrollment the following year may be impacted. Exceptions to this policy may be made by the Head of Middle School and/or school administration for medical reasons or extenuating circumstances.

### **Lateness**

Students who check-in with advisors or arrive to school after 8:05am must sign in at the Middle School office. Any student not in class by 8:10am, regardless of the reason, is marked late. The penalty for five unexcused late arrivals to school within a semester is a detention. Students who arrive late due to a late-arriving bus will be excused. A student who arrives after 9:00am without a note from a doctor's office is considered unexcused and the student is ineligible to participate in all after-school or evening activities.

### **Missed Schoolwork for excused absences:**

Each teacher is expected to clearly communicate a policy that instructs students how to obtain assignments when class is missed due to an excused absence. If a student departs school early, it is expected that he or she will check-in with the teachers of any missed classes prior to leaving school. While it is not possible for teachers to replicate or reteach interactive learning experiences for individual students when they are absent for excused absences, they will help students determine how best to make-up missed work and assessments. Students and parents may inquire but should not expect teachers to provide advance classwork or homework.

### **Missed Schoolwork for unexcused absences:**

When student absences are unexcused, it is the student's responsibility to use Veracross and other resources to get and complete missed work. Students may or may not receive full credit for missed work (including assessments).

### **Dental and medical appointments**

Whenever possible, dental or medical appointments should not be scheduled when they would conflict with a class or after-school activity.

### **Illness during the school day**

Students who become ill during the school day must request permission to visit the nurse. The nurse will determine whether or not the student needs to leave campus early and will contact the student's parent or guardian and inform the Middle School Office of the student's departure. Students may not call home and leave school without permission from the nurse or the Middle School Office.

## **Medical Leave of Absence**

In consultation with the Head of Middle School, the school psychologist, the school nurses and the student's physician and family, a medical leave may be requested for a student. Medical leave may be needed if a student has a communicable disease, illness and/or mental health issue that requires treatment and/or otherwise requires student to be absent from school for a period of time. In the event a student is absent due to a communicable disease, GA will follow the policies and procedures of its communicable disease policy.

Teachers will provide lesson plans, modified assignments, and/or online/virtual instruction contingent on the student's ability to work independently. Students are expected to complete the assignments at regular intervals during medical leave if they are medically able to do so.

When a student is ready to return to school from medical leave, Parents must promptly notify GA of their child's anticipated return date. GA will consult with parents and student regarding a plan to transition back into school. GA may require Parents to submit documentation from student's medical doctor and/or other healthcare professional to verify that student is medically cleared to return to school and/or is free of any communicable diseases prior to permitting student to return to school. Students return to school/re-admission is at the discretion of GA.

Under some circumstances, a student on medical leave may need to be retained and/or repeat classes. Head Advisors, Academic Dean, and/or Head of Middle School will consult with teachers, academic advisors and parents in making a determination as to whether a student is adequately prepared in all subject areas for the following grade level, and has met promotion requirements.

## **Immunization**

All students shall be immunized against specific diseases in accordance with state and municipal law and regulations, unless specifically exempt for religious or medical reasons. A certificate of immunization shall be maintained as part of the health record for each student, as required by the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

A student who has not been immunized in accordance with law shall not be admitted to or permitted to attend Germantown Academy, including any extracurricular activities or programs, unless exempted for medical or religious reasons or provisionally admitted by the Head of School.

Monitoring of immunization requirements shall be the responsibility of the Head of School or designee.

## **Communicable Diseases**

Parents should immediately notify the nurses if their child is diagnosed with any communicable health condition. Examples of communicable health conditions include but are not limited to lice, impetigo, pink eye, strep throat and chickenpox. Steps taken will depend on the particular communicable health condition identified. The nurses consult with the Montgomery County Office of Public Health, as needed, to ensure the health and safety of the school community.

Students who have been diagnosed by a physician or are suspected of having a communicable disease by the school nurse shall be excluded from school for the period indicated by regulations of the Pennsylvania Department of Health and Montgomery County Office of Public Health for certain specified diseases and infectious conditions.

Germantown Academy shall report the presence of suspected communicable diseases to the appropriate local health authority, as required by the Pennsylvania Department of Health and Montgomery County Office of Public Health.

The Head of School or designee shall direct that health guidelines and universal precautions designed to minimize the transmission of communicable diseases be implemented in school.

## **Absence from Physical Education Class**

A note from a parent must be presented to the teacher if the student cannot participate in physical activity on a given day due to injury or minor illness. A doctor's written recommendation is necessary to excuse a student from physical education classes due to illness or injury when the student cannot participate in class for more than a week; likewise, a doctor's clearance is needed for return to P.E. Students not participating in PE classes are ineligible to participate in athletics.

## **Participation in after-school activities**

Students are not eligible to participate in sports, evening programs, concerts, trips, dances, or other activities unless they have been on campus since 9:00am. If the student arrives later because of a medical appointment, a doctor's or dentist's note will permit the student to participate in after-school activities. A student who does not take part in Physical Education class may not participate in after-school sports.

### **Leaving campus for an appointment during the school day**

Parents/guardians of students who have to leave campus during the school day must communicate with the Middle School Office *before* departing campus. They must sign out on the clipboard outside the office when they leave and sign back in when they return. *Leaving campus without parental and school permission is a serious violation of school rules and may result in suspension, as the School assumes responsibility for students' welfare throughout the school day.*

### **Early Dismissal Procedures**

In case of bad weather, school will remain in session unless the Head of School announces otherwise, and we will maintain our regular schedule as long as we can. We release students whose buses arrive or who are leaving with a parent/guardian approved driver. Students must sign out indicating the time they departed, where they are going, and with whom. Early bus arrivals will be announced. Any students who are on campus after 3:00 p.m. on such days will report to the designated place and remain there until a parent arrives. Electronic Contingency cards in the Middle School Office will be kept on file and must be updated if circumstances change.

## **STUDENT LIFE**

### **Counseling**

When a student begins experiencing social, emotional, or academic difficulties, it is important to seek help before those problems become overwhelming. There are many avenues for formal and informal counseling at GA, and students are encouraged to take advantage of them. The classroom teacher (for specific academic difficulties) and the advisor (for general concerns) are always available to speak with parents or students. Usually, if approached when the problem is still minor, they can help relieve the anxiety the student feels or direct the student to someone who can. Also available to students and their families are extra help sessions, student or outside tutors, and parent conferences.

