

LAUREL SCHOOL

Middle School Handbook 2011-2012

WELCOME

Dear Middle School Families,

Welcome to the 2011-2012 school year at Laurel School. We look forward to sharing the upcoming adventure with you and your daughter. As we look ahead to guiding your daughter through her 21st century world, we are excited about the opportunities for her to learn and grow during these important developmental years. While you are experiencing almost constant change outside the school, we hope you will find consistency within the school: commitment to our mission. As we evolve, we want procedures to reflect our mission in inspiring our girls to achieve their promise and to better the world.

We offer you the Middle School handbook as a source of information to help guide you in answering many questions you may have. However, we recognize that no handbook can anticipate every question. If additional questions arise, please feel free to contact us in the Middle School Office.

The goal of the Middle School is to provide a curriculum that challenges each girl to strengthen her understanding of herself and the society in which she lives through academic, athletic, community-based and creative endeavors. An atmosphere characterized by respect, integrity and trust is necessary to enable each girl to feel confident as she meets these challenges. As a natural process of growing, students make mistakes. We look forward to guiding them, when they have made a mistake, through the process of learning to make wise choices in the future. Many of the items included in this handbook focus on the creation of a positive, caring, and respectful community.

Your daughter will be receiving her own copy of this handbook on the first day of school. This copy is for you to keep at home for reference. The girls will be reviewing key components of the handbook during their advisory periods. We will also have an opening assembly in which we review the importance of the Honor Code and sign it as a commitment to the community.

We invite you and your daughter to join us for a wonderful year. We hope that this year provides your daughter with an enriching experience in which all the girls can work, learn, and play together.

Hope Murphy & Jason Singleton
Co-Directors of the Middle School

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a clear central source of information about common aspects of life at Laurel, as well as details specific to our division. We expect that students and their families will take the time to review this book, as it provides answers to most questions you may have. Please keep a copy handy so you can refer to it whenever the need arises.

LAUREL SCHOOL MISSION

To inspire each girl to fulfill her promise and to better the world.
Laurel School, where girls Dream...Dare...Do!

STATEMENT OF INCLUSION

As an evolving community of learners, we strive to build bridges and make connections that embrace equity and justice not only within Laurel School, but also in our local, national, and global communities. Doing so allows us to embrace our mission “To inspire each girl to fulfill her promise and better the world.”

To this end, we work to honor individuals and to respect multiple customs, traditions, values, and perspectives. We understand that social identifiers – such as gender, race, religion, socioeconomic status, family configuration, sexual orientation, ethnicity, ability, and age – play a crucial role in our individual experiences even as they have shaped society as a whole. We expect members of our community to be guided by courage, empathy, and compassion because we believe these values foster inclusion and that their practice teaches us to better understand a complex and dynamic world.

MIDDLE SCHOOL MISSION

Laurel’s Middle School provides a unique learning environment designed to promote the academic, social and emotional development of early adolescent girls. Dedicated to girls' education, a richly integrated curriculum in academics, athletics and the arts encourages students to experience relationships with each other, their school community and the outside world. Curricular activities are designed to emphasize the importance of the learning process with the acquisition of core skills and content. Ample opportunities for collaborative and creative co-curricular programs enhance each student’s experience, providing many areas for success and connection during the Middle School years. Laurel’s Middle School challenges students to develop their intellectual curiosity in a supportive atmosphere that fosters leadership, builds confidence and celebrates diversity.

To support this mission, the Middle School faculty is committed to maintaining the following core pillars that characterize and support Laurel’s Middle School:

- An atmosphere of collaboration, open communication, and flexibility
- An understanding of and commitment to educating girls
- A community characterized by respect, integrity, and trust
- A commitment to the recognition and celebration of students’ involvement in the outside world
- An environment supportive of intellectual curiosity and risk taking
- A dedication to integrated curriculum design and development

GENERAL INFORMATION

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to attend school each day unless sickness or special family circumstances interfere. An effective Laurel education depends on the student's involvement and participation in each class. The student who is absent often misses out on the valuable experiences that lead to success. We ask that, whenever possible, you arrange medical and dental appointments at times that do not interfere with school commitments. Family travel and vacation plans should be made only during school vacations, and students are expected to attend school on the days before and after vacation breaks. If there is an extraordinary reason for a student's absence from school, please contact the Co-Directors of the Middle School to discuss the issue before making final plans. While teachers make every effort to plan assignments in advance, they are not obliged to provide future assignments or to give extra help to girls returning from travel or another unexcused absence. Make-up work may take place after school.

ABSENCES

Parents are asked to call (216-455-3010) before 8:00 a.m. to notify the school of an absence. Voice mail messages can be left at this number in the morning, or even the night before. If no phone call is received, the school will call the parents in an attempt to determine the cause of the absence. Whenever possible, students are encouraged to complete assignments missed during an absence. Assignments for students who have been excused can be obtained from the Laurel website (www.laurelschool.org).

