

# **STUDENT HANDBOOK**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Dear King Student,

Welcome to King Middle School! This is an excellent school with a lot of great kids and wonderful teachers. This book has been purchased for you. It has several uses and purposes. Your house team will explain the specific uses of the book.

There are school rules, school activities and policies listed in this book. There are also Portland Schools' policies listed as well. You will need to be aware of all of these policies; however, they are mostly just common sense school rules and are not difficult to follow.

I hope you will have a great school year. There are many opportunities to get involved in at King Middle School. We find that kids who get involved in at least one activity at school seem to have a better experience at King. Eighty five percent of our students got involved in one activity last year. What activity are you going to choose this fall?

Good luck and have a great year!

Sincerely,

Michael J. McCarthy  
Principal

**PORTLAND SECONDARY SCHOOL HANDBOOK**

All secondary school students are responsible for reading and adhering to the practices and regulations contained in this handbook. Parents and guardians are encouraged to become familiar with its content. The rules apply to all school-related events or activities, including both curricular and co-curricular programs, regardless of the location. Questions about the content of the handbook may be addressed to a Guidance Counselor, Assistant Principal, or Principal.

### KING MIDDLE SCHOOL

This handbook applies to the seven secondary schools in Portland; however, some of the rules and opportunities are specific to King. King Middle School has an enrollment of 500 students and is one of three middle schools in Portland. Our student population includes people from many different countries and cultures. We take pride in our diversity and work hard to create a welcoming atmosphere where all students can achieve at a high level.

### **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY STATEMENT**

The Portland Public Schools ensure equal educational opportunities and affirmative action, regardless of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, marital status, age, or handicap. Contact:

Joline Hart, Affirmative Action Officer  
Portland Public Schools  
136 Allen Ave.  
Portland, ME 04103  
(207) 874-8100

### **ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

#### Absences

#### According to Maine State Law:

Students may be granted excused absence or excused tardy if the parent writes a note documenting:

- Illness
- An appointment with a professional that cannot be made in an out of school time (i.e. doctor, dentist, funeral, court, etc.).
- A *pre-approved* family trip.
- Family emergency.

If a student is unable to come to school, a parent or guardian should inform the Student Services Office before 9:00 a.m. You may notify the Student Services Office by using the Attendance Line 874-8140 x507. This line is available from 7:00 am to 4:00 PM daily. Students are also required to

bring a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian to their homeroom teacher, which specifies the date(s) of and reason for the absence. Students must bring a written excuse even if the school has been called, or if the school has called their home -- the note is for the school's records.

#### Tardiness

**Students are tardy after 8:30 a.m. Between 8:25 and 8:30 a.m. students should report directly to homeroom. If students arrive after 8:30 a.m. they must report to the Student Services Office as soon as they enter the building to obtain a tardy pass to be given to the teacher of the class, which is in session at the time of their arrival.** The Student Services Office should receive a written note or phone call from a parent or guardian explaining the tardiness. **If a note or phone call is not received, the student may be assigned detention.** Students who are tardy between classes will be disciplined by their teachers, who may require them to complete make-up time or serve detention.

#### Dismissal From School

No student shall be allowed to leave during the school day for any reason without the permission of his/her parent, guardian, or other previously designated emergency contact person and either the Principal, Assistant Principal, School Nurse, or Office Secretary. If a student is to be dismissed during the school day, he/she is required to bring a written note signed by a parent or guardian to the Student Services Office before school begins in the morning. The presentation of a forged or altered note will result in disciplinary action. All dismissals will be noted on the absence list. (This procedure allows us to release students in a timely manner without disrupting classes). If a student becomes ill during the school day, he/she should report to the School Nurse in the Main Office. He/she should come with a pass from a teacher. In the case of a Nurse not being available, students should see an Office Secretary. Students should not call home from the classrooms to be dismissed. Students who are not to leave the building until a school official contacts the parent or guardian for permission prior to dismissal.

#### Messages for Students

In order to keep class disruption to a minimum, when a parent or guardian calls with a message for a student, or drops something off for the student, the message will be put on the York or Windsor message board. Students should check their house's message boards daily. If the message is of an urgent nature, the student will immediately be called to the Main Office.

#### Hall Passes

Students must obtain permission from staff to leave during class time. Your teacher must sign a hall pass before you leave to go to another teacher, lavatory, student services, the nurse, etc...