While we do not assume any change in a child's behavior at school necessarily reflects an underlying problem, we do recognize that adolescence is a time of stress for many children. Parents and teachers should be aware of normal developmental patterns during puberty and should be alert to significant deviations from students' usual behavior. The Middle School Psychologist supports students directly and works with parents and teachers on behalf of students with a variety of personal problems. Parents and the Head of Middle School are notified in cases where a student may speak of or participate in harm to self, others, damage to property, violation of school policies, or any illegal or similarly unsafe behavior.

Additionally, the Psychologist may make classroom observations or participate in mediations to seek resolution in student-to-student or faculty-student conflicts. Please note that this aspect of the role differs from the confidentiality and privacy protocols provided in the more therapeutic aspects of the role mentioned above.

### **Advisory**

Each student is assigned to an advisory that meets multiple times a week with an advisor. The advisory period is a time for the students to get to know one another, attend to administrative details like taking attendance, check on student progress, hold a discussion, attend grade level or Middle School meetings, and prepare for the day ahead.

Advisors serve as the primary point of contact for each of their advisees. Advisors monitor and support the social and academic progress of students in their advisory. Parent conferences are held biannually with the advisor.

### **Advisory/Course Placement**

We make placement decisions based on our understanding of students' academic, emotional, and social profiles, the parameters of the schedule, and class and grade dynamics. As a result, we cannot honor individual requests for specific teachers or advisors.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR LIFE**

### **Extracurricular Requirement**

Middle school students are required to participate in at least one on-campus sport or in the theatre program each year. The time involved is normally Monday to Thursday, 3:15-4:45. Theatre may require more time as the production date gets closer. Arrangements are made for students seeking to do both athletics and drama.

### **Exceptions to the requirement**

Exceptions to the on-campus requirement will be considered for students whose special talents or interests warrant a major commitment to some outside activity not offered by the school. Exemption request forms are available from the Assistant Director of Athletics for Middle School and should be submitted by October 1.

## Activities and Clubs

Activities and clubs provide opportunities for students and teachers to mix at various levels and explore areas of common interest. They enable students and teachers to see one another in a different light and provide regular and productive time together.

Examples of recent activities/clubs offered include:

- Book Club
- Art for the Community Club
- Community Service Organization (CSO)
- Chess Club
- Green Ambassadors
- In Our Own Write* – the literary magazine
- Math Counts Club
- Student Government Association
- Reading Olympics
- Jazz Band
- Karaoke Club
- Ski Club

Other activities are offered each year depending on student and faculty interest.

## Student Government Association (SGA)

The SGA consists of elected officers who are responsible for providing leadership and a voice for the student body, as well as leading discussions on ways to improve life in the Middle School. The SGA is also responsible for promoting school spirit, organizing social activities, and serving as helpers for community events.

The formal officers of SGA include eighth grade co-presidents and an eighth-grade vice-president who are elected by the MS student body, an appointed secretary, and up to five elected representatives for each grade. All community members are invited to attend weekly meetings.

## School Spirit Events

The Middle School SGA sponsors three after-school events each year, usually in the fall, winter, and spring. Although the officers of SGA are responsible for the planning and running of the events, all students are encouraged to serve on committees charged with various aspects of the events.

### Events guidelines:

1. Events are typically held from 7:30 to 9:30.
2. The school is locked during the events and the Middle School building are inaccessible; students are not allowed to go to their lockers for books, clothing, or other belongings.
3. For some events, students are allowed to bring guests. There is a registration card to fill out prior to the event, and the GA student is responsible for their guest's behavior.
4. Students must follow the same behavioral guidelines in effect during the school day.
5. Students may not leave the event unless their parents/guardians or adults designated by their parents get approval to do so.
6. At least one chaperone will remain at the school until all students have been picked up after the dance.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### Back-to-School Night

Early in the school year, parents are invited to campus to meet their child's teachers and hear about their courses of study.

### Class Trips

Each grade takes an overnight class trip.

### Grade Level Parent Orientations

In September and October, the Middle School team holds grade level orientation meetings for parents/guardians. In the spring, an orientation is held for incoming sixth grade and new to GA families.

### Concerts

The Junior Chorus, the Senior Chorus, the Concert Band, and the String Ensemble perform at a Winter Concert in early December and a Spring Concert in May.

### Drama

We present a fall play and a winter musical with Friday and Saturday performances.

### **Grandfriends' Morning**

Every other year Germantown Academy hosts Grandfriends' Morning. Students are encouraged to invite their grandparents or other special older guests to spend part of the day with them to visit classes.

### **Science Fair**

Each eighth-grade student presents his or her independent science research project at the GA Science Fair each year.

### **Greek Day**

Every spring the Middle School competes in a field day in which each student is on one of three teams: the Spartans, the Athenians, and the Persians. Students remain on the same team for each year in the Middle School.

### **Final Assembly**

A Final Assembly is held annually at the conclusion of each school year to bring the Middle School community together before we depart for the summer, to honor the eighth-grade students as they prepare to enter the Upper School, and to recognize those eighth grade students who have distinguished themselves academically. Students are also honored for overall contributions to life in the Middle School. Attendance by eighth-grade students is mandatory, and families of eighth graders and award winners are invited. There is a dress code for final assembly sent home in May.

## **ATHLETICS**

***Germantown Academy's approach to athletics is rooted in our school's mission. We seek to inspire our student-athletes to be confident, collaborative, and honorable in their pursuit of sportsmanship, teamwork, leadership, and lifelong fitness.***

**1. GA seeks to offer an inclusive, sequential, and rigorous athletic program.**

*Every student has an opportunity to pursue an athletic interest.*

- GA strives to accommodate every student who wishes to play a specific sport.
- Every team will offer high quality training and competition in order to provide skill development for a range of athletic abilities and interests.
- In order to ensure a sequential program, GA will pursue a vertically aligned program in which the US Head Varsity Coach is responsible for the oversight of the entire MS/US program, its coaches, and program/team/athlete development.

