



PORTER
ACADEMY

**2011-2012
PARENT HANDBOOK**

Welcome to Porter Academy

Dear Parents,

We welcome you and your child to Porter Academy! The purpose of this handbook is to share information with parents, promote understanding of our programs, and to foster a spirit of teamwork between parents and staff.

We strongly believe that open communication between parents and our staff is essential to fully meet your child's needs. We welcome any questions, ideas or concerns. These may be brought to the attention of your homeroom teacher or you can contact Barbara Ramer or me to discuss.

We encourage you to take an active role in your child's education. Volunteering in some capacity at our school is a great way to partner with us. Throughout the school year there will be many opportunities for you to participate. We hope you will take advantage of this time to get involved in our program. We look forward to a successful school year!

Sincerely,

Claudia Porter

Claudia Porter
Founder

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About Porter Academy

Mission:

Porter Academy is dedicated to the education of children with atypical learning styles who have not been successful in public or other private schools. We serve children who have difficulties with attention, language processing, auditory discrimination, dyslexia, visual-motor integration, fine or gross motor skills, processing sensory information, social interactions, self-esteem, etc. Our goal is to help each child appreciate and use his or her strengths to build self-confidence, to acquire academic and social skills, increase knowledge, develop motivation, and the good work/study habits needed to succeed elsewhere.

History:

Claudia Porter and Muriel Lange founded The Porter School in 2000. It first opened at Christ United Methodist Church in Roswell with sixteen children in grades 1 through 3. The following year the school expanded to include a 4th grade, increased to 30 students, and moved to a larger facility located at the Lutheran Church of the Incarnation in Marietta. In 2002, we purchased our present location; enrollment was up to 40 students, and we expanded to include a 5th grade. In 2003 we added a kindergarten and our student population grew to a total of forty-five. In 2005, we lost our second building to structural defects and added three trailers to accommodate our older students and occupational therapy center. We changed our name to Porter Academy in 2007. In the summer of 2010, a building addition with three more classrooms was completed. For the 2010 -2011 school year, we were accredited for Pre-K and Middle School.

School Information

Porter Academy

200 Cox Road

Roswell, GA 30075

Phone: (770) 594-1313

Fax: (770) 594-1771

Founder/Head of School: Claudia Porter

claudia@porteracademy.org

Principal: Barbara Ramer

bramer@porteracademy.org

Website: www.porteracademy.org

Non-Discriminatory Policy

Porter Academy, Inc. admits students of any race, color, religion, gender or national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender or national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship or loan programs, and athletic or other school administered programs.

Overall Approach

At Porter Academy, we believe that it's vital to help our students develop skills from the bottom-up. A student cannot be fully successful with reading and spelling if they're unable to visually perceive the difference between a "d" and a "b", or hear the difference between "ch" and "sh". Understanding the steps involved in learning allows us to assess each student at each of these steps and determine from where their higher-level difficulties stem. Based on this understanding of each child we develop goals and utilize techniques that will most benefit that specific child. Additionally, we strongly value the importance of using techniques and programs that are supported by research so we can be confident that our techniques are going to be effective in developing the skills each child needs.

The wide range of expertise available at Porter Academy allows us to develop a comprehensive understanding of each student. The more comprehensive our understanding, the better we're able to help remediate the root of the difficulties they're experiencing. Remediating the root of the difficulties leads to lasting and wide-spread benefits in every area of that child's life, leading them to feel success and pride in themselves.

Curriculum

Our curriculum covers the usual content for grades pre-kindergarten through middle school. We adhere as closely as possible to the requirements of the Georgia Core Curriculum and the NCTM Math Standards. We are attentive to the different learning styles of our children, and we adjust the sequence, timing, and intensity of what we teach accordingly.

We place major emphasis on the basic skills of reading, writing, and math as these provide the necessary foundation for success in all other areas. We have an exploratory, creative, hands-on approach to science and social studies at all levels. Our students are regularly scheduled for music, art, drama, physical education and occupational therapy. Use of the computer, both for reinforcing skills and as a tool for research, is an integral part of our curriculum.

Teachers & Staff

Claudia Porter

Founder/Head of School Language/Reading Specialist, Speech/Language Pathologist

M.A. in Speech/Language Pathology; Certified Speech/Language Therapist since 1971, GA license in Speech-Language Pathology; CA Life Teaching Certificate; developed L.D. program at High Meadows School; Program Director of Child Development Center in Roswell; speech/language therapist & teacher/coordinator for the Georgia Challenge Grant Program; North Fulton Child Development Association award; Who's Who in the South and South West; Fellowship for Masters degree at Occidental College; Certificate of Excellence by Occidental College Speech and Reading Clinics; ACE award presented by ASHA for outstanding accomplishments in Continuing Education; 2008 award from Leitalift Foundation, 2008-2010 presenter at annual GISA Conference; founded Porter Academy in 2000.

