



Middle School Student Handbook 2017/18

Urban Prairie Waldorf School is committed to providing a supportive environment for all middle school students to grow and learn. Teachers and members of Three Streams of Student Support work hand in hand to address students' social-emotional, behavioral, and learning needs.

The Three Streams of Student Support includes the following groups that are available to you:

Care Group

The Care Group supports students (potentially engaging their families) with academic and health-related needs that affect their ability to thrive in the classroom and school.

Guidance and Discipline Group

The Guidance and Discipline Group provides guidance to help students change behavior patterns through providing tools and redirection so students can orient themselves and find their footing at school.

Social Inclusion Group

The Social Inclusion Group supports students toward feeling welcome and respected. Social Inclusion may initiate individual student support but also welcomes students to actively seek assistance when they are having social difficulties. Social Inclusion employs a wide range of tools to help students work through misunderstandings and conflicts.

Each class has a Social Inclusion Group Representative who will work regularly and directly with the class to strengthen the social fabric of the class.

6th grade - Mx. Miller

7th grade - Ms. Merchant

8th grade - Mx. Miller

Student Action Committee

Student participation is an important element of the Three Streams process. The 8th grade students meet weekly with Social Inclusion Chair Mx. Miller to train as student mentors and helpers in the Three Streams of Student Support. They learn conflict-resolution skills and reflect on their own experiences to bring understanding and empathy to their work with younger students. They may be involved in "No Blame" meetings or other similar methods to support students in solving problems.

Conscious Communication Guidelines

The goal of conscious communication is that every UPWS student:

- is able to speak their mind in a way that also takes into account the time and space of others and respects the boundaries, thoughts, and feelings of others;
- takes interest in others' opinions and strives for understanding without judgment;
- speaks in a way that is kind, true, and necessary (does it improve upon silence?);
- is responsible for the consequences of their words and actions.

How do we do this?

1. Use "I" statements
2. Ask curious questions
3. Take responsibility for your feelings. No one can make you feel anything you do not choose to accept.
4. Be aware of your personal assumptions and beliefs and strive to be neutral in your listening.
5. Welcome and find peace with divergent viewpoints (agree to disagree).
6. Be as succinct as possible.
7. Engage in one conversation at a time.
8. Keep discussion oriented towards solutions and the highest good.
9. Focus conversation on people who are present.

Middle School Guiding Principles:

- build healthy habits at home and at school.
- show respect and regard for yourself and others.
- take responsibility for your words and actions.
- be strong leaders and role models for the entire school community.

In order to promote the Middle School Guiding Principles, Urban Prairie has the following guidelines for middle school students.

Dress Code

Student dress guidelines at Urban Prairie are designed to support a formal learning environment and to create a respectful and reverent atmosphere. Our curriculum provides for numerous physical activities throughout the day, both indoors and out. Clothing and footwear should fit well, while being sturdy enough to provide for optimal movement. All middle school students are expected to dress in a manner that promotes safety and is conducive to active movement. Students are asked to maintain good hygiene, in terms of grooming and cleanliness. Hair should not cover eyebrows.

Please keep the following dress guidelines in mind before leaving for school each morning:

Clothing & Footwear

- Clothes should be clean, comfortable and well-fitted so that you can move easily.
- We ask that you not wear clothing, shoes or accessories with cartoon characters, advertising or media-oriented logos or slogans.
- All students need to have a pair of indoor shoes, which will remain at school. Outdoor shoes and boots may not be worn in the classroom.
- Shoes should be supportive and light enough for students to take part in the various movement activities throughout the day. We also ask that all students wear socks. Please no flip-flops, slippers or crocs.
- Shorts and skirts must be long enough to assure unrestricted ease of movement. Students are advised to wear shorts, leggings or tights under skirts to allow for maximum movement during classroom and outdoor activity, which may include tumbling, handstands, cartwheels, climbing and hanging upside down.
- Shirts must cover the midriff area. In order to allow for unrestricted movement, we ask that you not wear spaghetti straps or strapless shirts.
- Students should have a separate set of clothing for movement class, which consists of gym shorts/pants and a t-shirt/sweatshirt that allows for freedom of movement. Tennis shoes are required for all gym classes, unless it is rainy/muddy in which case students will have to use their rain gear.