If it is necessary for a student to miss school for a professional appointment, parents should send a note to the Middle School Office at least one day prior to the appointment. The student is responsible for all academic work missed. If a student is absent on the day of an athletic game or special event, she may not attend that function without special permission from the Co-Directors of the Middle School.

Laurel School has a generous vacation and holiday schedule. We encourage students to be in attendance on all other days. If there are extenuating circumstances that require a planned absence from school (i.e. a family trip, various competitions), the student must complete the planned absence form available on the website.

ARRIVAL

Students are welcome in the building beginning at 7:30 a.m. and should plan to arrive in the North Wing no later than 7:45 a.m. If transportation creates a problem on a particular day, please contact the Middle School Office. Students should report directly to their homeroom at 8:00 a.m. Anyone who arrives after 8:00 a.m. *must report directly to the Middle School Office before going to class.* These procedures help ensure the safety of all students. If a student is "tardy" five times, she will meet with the Co-Directors of the Middle School to determine a strategy to allow her to arrive at school on time.

CLASS PLACEMENT

Class composition and placement are determined by faculty and division heads at the end of each year. Personality, friendships, learning styles, group dynamics and unique strengths are all considered. Parental requests for placement with a specific teacher or classmate are not accepted. All placement decisions rest with the school.

DISMISSAL

Middle School students leave the school from two locations. Those who ride buses leave from the main circle driveway and those who use carpools must use the North Wing circle. All students are expected to leave the building by 3:45 p.m. unless they are participating in a supervised after-school activity. Classrooms will be closed to students at that time. All students with transportation difficulties must report to the After-School Homework Room at 3:45 p.m. in order to ensure their safety. Students in Grades 7 and 8 should be picked up promptly from athletic practices and games. After

5:00 p.m., they will be asked to wait for their transportation in the Homework Room, where they can begin their assigned work. Supervision in the Homework Room will be provided until 6:00 p.m., when all students must be picked up. Fees for Homework Room usage will be billed to individual student accounts. The building closes at 6 p.m.

COMMUNICATION

Each member of the Laurel community is an integral part in the over-all communication network. Parents are encouraged to discuss any student issues with the appropriate Laurel faculty or staff. Teachers and administrators provide a variety of ways of communicating with them: conferences, phone calls, voice mail, or e-mail. It is our practice to try to respond to anyone within twenty-four hours. The following is a list designed to give you some overview and beginning sources of information.

Absences/Tardies	Ms. Lupton
Academic Schedule	Mrs. Murphy and Mr. Singleton
Athletics	Mr. Meyer or Mr. Kushkin
Conferences	Your daughter's advisor, Mrs. Murphy or Mr. Singleton
Discipline	Mrs. Murphy or Mr. Singleton
Grade Team Leaders	
Fifth	Mrs. Morse
Sixth	Ms. Ahmad
Seventh	Ms. Redmond
Eighth	Ms. Sullivan
Lost and Found	Ms. Lupton
Medications	Nurse Kramer
School Psychologist	Dr. Pearlman
Student Government	Mrs. Murphy and Mr. Singleton
Trips/Special events	Ms. Lupton or Grade Team Leader
Uniforms	Mrs. Murphy or Ms. Lupton

MESSAGES

A message bulletin board is located on the second floor landing. Students are asked to look at the message board several times each day. Messages may be called in or dropped off at the Middle School Office. It may be difficult for students to receive messages given to the Middle School Office after noon. Messages are to be placed on the message board by school personnel only.

SCHOOL CLOSING

In the event that school is closed unexpectedly, families will be informed via computerized phone message system and news media.

TELEPHONE USE

The office phone is for emergencies only and should be used only with permission. Students are not permitted to use cell phones, for calls or texts, or pagers during the school day.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Classes in each division operate on a two-week rotating schedule. Weeks are known as Dream Week and Dare Week; these designations are published each year on the school calendar. The Middle School daily schedule is as follows:

8:00 a.m.	Homeroom or Advisory begins
8:26 a.m.	Classes begin
11:54–12:42 p.m.	Lunch (Recess for grades 5, 6 and 7 begins at 12:20)
3:18 p.m.	Dismissal - Monday through Friday

INVITATIONS AND GIFTS

Please do not allow your daughter to distribute invitations or gifts that do not include the entire grade. Invitations to smaller parties must be sent directly to students' homes. Thank you for helping us avoid hurt feelings.

VISITORS

All visitors to the school must register at the main reception desk and wear a visitor's badge.

MEDICAL AND SAFETY INFORMATION

We have specific procedures for a variety of evacuation and safety scenarios. Throughout the year, the entire school community participates in practice drills for each of these procedures. If you would like further information about the types of emergency events for which we prepare please contact your Division Director.

HEALTH SERVICES

Laurel School is fortunate to have the services of a full-time registered nurse, Susan Kramer. Her office, open from 7:45 a.m. until 4:15 p.m., is located off the hallway overlooking the Small Gym. All medications or P.E. excuses should be taken to the nurse prior to the start of school. Students are not to stop in the Health Office between classes, except when dealing with an emergency. The school also contracts with a physician and a psychologist who act as consultants for health-related questions.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Emergency medical forms must be on file in the Health Office by the first day of school. These forms give the school specific instructions about whom to call and what action to take when we are unable to reach either parent in the event of a medical emergency.