Barbara Ramer

Assistant Director

M.S. in Education; 54 years experience in the field of education to include teaching (K-7), counseling (K-12), supervision, and administration; Member of National Board of Certified Counselors (NCC); Licensed Professional Counselor in GA and VA (LPC); designed community-wide promotions for guidance services in local VA schools; Director of Special Education School; served as Advisory Committee Chairman for the school superintendent to coordinate curriculum for the Virginia school system; joined Porter Academy in 2003

Teresa Bowen

Assistant Teacher

A.S. in Early Childhood Education, Georgia Perimeter College; trained in Handwriting Without Tears; iLs; skilled in Intermediate American Sign Language; joined Porter Academy in 2003

Hannah Cha

Assistant Teacher

A.S. in Early Childhood Education, Georgia Perimeter College; violin teacher; joined Porter Academy in 2003

Laura Corn

Middle School Lead Teacher

M.A. in Special Education, University of Arizona; Georgia certification in level 4; specializing in Autism; skilled in basic sign language; joined Porter Academy in 2006 Academy

James Cress

B.A. in Physical Education/Adaptive Physical Education, Ball State University; Georgia certified in Physical Education and Health; joined Porter Academy in 2010

Pam Higginbotham

Business Manager

B.S. in Corporate Finance and Accounting, 1992; 17 years experience in all aspects of accounting; joined Porter Academy in 2008

Maureen Kennedy **Lead Teacher**
M.S. in Education, Counseling Major; B.S. in Elementary Education; 19 years experience with special needs children; 21 years counseling children and their families; 7 years as rehabilitation coordinator at Children’s Rehabilitation Center in Ohio; joined Porter Academy in 2006

Jody Kershner **Music Therapist**
B.A. in Music Therapy; 25 years of music therapy experience in education and mental health settings; member of American Association for Music Therapy; trained with Dr. Gary Mesibov and Dr. Stanley Greenspan; ORFF music education; joined Porter Academy in 2003

Nancy Knight **Occupational Therapist**
B.S. in Occupational Therapy; 30+ years experience as OT; certified and licensed occupational therapist; worked in Fulton County School systems from 1987-present; joined Porter Academy in 2007

Vicki Miller **Assistant Teacher**
Vicki is certified as a Special Education Para professional; previous positions include: special education assistant-Brunswick, Ohio: special education assistant and personal care assistant: Erie, Pennsylvania; joined Porter Academy in 2008

Mary Retchko **Assistant Teacher**
BA in Philosophy and minor in English; Joined Porter Academy in 2010

Amanda Olsen **Teacher**
M.A. in Social Work, B.A. in Psychology, A.S. in Education; finalizing degree in Early Childhood Education; 14 years experience teaching Preschool, Kindergarten and first grade; joined Porter Academy in 2010

Barbara Richard **Supervising Lead Teacher**
M.A. in Educational Administration, B.A. in Elementary Education; 20 years experience teaching grades K-4; 2 years as Vice Principal; FL and MA teaching certification; Orton-Gillingham training; joined Porter Academy in 2004

Lynn Schoeneck **Occupational Therapist; Assistant Director**
M.S. in Occupational Therapy; B.A. in Psychology with honors; certified and licensed occupational therapist; instructor at the Autism Society of NC, iLs, Handwriting Without Tears, 4 years camp counselor at High Meadows School; drum, guitar and piano skills; joined Porter Academy in 2004

Marcie Schultz **Middle School Lead Teacher**
B.S. in Computer Technology; Certified Wilson Reading System Tutor; 9 years experience tutoring dyslexic children in reading and spelling; joined Porter Academy in 2004

Barbara Selkirk**Teacher**

M.Ed. in Reading; B.S. in Psychology; several years experience teaching elementary grades; 4 years experience teaching Budding Authors at Mercer University College for Kids; Orton-Gillingham training; year-long study of Art History; Founding Board Member for Mercer University Reading Center; Received the Georgia State University Mortar Board Honor Society Outstanding Student Award; joined Porter Academy in 2006

Jackie Shallcross**Middle School Lead Teacher**

B.A. in Education; 20 years experience teaching children with special needs and behavioral disorders in CT and GA; taught at Mill Springs Academy; drama at The Howard School; joined Porter Academy in 2002

Jennifer Townsend**Art Teacher**

M.A. in Fine Arts from Georgia State; 21 years teaching Art in private schools and Community centers; joined Porter Academy in 2008

Liana Valentin-Scott**Academic Assistant/Coordinator**

A.S. in Early Childhood Education; certified in M.I.L.E math program; skilled in intermediate American Sign Language; over 20 years office experience; joined Porter Academy 2004

Board of Directors

Bill Porter

President of Board

Community member and Parent

Bill has a B. S. in Information Sciences from University of Pittsburg. He has a law degree from Georgia State University in 1999. He is currently a practicing attorney in real estate and on business loans in his own firm

Judy Murphy

Vice-President

Chairman of Fundraising

Community member and Grandparent

Judy Murphy has a nursing degree. She and her husband worked together to found Data Media, a company known across the nation as business to turn to for medical business assistance.

Barbara W. Ramer

Secretary

Principal of Porter Academy

Barbara Ramer has a BS in Elementary Education and a Masters in Education from the University of Virginia. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor in the states of Georgia and Virginia. Barbara is also a National Certified Counselor. She holds a Postgraduate license in elementary, middle and secondary counseling and has experience in field of education including teaching, counseling, supervision and administration.

Tom Smith

Chief Financial Officer

Community member

Tom is currently a Certified Public Accountant. He is President and founder of GREAT SSIO, Inc. This is a scholarship foundation that helps families who have children in need of a private school education. The foundation provides tuition scholarships to children grades kindergarten through Grade 12 that attend private schools. GREAT SSO, Inc. is an independent, non-denominational organization. Tom is also involved in Boy Scouts, coaches Youth Baseball and supports parents' choice in education.