#### Truancy

When a student is absent from school or class without prior permission of his/her parent or guardian or a school official, that student is considered truant. Truancy will result in disciplinary action.

#### School Delay or Cancellation

In the event of emergency or weather-related delays or cancellations, all local radio and television stations beginning at 6:00 A.M. will make announcements. **Please do not call the school office for this information.**

#### Religious Holy Days

It is the policy of the Portland secondary schools that no tests shall be given and no substantially new materials shall be introduced on major religious holy days when students of various faiths are absent in their observance. These holy days include Jewish New Year, Jewish Day of Atonement, Good Friday, Greek Orthodox Good Friday, EID and others.

#### Student Visitors

Students may not bring visitors to school without prior permission from one of the administrators. This approval must be requested at least one day in advance of the visit. Students and visitors must report the schedule the visitor will follow to the Student Services Office. Visitors will be only allowed if they are moving to Portland and want to see the school or if their parents have arranged an out-of-district visit with the Guidance Counselors. Friends or former students, who are visiting, cannot be given permission to spend the day at King.

#### Make-Up Work

Students are expected to arrange for and complete make-up work for excused absences. Teachers may establish deadlines for submission of make-up work. Failure to meet such a deadline may result in loss of credit for the assignments. Students have no make-up privileges for unexcused absences or truancy.

### **KING MIDDLE SCHOOL DISCIPLINARY CODE**

(See Appendix I for Portland Secondary School Disciplinary Code and Procedures)

### Rights and Responsibilities

In order to provide a safe and orderly environment in which learning can occur, the Portland secondary schools have established a Code of Conduct, which includes the following student rights and responsibilities.

#### **The right to have individual belongings protected.**

- Respect for property that is not your own is expected at all times. It is not acceptable to deface or vandalize school property or someone else's property. Consequences include cleaning, repairing, or replacing damaged property, detention, suspension and other disciplinary actions.

#### **The right to have ideas and feelings respected.**

- Language that hurts others is not acceptable at any time. Teasing, name calling, swearing, gossiping, spreading rumors, verbal aggression or language that is threatening to other students or staff members will result in consequences that include detention, behavior classes, suspension, or other disciplinary action.

#### **The right to personal safety.**

- Physical aggression is not acceptable at any time. Aggression in the form of bullying, hurting or putting someone else's safety at risk will result in consequences that include detention, behavior classes, suspension or other disciplinary action.
- Fighting will result in suspension from school.

#### **The right to a quiet, orderly place in which to learn.**

- Preventing another person from learning is not acceptable. Shouting, arguing, fooling around, and not following directions are all examples of actions that disrupt the learning environment. Consequences for these actions include detention, behavior classes, suspension, or other disciplinary actions.
- If a student has been sent to the office and an administrator is required to remove the student from the classroom that student will automatically be sent home.

**Each student shall have the RESPONSIBILITY to:**

- Use courtesy in speech and actions,
- Respect other people's space,
- Follow basic school rules,
- Act in a manner to promote everyone's learning,
- Be prepared for class and contribute to class,
- Take an active role in learning,
- Arrive on time and attend school and classes regularly
- Respect school property,
- Actively make King a safe place, and
- Resolve conflicts in a non-violent manner.

Individual classroom teachers will handle most behavioral situations. Behaviors which are more serious (fighting, obscenity, theft, repeated classroom disruptions, etc.) will be referred directly to the administration.

**KING MIDDLE SCHOOL INFORMATION**

**Academic Teams and Vertical Housing**

Teachers working as a team has long been promoted as a way for the middle schools to bridge the gap between self contained elementary classes and departmentalized high school classes.

An additional advantage to teaming is that teachers are provided common planning time which allows them to plan integrated curriculum, thematic units and learning expeditions, as well as an opportunity to communicate with parents and colleagues.

King Middle School is divided into two academic teams, the House of York and the House of Windsor. When students enter King, they are placed into one of these Houses and remain in that House throughout their years at King.

Both houses have a two-year loop in sixth and seventh grades which means student and teacher teams stay together for two years.

**Crew Time**

The goal of Student Crew Time is for students to experience a sustained and meaningful relationship with an adult during their years at King Middle School and also to work on a record of their three-year work. Student Crew Time meets for fifty minutes per week in addition to a daily ten-minute check-in during homeroom where attendance is recorded and announcements are read.