**2. GA will be committed to competing successfully throughout our athletic program.**

*Successful athletic programs foster student interest, passion, and growth in knowledge, skills, work ethic, perseverance, and respect for oneself and others. Most importantly, successful athletic programs balance the roles of student and athlete, and tend to the physical and emotional health and wellness of our students.*

- GA will take a developmentally appropriate, flexible approach to placing students on athletic teams.
- Typically GA will offer different competitive levels for each sport to provide student-athletes with appropriate training and playing time at their respective skill level within their division, regardless of grade level, while always keeping a student's social development in mind.
- In the Middle School, all athletes will have a regular opportunity to compete, but equal playing time may not be possible in all sports at all levels.
- In the Upper School, the best student-athletes will generally play more, especially in competitive varsity matches.
- As a college preparatory school, GA's coaches and college counselors will support and advocate for qualified student-athletes who seek to pursue their sport at the collegiate level.

**3. GA strives to develop and attract talented student-athletes and teacher-coaches.**

*Exceptional coaches engage their players in the sport the way that master teachers engage their students in the curriculum. They are good teachers of their game and they inspire and grow our student-athletes. Committed student-athletes contribute meaningfully to our school as scholars first and also in athletics and other extracurricular arenas.*

- GA will actively recruit qualified teacher-coaches who have played and/or coached their sport at a high level and support coaches with relevant, current professional development opportunities. Teacher-coaches will meet the same standard of teaching excellence as other faculty.
- As needed, GA will augment the teacher-coach model with outside experts who are committed to the GA mission.
- GA will attract, develop, and assist student-athletes in their quest to pursue athletics from the beginner level to the highest level of competition. Student-athletes will meet the same range of admission standards as all GA students.

### **Middle School Athletics**

The Middle School athletic program offers students an introduction to a variety of sports, with an emphasis on skill development. At this level, we seek to maintain competitive teams while also valuing participation, including active involvement in practice and in games and support of teammates throughout each season.

## **Code of Conduct**

### **Players should...**

- Prioritize academic achievement and commitments over athletics.
- Strive for excellence, play hard, and abide by the letter and the spirit of the rules.
- Value one's own integrity, exercise self-control, and set a good example for others.
- Treat all players, officials, and coaches with respect and courtesy.
- Welcome and accept constructive criticism.
- Value the contribution of each team member and emphasize the importance of the team over oneself.
- Keep the importance of winning in perspective.
- Win and lose gracefully.
- Remember that it is a privilege to represent one's school.

## **Attendance Expectations**

- Students are expected to attend every scheduled practice. Failure to do so will result in reduced playing time and, if necessary, in loss of credit or dismissal from the team.
- Unless excused, students must be on campus by 9:00 a.m. to participate in practice or competition that afternoon.
- Students with a medical excuse for physical education may not participate in athletics.
- If a student cannot attend practice for longer than a week for medical reasons, a note from a physician must be presented.
- Absence for religious commitments is excused. Students and/or parents should notify the coach in advance.
- Absence for personal reasons requires a written note from the student's parents.
- A student may be excused for extra help or afterschool study hall on an individual basis. Extra help and make-up tests take precedence over practice but not necessarily over games.

## **Changing/Quitting Teams**

The "trial period" at the beginning of each season is a chance for young student-athletes to get a feel for a sport. Students may change teams during this period of time. However, as we want to teach students the importance of commitment to a team, students are strongly encouraged to honor this commitment after the trial period. Students should discuss concerns with their coach and their advisor before reaching a decision.

## **Team Placement**

GA strives to accommodate every student who wishes to play a specific sport. Depending on the number of participants, teams may be divided into varsity, JV, and/or 3rd teams. In squash, tennis, and basketball, it is sometimes necessary to limit roster sizes. In such cases, students will have the opportunity to switch to another sport, or, depending on interest and space availability, GA may offer alternatives to our interscholastic sports program.

With respect to team placement, our Middle School program takes a flexible approach based upon participation numbers for each sport each year. We will look at the composition of teams and treat athletes as individuals. Our coaches will place athletes on the Middle School team that will best foster their athletic growth and skill development, while keeping their socio-emotional growth and safety in mind.

## **Fundraising & Team Gear**

Teams may not hold fundraisers or solicit money without prior approval of the Assistant Director of Athletics for Middle School. Team gear will be available for purchase at the beginning of each season through an on-line team store. More information will be emailed to parents each season.

## **Concerns**

The most effective way for a parent to address a concern is to speak directly to the coach. Since it may be unwise to do so during practice or immediately after a game, an appointment should be made. If the issue involves playing time, the player should speak to the coach first. If the concern remains unresolved after a discussion with the coach, it may be appropriate for the Assistant Director of Athletics for Middle School to become involved.

## **INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS**

### **Practices and Games**

Middle School teams practice from Monday through Thursday. All practices end by 4:45pm. Games will usually run later than scheduled practice times. Games and practices are not scheduled on any days when school is closed.

With few exceptions, students are dismissed at 3:00 p.m. for home games and at 2:15 p.m. for away games.



The school provides transportation to and from all off-campus athletic events. Students may leave from an away game only with his or her parents and should stay until the end of the game.

### **TeamApp**

Coaches will use TeamApp to communicate with parents and athletes. While TeamApp messages are also sent via email, parents are encouraged to download the app. Instructions and invitations to join will be sent out at the beginning of each season.

### **Schedule Changes/Game Cancellations**

The published schedules are subject to change. We will inform students and families of changes as soon as possible through TeamApp. Schedule changes are posted in the Middle School, on TeamApp, and on the GA webpage. On rainy days, final decisions are made by 1:30 p.m. Parents may also subscribe to a feed for an electronic calendar through the athletics webpage (note that though changes will appear on your calendar, you will not be alerted to them).

### **Uniforms**

Uniforms are provided by the school and issued at the beginning of each season. Uniforms must be returned after the last game of the season. Students will not receive a uniform for the next season until these uniforms are returned, and their student account will be charged. *Please note:* The equipment manager does not have extra uniforms to lend out to students who forget theirs on a game day.

### **Equipment**

With few exceptions, Middle School students are responsible for providing their own equipment. The necessary items for each sport are communicated to families prior to the start of each season.

### **Sports Injuries**

Germantown Academy has a fully certified trainer on staff. The trainer will also serve as a resource for the treatment and rehabilitation of sports injuries. Coaches are certified in CPR. The trainer is the point person for GA's return to play protocols surrounding more serious injuries, including concussions. The trainer and/or coach will handle injuries occurring at home games. The staff of the opposing school will handle injuries at away games. If a serious injury occurs, parents will be notified as soon as possible.