MEDICINES

Students must bring medicine (prescription or non-prescription, and/or vitamins) to the Health Office first thing in the morning so that it can be stored safely and administered by the school nurse. Please send medicine in its original container accompanied by a completed prescription form indicating the time it is to be administered, permission to dispense the medicine, and the diagnosis.

ABSENCE DUE TO ILLNESS

Parents are asked to keep their daughter at home if:

- Her temperature is 99.9 degrees or above
- There is any vomiting or diarrhea
- She tests positively for strep throat: in this case, students must stay home 24 hours after being given an injection or starting on oral medicine
- She has a contagious disease

If your daughter has any of these symptoms, please do not send her to school **for at least a 24-hour period after** the symptoms have been absent -- even if your daughter says she would like to return to school. Students must also remain home 24 hours after being given an injection or starting oral medication. **If your daughter is not well enough to go outside for recess, she needs to remain at home.** Children with the above symptoms will be sent home.

ILLNESS DURING SCHOOL HOURS

The Health Office has regular office hours during the day. At all other times, the Health Office is not open except in the case of emergencies. *A student must have permission from a teacher to visit the nurse and must return with a note.*

EVACUATION DRILLS - FIRE AND TORNADO SAFETY

During all fire and tornado drills, students must remain silent and walk to designated areas. During a fire drill, there shall be no talking from the time the fire alarm sounds to the time when everyone is back in the school building. The last person to leave a room should close the door before following the group to the outdoor assembly area. When the fire evacuation drill is over, students resume their regular schedule.

During tornado drills, Middle School students will be escorted to areas of safety when warned by the tornado alarm. Students who are in classes held in the North Wing will move immediately to the first floor of the North Wing and take shelter in the hall away from glass areas. Students attending classes or activities in the Main Building will move immediately to the Main Building basement. After the “all clear” is given, students will return to the classes they were in when the alarm sounded, no matter the time.

LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Once per year, students will participate in a lockdown drill. They should move quickly and quietly to the area in the classroom designated by the teacher. They must maintain absolute silence until the “all clear” is sounded. Students in hallways and bathrooms when the drill begins should move to the nearest classroom. When the lockdown drill is over, students resume their regular schedule.

ACADEMICS

Curriculum is understood to be all that takes place in the life of a student during the school day. In a college preparatory school such as Laurel, the academic curriculum is of highest priority. Through a variety of means, including cross-divisional discussions, the academic life of the students reflects a well-planned, sequential curriculum from Pre-Primary through Grade 12. Students are challenged to become collaborative learners as well as independent thinkers and risk takers, confident in themselves and their abilities. Each division has determined appropriate measures for keeping students and families apprised of academic guidelines and each student’s progress.

ADVISORY

Fifth Graders meet with their homeroom teacher to learn organizational strategies and discuss effective ways to handle social and emotional concerns. In Sixth through Eighth Grade, each girl is assigned a faculty advisor who oversees the progress of approximately 8-12 girls. Advisory groups meet each week during the school day; time also may be taken to work with individuals or with the group as needed. The advisor acts as a liaison between school and home, maintaining communication with parents by phone, and e-mail and through parent-teacher conferences. Academic teams meet regularly to discuss student progress and to coordinate curriculum.

COMMUNICATION OF STUDENT PROGRESS

At Laurel School, we believe that regular communication about student progress is central to healthy parent-school partnership and fundamental to best educational practice. In the Middle School, we communicate informally through advisor-parent phone or email contacts and formally through grade reports once each grading period.

GRADING POLICY

Achievement Grades – In the Middle School, letter grades are used to describe the academic achievement of students over the course of a grading period for Seventh and Eighth Grades. These term grades are earned by students according to class policies established and communicated by each teacher at the beginning of the year. Laurel teachers develop diverse systems to assess student progress in a manner responsive to content knowledge and consistent with the school's overall mission. Middle School grading criteria are designed to acknowledge attributes of student performance, both product and process. Independence and effort are included secondarily as attributes of academic achievement in

calculating term grades. Reporting periods are independent from one another and year-end, summative grades are not reported.

Fifth and Sixth Graders do not receive end-of-term letter grades. This ungraded period allows our newest members of the Middle School to become adjusted to the expectations of a new division. They do however receive graded assessments throughout the year. Teachers also assess student progress through rubrics.

