

# Kensington Woods SCHOOLS

## *Middle School Academic Expectations*

### **Introduction**

Kensington Woods has adopted common expectations for all courses. This document lists these expectations and should be referred to by all students enrolled at Kensington Woods Schools. These expectations will be referenced often by the K Woods' faculty; however it is the responsibility of each student to be familiar with and to apply these guidelines as they engage in their academic work at K Woods.

### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Curriculum**

To be successful in college, career and life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, students must learn a set of skills that prepare them to use the knowledge they gain, rather than just memorize it. Students must be able to problem-solve, think critically, make connections, raise questions and make decisions based on inquiry and careful consideration. The faculty at Kensington Woods believes in a curriculum that prepares students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and has designated eleven 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills to focus on throughout the curriculum.

21 <sup>st</sup> Century Skill	
<b>Collaborate</b> <i>What does collaborate look like?</i>	Students who collaborate respectfully <b>work with others</b> to effectively accomplish a goal or task. They <b>leverage their own strengths and strengths of others</b> to accomplish a common goal. They assume <b>shared responsibility</b> for collaborative work and <b>value the individual contributions</b> made by each team member. They also respectfully and productively <b>give and receive feedback</b> .
<b>Self-Awareness</b> <i>What does self-awareness look like?</i>	Students with self-awareness are able to <b>think critically about their own actions, thoughts, knowledge and limitations</b> to better inform future behaviors. They are <b>internally motivated, responsible, self-directed</b> and can <b>manage their own time</b> . They understand that <b>learning is a process</b> and think critically about that process. They are able to <b>recognize opportunity</b> and <b>set and work towards goals</b> . They exhibit <b>integrity</b> and <b>ethical behavior</b> .
<b>Communicate</b> <i>What does communicate look like?</i>	Students who communicate well are able to use verbal, written, digital, visual and other methods of communication to <b>convey their ideas clearly and concisely</b> . They are <b>active listeners</b> , listening to decipher meaning and intentions. They not only consider what they communicate but <b>how others will perceive</b> what they communicate. They are able to display proper and purposeful <b>social skills and interaction</b> .
<b>Persist</b> <i>What does persist look like?</i>	Students who persist have a <b>drive</b> that pushes one to get past setbacks and negativity. They understand that <b>failure is not the end</b> , it is an opportunity to learn and is part of the learning process. They have a mindset of <b>lifelong learning</b> .

<b>Innovate</b> <i>What does <b>innovate</b> look like?</i>	Students who innovate have an open mindset of <b>questioning, wonder</b> and <b>discovery</b> . They are willing to <b>take responsible risks</b> to discover new and worthwhile ideas. Innovating is not always starting from scratch; it is often <b>making new connections</b> with existing ideas and things.
<b>Think Critically</b> <i>What does <b>think critically</b> look like?</i>	Students who think critically exhibit <b>problem solving</b> skills. They look for <b>deeper connections</b> between content areas, life experiences and different perspectives. They <b>integrate</b> different disciplines and perspectives in their work and thoughts. They <b>evaluate</b> and <b>reflect on</b> experiences, processes and content critically.
<b>Create</b> <i>What does <b>create</b> look like?</i>	Students who create <b>design solutions to problems with a purpose</b> . Through the process of creating, they <b>innovate, brainstorm, develop multiple possible solutions</b> and <b>choose the best solution(s)</b> for the situation. They also <b>test</b> their solutions and get <b>feedback</b> to develop the best answer to the problem.
<b>Fun</b> <i>What does <b>fun</b> look like?</i>	Students who have fun look at life with the <b>mindset of discovery and play</b> . They use their <b>imagination</b> and <b>sense of humor</b> to be productive and engage themselves in situations. They use fun to <b>relate to the world and people</b> in a way that is fun for everyone.
<b>Think Big</b> <i>What does <b>think big</b> look like?</i>	Students who think big <b>see the big picture</b> . They gather the pieces of the puzzle and <b>synthesize</b> them when making decisions or opinions. They are able to <b>embrace different points of view</b> and <b>view situations from multiple perspectives</b> . They <b>understand the implications of different decisions</b> on different perspectives . They also have a <b>global awareness</b> .
<b>Empathize</b> <i>What does <b>empathize</b> look like?</i>	Students who empathize <b>immerse themselves in other's experiences and perspectives</b> to better understand the situation. They look at the <b>context</b> of situations. They <b>engage themselves with others</b> to build relationships and deepen understanding. They <b>understand the implications of different decisions</b> on different perspectives. They also respectfully and productively <b>give and receive feedback</b> .
<b>Media &amp; Technology Literacy</b> <i>What does <b>media &amp; technology literacy</b> look like?</i>	Students who have media and technology literacy understand the <b>proper and purposeful use</b> of technology and media and use it to effectively <b>communicate their ideas</b> and <b>access information</b> . They are open to <b>innovation</b> with media and technology but also look at it with a <b>critical eye</b> , understanding the positive and negative impacts media and technology can have on one's life.