### **Supervision After Sports**

Students involved in after-school activities must go to the library or the Pavilion for pick-up following practices and games. Students may work in the library until it closes Monday through Thursday, and security will supervise the pavilion until 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Students may not be in the gyms, locker rooms, or areas other than the library or Pavilion once after-school activities are complete.

# Middle School Standards of Conduct

*These Standards of Conduct may be modified or amended at any time at GA's sole discretion.*

## Introduction

Being a good citizen requires that we treat others with kindness and respect, recognize and appreciate differences, work hard, be honest and fair-minded, be an active participant in school life, and make a positive contribution every day. To that end we have the following guiding principles and specific policies:

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- treat everyone (self, classmates, teachers, substitutes, visitors) with kindness and respect
- understand that words are powerful; use them to do good, not to do harm
- speak up when you see someone doing something hurtful or dangerous
- welcome and reach out to new students and faculty, substitutes, and guests
- behave as responsibly when adults are absent as when they are present
- respect the privacy of classmates and teachers
- respect your own possessions and those of others
- take care of your school – respect the campus, keep it clean, recycle, and encourage others to do likewise
- understand that, as a member of a community, each of us must balance our own wishes and needs with those of others; the common good should guide our choices and decisions
- show a willingness to help solve problems
- show pride in ourselves, our families, our school and our community
- recognize that those who came before us built the school we enjoy today and that each of us has a responsibility to safeguard and strengthen our school for those who follow us

## DIVISION POLICIES

*These policies outline the Middle School's expectations for behavior and the consequences for not meeting those expectations. Any behaviors viewed as inconsiderate, disrespectful, or reckless, or as inconsistent with the principles expressed in the Mission Statement, whether they are described below or not, are subject to disciplinary action.*

### Germantown Academy Civility Pledge

In living its Mission, GA pledges to be a community grounded in respect and committed to courtesy.

I agree to adhere to the standards embedded in the Civility Pledge and in the Mission Statement throughout my interactions in the GA community, including curricular, extra-curricular, and social environments by:

1. Honoring GA's mission as an inclusive, diverse community.
2. Treating all members of GA with respect and civility.
3. Supporting an educational environment that encourages the development of positive learning attitudes and habits.
4. Seeking understanding in the spirit of collaboration.
5. Communicating compassionately and honorably.

### Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policies and Protocols

Germantown Academy is committed to fostering a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for all students and employees that is free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Transgender and gender nonconforming people have the right to discuss and express their gender identity and expression openly and to decide when, with whom, and how much to share private information. Every person has the right to be addressed by a name and pronoun that corresponds to the person's gender identity. A court-ordered name or gender change is not required, and the person need not change his or her official records. Germantown Academy maintains separate bathrooms for males and females. Transgender or gender nonconforming people may use the bathroom that corresponds to their gender identity asserted at school. All bathrooms have stalls for privacy. Germantown Academy maintains separate locker and shower rooms for males and females. For physical education and athletics, transgender and gender nonconforming students may use the locker room and shower that corresponds to their gender identity consistently asserted at school. All locker rooms have changing stalls and showers with curtains for privacy. People who desire increased privacy may use any of the single stall, gender neutral restrooms for changing, regardless of the underlying reason. All

students shall be permitted to participate in physical education classes and athletics in a manner consistent with their gender identity. Furthermore, all students shall be permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics in a manner consistent with their gender identity.

## **Academic Honesty**

### ***Tests, Quizzes, and Exams***

Telling the truth and assuming responsibility for one's own work lie at the heart of academic life.

Copying another's work or making it possible for others to copy carries disciplinary and academic consequences for the student who copies and, if with the other student's knowledge, for the other student as well.

Students are guilty of cheating if, for example, they bring information into a test, have materials visible during a test, seek or provide answers during a test, or pass along information about a test, etc. This policy applies equally to quizzes, tests, and exams. Sometimes students may act in such a way that they compromise themselves without intent to cheat. Thinking that a test is over, for example, a student may ask a classmate a question before turning in his or her paper. A consequence for a breach of this policy is necessary regardless of the student's intent or understanding.

### ***Plagiarism***

Plagiarism is the act of submitting someone else's work as one's own, whether word for word or the general idea. To avoid plagiarism, students must cite all sources used, including information from the Internet as well as from printed material. Teachers and the school librarians are available to help students understand what constitutes plagiarism if they are uncertain.

The results of group work vary with the project. When individual reports are required, it is assumed that students have completed them independently. In such cases (for example, a lab report) if the content of the students' submissions is the same, the work will be considered plagiarized. If a group project is required, the names of all students who worked on it should be included, designating what each individual did if applicable.

## **Additional Honors Offenses**

Lying, copying homework, allowing someone to copy your homework, forging a parent's signature, cheating, repeated plagiarism, and sharing test information are considered honors offenses.

## **Academic Probation (AP)**

Students who earn three grades of C- or below or two grades below C- may be placed on Academic Probation; students who earn three grades below C- will be placed on academic probation. This determination is made after careful review of the student's progress by their teachers, advisor, Head Advisor, Academic Dean, and Head of Middle School. After the student is placed on AP, a support plan is developed for the student that includes regular communication home about progress. At re-enrollment time, a student on academic probation can expect to have their re-enrollment contract withheld. If improvement is not demonstrated within the time limit established in the support plan, or if the plan is not followed, the student's enrollment at GA may be in jeopardy.

## **Classroom Dismissal**

If student behavior during class is sufficiently disruptive to prevent or hinder instruction, a student may be dismissed to the Middle School Office. Upon arriving to the Office, the student completes the Classroom Dismissal Form, has a discussion to reflect on the cause of the dismissal, and the student's advisor and parents/guardians are notified about the dismissal and any consequences.

## **Leaving Campus (Modifications may be made to this policy in 2022-23)**

Middle School students may not leave campus during the school day, nor are they permitted to leave campus between the end of the academic day and the start of their after-school activities. If given permission on their contingency card, students may cross over to Rich's Deli and return to campus without supervision ONLY after the completion of all after-school obligations. **Middle School students are NOT allowed to walk from campus to Wawa (or any location other than Rich's Deli).**

## **Conduct Inside the School Buildings**

Conduct and conversation in buildings should maintain safety and decorum. Loud, boisterous, or reckless behavior, running in the halls, and roughhousing inside the building make daily life uncomfortable and unsafe for others. Those who do not contribute to a positive tone will lose privileges and will be subject to further disciplinary action unless their behavior improves.