Claudia Porter

Chief Executive Officer

Head of School

Claudia is the founder of the school. She is a Language/Reading Specialist and a Speech/language Pathologist. She has a M.S. in Speech/language Pathology, and Has been a Certified Speech/language Therapist since 1971. Claudia has a Georgia license in Speech-Language Pathology; CA life Teaching Certificate/She was the Program Director of Child Development Center in Roswell as well as the Speech/language therapist and teacher/coordinator for the Georgia Challenge Grant Program. She founded Porter School in 2000.

Reverend Cyrus S. Mallard, Jr.

Retired Minister and Pastor Emeritus of Roswell Presbyterian Church.

Community Member, Vice Chairman of Fundraising

Reverend Cy mallard received a degree from Presbyterian College Clinton, S. C. He has a Masters in Divinity from Columbia Theological Seminary. Cy is currently Pastor Emeritus of Roswell Presbyterian Church. He has served on boards of the North Fulton Charities including North Fulton Child Development Center, Homestretch and North Fulton Regional Hospital

Lynn Schoeneck

Lead Occupational Therapist, Porter Academy

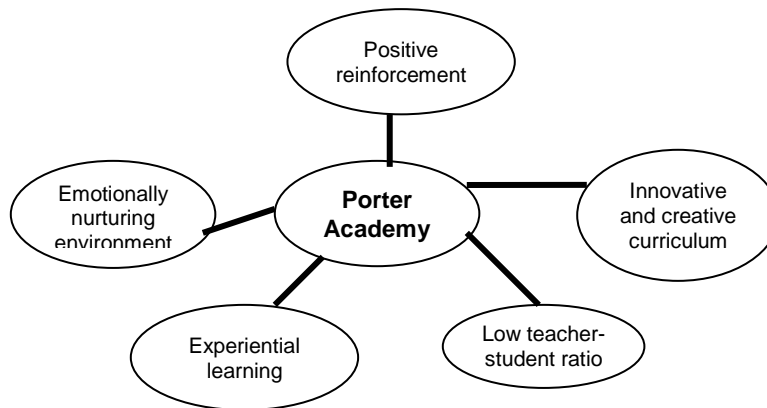
Chairman of Community Outreach for Board

Lynn is in charge of the Occupational Therapy Program at Porter Academy. She has a M.S. in Occupational Therapy; B. A. in Psychology with honors. Certified and licensed occupational therapist. She has Auditory training (Integrated Listening systems and Therapeutic Listening)

Classroom Overview

Instructional Groups

This year our staff will be teaching in modified self-contained homerooms and teams. Each child is assigned to a homeroom and each homeroom is assigned to one of three teams. These teams collaborate to integrate the academic strengths of each staff member, to ensure that students reach their full potential. Porter Academy's program is based on a multi-sensory, integrated approach to learning.



To quote Claudia Porter, “Porter Academy was created so that children with learning differences succeed.”

Middle School Program

Middle school is an important time for students, parents and teachers. This is also an exciting and somewhat confusing period of development. Your student will not only be filled with academic curiosity, but will also be questioning the world around him/her. Our curriculum is based on the Georgia Performance Standards for Middle school. Porter Academy Middle School provides challenge, investigation and examination. As teachers, we will provide a healthy and safe environment, allowing students to become independent thinkers and workers. Students are encouraged to see the importance of being responsible and accountable both academically and socially.

Drop-Off / Pick-Up

MORNING DROP-OFF * Monday – Friday **Middle School:** 8:00 - 8:15 AM
GA Wilderness: 8:15 - 8:25 AM

AFTERNOON PICK-UP * Monday – Friday: 3:10 PM
* 3rd Friday: 1:00 PM

Please note: Students are dismissed at 1:00 PM on the third Friday of each month

LATE DROP-OFF: Students must be signed in at the front desk in Building 1 before going to their homeroom.

EARLY PICK-UP: A note to request an early pick-up may be sent or written in the planner. Be sure to include time of pick-up. Your child will be waiting in the lobby of Building 1 where you can sign them out before leaving.

Morning Homeroom

Each homeroom has its own morning ritual. The same basic elements are included throughout the school, with adjustments in style geared to the maturity level of the group. Activities include homework accountability, teacher-directed announcements, awards and special recognition, and classroom and behavioral concerns. Students brainstorm on matters that concern them. They discuss “how their engine is running” and participate in sensory-motor activities to help bring their engines to “just right.” These sensory-motor activities also work to develop the students’ abilities to cross midline and to coordinate the two sides of their bodies (bilateral coordination). Students may fill out their planners, talk about the monthly character trait, and choose jobs. They also discuss the calendar, weather, and work on calendar skills.

Morning Energizers (Before school program)

A before-school program is available Monday through Friday from 7:15 to 8:15. Activities will include bilateral coordination exercises (incorporating exercises from Brain Gym and the Vital Links Astronaut Program), core strengthening, astronaut board with paired ocular motor exercises, and other sensory integration activities. The cost is \$2 per 15 minutes. You may select which days best fit your schedule.

Alert Program

Porter Academy uses the Alert Program with all students. The program focuses on students recognizing and regulating their own alertness level. We guide students through sensory processing which helps them to efficiently facilitate attention to tasks. The goal in this program is for students to self-regulate while increasing their learning potential. Each homeroom uses a modification of this program that is developmentally appropriate for those students.

Break

As weather permits, students have free time outdoors. On rainy days, indoor activities such as drawing, building with Lego's or K-nex, watching videotapes, or playing computer games. Interaction within all groups takes place while participating in activities of their own choice. In addition to the essential benefits of physical activity, this unstructured time provides opportunities for practicing and improving social skills and impulse control.

