



ARCHANGEL GABRIEL
CATHOLIC SCHOOL



Middle School Handbook 2020-2021

Dear Middle School Parents,

Welcome to Middle School at Archangel Gabriel Catholic School!

Our goal for the Middle School is to prepare and help transition your child(ren) into high school and beyond. The Middle School places emphasis on organization, structure, spiritual and personal growth, and academic achievement during these years. We also strive to provide a safe and positive learning environment.

When students enter the Middle School, certain responsibilities—such as organization, homework, and monitoring of grades—shift more from the parent to the student.

We have prepared a middle school handbook as a resource of the procedures and expectations for your student(s). **In addition, Virtual learners should refer to the AGS Virtual Learning Handbook.** Please read this with your child(ren).

We appreciate your support this year and dedication to Catholic Education!

Archangel Gabriel Middle School Teachers,

Alan Betten	abetten@archangelgabrielpgh.org
Amanda Codori	acodori@archangelgabrielpgh.org
Brenda Ford	bford@archangelgabrielpgh.org
Clara Jablonski	cjablonski@archangelgabrielpgh.org
Jennifer Mattarochia	jmattarochia@archangelgabrielpgh.org
Darci Smith	dsmith@archangelgabrielpgh.org

Attendance

Regular school attendance is a major factor in determining academic success. Parents and guardians of students who acquire excessive absences may be required to provide documentation from a physician indicating that the absences are related to an existing medical condition. Students absent for more than thirty days during the academic year may be denied academic promotion.

Parents should call the school and leave a message on the student call-off line each day that a child is absent from school. Kindly report your child's absence by 10:00am. Give the child's name, homeroom teacher, and reason for the absence, and homework requests. Home requests will not be taken after 10:00 A.M. in order to give the homeroom teacher ample time to get assignments ready.

Students arriving before 10:00 AM, will be marked tardy. Students arriving after 10:00 AM or leaving before 12:30 PM will be marked absent for a half day.

Vacations/trips during regular school days are strongly discouraged in the Middle School. As per the Archangel Gabriel School Handbook, teachers are not required to provide students with missed assignments in advance. For any absences—vacations, illness, etc.—the student has the number of days missed in order to make up that work (e.g., If a student is absent for four days, the student has four school days in which to make up all tests, homework, assignments, etc.).

Birthdays

Please do not send party invitations to school to be distributed for your child's birthday. This may cause hurt feelings among the students who are not invited. The only exception to this is if every boy, or every girl, or all students in your child's room are invited.

All children in grades K-8th may dress out of uniform on their birthday. Please be sure that clothing is within school guidelines. All students in grades 6-8 that have gym class on their birthday must change into their gym clothes. Students in the Middle School are not allowed to bring in a treat for their birthday.

Cell Phones

Students are permitted to bring a cell phone to school to be used for after school activities only. The students must keep their cell phones turned off and in their bookbags throughout the day. Students are not permitted to use their cell phones from 8:00 A.M.-3:00 P.M. Students are never allowed to use phones to take pictures at school or on the bus. In the event of an emergency, please contact the school office. Noncompliance with the cell phone policy will result in two demerits and confiscation of the cell phone. Parents must pick up the confiscated cell phone in the school office. After the second infraction, the student will need to turn in his/her phone to the office for 5 consecutive school days.

Chaperones

Parents wishing to accompany classes on field trips, Field Day, or any in-class volunteer opportunity must have all required state clearances on file. All required forms and information can be found in the Archangel Gabriel School Handbook and on the website. Clearances need to be completed and on file by the first week of October in order to volunteer. ***Due to Covid-19, there are restrictions which could affect the opportunities to chaperone.**

Cheating/Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, copying another student's work; using another student's work; cheating on tests, homework, or assignments. Intentional plagiarism is knowingly copying another author's work without proper citation. Cheating on a test or intentional plagiarism will result 5 demerits and automatic detention. Cheating or copying homework or an assignment will result in 3 demerits.

Chewing Gum

Students are not allowed to chew gum in the school building, except during standardized testing week. The gum will be provided by their teacher. Students caught chewing gum will be given one demerit.

Communication

Archangel Gabriel Middle School will post all homework assignments, tests, projects, upcoming dates, etc. on <https://sites.google.com/holytrinityrobinson.org/holy-trinity-catholic-school/home>. Teachers will communicate via email, notes, and phone calls as needed. Grades will be posted on Option C in a timely manner.