## **Lockers**

Each student is assigned a locker. Lockers come with built-in locks. Students should not share locker combination with anyone, and at no time should students open other students' lockers. Students are expected to keep their lockers tidy, closed, and locked. Students may hang their personal school schedule inside their lockers, and any decorative material or messages placed on the outside of the locker door should be removed at the end of the day.

## **Backpacks**

Students are allowed to carry their backpacks with them during the school day. Additional backpack guidelines will be provided at the start of the school year.

## **Smartphones & cell phones**

Smartphones and cell phones may not be used during the school day from 8am-3pm. Any phones that are seen or heard between 8am-3pm (with the one exception that follows) will be confiscated and kept in the MS Office until 3pm. Additional consequences may be given. If family-student communication is absolutely necessary, students will be permitted to text with their parents/guardians at the conclusion of lunch, from 12:45pm-12:55pm. Students needing to communicate with parents/guardians at other times must ask permission of a faculty member or go to the Middle School Office.

## **Electronic Games & Social Media**

Non-academic/curricular games are not allowed to be played on electronic devices during the academic day (8am– 3pm). Academic or curricular games may only be played with the permission of a Middle School faculty member. Social media may not be used by Middle School students during the academic day.

## **Study Hall Expectations**

Study hall happens during the Middle School's flex period. Students should adhere to the following guidelines when in study hall:

### General guidelines:

- Arrive promptly, quietly, and with all materials for the entire period. If you have a music lesson, want to participate in a club, or have pass to meet with a teacher or go to the library, be sure to sign-out with the appropriate adult (proctor or advisor) prior to departing.
- Work silently and productively

### Library: **(Library use may modified in 2022-23. Changes will be communicated separately)**

- Obtain a library pass from your classroom teacher, a librarian, or your advisor prior to the start of the study hall period.
- Check-in to the library upon arrival.
- Do not use personal electronic devices without the permission of a librarian.
- Students are not allowed to listen to music.
- Remain in the library for the duration of the study hall period.

### Music:

- Students may use their tablet PC to listen to music with headphones during study halls (with the exception of in the library).
- If listening to music is distracting to a student and/or their peers, the student will be asked to turn the music off.

## **Food and Drink**

In order to care for our constituents and our property, Germantown Academy has designated certain areas for the enjoyment of food and drink. Food and drink can be enjoyed in the Pavilion, the Academic Courtyard, the Middle School Commons and Green (area in front of the Middle School Auditorium), Middle School Alcoves, Connor Quad, classrooms when supervised by a faculty member, the Belfry lobby, the Dining and Common Rooms, and the Athletic Hall of Fame area. Light snacks are allowed in the library with permission of the librarians, and the understanding that students clean up after themselves and are respectful of the shared library space. Students must ask the librarian at the desk for permission to bring snacks and eat in the library. Food and drink may be consumed in Middle School hallways as long as students clean up after themselves. Food and drink may not be consumed in the tech centers, the Arts Center theatre, the artificial turf fields or athletic locker rooms. Trash and recycle centers are located throughout the school so everyone can take responsibility for their surroundings. Middle School students may not chew gum on campus during the school day (8am-3pm).

## **School Store**

Middle School Students may only purchase food and drink from the school store before school begins (7:45-8am), and during break (10:05-10:20am). Students may also purchase food in the School store after school, as long as they are not late for their ride, the bus, or their after-school activity.

## **Elevator**

Elevators serve those who cannot, for some reason, use the stairs. Students who require this accommodation must ask permission from the Middle School Office.

## **Lunch**

Both the Dining Room and the Common Room are reserved for Middle School students at lunch from 12:25pm until 12:55 p.m. Students are welcome to eat outside on Connor Quad as well. Students are not permitted to spend their lunch period in the library, Pavilion or MS Commons.

Students must clean up after themselves and be dismissed by one of the faculty members on duty. Recycling is expected.

### **Library obligations**

Students who borrow materials from the library have a responsibility to return the materials on time. Overdue notices are sent to students' GA email addresses. Students may be charged the replacement cost for lost or damaged library materials if the item is not returned within three weeks of the last due date.

### **Musical Instruments & Athletic Equipment**

Musical instruments must be stored in the instrument storage room or first floor storage area of the Middle School. Athletic equipment must be stored in the second-floor equipment storage area. The fire code prohibits the placement of any of these items on hallway floors or in doorways.

### **Privacy**

The desks, telephones, papers, plan books, grade books, computers, briefcases, closets, and other private property of adults are all off limits to students, as are faculty and administrative offices, the faculty room, photocopiers, and other equipment.

### **School Bus Conduct**

Students are expected to follow all bus rules and demonstrate respect for the bus driver and all passengers. Consequences in keeping with GA's response to infractions of school standards will be imposed for not maintaining appropriate conduct. A student's bus privileges may be revoked.

### **Community Standards for Off-Campus Behavior**

The school believes that upholding standards for off-campus behavior is and should be primarily the responsibility of the students themselves and their parents. The Civility Pledge is a good guide. However, in certain cases of off-campus behavior, school action might also be necessary to maintain the integrity of the institution.

Therefore, the school reserves the right to take action whether in the form of educating, censuring, warning, and/or adding a letter to the in-school file of any students whose behavior at any time or place diminishes the safety, physical welfare, or emotional well-being of others; damages private or public property; undermines the morale, discipline, work, and/or activities of the community.

The school also reserves the right to separate immediately and permanently any student or family from the school, whose out-of-school behavior is repeatedly unacceptable and/or suggests a clear and present danger to others.

### **Technology Responsible Use Policy (RUP)**

Each year Middle School students and parents/guardians sign a version of the following Technology Responsible Use Policy prior to the start of the school year.

#### **Middle School Technology Responsible Use Policy 2022-2023**

In the Middle School at Germantown Academy, we are committed to the enhancement of our programs through the responsible use of technology. Students are expected to use technology in purposeful, meaningful, and efficient ways that develop 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and learning. Students and their parents/guardians annually review and sign the *Middle School Technology Responsible Use Policy*.

Additionally, parents/guardians should review the school's comprehensive *Germantown Academy Technology Responsible Use Policy*. This comprehensive Policy is located on the Germantown Academy website.