Afternoon Homeroom

Students return to their homeroom in the afternoon before dismissal. We discuss their day and verify that the student planners are completed for parents to review. Homework, handouts, and communications to parents are distributed and packed. We utilize social skills and confer on our plans for the next day of school.

Extended School Day Program

Students attending the Extended School Day program will be released to the assigned teacher during afternoon carpool. Extended day ends at 6:00 and costs \$10 per hour. Charges may be added for pick-up after 6:00.

Homework

Homework is meant to reinforce the materials students learn during the school day. Your child's homework is recorded in the student planner. Please communicate any homework concerns directly with your homeroom teacher.

Student Planners

Student Planners are used to record your child's daily activities. Teachers and/or students will write their homework assignments in the Student Planner. Teachers will ensure that homework assignments and other general information are recorded. We request that parents review and sign the planner and be sure that it is returned to school the next day. The front pocket in the Student Planner has been designated for homework or notes. Log Academic Minutes in either the homework section or designated area. Contact your homeroom teacher if you have any questions.

Student Planners: Middle School

Student Planners will be filled out by the student during the morning homeroom. If a student misses morning homeroom they will be required to fill out the planner during a scheduled break. The planner lists the academic activities and homework and is the main source of communication between the teachers and home.

Students are required to do their homework at home or during the extended day. Failure to turn in an assignment will result in a "highlight"; the assignment will be highlighted by the teacher. When the student completes the assignment they will hand in the completed work and their planner to the teacher. The teacher will then sign the highlight indicating the work is complete. Only those students who have completed all assignments for the week (all highlights signed) will be able to participate in the Friday Activity. Those with unsigned highlights will be in an academic study hall on Friday to complete their assignment(s). Students will remain in study hall until the Friday Activity is over.

Behavior

Porter Academy has a unique and effective behavior system that has been created and refined over the years by Claudia Porter. Students efforts to grow and improve in academics, social skills, attitude, and by good behavior choices are acknowledged through verbal recognition, incentives and rewards. The behavior system is linked to increased privileges with increased responsibility.

This behavior system has been developed to encourage appropriate behavior and life skills such as integrity, personal responsibility, and respect for self and others. This system allows student and teachers to respond immediately to appropriate as well as inappropriate behaviors.

If a student's behavior is disruptive to others, the teacher will handle the behavior accordingly. If the behavior becomes unmanageable while in the classroom setting, an administrator will be asked to remove the child from the room until he/she can regain control and calmly discuss the issue. If the child continues to struggle with the same or similar issues, a parent conference may be necessary to discuss a plan of action.

Team A & B: Georgia Wilderness

The "Georgia Wilderness" teachers will be rewarding students who are working hard, cooperating, and following directions with pennies or stickers. Depending on the developmental level, stickers or pennies are traded daily or weekly for larger rewards. The teachers will specifically be targeting social skills, effort, participation and attitude.

If a student's behavior affects the learning environment of our school to the extent that it jeopardizes the education and safety of other students, a conference will be arranged immediately with parents and staff to determine whether it is appropriate for the student to continue at Porter Academy.

Team C: Middle School

Teachers and Staff in the Middle School will model and discuss appropriate behavior and consequences as situations arise within the class or with an individual student. Students will earn points in their planner throughout the day for appropriate behavior and individual achievement.

If a student's behavior affects the learning environment of our school to the extent that it jeopardizes the education and safety of other students, a conference will be arranged immediately with parents and staff to determine whether it is appropriate for the student to continue at Porter Academy.

Disruptive Behavior

- Options may include a behavior contract signed by the student, teachers, and administrators

Extreme/Violent Behavior

- Options may include 1-3 day in school suspension OR 1-3 day out of school suspension

Sample

Behavior Contract

Examples of behavior:

1. Inappropriate behavior with peers, either verbal or physical. Example: shouting, cursing, pushing, grabbing, name-calling or gestures
2. At the teacher's discretion: refusal to comply with teacher's directions
3. Temper tantrums

Student will be escorted to the main building, where he/she will be asked to answer the following questions on paper:

- Who was involved?
- What happened?
- When did this occur?
- Where did this occur?
- How could you have dealt with the situation more appropriately?

Student will receive zero points for each class period missed.

Failure to comply with the above will result in a phone call to the student's parents.

Student's Signature

Date

Parent's Signature

Date

Teacher's Signature

Date

Principal's Signature

Date

Rewards

Each homeroom teacher implements a system that is developmentally appropriate and rewards effort, good attitude, and positive interaction. The reward item (stickers, pennies, points, etc) is given as earned and used as a method to earn a larger reward (treasure box, store, etc) at a scheduled time.

Box Tops

Porter Academy students are encouraged to collect Box Tops throughout the school year. As they are collected the students will give them to the homeroom teacher as part of a class collection. During collection periods, the class that turns in the most Box Tops receives a special class activity.

Fantastic Friday-Parent Activity

At the beginning of the school year, parents are assigned a day to host a Fantastic Friday activity. On the third Friday of each month, students are dismissed at 1:00 pm. The parents and their child host a special in-class activity based on the child's interest before this early release. **The sponsoring parent(s) are responsible for all costs associated with their Fantastic Friday activity.** If you are unable to host your assigned Friday, you may trade with another parent or pay \$100, and the homeroom teacher will arrange for someone to host it for you. Please coordinate any food or beverage with your homeroom teacher and remember to follow the school's policy for snack and lunch and refrain from bringing in foods and drinks with high sugar content. **Note: This activity MUST be held at school. Children may not be taken off-campus.**

Friday Activity – Middle School

At the beginning of the school year teachers will ask for contributions from middle school parents to support educational seminars, cultural awareness, career exploration, and guest speakers. Teachers will schedule, plan and direct the Friday Activity for Middle School.