***If a concern arises with your child, please contact the teacher first to try and resolve the situation. Only then, if not resolved, should you contact the principal.**

Dances

Students in grades 7th & 8th will have several dances each year. The dances are organized by the parents, with the approval of the principal. All dances will occur on either a Friday or a Saturday evening. These events are for current Archangel Gabriel students only. Each child attending must complete a permission slip. Please remember these are middle school dances, not a prom. ***Due to Covid-19, there are restrictions which could affect the opportunities for dances.**

Daily Expectations:

***Students should follow all safety guidelines in the AGS reopening plan.**

Homeroom

- Report to your homeroom upon arrival in proper uniform and prepared for morning classes (refer to school handbook)
- Cell phones are turned off and placed in lockers
- Turn in all notes and forms
- Participate in morning prayers, pledges, and songs
- Remain silent for morning announcements
- Students are not allowed to phone home—neither on their cell phones, nor in the office—for forgotten items, which include clothes, homework, or other materials

Hallways

- Maintain six feet for social distancing
- Walk quietly and use soft voices
- Follow directional arrows
- Line up according to your homeroom number along walls and lockers outside of their classroom
- Do not block classroom doorways
- Be respectful and courteous to others

Classrooms

- Students should always remain in their seats unless directed by the teacher
- Follow the rules and expectations of each teacher
- Have all materials needed: pencils, notebooks, textbooks, planners, **charged devices**, and any other required materials
- Turn in homework/assignments on time
- Be an attentive listener in class
- Do not speak when others are speaking
- Be respectful to the teachers and peers
- Allow everyone to learn
- Record homework assignments

Cafeteria and Recess

- Follow all posted cafeteria rules
- Remain seated in your assigned seat during the designated eating time
- Clean up, pick up all papers, scraps of food, etc., and dispose of them properly when directed
- Obey cafeteria monitors
- Speak in a conversational tone
- Walk at all times
- Display good sportsmanship and exercise self-control
- Play in assigned areas only

End of the Day

- Consult planners for homework
- Gather all materials and pack backpacks
- Clean your designated area
- Clean device if taking it home
- Follow dismissal procedures
- Be quiet to hear dismissal announcements

Demerits

In order to create a positive learning environment at Archangel Gabriel Catholic School, a demerit system will be used to address inappropriate behavior. Listed below are the consequences for negative behaviors and the number of demerits for each infraction in the middle school.

- Skips class 5 and automatic detention or suspension
- Intentionally harms another 5 and automatic detention or suspension
- Cheating on a test or intentional plagiarism 5 and automatic detention or suspension
- Fighting (Initiating or participating) 5 and automatic detention or suspension
- Harassment/intimidation/ostracizing 4
- Disrespect for teachers/staff/students) 4
- Obscenity (language or gestures) 4
- Destruction of school property 4
- Inappropriate use of technology 4
- Name calling/teasing/gossiping/rumors 3
- Use of cell phone/SmartWatch/FitBit between 7:45am-3:00pm 2 and device needs to be picked up in office by a parent
- Class disruption 2
- Horseplay in school 2
- Passing/writing notes 2
- Dress code violation 1 per violation
- Late for class 2
- Unprepared for class 1
- Missing or uncharged device 1
- Chewing gum 1
- Failure to return signed demerit form 1

Five demerits will result in an afterschool detention. Ten demerits during a 9 Week period will result in the loss of all extracurricular activities, including sports.

Extra-Curricular Eligibility

Participating in the Archangel Gabriel Catholic School athletic program is a privilege, not a right. Students earn the privilege of participating through hard work, dedication, desire, and self-discipline. The school, in cooperation with the parents and students, will make a reasonable effort to hold participating students to personal, academic, and discipline standards. Students, athletes, spectators, coaches, and instructors represent the school, and are thus expected to be worthy representatives.

Academic Eligibility

Academics are a priority at Archangel Gabriel School. Students should maintain a grade of a C or above in each subject. This includes all Specials. If a student has below a C, that student will be given a warning at progress reports or end of the quarter. During the warning period, the student will meet with the teacher and/or principal to work on an improvement plan. While a student is on a warning, they may go to practices and games. If the student's grades are not brought up to a C or above by the next progress report or quarter, they will not be able to attend practices or games until grades improve.

Behavior Eligibility

When students choose to become involved at AGS, they have to accept responsibility for their behaviors. If a student receives 5 demerits during a 9-week period, he or she will not be able to participate in games for a period of two weeks and will receive an after-school detention. Weekly monitoring of behavior will occur during the time of the ineligibility. The student must remain demerit free during this period. The student may attend practice during this time. If a student earns 10 demerits during a 9-week period, they will be removed from the team.