1. I will handle all school devices with care (tablet PC, computer, etc.) and will be responsible for up to \$450 if a school device is lost or damaged (including accidental damage). Please see *Responses to RUP Violations* below for additional details.
2. I will be responsible for the use of school devices, as not to damage or change any of the hardware, software, or installed apps. If something seems to be wrong with a school device, I will notify a teacher or the Technology Department immediately.
3. I will not leave a school device assigned to me unattended. I will not swap or lend my device or accessories with anyone.
4. I will respect others' work by not accessing, moving, editing, or deleting anything that is not mine.
5. I will respect others by not cyberbullying. I will not intimidate, humiliate, or put another person down through my use of technology or devices (tablet PC, computer, iPad, smartphone, etc.).
6. I will respect others by not using language that is hurtful to a person because of their race, gender, sexuality, religion or other aspect of their identity, or perceived identity, when communicating on school or personal devices (tablet PC, computer, iPad, smartphone etc.) with others.
7. I will only use appropriate language, pictures, and videos when I am using technology and social media, and I will speak with an adult (advisor, teacher, counselor, parent) if or when I see something that is inappropriate.
8. While at school, I will use devices for school-related work and activities only. I will only use programs, apps, or websites with the approval of MS Faculty members and/or the Technology Department.

9. I will adhere to the following additional guidelines & expectations:
- I will check Germantown Academy email & Veracross daily.
  - I will only use a device outside of classes at permitted times.
  - I will not use devices while consuming food or drink.
  - I will follow the directions and instructions of teachers and put my devices away when I am told to do so.

### **Virtual Instruction-E Safety**

- GA may offer virtual instruction due to required school closures for a State, Federal and/or local emergency. Virtual instruction may be conducted via Zoom and/or similar video conferencing technology. In the event that virtual instruction is provided to students, the following guidelines should be adhered to:
- Students may not change their name and must use their name as registered and/or name they are known as at GA. Students are not permitted to log in under or as another student, employee or guest's name.
- Students are responsible for the use of their individual access and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their account. Students shall not reveal their passwords and/or other access information.
- A parent, guardian, and/or other responsible adult must supervise the student while participating in the virtual instruction/video conferencing. Students shall not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, hateful, threatening, or disrespectful language while participating in the virtual instruction.
- Failure to comply with this policy, the responsible use policy and/or or inappropriate use of the videoconferencing technology shall result in usage restrictions, loss of access privileges and/or disciplinary action in accordance with GA's policies and procedures.

### **Violations of the MS Technology Responsible Policy:**

Violations of the Responsible Use Policy will be handled on a case-by-case basis. What follows is an outline of typical responses and consequences for when students violate the *Middle School Responsible Use Policy*. The information below is not comprehensive and any consequence can be implemented at any time.

**Replacement Fees for Accessories:** All replacement accessories MUST be purchased from the GA Tech Office. Lost, Damaged, or noncompliant hardware will be billed according to the fee schedule below:

Tablet stylus replacement: \$80

Tablet keyboard/type cover replacement: \$130

Tablet power supply replacement: \$80

### **Replacement Fees for Tablets:**

Any physical damage, including cracked screens and broken hinges, or loss of the tablet itself requires complete replacement. The charge will be the full \$450 deductible. Devices MUST be brought to the Tech Office as soon as damage is noticed.

### **Advisor Notices:**

Students may be given advisor notices for initial minor violations of the *Middle School Responsible Use Policy* (especially lines 2-9 or the RUP).

### **Detention(s):**

Students may be assigned one or more detentions for repeated minor violations or a single major violation of the *Middle School Responsible Use Policy* (especially lines 2-9 or the RUP).

### **Loss of Privileges:**

If there is a pattern of behavior that suggests an inability to meet the articulated expectations of responsible technology use, students will lose some or all device privileges.

### **Suspension:**

Major violations of the articulated expectations of responsible technology use or an ongoing pattern of minor infractions will result in suspension.

### **Dismissal:**

It is possible that a single major violation, or repeated minor violations, of the *Middle School Responsible Use Policy* could result in dismissal from Germantown Academy.

**Note:**

Cyberbullying and the online use of language that is hurtful because of a person's race, gender, sexuality, religion or other aspect of their identity, or perceived identity, is a major violation of the *Middle School Responsible Use Policy*.

**Network Use**

The network user who damages systems through acts prohibited by the RUP is responsible for all repair costs incurred by the school. Users may not move, repair, reconfigure, modify, or attach external devices to existing systems; users may not install software on the network. Students may not tamper with, add to, or change in any way any of the applications or software with which the school computers have been equipped.

It is forbidden to break, to vandalize or otherwise destroy or damage school computers, mice, printers, projectors, earphones, and/or other hardware that is the property of GA.

**BULLYING, HARASSMENT, & HAZING POLICY**

Bullying, harassment, and hazing in any form will not be tolerated. Any student who is the target of bullying, harassment, or hazing, or has witnessed an incident of bullying, harassment, or hazing is strongly encouraged to promptly report the matter to a Middle School faculty member, Head Advisor, Middle School Psychologist, Director of Student Life, or Head of Middle School. Students are also strongly encouraged to use the Safe2Say Something anonymous reporting system. All complaints will be investigated thoroughly by Germantown Academy.

***Bullying:***

We broadly define bullying as the repeated use of a written, verbal, electronic expression, physical act, or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at the victim, that:

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the targeted student or damage to the targeted student's property;
- Places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property
- Creates a hostile environment at school for the targeted student; Infringes on the rights of the targeted student at school; or
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of the school.

***Harassment:***

Whether direct or indirect, blatant or subtle, verbal or physical, any behavior that stigmatizes, victimizes, targets, or interferes with another member of the school community for any reason, including race, gender, sexuality, disability, religion or other aspect of their identity, or perceived identity, ethnic origin, ancestry, color or physical attributes, is expressly forbidden.

Examples of bullying and harassment include, but are not limited to:

- electronic communication involving physical threats and/or malicious gossip and slander;
- hit lists or polls naming specific students and/or teachers;
- stealing passwords and misrepresenting oneself;
- changing others' personal profiles;
- making sexual advances;
- visual conduct; e.g., leering, making sexual gestures, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters;
- taking, distributing, sharing, and/or posting inappropriate, humiliating, or explicit photos, images, videos, or content of oneself or others;
- verbal conduct; e.g., making derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, jokes, verbal sexual propositions, verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentary about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, suggestive or obscene language, letters, notes or invitations, malicious gossip and rumor spreading;
- physical conduct; e.g., assault, touching, impeding, or blocking one's movement.