Pets

Pets are welcome to visit our classrooms on Show or Share Friday mornings. (Show and Share mornings are every Friday). Arrangements must be made in advance and in writing, with approval by the homeroom teacher. Parents will remove pets after sharing.

Academic Minutes/Safari Bucks Awards

In addition to homework, students are encouraged to read and practice math facts daily.

Academics Summary Sheets are included in the front of the Student Planners. On the first school day of each month, students will submit the completed summaries with the total minutes recorded and parents signature. Safari Bucks will be issued on the second Friday of each month. ***It is critical that Academic Minutes are turned in. The presentation of Safari Bucks is very important to your child.***

What counts towards Academic Minutes?

Please choose activities that are developmental appropriate for your child

Assigned reading or math minutes by homeroom teacher

Assigned homework all subjects

Earobics™ program

Approved on-line websites: with homeroom teacher approval

Outside therapies: Speech, OT, PT,

Practiced language: speak in complete sentences

 speak clearly – articulation

 complete sentences using descriptive words

 reciting the alphabet

 making up stories

 retell a story

 spelling

 reading signs or billboards

Math concepts: practice counting, addition, subtraction, multiplication, fractions, measurement: dry & liquid, estimation, money: counting, coin identification, denominations

Phonics:

 practice phonics i.e. What does a “B” say? How does a “P” sound?

 practice zoo phonics (younger ages) i.e. Bubba Bear - “buh” “buh”

 include the short and long vowel sounds i.e. long vowels say their name

 include blends i.e. bl, br, sh, sp, ch, cl

Safari Bucks Awards

Each night you and your child will record the total number of Academic Minutes logged for that day in the front of the student planner.

Each month students are rewarded with one Safari Buck for every 100 minutes of logged Academic Minutes. Safari Bucks are issued on the second Friday of each month.

Monthly reading awards are based on total minutes:

 Gold Award over 1500 minutes

 Silver Award 500-1,499 minutes

 Red Award 100-499 minutes

Safari Bucks are also paid throughout the year as your child completes workbooks and other instructional material. We ask that you exchange the Safari Bucks for real money. Current month reading certificates with an accumulated total will be displayed in the classroom and sent home the following month to share with family and friends.

An extension of the Safari Bucks Awards is the Gold Star Achievers Club. Students that have logged 1,500 or more minutes in a month earn a gold star and an invitation to our Gold Star Luncheon held at the school (two times per year). They also receive a free ice cream coupon from Moe’s Southwestern Grill. If your child earns five (5) gold stars during the school year, they are invited to join the Gold Star Achievers Club. At the end of the year club members will attend a special luncheon and receive a commemorative t-shirt. Know that your support of this program is very important to your child.

Show-and/or-Share

Friday is always show-and/or-share day. Everyone participates in show-and/or-share. This is the only day that teachers will allow “trinkets” from home, unless previously approved. This is a very important activity in which students practice and improve their expressive language while telling about a topic that is of interest to them. When needed, teachers help students to formulate and express their thoughts as they gain confidence in speaking in front of a group. Students must participate, even if they have nothing to show. Trinkets from home are not allowed on any other day unless requested by the homeroom teachers.

Middle School Guidelines: No toys or playthings. Students may share memorabilia, pictures, souvenirs, hobbies, etc.

Policies and Procedures

Attendance and Tardiness

The Middle School day officially begins at 8:15 AM, the Georgia Wilderness school day at 8:30, and dismissal is at 3:10 PM at the end of the day. A sign in/out sheet is located in the lobby for students that arrive late or need leave early. Except for emergencies, please communicate early dismissal plans to teachers and/or staff members, in writing, with as much advanced notice as possible.

Parents are requested to call the school office by 9:00 am and leave a message if their child will not be in school that day. Advance notice should be given for a planned absence (such as doctor's appointments). Daily activities are designed to contribute in a variety of ways to the education of your child. This makes it very important to arrive on time every day. Chronic tardiness will result in a parent-staff conference to determine a resolution.

Birthday Celebrations

If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday (or half birthday for those with summer birthdays) at school, please contact your homeroom teacher to arrange for a special snack to be served. Elaborate celebrations/Parties are NOT allowed.

Conferences

Conferences are routinely scheduled in October, January, and May to discuss your child's progress. At this time, each child's IEP (Individual Education Plan) is revised as needed. Progress reports are sent home every nine weeks. Parents may sign up for a January conference, or the school may request a conference if one is needed during this time.

Please note: Parents, teachers, or staff may request a conference at any time.