Letter grades are used to describe student achievement as follows:

- **A** Demonstrates thorough knowledge of course content; expresses ideas with clarity and style; exhibits critical, inquiring attitude; makes connections, draws inferences, sees relationships; thinks independently and creatively; is willing to take risks, pursues opportunities to extend learning; has excellent work habits; is involved positively in learning.
- **B** Demonstrates accurate knowledge of most course content; expresses ideas clearly with strong control of structure and mechanics; often indicates curiosity, creativity, insight, and initiative; has very good work habits; exhibits cooperation and engagement in class activities; may require support or reinforcement to accomplish course objectives.
- **C** Suggests adequate grasp of basic course content; expresses ideas in an organized form with adequate control of terminology and mechanics; shows understanding of main ideas and some relationships; displays suitable effort and cooperative attitude in learning; may be inconsistent in work habits; requires teacher support.
- **D** Suggests minimal knowledge of course content and unsatisfactory course products; may present ideas unclearly; may lack understanding of essential ideas and relationships; may use faulty or inadequate reasoning; may exhibit poor effort/attitude toward learning; may resist help; may fail to meet deadlines; needs more active involvement in and personal contribution to learning. While grades in the D range earn passing credit, they call into question a student's ability to be successful in subsequent courses where the degree of difficulty and challenge are greater.
- **F** Demonstrates unacceptable level of understanding of course content; indicates inadequate skills; may imply lack of preparation, effort and classroom involvement.

HOMEWORK

Middle School teachers meet weekly in grade-level teams to coordinate daily and long-term homework assignments. If work is completed as it is assigned, and some care is exercised by students in pacing their progress on major projects, nightly homework assignments normally should not exceed 1 – 1½ hours in Fifth and Sixth Grades and 1½ - 2 hours in Seventh and Eighth Grades. It should be noted that students work at varying speeds and the accurate prediction of homework time for individual students is very difficult. Every effort is made to encourage students to plan ahead and to organize their time efficiently. With this in mind, each student is given a planning book which is used to record assignments. Teachers post assignments for homework on Haiku.

A similar homework load should be expected on weekends with the exception of designated “homework free” weekends. Homework is not assigned over major vacations although students are encouraged to read as much as possible during these breaks.

Incomplete Work - Students are expected to complete all assignments on time except when absence caused by illness makes timely completion difficult. Unexcused late work will not receive full credit. Those students who fall behind in their work for any reason may be asked to meet with a teacher during study hall, before school or after school. Teachers will notify parents if special transportation

arrangements need to be made. A student who receives an incomplete on her report card has two weeks to make up the work.

MAKING UP WORK

Following an excused absence, a student should check with her teachers to make arrangements to make up work in order to receive credit for the work missed. This responsibility lies with the student. If a student is late to school because of an appointment, she should be sure to see the teachers of the classes missed to get assignments or to arrange to take any tests. As a rule, a student has as many days to make up work as she was absent, if the absence is excused.

For students returning from unexcused absences (e.g., trips, days off with no medical excuse), teachers will not prepare special instruction or materials. Students will be held responsible for all assignments and assessments. Make-up tests may be administered after school on specially designated days.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

A student whose average for the trimester is below 1.67 or who has one grade of F or two grades of D+ or below is placed on academic probation for the next grading period. Students on academic probation have placed their enrollment at Laurel in jeopardy and will be required to work with teachers to improve progress.

LIBRARY POLICY

All Laurel students are encouraged to use the Laurel School libraries for their research and reading needs. Numerous resources are also available on-line (www.laurelschool.org). Students may checkout up to ten items in the Circulating Collection for a period of two weeks: these may be renewed two times unless someone else is waiting to borrow them. (Reference and Reserve materials have shorter checkout periods.) We ask that students be considerate and responsible in their use of library materials.

Each week a notice is sent to the student's homeroom if items are overdue. If an item is one month overdue, a letter will be mailed to the parent(s). If the item is not returned, notification will be forwarded to the Business Office and the cost of the item will be added to the school billing.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Laurel School recognizes the value of the information to be gained from standardized testing, the prevalence of the use of tests within our American educational system, and the importance of our students being properly prepared to take tests and thus better able to demonstrate their accomplishments. Test results help teachers and administrators better respond to individual learning needs as well as assess the school's curriculum for both content and pacing.

All students take a full battery of tests designed by the Educational Records Bureau (ERB) each year. Test results are mailed to families. Any family wishing to know more about this testing program or their daughter's scores can contact the Co-Directors of the Middle School or the Director of Learning Enhancement.

Non-standard administration: If a student has a documented disability, she may be tested utilizing non-standard administration. All of the testing services mentioned above provide special testing arrangements for students with current, documented physical, psychological and learning disabilities who have been professionally diagnosed and are currently receiving accommodations for in-school testing. Information regarding specific requirements is available from the appropriate division office and the school psychologist. Although non-standard administration is an option, Laurel recommends that all students attempt the standardized testing under standard conditions. Many students with disabilities are able to perform well within this controlled environment and, as they are growing and developing, it is good for them to experience as much as possible within the normal setting to see what they can do so as not to restrict themselves unnecessarily. Further information regarding support services is available from the Middle School Office.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

Technology is an important component of a 21st century education. At Laurel, we are fortunate to have many resources available for students. But with privilege comes responsibility. It is important that you and your parents understand your responsibilities around technology at Laurel. Faculty and staff monitor the use of information technology resources to help ensure that uses are secure and uphold school policy. Faculty reserve the right to examine, use, and disclose any data found on the school's information networks in

order to further the health, safety, discipline, or security of any student or other person, and to protect property. Additionally, Faculty may use this information in school disciplinary proceedings and may also furnish evidence of any suspected crime to law enforcement officials. In other words, there can be very serious consequences for misbehavior involving technology. The acceptable use policy and rules detailed below will guide your successful use of technology as a member of the Laurel community.