***Hazing:***

Hazing refers to any situation or action which endangers or has the potential to endanger the mental or physical health or safety of a person or which willfully destroys or removes public or private property for the purposes of becoming, remaining, or participating in any group. The fact that the person consented to participate in the activity is no defense. Any situation or activity that, for the purposes becoming, remaining, or participating in any group, produces or could be expected to produce mental, emotional or physical discomfort, fright, degradation, moral compromise, humiliation, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule to the student is hazing. A person violates this policy whenever he or she engages, assists, or attempts to engage or assist in the planning or committing of any hazing activity, whether on or off campus or other School property. All members of our School community, including, students, faculty, and staff, are responsible for immediately reporting any hazing activity or plans for any hazing activity to the appropriate faculty member, Division Head, Athletic Director, or the Head of School. The failure to make such a report is also a violation of this policy. Any athletic team/sport, club, association, organization, or other group who authorizes hazing may be sanctioned by the School. Such sanctions include, without limitation, fines, suspension of operation, loss of use of School facilities, loss of funding, and withdrawal of permission to operate. No adverse action will be taken against any person who makes a good faith report of hazing activity.

Hazing activities include, but are not limited to:

- any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping, paddling, kicking, striking, beating, branding, writing or marking on a person's skin or clothes, forced calisthenics, exposure to the elements or other physical abuse;
- Forced head shaving, haircut, or other forced modification of any part of the body
- acts of personal servitude (i.e., forced labor or service);
- sleep deprivation;
- forced exclusion from social or verbal contact;
- kidnapping or strandings;
- restrictions on personal hygiene;
- yelling, swearing, insulting or demeaning verbal abuse;
- being forced to wear embarrassing or humiliating attire;
- consumption of any food, drug, vile or other non-food substances, or alcohol;
- smearing of skin with vile substances;
- performing sexual simulation or sexual acts;
- stunts or dares, whether public or private, that could result in physical injury or harm to a person's mental, emotional or social well-being;
- activities causing physical or mental fatigue;
- physical or psychological shock;
- placing any person in a situation of actual or simulated peril or jeopardy;
- any theft/destruction/damage of public or private property; or
- any act in violation of the law or School policy, and any other activity that could fall within the definition of hazing.

When the School administration becomes aware of any instance of bullying, harassment, or hazing, the situation will be promptly investigated. In the event that the school concludes behaviors to be bullying or harassment, an administrator will contact the family of the student engaged in bullying or harassment to inform them of the complaint and outcome of the investigation. Depending on the school's assessment of the severity of the offense, consequences and interventions may include but are not limited to the following:

- A required intervention meeting with school psychologist, student, parents/guardians, and Middle School administrator. This meeting must take place prior to a student's return to the classroom setting
- Suspension from school for a day or several days
- A comprehensive intervention plan that includes professional counseling outside of the school setting
- Permission for the school psychologist to be in communication with the outside professional counselor
- A Restorative Practices process between the student who bullied and the victim of bullying
- Increased structure and supervision
- Loss of privileges and/or temporary removal from areas of the school
- With a pattern of bullying behaviors established, a student may be placed on disciplinary probation
- If the school determines that a student's bullying behaviors negatively impact the school's ability to provide a safe environment for other students or adults, the school may advise the family to withdraw the student from school or the school may proceed with expulsion
- Persons violating this policy may also be subject to civil liability or criminal liability under Pennsylvania law.

### *Complaint Procedures*

Any student who is the target of bullying, harassment, or hazing or has witnessed an incident of bullying, harassment, or hazing is strongly encouraged to promptly report the matter to a Middle School faculty member, Head Advisor, Middle School Psychologist, Director of Student Life, or Head of Middle School. Students are also strongly encouraged to use the Safe2Say Something anonymous reporting system. All complaints will be investigated thoroughly by Germantown Academy. Complaints will be processed in a manner which protects the complainant and maintains the individual's confidentiality, to the greatest extent possible.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

GA is committed to maintaining a school environment free of discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment. Sexual harassment of any kind at school or school-sponsored events including activities, locations, on school property, or on busses and/or at any education program as defined in Title IX is unlawful and strictly prohibited. GA requires all GA personnel and students to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner, with respect for others in the GA community.

GA will take reasonable and appropriate action to prevent, address, and eliminate sexual harassment in the education program and activities in every school, school sponsored activity, and on school property or on busses. This effort shall include, but is not limited to, monitoring and supervision to prevent, detect, and correct instances of sexual harassment; eliminating any hostile environment; conducting investigations of complaints, formal or informal, of sexual harassment; protecting victims of sexual harassment; instituting remedial measures; and educating GA personnel, students, parents, and guardians about sexual harassment and this policy.



GA will designate and authorize at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with its Title IX responsibilities, which employee will be referred to as the "Title IX Coordinator. "GA will notify applicants for admission and employment, students, parents or legal guardians of elementary and secondary school students, employees, of the name or title, office address, electronic mail address, and telephone number of the employee or employees designated as the Title IX Coordinator.

Sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would determine is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's education program or activity; sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking.

GA will investigate complaints of sexual harassment and provide due process rights in full compliance with the requirements of Title IX. In the event that it is concluded that behaviors engaged in by a student constitute sexual harassment, the consequences may include, but are not limited to, removal or withdraw from school and/or expulsion.

### **Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco**

The use, possession, or distribution by students of illegal drugs, alcohol, and tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, vapes, mods, or Juuls, will not be tolerated. Students have the right to attend school in a drug and alcohol free environment. Students shall not use, possess, sell, distribute, or transfer illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, unauthorized medication or alcohol, and they shall not be under the influence of drugs or alcohol prior to coming to school, at any time during the school day on or off school premises or at any school-related activity. The School's response to violations of this policy may include, but are not limited to counseling, suspension, and expulsion. Violators may be required to submit to drug testing as a condition of being readmitted to school. Reported or rumored use, *in all cases*, will be shared with the parents of the reported student.

### **Violence**

Incidents of violence will not be tolerated in any form. This includes acts or threats of violence against students, staff, or any visitors to a school or school property, or at any school sponsored activity, on or off school grounds or online.