Calendar

2011

Aug 12	Fri	Orientation: 10:00 AM – 11:00 am Georgia Wilderness 1:00 PM – 2:00 pm Middle School
Aug 15	Mon	First Day of School
Aug 19	Fri	1:00 Dismissal-Fantastic Friday
Aug 22	Mon	6:00 PM Curriculum night – Georgia Wilderness
Aug 23	Tue	6:00 PM Curriculum night – Middle School
Sep 5	Mon	NO SCHOOL– Labor Day
Sep 16	Fri	1:00 Dismissal-Fantastic Friday
Oct 10	Mon	Teacher Work Day-No School for students
Oct 21	Fri	1:00 Dismissal-Fantastic Friday
Oct 24-25	Mon/Tue	NO SCHOOL GA Wilderness-Conferences
Oct 26-27	Wed/Thu	NO SCHOOL Middle School -Conferences
Nov 7	Mon	Teacher Work Day-No School for students
Nov 18	Fri	Grandparent/Special Friend Celebration
Nov 22	Tue	1:00 Dismissal
Nov 23-25	Wed-Fri	Thanksgiving Holiday
Dec 16	Fri	1:00 Dismissal –Fantastic Friday
Dec 19-30	Mon-Thu	NO SCHOOL – Winter Break

2012

Jan 2-3	Mon-Tue	NO SCHOOL – Winter Break
Jan 3	Tue	Teacher Work Day -No School for students
Jan 4	Tue	School resumes
Jan 16	Mon	NO SCHOOL – Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Jan 17-18	Tue-Wed	NO SCHOOL GA Wilderness – Conferences
Jan 19-20	Thu-Fri	NO SCHOOL Middle School – Conferences
Jan 20	Fri	1:00 Dismissal – Fantastic Friday
Feb 17	Fri	1:00 Dismissal–Fantastic Friday
Feb 20	Mon	NO SCHOOL-President’s Day
Mar 2	Fri	Teacher Work Day – No School for students
Mar 16	Fri	1:00 Dismissal-Fantastic Friday
Mar 19	Mon	School Holiday
Apr 2-6	Mon-Fri	NO SCHOOL – Spring Break
Apr 20	Fri	1:00 Dismissal – Fantastic Friday
May 2	Wed	NO SCHOOL – Teacher Work Day
May 14-15	Mon-Tue	NO SCHOOL – GA Wilderness- Conferences
May 16-17	Wed-Thu	NO SCHOOL- Middle School- Conferences
May 18	Fri	1:00 Dismissal- Fantastic Friday
May 25	Fri	1:00 Dismissal – Last Day of School

Dress Code

Students should dress in a way that promotes positive student morale, school spirit, and is demonstrative of the high personal standards we expect from our students. School is considered a student's primary occupation or work; therefore, torn clothing, extreme attire or hairstyles, short skirts and sloppy clothing are considered inappropriate for work or school. Clothing should also fit the student. Large shirts, short skirts/shorts and baggy pants are not allowed. Please review the following guidelines and help your child to choose appropriate school wear.

- Students should wear sneakers and clothing designed for daily physical activity. Open-toed sandals, crocs, flip-flop type footwear and boots are not acceptable.
- Students are to wear clothing that covers all parts of the body from neck to mid-thigh
- All shirts and blouses must cover midriff, back, sides, and all undergarments including straps at all times
- Age-appropriate under-garments are required
- No under-garments may be visible
- All shirts must be zipped or buttoned to an acceptable level
- All pants, slacks, jeans, skirts, and shorts shall remain at the top of the waist
- Shorts, skirts, divided skirts, dresses, and culottes must be mid-thigh length or longer
- Girls should wear shorts beneath their skirts and dresses
- Clothing that displays obscene writing or promotes indecent or unacceptable behavior, whether stated or implied, is not permitted

These are examples of clothing that are not appropriate for school:

- Pajama or lounge pants (unless a "Pajama Day" has been awarded)
- Exotic makeup or hair dye
- Heelys™ skate shoes, platform or high-heeled shoes or sandals
- Midriff tops, tank tops, strapless tops, spaghetti straps, muscle shirts
- See-through or mesh garments without appropriate clothing underneath
- Apparel with inappropriate, obscene or profane statements or illustrations
- Biker shorts/exercise shorts
- Hats inside the buildings
- Extreme hair cuts

Please note: Appropriate clothing to participate in P.E. should be worn each day (i.e. athletic shoes with socks, shorts under dresses or skirts).

Drop-Off / Pick-Up

The covered area in front of Building and the line that forms behind it is the “carpool” drop-off and pick-up lane. Please follow these rules for drop-off and pick-up:

- Do not park or linger in the “carpool” lane
- NO U Turns
- NO Speeding
- Keep your children and animals in the vehicle – do not permit them to sit on top of the vehicle or hang out the windows or sunroof.
- If you don’t use the carpool lane, your child must be accompanied into/from the school building. All children should be escorted during carpool.
- After you have picked up your child, you are responsible for their safety - Please do not let them wander in the carpool lane or parking area.
- Do not make U-turns in the driveway - follow the carpool line and proceed to the back of the parking lot and around the trailers.

Mornings

Middle School carpool starts at 8:00 each morning and Georgia Wilderness carpool starts at 8:15. Please keep your child safely inside the car until a staff member opens the car door at carpool.

Children are not allowed to enter the Middle School before 8:00 or Georgia Wilderness classrooms before 8:15 unless they are in Morning Energizers. Students arriving after 8:15 and before 8:30 should be dropped off using the “carpool” lane.

Parents are not allowed into the child’s homeroom prior to, or after homeroom has begun. We request that you do not accompany your child to their homeroom in the morning. An appointment should be made with teachers to ask questions and discuss issues. Contact can be made via e-mail or by sending a note in the front pocket of the planner.

Afternoons

Written notice to your child’s homeroom teacher is required if students will be going home with someone other than their normal designated driver.

If your child needs to leave early please inform the homeroom teacher by sending a note in the planner or an e-mail. Be sure to include time of pick-up. We will try to have your child waiting in the lobby of Building 1 where you can sign them out before leaving.