Students are asked to refrain from wearing:

- Jewelry and other clothing or accessories which inhibits movement
- Shirts with media images or brand logos
- Pants which fall down
- Exposed underwear
- Shoes with heels higher than one inch

Outdoor Wear

All students go outside everyday and should wear or bring appropriate clothing for any weather condition that may occur while they are at school. Exceptions to this policy are severe conditions such as wind chill factor of -15 or greater. The following attire is recommended for weather conditions throughout the year:

For Rain	For Cold and Snow
Rain Pants	Warm boots
Rain Boots	Snow Pants
Rain Coat	Waterproof Winter Coat
	Gloves, Hat, Scarf

Punctuality

Procedure for students that arrive after 7:55 am:

- The front door of the school will be closed at 7:55 a.m. After this time, students must ring the doorbell or call the school at (312) 733-5337.
- A parent/guardian must accompany the student to the office to receive a tardy slip. Students without a tardy slip will not be admitted into a classroom.

- After putting their items in their locker, students will follow their teacher's protocol for entering the classroom late.
- Tardiness may be excused in cases of significantly inclement weather conditions that impact road conditions for travel to school.

Tardiness to classes after start of the day

- Students are required to be at their desk, prepared for class at the designated start time of each class.
- Students will receive a tardy if they are lingering in the hallway, still in the bathroom, getting a drink of water or any other action in which the teacher believes the student is disrespecting the class time, time of the teacher and their peers.
- The only exception to a mid day tardy is if the class teacher has received communication from the student in advance and approved the tardiness.

Parents will be alerted when a student has eight tardies. A student who has nine tardies from school's opening day to January 1st or eleven tardies from January 1st to June 1st is considered excessively tardy and will do a Friday afternoon in-school service.

If a student is excessively tardy, the class teacher will meet with the student and parents to determine appropriate actions that will assist the student in getting to school in a timely way, as well as to make up work and skills deficits as a result of their missed class time. This may necessitate academic tutoring at the family's expense. This may also result in the student being placed on probation. Successful completion of the teacher's recommended "Make-up Work" may be a condition for re-enrollment for the following year.

Independent Work

Students are expected to complete independent work by assigned due dates. Students who do not complete their work on time may be expected to stay in from recess to do so. The first time a student misses an assignment in a class their teacher will speak with them individually. The second time a student misses an assignment within a block or unit of study, the teacher will speak with them and also send a note home to the parent(s) to inform them. A third instance of missed work within a block or unit of study will result in direct communication with the parent(s) to help better support the student.

Behavior Guidelines

Code of Conduct

Urban Prairie strives to build an environment of mutual respect, reverence, and responsibility. Caring for each other and the environment is integral to our curriculum and is vital for students growing into responsible adults. All members of the Urban Prairie community are expected to treat themselves, others, and the school with integrity, kindness, and respect.

The Code of Conduct has been developed to ensure that all of us – students, faculty, parents, and volunteers – understand the expectations we have for each other. The following guidelines will help nurture a positive and supportive learning environment for all students.

School Etiquette

UPWS requires that students:

- Have a respectful attitude toward one another and the adults at school.
- Use a quiet tone of voice when indoors.
- Walk in the school.
- Follow classroom and outdoor rules whether established by their class teacher, subject teacher, substitute teacher, adult volunteer, or field trip chaperone.
- Use polite and kind language when addressing others: please, thank you, excuse me, etc. Name-calling or use of demeaning or derogatory language is not permitted. UPWS does not tolerate teasing, bullying, ostracizing or mean-spirited criticism.
- Respect the personal space of others at all times.
- Respect the belongings of other students and of classroom equipment and materials.
- Respect all areas of the school facilities including classrooms, hallways and bathrooms. All students are asked to help maintain the cleanliness of the facility and report any issues, as they are able.
- Leave cell phones, cameras, web-based wrist wear or other technological devices at home. If a student requires a cell phone for parent communications, the device must be turned into the administrative office every morning and retrieved after school is dismissed.

Classroom Etiquette

UPWS requires that students:

- Put their belongings in the appropriate place, greet their teacher, and come to silence for the start of the day.
- Keep shoes and other belongings neatly arranged in the cubby.
- Transition between classes in an orderly, timely and quiet manner.

Outdoor Etiquette

UPWS requires that students:

- Walk on the sidewalk calmly with their teacher when going outside for recess or an outdoor class.
- Socialize safely at recess: behavior that threatens anyone's safety and wellbeing is not permitted.
- Do not litter.
- Use playground equipment in an appropriate manner. Follow teacher guidelines regarding equipment use.
- Do not throw snow, ice, or sticks at others.

Disciplinary Procedures

Urban Prairie seeks to cultivate an environment of reverence, respect, and responsibility. We strive to create a safe learning environment both physically and emotionally. UPWS understands discipline to be a creative, positive, and mutually supporting relationship – students are given tools to control their own behavior. This is done pedagogically by intentional practices such as social and movement activities in the classroom, the unique design of the curriculum, and the thoughtful classroom environment.