Girls in Grades 6-12 are provided school-based email accounts for academic purposes. The school's information technology resources, including computers (in the labs, hallways, and classrooms), email and internet access, are provided for educational purposes. It is easy with a single click to share more information than you intended with a wider audience in a permanent way. Please be cautious about what information you decide to share. Never feel pressured to offer information you do not wish to share.

Always remember that you are a Laurel girl twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, in school, out of school, and on the internet. Be particularly mindful of your membership in the Laurel community in your communications on social networking sites and while texting. The ways in which you use technology, both your own and that which the school provides, must comply with the Honor Code as published in the Student Handbook. The ways in which you use technology must also honor the mission of the school: "To inspire each girl to fulfill her promise and to better the world. Finally, the ways in which you use technology must also reflect the core values of the school as set forth in our core values statement: "In a community of learners, Laurel girls are courageous, ethical, and compassionate."

Accordingly, you are required to follow the rules set forth below.

AS A LAUREL STUDENT, YOU UNDERSTAND THAT YOU MUST:

1. Respect and agree to live by the principles of the Honor Code, the mission of the school and the core values statement.

- You will communicate only in ways that are kind and respectful.
- You will report any threatening or inappropriate communications, posts and other materials to a teacher.
- You will not intentionally access, transmit, copy, or create material that violates the school's mission, core values statement or Honor Code (such as messages that are rude, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, inappropriate or pornographic).
- You will not intentionally access, transmit, copy, or create material that is illegal (such as stolen materials, or illegal copies of copyrighted works).
- You will not send spam, chain letters, or other mass unsolicited mailings from your Laurel email account.
- You will not buy, sell, advertise, or otherwise conduct business from your Laurel email account, unless approved in advance by your division head as a school project.
- You will not access social networking sites (such as MySpace, Facebook, etc.) while in class. We encourage you to use your time at school wisely and to refrain from using technology (cell phones or social networking sites) for entertainment during school hours. Any use of cell phones and social media sites at school is prohibited unless expressly permitted in advance by a faculty member.

- You will not waste or abuse school provided computer, network or printer materials (for example, you will not print unnecessary copies).
- You will not waste or abuse school provided internet access (for example, you will not stream video for entertainment purposes).

2. Respect and protect the privacy of others.

- You will use only assigned accounts.
- You will not view, use, share or copy passwords, data, or networks for which you are not authorized.
- You will not distribute private information about others. This includes passwords and personal information such as addresses and telephone numbers. If you believe that someone else knows or has shared private information, you will report that to a faculty member immediately.

3. Respect and protect the integrity, availability, and security of all electronic resources.

- You will report security risks, and any misuse of computers or computer resources to a faculty member or the Information Resources Department. Misuse would include (but is not limited to) unauthorized access to other people's files or passwords, theft of data, passwords or equipment, vandalism or spreading of viruses.
- You will not destroy, damage or modify data, networks, or other resources that do not belong to you.

4. Respect and protect the intellectual property of others.

- You will not infringe on copyrights (for example, making illegal copies of music, games, or movies!).
- You will attribute sources appropriately.

CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATIONS.

Violations of these rules will result in disciplinary action, which may include the loss of a student's privileges to use the school's information technology resources. Further, Laurel students who access, transmit, copy, or create material that violates the school's mission, core values statement or Honor Code, such as messages that are rude, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, inappropriate or pornographic will be subject to disciplinary action that may result in suspension or expulsion as well as civil and criminal legal action.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Our commitment to the principles of **Integrity, Respect and Responsibility**, forms the basis of Laurel School's guidelines for student behavior. Principles governing behavior weave throughout the school's curriculum, in the classrooms, on the playing fields, in co-curricular activities and in ways that students represent the school in the larger community. To enhance our understanding of these fundamental principles, each Middle School student is required to sign and abide by the following tenets contained in the Middle School Honor Code:

Middle School Honor Code

You are a Laurel girl twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, in school, out of school, and on the internet. Laurel girls are expected to follow the guidelines listed below daily.

- I will be honest in all of my work, interactions, and statements with others. All of my work will be my own. If I use the work of others, I will give them credit.
- I will tell the whole truth, regardless of the circumstances.
- I will respect all members of the community at all times. I will act with kindness and consideration for others and will not tease or hurt anyone in person or online.

- I will respect the property of others. I will not take the property of another person unless I have permission. I will not damage, use improperly or destroy the property of another person or of the school.