Afternoon pick-up ends at 3:20 on regular days and 1:15 on early release days. Students not picked-up will attend the After Care Program

Evaluation Request

Psychologists and other professionals working with your child may ask that our staff complete evaluation forms. Please attach the evaluation form to our "Authorization to Release Records, unless you have one on file already, and submit to the Principal. We will ensure that the forms are completed and returned directly to the professional contact. Please make sure to allow the teacher at least 5 days to complete the form and mail it to the professional office directly.

Extended School Day Program

Porter Academy offers an after-school program from 3:20 pm to 6:00 pm on normal hour school days and from 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm on early release days. This program will provide a safe and positive environment. Students will have an opportunity to work on homework or assigned projects, participate in structured recreations, cooperative games, and art activities in a safe and positive environment

Field Trips

Each homeroom will have at least one in school or off sight field trip during the school year. You will receive instructions regarding departure/return times, transportation, appropriate dress, snack, lunch, and information outlining the event.

Fire Drills

We are in compliance with Subsection 11-7.1 of the National Fire Protection Association's Life Safety Code, which states that all public and private schools must conduct a fire drill every month the school is in session (dates TBD). Faculty and staff are involved in the safe evacuation of all students from the building. The entire school meets on the front edge of the back playground, beyond the parking lot. Teachers call roll to verify the safe evacuation of all staff and students.

Severe Weather Drills

In accordance with the Georgia Office of Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner, schools have to perform a Severe Weather Drill during the months of November and February in lieu of the required School Fire Drill.

If a weather warning is in effect, staff and students will proceed to the designated shelter areas for each classroom. Teachers will close all windows and doors. Students will proceed to their designated areas, assume a kneeling position and place their hands over the napes of their necks. The staff will make sure everyone is safe from window areas. No one will be allowed to exit the building.

Snack & Lunch

Each child must bring enough food for both mid-morning snack and lunch. We encourage healthy, nutritious food. This also applies to snacks that may be brought on Fantastic Friday or other special occasions. Inappropriate food or beverages will be confiscated. The following foods are NOT allowed at school:

- Carbonated beverages, artificial fruit drinks or other sugary drinks
- Candy or gum
- Items with high sugar content

A microwave oven is available for staff to use for **quick** heat-up of student lunches. Middle school students are limited to 30 seconds of reheating and Georgia Wilderness is limited to two minutes. Please make sure food is cooked at home and only needs reheating. Cold packs should be in student lunchboxes for all refrigerated items. Children are encouraged to help choose what they will eat and help pack their own lunches. Students are not allowed to trade or share food.

Hot lunch is available if ordered in advance. You will receive detailed information including menu items, costs and order form.

A nutritious lunch is a vital part of your child's ability to learn. If your child arrives at school without a lunch, we will contact you, and you may leave it in the office. Please do not deliver the lunch to the classroom. If we can't reach a parent the school will provide lunch to the student and charge the parents \$4 for the meal. You may wish to send in extra nutritious non-perishable food items to store in your child's locker in case of a "lunch or snack emergency."

Health and Safety

A child should not be brought to school if he or she has any of the following symptoms:

- Fever, vomiting or diarrhea ***within the last 24 hours*** (If your child returns to school prior to the mandatory 24 hour incubation period you will be asked to pick them up immediately.)
- Severe cold, cough or strep throat
- Earache
- Undiagnosed rash
- Head lice

If your child becomes ill or shows any of the above symptoms during the school day, you will be notified, and you must make arrangements to have your child picked up as soon as possible.

Health Forms

Before your child can attend school, the State of Georgia requires that each child enrolled have a current Georgia certificate of immunization record (form #3227) and a Georgia certificate of ear, eye and dental screening on file. These forms can be obtained from your pediatrician or through the County Health Department.

A Porter Academy Health Form must also be filled out and on file before your child attends school. The form includes: general state-of-health information, doctors, medications and their purpose.

Items to be left at home*

Gameboys™, hand-held computer games and all trading cards should be left at home and not brought to school. If a student is found with any of these items, they will be taken away and returned to the student when getting into their car at the end of the day.

Middle – Toys and stuffed animals.

*Cell Phones if brought to school MUST be turned OFF and left inside lockers or backpacks. If it is taken out during the school day it will be confiscated by the homeroom teacher until the parent is able to pick it up at afternoon carpool.

Medication

We are asking for your cooperation regarding the use of medication at school. The appropriate dispensing of medication is critical to your child's safety and well-being; therefore we insist that these guidelines be followed:

A completed Porter Academy Authorization for Medication form is required for all medication and must be filled out every time there is a change in dosage.

Prescription Medication – A physician's order is required for all prescription medication. Medicine must be in the original bottle with the pharmacy label that shows the prescription number, name of medication, date filled, physician's name, child's name and directions for administration, along with the pharmacy drug information sheet. Your pharmacy will provide you with two labeled bottles if requested.

Over-the-Counter Medication – If your child typically takes over-the-counter (OTC) medicine such as a pain reliever or antihistamine, please provide it to the school. A completed Porter Academy Authorization for Medication form is required for any OTC medication you would like us to administer. We will contact you prior to giving the medication when needed.

Medication Delivery to School – Parents or a designated adult, such as carpool driver, **(not students)** must hand deliver medication to the front office. All medication must be in its original bottle, along with the pharmacy drug information fact sheet. Do not send medicine in baggies or envelopes. Students are not permitted to have medicine in their possession at school. A staff member will dispense the medication each day. School personnel will not dispense medication that is not in the original container, appropriately labeled.