Grading/Option C

Archangel Gabriel Catholic School utilizes an online grade book system. Parents will receive an ID number and password in order to check their child's academic progress via the Internet. Access to the online grade book may be found at www.optionc.com or through the link on our school website, at www.archangelgabrielpgh.org. Please take advantage of this educational tool.

Parents will be notified by a teacher if their child continuously maintains less than a "C" average.

High School Visits – 7th and 8th Grade Students Only

Students are allotted three days a school year to visit /shadow a high school. A letter from the high school's office needs to be presented to the homeroom teacher upon the student's return to school, in order for it to be counted as a day of school. If a letter does not accompany the student, he/she will be marked as an unexcused absence. Students are responsible for scheduling their own school visit/shadow days. Once a day is confirmed, the student is responsible for informing his/her teachers and make arrangements for missed assignments.

Homework

Homework grading will vary by teacher, except for math.

The math homework policy will be:

- 20 points for all assignments completed
- 19 points for only 1 or 2 missing
- 18 points for only 3 or 4 missing
- 17 points for 5 missing
- 16 points for 6 missing
- 15 points for 7 missing
- 14 points for 8 missing
- 13 points for 9 missing
- 0 points for 10 or more missing assignments

Homework assignments in all subjects will not be accepted after one week (5 school days), unless a valid reason (e.g., being on vacation or out sick) is given. Points will be deducted from the assignment each day until a week has passed, at which point the assignment will receive a zero.

It is the student's responsibility to record all homework assignments. If a class is missed due to **illness, band, violin, etc.**, the student needs to see each teacher for his/her missed work and notes. Homework charts are posted in each classroom, as well as online.

Honor League

The requirements for the Beaver Regional Honor League are as follows:

Scholarship:

- Students must be in 7th or 8th grade
- Have a grade point average of 3.5 or higher
- Must currently participate in at least 1 extra-curricular
- Participate in an academic activity such as Student Council, Forensics, Battle of the Books, Challenge 24, Science Club, Spelling Bee, Band, Violin, Academic Team and Geography Bee, Fine Arts

Service:

- The student must be involved in service to the school and or local community. This information can be obtained from the Service Hour form.

Citizenship:

- The student must demonstrate good citizenship

Leadership and Character:

- The student must demonstrate leadership and outstanding character qualities.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

***Due to Covid-19, the format for conferences will be communicated at a later date.**

Parents do not need to meet with homeroom teachers to receive report cards. Report cards will be sent home for parents to review before scheduling conferences. Each family will be able to schedule a 10-minute conference with no more than two middle school teachers. Conferences should be based on their child's report card and parent concerns. Remember that conferences are mandatory, so you must conference with at least one teacher.

Science

The middle school science curriculum is comprised of three fields of study: life science, physical science, and earth science. The curriculum is designed to be an integrated progression within the three disciplines. Each year, your child will be introduced to a new topic, or expand on a prior topic. For example: In Earth Science, sixth grade learns about the solar system and planets. Seventh grade learns about how the planets were formed, and eighth grade learns about the characteristics and lives of stars and galaxies.

As a way to reinforce and incorporate STEM into the science curriculum, seventh grade will follow the Scientific Method and complete a science fair project during the first semester of the school year.

Service Hours

All students in grades 6-8 are required to do community service. The requirements for each grade are as follows:

- 6th Grade: 5 hours
- 7th Grade: 10 hours
- 8th Grade: 15 hours

Service hours must be completed and turned into your homeroom teacher by May 21, 2021. Failure to complete service hours will affect your religion grade for the last 9 weeks, as service hours equate to a grade.

Honor League students will need an additional 15 hours, and forms must be returned to the principal by May 2021. *Due to Covid-19, these requirements are subject to change.

Technology

Teachers use a variety of technological devices during instruction. Students are expected to handle all equipment with great care. If any equipment should be damaged through carelessness or mischievous activities, the student and his/her family will be held financially responsible for any repair or replacement required.

If any student deliberately logs onto an inappropriate site or passes on an address for an inappropriate site to another individual four demerits will be issued. This applies to all devices when at Archangel Gabriel School.

Testing

Teachers will be cognizant of student testing schedules and will try not to schedule more than 3 core subject tests on the same day. However, there are times throughout the year where this will be more difficult. These times will include before holiday breaks, the end of the 9 weeks, and the end of the school year. Advance notice will be given for tests and posted on the Middle School Google Site.