All students at Laurel School are expected to abide by the *Honor Code* which implies respect *for self*, *respect for others*, and *respect for community*. The Middle School Honor Code was developed by a student committee during the 1999-2000 school year and was revised by a student committee during the 2010-2011 school year.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Every situation is unique. Each situation is addressed with concern for the individuals involved. We make every effort to discover what happened, according to all parties, and to help the students resolve the issue fairly. Through this process we plan to help them learn to make good choices and better understand how the consequences relate to their actions. Our efforts are meant to be instructive, which allows our students to learn from their mistakes in their actions and make wise decisions in the future. Minor infractions, such a rule breaking, are typically handled by classroom teachers when the incident is witnessed. Teachers may choose to ask for the support of the child's advisor, team leader, or an administrator if necessary. When a student repeatedly breaks a rule or violates the Honor Code, the Co-Directors handle the situation. In such cases, parents are enlisted to foster a team approach in guiding the student to make wise choices in the future.

PROBATION AND SUSPENSION

A student may be placed on probation when she fails to meet the minimum academic or behavioral standards of Laurel. Specific goals will be established in order to motivate the student to improve her status at the school. Suspension from school activities is an infrequent and serious action that removes a student from classes and school activities. Students may be asked to serve an in-school or at-home suspension. Parents will be notified by the school before a student is suspended and must meet with the Co-Directors of the Middle School before their daughter may return to classes.

STUDENT LIFE

Laurel offers many co-curricular activities for its students. These range from our full offering of athletic teams to student government and many clubs. The underlying principle of all of these activities is to encourage initiative, appropriate risk taking, leadership and a willingness to cooperate with others. Student activities vary a good deal from division to division, as each seeks age-appropriate ways of pursuing these important goals.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Middle School students have a variety of after school options. These include:

- After School at Laurel – Fifth and Sixth Grades
- Athletics – Seventh and Eighth Grades
- Homework Room – Fifth through Eighth Grade
- Voices of Laurel – Fifth and Sixth Grades
- Orchestra – Fifth through Eighth Grades
- Theatre Workshop – Fifth (spring) and Sixth (fall) Grades
- Drama Production (winter) – Seventh and Eighth Grades
- Science Symposium – Seventh and Eighth Grades

ATHLETICS (See Mr. Meyer or Mr. Kushkin)

The Middle School interscholastic athletic program is for students in Seventh and Eighth Grades. The sports offered are as follows:

- Fall: Tennis, Field Hockey, Volleyball, and Soccer
- Winter: Basketball and Swimming

Spring: Fast-pitch Softball, Lacrosse, and Track and Field

Practices are held Monday through Friday immediately after school for 1½ to 2 hours. Students are expected to be picked up promptly after the scheduled ending time of practice or return time of a game. Students will wait for their transportation in the Homework Room if pick up is not within 15 minutes of scheduled ending time. A student may not practice or compete in a game on a day that she is marked absent from school. A student may wear her athletic uniform top to school on game day; she must wear regulation skirt or pants, leg and footwear. All sports will require students to purchase some personal equipment. Usual items include, but are not limited to: mouth guards, shin guards, appropriate shoes, racquets, sticks, swimsuits and caps.

Athletic eligibility comprises the following requirements:

1. Must be younger than 15 years of age by August 1, 2011
2. Must submit annually an updated Laurel School Emergency Medical Authorization form
3. Must submit annually an OHSAA physical card signed by a doctor
4. Must maintain a grade point average of 1.67 or higher with no grade of F and not more than one grade of D. Eligibility is calculated at the end of each semester and affects the following semester.
5. If a student requires a prescription inhaler or epi-pen, the item must be turned in to her coach for keeping in the team med-kit.

At the beginning of each season, there are specific team and parent meetings where further information regarding expectations is distributed.

The interscholastic sports program at the seventh and eighth grade level differs from the Upper School varsity sports program. Students who regularly attend practice sessions will be included in games or matches scheduled against other schools. Parents and spectators are encouraged to attend.

ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS

Middle School assemblies are held regularly to bring the Middle School together to consider common ideals, to hear a variety of speakers and to share experiences. Students process and recess formally and are expected to show respect and consideration for speakers and guests. Parents are welcome to attend any assembly.

CCIS EVENTS

There are a number of CCIS (Cleveland Council of Independent Schools) events scheduled for Seventh and Eighth Grades. CCIS socials take place throughout the year at member schools, running from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. The following guidelines apply to all socials:

- Chaperones will arrive at socials with the students and will stay until all the students from their own school have left.
- Chaperones will check in and collect tickets from their own students. Students may not be admitted if they are dressed inappropriately (see social dress guidelines), or if they have been absent from school that day.
- Students will be admitted only during the first 30 minutes of the social and are expected to stay for the entire time unless written parental permission has been granted.
- Students are to be picked up by a parent within 30 minutes of the end of the social or they may not be allowed to attend the next event.
- Chaperones monitor the behavior of students from their own school.
- Parents picking up students early should remind their daughters to check out with a chaperone.