## **Academic Behaviors**

The academic skills and behaviors listed below are skills and behaviors that Kensington Woods' faculty believes are extremely important to developing college-ready students and are ones that will be implemented throughout the curriculum.

<b>Academic Knowledge or Skill</b>	
Reading and Comprehension	Students will demonstrate a proficiency in reading material for all subjects through their ability to comprehend reading material from a variety of resources.
Writing and Editing	Students will employ all aspects of the writing process to produce a variety of essays, including but not limited to narrative, expository, business, persuasive and research papers.
Build Vocabulary and Word Analysis Skills	Students will build vocabulary skills and word analysis skills, including roots and derivations, through reading literary works. Students will develop familiarity with literary terminology through literary analysis.
Research	Students will evaluate the appropriateness of a variety of source material in order to synthesize and incorporate the material into a research assignment.
Reasoning, Argumentation, Proof	Students will construct focused, coherent, fully supported positions on a variety of topics and issues. Students will seek reasons and strive to be well informed.

<b>Academic Behavior</b>	
Study Skills	Students will develop and adhere to assignment deadlines.
Organization	Students will be able to organize a range of tasks appropriate to their assignments.
Work Habits	Students will be able to work independently, collaboratively and will seek assistance if needed.
Academic Integrity	Students will act honestly and ethically in their academic work.
Persisting	Students will take advantage of opportunities to demonstrate mastery.
Managing Impulsivity	Students will employ classroom behavior that promotes a supportive learning environment for all students.
Responsible use of Technology	Students will use technology responsibly and for academic purposes.
Awareness of Support Systems	Students will be made aware of support systems, including academic and career resources.
Value of Education	Students will be aware of the importance of continuing postsecondary opportunities, and because of this they are expected to actively participate in their courses.

## ***Student Rights and Obligations***

Kensington Woods believes firmly that a safe, supportive and challenging learning environment is a right for every student and helps students find academic success. To help establish that environment, Kensington Woods has developed Students Rights and Obligations and expects every student to abide the following:

### ***Student Rights***

1. You have the right to make a contribution to an attentive, responsive audience.
2. You have the right to ask questions.
3. You have the right to be treated civilly.
4. You have the right to have your ideas discussed, not you.

### ***Student Obligations***

1. You are obligated to speak loudly enough for others to hear.
2. You are obligated to listen for understanding.
3. You are obligated to treat others civilly.
4. You are obligated to engage and reflect on the discussion and support your opinion

## ***Grading***

Specific information regarding grading and which assignments fit into which categories will be covered by individual teachers. The following is school-wide grading information:

Each teacher will use the following formula to calculate a student's final semester grade will calculate a student's grade based on the following:

- 70% Summative Assessments
- 20% Formative Assessments
- 10% Semester Exam

*\*Please note that the percentage of formative assessment weight may vary a little by teacher/department.*

KWS follows the following grading scale:

- A = 95-100 (4.0)
- A- = 90-94 (3.7)
- B+ = 87-89 (3.3)
- B = 83-86 (3.0)
- B- = 80-82 (2.7)
- C+ = 77-79 (2.3)
- C = 73-76 (2.0)
- C- = 70-72 (1.6)
- F = below 70 (0.0)

### ***Mastery Learning Philosophy***

At Kensington Woods, we believe in a Mastery Learning Philosophy that allows students to develop their skills and knowledge until they can demonstrate mastery of the content. For learning to happen best, teachers need to monitor where students are at during the learning process. Therefore, we expect students to complete all formative (practice) assessments in preparation of the required summative assessments to be turned in or administered on the date they are due as a checkpoint and to provide students feedback at regular intervals.

### ***Summative Assessment Policy***

Students are expected to take or turn in summative assessments on the date due or zero credit will be given. Students will not have the opportunity to retake the assessment or turn it in at a later date with exception of the following:

- If students are absent on the day of the assessment, they are expected to take/turn in the assessment the day they return. If a student is absent for more than one day prior to the assessment, the standard absence work policy rule applies: one day extension is given for every day the student was absent.
- If a student does not pass the assessment, they are expected to follow the Mastery Learning Steps to revise their grade.
- Extensions may be requested a minimum of 24 hours prior to the due date. They will be granted at the discretion of the teacher.

### ***Mastery Learning Steps***

- Fill out and turn in the Request to Retest or Revise form
- Turn in all formative/practice work from the unit, along with the previous assessment and rubric, if applicable.
- Retesting must take place outside of class time (after school, Advisory, Study Skills, Math Lab, etc.), with prior arrangements made with the teacher
- Retakes or revisions must be taken/turned in within 2 weeks after students receive the assessment back with feedback from the teacher.
- Please note, teachers may add additional expectations if appropriate for their class.

### ***Classroom Conduct***

Students are expected to follow the policy and procedures that each teacher sets for his/her classroom. Kensington Woods Schools students are always expected to arrive at class prepared to learn which includes engaging fully in the learning activities, respecting the learning environment and putting forth their best effort on a consistent basis.

Additional specific policy and expectations related to classroom conduct will be covered by individual teachers.

### ***Planners***

At Kensington Woods, we require all Middle School students to utilize a planner. We find that when students use a planner, they become more organized and perform better academically. Students become more accountable for their work and can better self-advocate for themselves when they are organized. The school provides planners to all students at the beginning of the year, but they are welcome to use their own planner if they prefer. Students are given a chance to fill in their planners during every class. Students will be educated on ways to use a planner during their classes and Advisory periods.

## ***Cheating and Plagiarism***

Do not use material from other sources without identifying them. Any passages that are directly or indirectly taken from another source must be acknowledged. We as teachers will show you how to include the ideas and words of other writers and how to acknowledge sources properly.

What we mean by cheating or plagiarizing is simply passing off someone else's work – thinking or writing – as your own. We strongly discourage cheating and plagiarism because they subvert the development of the individual student's talents and skills, because they erode the morale of all students and teachers, and because they undermine integrity and self-worth.

*It is plagiarism if you:*

- Copy or paraphrase ideas from another source without citation, either from another student's paper or from a published book or article.
- Plagiarism means deceiving or misleading your reader, not only about the source of specific phrases or sentences, but also about ideas and interpretations.

*It is not plagiarism if:*

- You quote another's words and acknowledge, in a footnote, the source of your quotation.
- If you indicate, in a footnote or within the body of your paper, the source of an idea you are discussing. You do not need to footnote ideas derived from class discussion or lectures or from conversations with friends, but it might be good courtesy to do so, especially if the ideas are not supported by your own examples and explanations. You do not need to footnote any general background works you read as long as you did not take specific ideas and interpretations from them to present as your own.

Those who assist in cheating or plagiarizing will be treated the same as those who try to profit from it. You are cheating if you let someone copy from your tests or papers, and you will be treated accordingly.

***Check with your teacher in advance if you have any questions about whether your practices constitute cheating or plagiarizing. Plagiarism is an extremely serious offense and may result in loss of credit in a class.***