All teachers practice a variety of classroom management techniques, such as helping students refocus their attention or redirect their behavior, and are supported in this work by the Guidance and Discipline Committee. This is carried out in a respectful and effective way, taking the circumstances and age of the child into account. All disciplinary processes are conducted so that the privacy and rights of the individuals involved are protected.

In the beginning and throughout the school year, teachers will clearly communicate to students and their parents the guidelines and expectations for behavior. These expectations will change as the students mature through the grades. Questions about behavioral guidelines are best addressed with the class teacher.

Severe behavior generally encompasses a pattern of behavior that disregards classroom rules and school etiquette and brings harm or shows disrespect for peers, teachers, staff, and visitors.

Incidents involving inappropriate and severe behavior will be addressed based on the nature and severity of the offense. Behavioral incidents will be brought to the attention of a student's parents based on the nature of the incident including the severity of an incident or in the case of repeated incidents in which the student does not respond to teacher's reminders. Upon a full review and investigation of an incident Faculty and Administration will determine the level of discipline necessary which can range from a verbal warning up to and including expulsion.

The purpose of a more severe disciplinary action is to call the inappropriate behavior and actions to the consciousness of the child in order to help them modify the behavior or receive the support the need for correcting the concerns.

In-school Service

School Service is intended to help students understand how their actions have affected the situation of others or themselves and take responsibility for such behavior. Teachers may utilize in-school service as a tool to help bring awareness to middle school students about behavior that needs to be transformed or in the context of situations that need to be redeemed. In-school service may mean a missed practice or lesson or that a family is inconvenienced. Teachers endeavor to help students understand that actions have consequences, not only for themselves but also for those around them.

In most cases, students will receive a verbal warning when there is a policy violation, but in extreme and repeated instances in-school service may be required without warning. In-school service is served on Friday afternoons from 3:40 to 4:40 with a faculty member. Issuing teachers will provide students with a form stating the reason for the required service and the date it needs to be performed. Students need to have forms signed by parents and returned to their class teacher the following day.

Students who earn five or more in-school services in a year will be asked to serve a two-hour Saturday in-school service. A parent will be asked to accompany the student for the Saturday in-school service. At that point, a conference with parents, the student and appropriate school faculty will be called to discuss how to best support better the student.

Healthy Eating Habits - Breakfast, Snack, Lunch

Students should bring a full water bottle and a nutritious snack to school every day.

Students may either participate in Urban Prairie's hot/cold lunch program or bring a nutritious lunch from home. Please keep the following in mind:

Nutrition matters! Eating well will positively affect the quality of your academic experience and your school day, including your mood, behavior, energy level and stamina, and ability to focus and pay attention.

- Eat a nutritious, protein-rich breakfast.
- Refill your water bottle, as needed, to stay hydrated throughout the school day.
- Do not bring candy, gum, soda, or any highly processed food high in refined sugar to school.
- Please do not trade food.

Cell Phones

We ask that students not bring cell phones to school. If there is a necessary exception to this policy, parents may bring a Cell Phone Exception Request form directly to the teacher or administration for review and approval. These forms are available in the office.

An example of an exception may be for a student who needs for the phone for after-school activities outside of Urban Prairie. If an exception is approved, the phone must be left in the office during school hours.

Media & Screen Time

There is extensive research to support the importance of conscious use of media and limiting screen time, as screen time affects mood, initiative, imagination, as well as one's ability to pay attention, rest and fall asleep at night. Teachers ask that you responsibly moderate screen time during the week and choose a 'cease screen time' in the evenings a minimum of two hours prior to bedtime, in order to facilitate a more restful sleep on school nights. Ideally, teachers recommend saving screens for the weekends as a standard practice. In alignment with expert recommendations, teachers also advise screens, including cell phones, not be kept in bedrooms during the night.

Netiquette

"Netiquette" refers to etiquette and behavior guidelines for internet communications. Engaging in discussions online, adding comments, posting on a blog, within an app, or on a social media page is like talking in someone's living room. The conversation should not be considered private. **Be respectful and kind.** Many topics can be controversial or hurtful. Under no circumstances are students to post, message, or email any comment or image with regard to the school or another student that might be considered threatening, exclusionary, harassing, bullying, or obscene. Students may also be held responsible if they encourage another student to take such an action.

I have read, reviewed and understand the guidelines in the UPWS Middle School Student Handbook, and I will strive to follow and uphold them.

Student Name: _____

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent signature: _____ Date: _____