## **CONSEQUENCE CATEGORIES**

These standards of conduct provide guidelines to students and administrators but will not be considered a limitation on GA's authority to define misconduct and determine the appropriate punishment for any particular misconduct. The type of disciplinary action shall not be considered exclusive, but merely provides examples of action which may be taken in response to violation of these standards of conduct. Depending on the circumstances, misconduct listed under a particular level may be treated as a higher level offense, and a student may be subject to suspension or expulsion for a single incident or for misconduct not specifically listed. The penalties set forth should be considered minimum penalties for designated offenses.

Specific disciplinary actions are sometimes, but not always, assigned to violations of the school's Standards of Conduct because the School has discretionary authority to assess the seriousness of an incident. Disciplinary actions, along with discussion and, when appropriate, counseling, serve to discourage misbehavior. In our experience, students who misbehave are more likely to learn from their mistakes if they are disciplined and are helped to repair the hurt they have caused. It is also our observation that the student will learn appropriate lessons and grow from the experience when home and school work well together at critical times.

### **Discussion with student (Teacher, Advisor, or Head Advisor)**

A teacher who is concerned in some way about a student's behavior will normally draw the student's attention to the concern in a timely conversation, the purpose of which is to raise the student's awareness and level of understanding. If necessary, subsequent conversations may include the Advisor and/or Head Advisor.

### **Advisor Notification (Teacher, Advisor, or Head Advisor)**

If the student does not respond to the initial discussion or if the misbehavior warrants a stronger response, the teacher will notify the advisor. The advisor, who has the broadest perspective on the student's life at school, will discuss the concern with the student. Every three Advisor Notifications within a semester prompt a detention and parent/guardian notification.

### **Detention (Advisor or Head Advisor)**

A Detention, 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, may be issued to indicate that the student's behavior is unacceptable. Parents/guardians are notified of all detentions.

### **Multiple Detentions (Head Advisor, Director of Student Life, or Head of Middle School)**

Multiple detentions are typically reserved for a pattern of misbehavior or significant violations of the Middle School Standards of Conduct. The number of detentions may be between two and four, depending on the situation.

**Withdrawal of privileges (Head Advisor, Director of Student Life and Advisor, in consultation with Head of Middle School)**

If the school views a student's behavior as detrimental to himself or herself, or to others, or to the community as a whole, the student's free time at break and lunch may be curtailed and privileges such as access to the library, participation in clubs, activities, sports, special events, and dances may be withdrawn for an indefinite period of time. Participation in day or overnight field trips may be denied if a student continues to misbehave.

**Suspension (Head of Middle School)**

A student may be suspended from school for one or more days in response to a single infraction such as flagrant disrespect towards a teacher, harassment, bullying, fighting, theft, vandalism, leaving campus without permission, or a violation of the Technology Responsible Use Policy. A pattern of unacceptable behavior or dishonesty may also result in suspension.

Suspension is intended to let the student know that he or she may not continue to attend Germantown Academy unless his or her behavior is appropriate in the future. Suspension may be accompanied by a period of Disciplinary Probation, the length to be determined by the Head of Middle School. Quizzes and tests will be made up the day of the student's return; teachers are not expected to re-teach material or provide individual help following a suspension. Students may contact classmates to find out what assignments were given and may also email teachers to request assignments. Upon notification of suspension, a student may not participate in extracurricular activities.

**Disciplinary Probation (Head of Middle School)**

Disciplinary Probation, formal notification that a student's misbehavior has put his or her enrollment at the Academy in jeopardy, is reserved for a pattern of misconduct that the student appears unable or unwilling to address, for actions that have a detrimental effect on the physical or emotional well-being of others, and for major violations of school policy. Disciplinary Probation may be imposed for an indefinite period of time. During a period of Disciplinary Probation, privileges such as access to the library, participation in clubs, activities, sports, special events, dances and field trips may be restricted or withdrawn. The school may withhold re-enrollment for students on disciplinary probation and those students who fail to meet the conditions of their probation will not be invited to return. Students on Disciplinary Probation at the time of enrollment contracts can expect that their contracts will be withheld.

**Dismissal (Head of School on recommendation of Head of Middle School)**

Dismissal may be imposed immediately in response to a flagrant breach of school rules, deemed by the Head of School to be detrimental to a member of the school community or to the school community as a whole, or in response to a violation of school rules during a period of Disciplinary Probation. Dismissal may be imposed for the possession, use, or sale of alcohol or other drugs.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL DRESS CODE**

### **Middle School Dress Code - “GA Gear 2.0”**

#### **Shirts**

Collared short or long-sleeved polo or turtlenecks in solid navy, black, gray, GA red, or white; solid white or blue Oxford cloth.

*ALL shirts must be embroidered with the GA logo. ALL shirts worn underneath the GA shirt or sweatshirt must be solid navy, black, gray, red, or white.*

#### **Sweatshirts, Sweaters, Fleece**

GA sweatshirts, with or without hoods, and crewneck sweaters or fleece jackets/vests in solid navy, black, gray, or GA red; this apparel must be solid in color and with GA logos only. *Shirts with GA logos must be worn underneath.*

#### **Pants and Shorts**

Pants and shorts must be in **navy and khaki only** and must fit appropriately: not too baggy, not too tight, and not too short. Shorts must extend to the end of your fingertips when your hands are at your sides. No active wear may be worn during the school day. In 2022-23, we will continue our pilot addition to the dress code of “dressy joggers”. Dressy joggers that are navy and black will be allowed. The joggers may not be sweatpants or sweat pant material and must be navy or black. *Permitted styles and examples will be shown during the first days of school, so it might make sense to wait to purchase this option.*

#### **Kilts**

Kilts must extend to the end of a student’s fingertips when one’s hands are at one’s sides and must be a GA kilt, navy kilt, or khaki kilt. Opaque shorts, leggings or tights must be worn underneath skirts.

#### **Other Outerwear**

Windbreakers or any type of coats and hats may not be worn in the building during the school day.

#### **General Statements Regarding Dress Code**

Clothing must fit appropriately.

Denim fabrics or distressed (frayed) styles are *not* permitted, nor is clothing that is torn or ripped.

Items not described above are excluded.

If unsure whether or not an article of clothing is appropriate, please see your Head Advisor for approval before wearing it.

#### **Relaxed Dress**

If students are given a dress down day, they should still be suitably dressed for school. Clothing must fit appropriately.

Faculty and administration are responsible for monitoring and enforcing the dress code. The Dress Code is in force unless otherwise noted.

Violation: Advisor Notice

The Dress Code is reviewed annually.