Student Crew Time provides the opportunity for students to deal with issues, which are important to their goals for success during the middle school years.

The purposes are: to have every student known well by at least one adult, to give students an opportunity to deal with issues and concerns related to their school experiences, and to establish a communication network with the students that are permanently scheduled.

Student Crew Time allows for advisement and academic assistance, provides a source of guidance, minimizes the chance of students “falling through the cracks”, opens channels of communication, and is a designated time to address young adolescent issues. It is also a time when the teachers and students specifically work on the student portfolios. All students will present their portfolios to their parents or a significant adult at conferencing in November and March.

### Supervised Study

Supervised Study is an instructional period used for the following reasons:

- Quiet study in the classroom;
- To receive extra help from a teacher;
- To attend scheduled classes (e.g. Chorus, Band, Orchestra etc.).

### Flexible Schedules

Middle school schedules need to be flexible to accommodate integrated curriculum and learning expeditions. At King the scheduling committee provides a master schedule with large blocks of uninterrupted time to each team. It is then the team’s responsibility to plan their students’ academic classes. This allows teachers the autonomy to adjust the daily schedule to make time work for them when more flexibility is required. In order to accommodate these longer blocks of time in the core academic areas, King has moved to a six-day rotating schedule. If school is cancelled, the day they return will be the same as the one previously scheduled (i.e. day 1, day 2(snow), return to day 3).

### Grouping

Students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 are placed into teams according to teacher recommendations, input from counselors, performance on standardized tests, and foreign language selection. Grade level teams are heterogeneously grouped and have a wide distribution of ability levels. Parent communication regarding team placement is welcome but final team decisions are made according to academic and social factors.

### King Middle School Curriculum

Middle school goals and philosophy are implemented through our curriculum. King Middle School teachers provide instruction and skills in

the areas of Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, and Science. In addition, King students are introduced to a wide range of related arts courses. Specialists in Health, Physical Education, Computer, Music, Art, Scientific Communication, Technology Education, and World Cultures provide challenging opportunities for students to explore.

Grade 6

Language Arts	Foreign Language or Reading
Math	Music
Social Studies	Computer
Science	Health/Physical Education

Grade 7

Language Arts	Foreign Language or Reading
Math	Scientific Communication
Social Studies	Art
Science	Health/Physical Education

Grade 8

Language Arts	Foreign Language or Reading
Math	Technology Education
Social Studies	World Cultures
Science	Health/Physical Education

Expeditionary Learning

Expeditionary Learning is a form of curriculum design where teachers and students engage in long-term investigations built around significant projects and performances. These learning expeditions allow students the opportunity to engage in rigorous experiences and authentic research of content material where revision and assessment are practiced.

**ACADEMICS**

Academic Honesty

King Middle School students are expected to be honest. Academic dishonesty, including cheating or helping others to cheat on school assignments, is the most serious violation of the social contract between students and teachers. When a student is found to have cheated, his/her parent or guardian will be notified and a teacher may deny a student credit for the work submitted. Repeated offenses will subject the student to suspension or other serious consequences.

Homework Guidelines

Homework assignments at King will be planned within the House.

Homework should be an extension of the problem-solving activities begun in school. It should be a means of reinforcing and supplementing material learned during a class lesson.

The average minimum time per grade will be:

Grade 6 One hour, four times per week,

Grade 7 One hour & fifteen minutes, four times per week,

Grade 8 One and one-half hours, four times per week.

Long term assignments such as book reports, notebooks, research papers, special course projects and electives may at times add to these times. These projects are planned by and with each House.

### Progress Reports

Halfway through each trimester, teachers will alert students of work habits, which are unsatisfactory and encourage those, which are satisfactory in a particular subject. Teachers will send reports home to parents who must sign them and return them to school.

### Report Cards

At the end of every trimester, students will receive a report card that is especially designed for middle school students. It is a very complete card, which should help parents and students to understand exactly how the student is doing in each class.

The Portland Public Schools use the following ranking scale:

#### Academics:

A+	99-100	B+	91-92	<u>Effort/Conduct</u> 1= Excellent 2=Average 3=Inadequate/None
A	95-98	B	87-90	
A-	93-94	B-	85-86	
C+	83-84	D+	76-77	
C	80-82	D	72-75	
C-	78-79	D-	70-71	
F	Below 70			

Parents and guardians are encouraged to contact teachers, guidance counselors, and administrators with any questions or concerns they may have about a student's performance.