Guidelines for Student Attire at CCIS Middle School Activities

All clothing should be neat and clean, fit reasonably well, and not be in need of repair. Clothing with questionable language and graphics is not permitted. Girls should wear tops that cover their shoulders

and backs. The three fingers rule is a good guideline for determining an appropriate thickness for shoulder straps. Halter-tops, tube tops, and bare midriffs are not permitted. Shorts and skirts should be no shorter than fingertip length. Prohibited attire includes nightclothes, beachwear, camouflage wear, costumes and high heels. Students are to understand that their teachers and chaperones are accorded the responsibility to make final determinations on the appropriateness of any attire. If a student comes to a CCIS Social Event dressed improperly, she/he will be asked to have acceptable clothing brought to the event. Until the clothing arrives, the student may not participate in the activity.

DINING ROOM

To ensure that the students get to know everyone in their class, lunch tables may be assigned for all grade levels throughout the year. Teachers may sit at tables with students. Homeroom teachers will decide when and if “free” seating is permitted.

DINING ROOM MANNERS

- Students may take as much food as they feel they can eat without waste. All students are encouraged to select a nutritious and well-balanced lunch.
- Students are to clear their own dishes, push in their chairs and check the floor for paper.
- Assigned students wipe tables.
- Students are expected to use good behavior and good manners throughout the lunch period.

HOLIDAYS

Laurel is a non-sectarian school that respects the diversity of all its families. The school will provide assemblies to increase student understanding of the various cultural and religious beliefs represented in our student body. Parents are invited to help with such programs and should speak with the assembly coordinator or Co-Division Directors if they have suggestions or comments.

LOCKERS

Lockers are assigned to students for their possessions. All coats and supplies need to be kept in lockers. Books may be stored in lockers or placed in cubbies, as available. No food should be stored in lockers since this has given rise to a serious invasion of ants and mice in the past. We ask that students keep their lockers clean and in good order. Students may hang pictures inside their lockers as long as the pictures are in good taste and can be removed at the end of the year with no remaining marks or damage to the lockers. Nothing may be put on the outside of the locker doors.

SCHOOL GOVERNMENT

The Laurel Middle School Government is the organization that represents all members of the Laurel Middle School community: students, faculty and administration. Members of the School Government are elected by the students and faculty and have an equal vote in all matters that come before the Government.

The President and the Secretary/Treasurer are elected each May for the following year from a slate of three candidates nominated by their seventh grade classmates. The Vice President is chosen similarly from the sixth grade class. Each candidate may campaign for office during the week preceding the Middle School elections. Each candidate may post three posters. No more than \$10 may be spent by each candidate on campaign materials, and candidates will not be permitted to give gifts to influence voters. On the day of the election, each candidate will be asked to speak in a Middle School assembly for two minutes or less about her plans for the position. The campaign offers each girl the opportunity to experience the challenge and responsibility involved in the positive promotion of strong leaders.

A student may not automatically run for office if she has a grade average lower than a C, or is significantly behind in her work. She must petition the Co-Director of the Middle School for permission to run.

All School Government officers must attend every School Government meeting. The President presides, and the Secretary/Treasurer takes minutes of the meeting, including attendance. All officers should arrive at the assembly five minutes before the program begins to assist with set-up and ushering duties. The following job descriptions are presented to give the officers some idea of the extent of their duties. This list is by no means complete. Each officer brings a unique set of skills and abilities to the job, which will expand and be shaped by the individual's character and expertise.

President: The President runs bi-weekly government meetings and is responsible for overseeing all government programming and making sure that follow-through occurs. The President also convenes weekly assembly programs. She should check with the assembly coordinator and music director by noon of the previous day in order to plan an introduction. The President begins the assembly with the Pledge of Allegiance, and then introduces the speaker or program. She also is responsible for publicly thanking the speaker. The President will call on various people to make announcements as necessary.

Vice President: The Vice President serves in the President's absence running meetings or leading assembly.

Secretary/Treasurer: The Secretary/Treasurer takes minutes at meetings and distributes them to all government members. She also keeps a balance of the treasury account and handles all correspondence, including thank you notes to assembly speakers.

Grade Representatives: Two grade representatives are elected by each grade at the beginning of each year. Students who have served previously during the year are not eligible to run as a representative. Elections take place in homeroom, following a discussion of the roles of representatives.

A grade representative will:

- attend all Student Government meetings
- report weekly to classmates about actions in meetings
- report ideas of classmates to Student Government
- participate fully in Student Government discussions

SNACKS

A light mid-morning snack is provided for students each school day. Students from each grade level will be asked to assist in distributing the snack.

HOMEROOM/RECESS

Time has been built into the school day to provide time for students to:

- meet with faculty for academic help
- work cooperatively with classmates on projects
- meet in advisory groups
- play together on the playground, on the field or in the gym
- have class meetings

VEHICLES AND VEHICLE USE ON CAMPUS

Laurel School, while having grown in our student population, remains limited in the number of available parking places and spaces. The entire Laurel community is encouraged to abide by the parking plan and respect that our neighbors also have parking needs. Please note the posted signs and hours on all circles, both school and city, and remember that a school zone is a 20 MPH zone. As the safety of all community members is of utmost importance, cell phone usage is not permitted while driving on campus and drivers are expected to drive in a safe and respectful manner at all times. Left turns are not permitted when entering or exiting the Middle School circle.