### Honor Roll

Students who receive A's in all subjects will achieve **HIGH HONORS**. Those who receive A's and B's in all subjects will achieve **HONORS**. Students who receive all "1" ratings in effort and no "3" ratings in conduct will achieve **EFFORT** Honor Roll status. All subjects are included in the Honor Roll and Effort Honor Roll eligibility.

#### Back on Track

Back on Track is a mandatory program for students failing two or more classes at progress reporting times during each trimester. Students are required to attend ten sessions from 2:35 pm to 3:35pm. The program is designed to assist students with work owed so that they are passing all of their classes. Parents and students are encouraged to check grades regularly by using the Power School log ins.

#### Student Services

Each team is assigned a strand leader, a guidance counselor and a social worker. They are all located in the Student Services area on the second floor and are available to assist students with personal, social, and academic concerns.

The guidance counselor works, in and outside of the classroom with individual students or with small groups of students. The social worker provides student services in the home, in school, and/or in the community.

To make an appointment, see the counselor or social worker directly or leave a message with the secretary in the Student Services office. Parents are encouraged to communicate with their child's strand leader, counselor and/or social worker whenever the need arises.

#### School Nurse

King's school nurse is responsible for protecting and promoting the health of all students. Some of the services she provides include setting up individual health plans for students with health concerns, administering first aid, educating students, staff and parents about various health issues, counseling, and testing students' vision, hearing and backbone curvature.

If a student is ill, in need of first aid, or wishes to speak with the nurse, s/he should first get a pass from a teacher then go to the Main Office. When the nurse is not in the building someone in the Main Office will assist students and will contact a nurse by phone if necessary. Students must have a signed permission slip in order to receive Tylenol or other medication at school.

#### Student Health Center

King is fortunate to have a Student Health Center right at school several days a week. Students may access this through the Nurse's office.

Students must have parent permission sheets returned to access the clinic. Services include medical and limited dental care.

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

### Student Appearance

Students are expected to keep themselves well groomed and neatly dressed at all times. Any form of dress, which is considered contrary to good hygiene or which is disruptive in appearance or detrimental to the purpose or conduct of the school will not be permitted. Bandanas, do-rags, hats, sport sweatbands, pajama pants, short or tight-fitting skirts or shorts, thin strapped, revealing tops (like tube tops, halter tops or low cut tops) on girls and tank tops on boys or other similar items of clothing will not be permitted. Clothing that signifies gang culture will not be allowed. Rollershoes are not permitted. Clothing should cover the midriff area so that the stomach is not exposed. Shirts advertising tobacco, alcoholic beverages or those with obscene or questionable printing on them will not be permitted. Students may be sent home to change if the above rules are not followed.

### School Dances

Rules and regulations pertaining to school dances are to be adhered to and there shall be no exceptions. A brief summary of the rules follows:

- \*Only King Middle School students may attend the dances.
- \*Sign-up for dances will occur by grade before a dance.
- \*Tickets may be purchased at the time of sign-up.
- \*Each student may purchase only one ticket.
- \*No one will be admitted to the dance without having signed up and paid for a ticket prior to dance.
- No tickets will be sold at the door.**
- \*Dances run from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- \*Students should have prior arrangements made with parents to pick them up and should not expect to make phone calls from the school the night of the dance.
- \*Once a student leaves the dance area, he/she will not be allowed to return.
- \*All school rules pertain to dance activities.
- \*King's dances are informal, therefore the dress is informal. Dress should be appropriate for a school function.

- **Any student who is under suspension will not be allowed to attend a school dance.**
- **Anyone suspended in the time period prior to the first dance or between dances will not be allowed to**

**attend the next dance.** (Students assigned in-house suspension for a portion of a school day may be eligible to attend a dance.)

- **Anyone who misses 30% or more days between dances will not be allowed to attend the next dance.**

#### Bikes, Scooters, Skateboards, CD Players and Cell Phones and related music technological items

Bicycle racks are provided outside the school. Bikes are to be left in the racks throughout the entire day. It is the student's responsibility to see that the bikes are locked at all times. Skateboards and scooters may **not** be brought to school. Students should not bring toys of any kind to school. Cell phones and music technology must be **shut off** and **locked** in lockers. They are **not** to be used in school at any time. A violation of these rules may result in the individual disciplinary action and confiscation of the item. Parents must pick up the confiscated items in the main office. **THE SCHOOL IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST OR STOLEN ITEMS.**

#### Student Lockers/Locks

Lockers assigned to students are the property of King Middle School and should be properly maintained. Students are to use their assigned lockers for their books, school materials, and clothing. Lockers are not to be used for storing other materials.