DRESS CODE

Laurel's uniform (K-12) is one of its most important features. The uniform is something every girl shares, no matter her background. As with the uniform our athletic teams wear, Laurel's school uniform implies pride in the group. By wearing the school's uniform, Laurel students symbolically embrace their membership in the school. While children in Pre-Primary do not wear a uniform, the Primary Division, Middle and Upper Schools have their own variations of the uniform, but all share a common look. This look identifies each girl as a part of the entire school community, while the subtle differences identify her as a member of one of our divisions.

Students are expected to be in uniform at all times except on "civvies days" which occur once per month or on special occasions as designated by the Co-Directors of the Middle School.

Formal Uniform: Glen plaid kilt, white, short-sleeved Laurel logo shirt (Lands' End), white ankle socks, brown or black leather shoes. The formal uniform is required at several events throughout the year.

Daily Uniform:

Skirts: Glen plaid kilt
solid green kilt
green pinfeather kilt

Boxer shorts may be worn under the uniform skirt as long as they do not show beneath the skirt. The skirt hem must be no higher than 3 inches above the kneecap.

Tops: white, evergreen or navy solid-colored Laurel logo polo shirt (long or short sleeve, mesh or interlock, regular or feminine fit) or Laurel logo turtleneck in evergreen, navy or white available **only** from Lands' End. Shirts worn underneath the uniform shirt must be **white** and free of writing or graphics. Undershirts must not extend beyond the length (sleeve or waist) of the top layer shirt.

Socks: navy, white or dark green solid colored knee, ankle length or low sports socks or tights. Socks must be free of manufacturers' insignia.

Shoes: brown or black leather or synthetic leather, one and a half inch or lower heel, loafer, laced or buckle style; (for grades 6-8 Birkenstock-type shoes such as the *Eaton, London, Ascot* and *Boston* models may be worn). Hiking style boots are permitted for all grades only when wearing pants. White, brown or black indoor athletic shoes may also be worn. Fleece-lined shoes are not allowed.

Sweaters and Fleece: the following items are all within the uniform guidelines: **solid** navy, dark green, or white pullover or cardigan sweaters supplied by Lands' End only. Laurel green fleece vest and pullover jacket; navy, white or Laurel green sweatshirts, **solid** in color with the Laurel logo. Sweatshirts and fleece must be purchased from the Gator Shop.

Pants: solid navy or tan, twill or corduroy with a pleated or plain front. Zippers or pockets on the legs are not permitted. Students are not allowed to wear cargo pants.

P.E. uniforms can be purchased from Company Casuals. A link can be found on the Laurel website by clicking on the parent tab on the homepage then parent resources; see link below. (<http://www.laurelschool.org/parents/resources.cfm>) Students are required to wear their P.E. uniform to every P.E. class. The P.E. uniform includes:

- gray Laurel shirt · green Laurel shorts · sweatshirt (optional) · sweatpants (optional)
- sneakers (no black bottoms) socks

Middle School athletic teams may wear their athletic uniform shirts to school during the day of a scheduled game, but with their regular school uniform skirts/pants and leg/footwear. If the sports top is sleeveless, girls must wear a Laurel polo shirt underneath.

Where can I purchase the uniform?

Skirts must be purchased at Schoolbelles (216-898-5500). Pants can be purchased at Schoolbelles or another source but must be within the guidelines listed above. Tops and sweaters must be purchased only from the Lands' End (800-469-2222) uniform catalog. The preferred school number at Lands' End is **9000-8603-4**, logo number **0329609K**. Sweatshirts and fleece must be purchased from the Gator Shop. Many items are available at the LSPA Used Uniform Sale.

Miscellaneous:

- No hats may be worn during the school day.
- Sunglasses are not permitted inside the school.
- Coats, jackets, and gloves may not be worn during the school day, unless approved by the Middle School Co-Directors.

Guidelines for Civvies Days:

On the last Friday of every month, and at the discretion of the Middle School Administration, students will be permitted to wear neat and appropriate non-uniform clothing (including jeans and shorts). There are rules that must be followed:

- Skirt and short length should be appropriate. As a general guideline, the skirt/shorts must fall below your fingertips when your arms are extended straight down at your side.
- Shirt length should be appropriate. Shirts must fall below the waist of your skirt or pants.
- Shirts must have at least two inches of fabric on the shoulder; no cleavage may show.
- Daytime attire **does not** include pajamas.
- No sweatpants, yoga pants or leggings.
- Clothes may not have holes or be torn.
- Garments may not have any discriminatory remarks, symbols, or pictures on them.
- Garments may not have inappropriate language, pictures, or references on them, including those related to alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or sex.
- No hats may be worn during the school day; hoods on sweatshirts may not be worn covering the head.
- Ugg style boots or slippers are not permitted.

We appreciate the efforts that girls go to to abide by these guidelines. Their effort sets a fine example to others and helps to establish a positive attitude in the middle school. The community that is built on trust, respect, and honesty is strong, and one in which all members take pride.