Students must purchase their own locks and give the combination to their homeroom teacher. Please do not purchase key locks.

#### Telephone Use

**The office telephones are for office and teacher use only.** School phones are to be used by students for *emergency purposes only*. Students must get permission from a teacher to use a classroom phone.

#### Physical Education Dress Policy

All students should be appropriately dressed for Physical Education class. This is a rule designed for safety and hygiene reasons. Students should have a suitable pair of shorts/sweatpants, a shirt, and sneakers.

For full daily credit, students must participate in a clean shirt, shorts/sweatpants, and sneakers. For half credit, students may participate dressed in their street clothes (except skirts) and sneakers.

Students should **not bring** valuables to Physical Education class.

#### Clubs, Activities, and Special Activities

While your academic skills are very important, there are also other things a middle school should teach you, including how to enjoy yourself while learning. For that reason, King has developed an activity program, which includes sports, clubs, publications, and school services.

There are various intramural and interscholastic sports offered for both boys and girls. The main objective is to provide instruction in sports as well as to develop a strong school and athletic spirit through training and competition.

In addition to athletics there are also a number of other activities to become involved in at King. They include Math Team, Debate Club, Literary Magazine, Drama, Yearbook, Chess Club and Outing Club.

Following are the sports offered at King Middle School.

#### Fall Sports

Soccer – Boys and Girls  
Cross Country – Boys and Girls  
Field Hockey -- Girls

#### Winter Sports

Basketball -- Boys and Girls  
Indoor Track -- Boys and Girls  
Swimming -- Boys and Girls (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade only)  
Wrestling – Boys and Girls (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade only)

#### Spring Sports

Baseball – Boys (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade only)  
Softball – Girls (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade only)  
Outdoor Track -- Boys and Girls  
Tennis -- Boys and Girls

**NOTE TO PARENTS:** All interscholastic sports require a physical for students to take part. Physicals will be valid for a period of two years and cover all sports.

#### Co-Curricular Eligibility Policy

A co-curricular activity is defined as an out-of-class activity, supervised and/or financed by the school, which provides curriculum-related learning and character building experiences. They are voluntary, are not graded, and do not earn credits.

#### Determining Eligibility

- Eligibility shall be determined by academic trimesters (determined by the first Monday after the trimester ends).

- Grades at the end of the marking period will be final. “Incomplete” grades will be made up for credit during the first two weeks of the next trimester.
- If a passing grade is not achieved, the student becomes ineligible.
- The principal or his designee will be responsible for certifying the eligibility of all students participating in co-curricular activities.

### Middle School

- Student must pass all but one subject in the previous trimester to maintain eligibility.
- Any student going on to ninth grade must pass all but one subject in the final trimester to be eligible for the first quarter of ninth grade.

### All Levels

- Students in special education classes will meet the same general requirements as all other students. The exception would be those students whose academic progress is addressed in the Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.).
- A student may improve their G.P.A. by making up a failed course by completing approved summer classes. His or her eligibility for the next quarter, however, will depend on the previous quarter’s grade.
- A student who does not meet the above criteria will be ineligible for a minimum of 4 school weeks. On the fifth Monday of the trimester, the student may regain eligibility if the criteria are met. If a student does not become eligible after the probationary period, s/he is dropped from the activity.
- An ineligible student may practice with the team/club/organization during the first 4 weeks of the trimester but may not participate in any games/matches/productions, etc., nor may he/she sit with the team at competitions, nor travel with the team.
- It is recommended that a student who is ineligible seek additional help from his or her teacher or from a tutor suggested by the teacher.

### Sports and School Attendance

~Regular attendance is required of all students. A student absent

from school any part of the day of a competition/practice may not participate unless approved by the principal.

~If an activity is scheduled for Saturday and a student is absent on Friday for an excused reason, the principal shall verify the reason and determine if the student is given permission to participate.

### Nutrition

One of the goals of our health program is to foster healthy eating habits. Students should not be bringing or have soda dropped off for them to drink during the school day. Our House Teams are emphasizing healthy snacks. Only water and juice drinks will be permitted.