Change of Dosage – If your child's medication or dosage changes, you must send a new *Authorization for Medication* form to school. A fax or written instructions from the prescribing physician and a new prescription bottle with matching dosing instructions must accompany any change in medication, dosage or timing. This applies to both prescription and over-the-counter medication.

Parent Bulletin

The Parent Bulletin is emailed to families each Wednesday. Please check the front of your child's planner each day for other notices and information that is frequently sent home.

Parent Involvement and Support

Porter Academy encourages involvement of parents, grandparents, and other special friends who are significant to your child. Parents are encouraged to schedule a visit to observe their child's school environment so as to better understand the methods we use to help your child learn. Parents may volunteer to participate or help with classroom activities and school events. Additionally, special programs for families and friends are planned throughout the year.

Each of us has our own individual talents. When a parent and child combine their gifts to create a special Fantastic Friday experience, it boosts the self-esteem of that child while enriching the school experience for his/her classmates.

Our student's success depends on a cooperative effort between school and home. Your child may need your time, support and guidance to complete daily homework assignments. Open communication between you, the teachers and staff is an important element for your child's educational success. The daily planner sheet is the most efficient way to communicate any observations or concerns you have in relation to academic or behavioral performance. Please communicate any changes or circumstances that may affect school performance. This allows us to respond appropriately to your child's needs the following day.

We all become winners when parents, teachers and students work together as a team. Our events, celebrations, Safari Bucks awards program, and the continuous communication between school and home require a joint effort.

Release of Records

Records can only be released if there is a signed Record Release form on file. Records cannot be released if there is an outstanding balance owed to the school. As soon as the debt is paid your child's records will be sent.

School Closing

In case of severe weather or other emergency that requires us to delay the start or close the school, notices will be given on the following radio/TV station listed as "Porter Academy":

WSB AM750

ABC- Action News 2- WSBTV

NBC- 11 Alive News- WXIA
11 alive.com

We will also utilize "phone trees" to contact families.

Termination of Services

Porter Academy reserves the right to terminate services to a student for the following reasons:

- Failure to pay assessed tuition or fees in a timely manner
- Excessive absences
- A pattern of behavior that is potentially harmful to self or others or that interferes with the rights of other students to receive their education
- Damage to school property or to the property of others
- Consistent failure by a student or parent to comply with school rules, policies and procedures
- Failure to follow through on school recommendations and/or consistent communication between parent and school.

Testing

The major goals of our testing program are to:

- Provide parents with concrete information about the age/grade level at which the child is performing.
- To assist teachers in determining individual learning objectives for each student.

Each homeroom teacher will give each student in his/her homeroom an assessment to determine the instructional level for reading, math, comprehension and math facts/concepts. Students will also be administered at least one standardized test in the fall and spring. These may include the WRAT(Wide Range Achievement Test), Woodcock Johnson Diagnostic Test, or Peabody Individual Achievement Test (PIAT) annually. These results should be included in the IEP and reported to the Parents. Barbara Ramer, Principal can answer questions.

OT testing is extensively done at Porter Academy. The OT tests include Bruininks-Oseretsky test of Motor Proficiency, Pitch Discrimination, Handwriting Without Tears Assessment, BASC-2, informal assessment of visual perceptual skills, SCAN-3 for students in the iLs program and the Token test for those not in the iLs program. Contact Lynn Schoeneck, OT for further information.

Speech and Language testing is also available. These include but are not limited to the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, and Expressive Vocabulary Test. If you have questions please contact Claudia Porter, Head of School and Speech, Language Pathologist.

Withdrawal from School

Written notification to the Principal is required for withdrawal from school. This notice should include the date of the last day to attend, the name of school being transferred to, and the reason for withdrawal. We will help your child with their transition as much as possible.

Parent Association

Porter Parents Association (PPA) members are parents of children currently enrolled at Porter Academy. PPA dues are included in your yearly tuition. PPA officers and committee chairpersons will:

- Better acquaint parents with the activities, programs and policies at Porter Academy
- Provide and stimulate more effective parental participation in the life of the school
- Provide for the general welfare of the school in whatever its capabilities and resources may permit, with particular emphasis on providing those extras which will enhance and enrich the lives of the students
- Raise funds on behalf of the school, to be used by the school and PPA to enrich our program

PPA Officers

President Melissa Rawlins & Jack Ploeger

Vice President Tracey DePew

Secretary

PALS Chairman Krista Shermann

Treasurer Pam Higginbotham

PPA Committees

Fund Raising
Scholastic Books
Bingo Night
Fall Festival & Picnic
Grandparents/Special Friend's Day
Hospitality
Homeroom Parent Coordinator
Library
Teacher Appreciation

Financial Matters

ANNUAL FUND

The annual fund helps defray the cost of our annual operating budget. This allows us to keep tuition to a minimum, allows us to keep valuable staff, provides funds for classroom enhancements, and covers unanticipated operating expenses. If 100% participation is reached the school will benefit from private foundation grants that we may not otherwise be considered for. The level of giving is a personal decision for each family. Please know that your gift is appreciated.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

The Capital Campaign provides for expansion of our programs through buildings. The money is directly allocated to new development of improvements to our physical facilities.

FUNDRAISING

The Porter Academy is a non-profit tax-exempt corporation. At the present time, we are being financed completely by tuition and contributions from present and former parents, along with a few fundraising partners. Please support these Partners who have contributed funds to our school and renew your card annually

- **Publix** – You will receive a Publix Cards at orientation or may attain one at any time from the Business Manager - please share them with your family and friends! Simply scan the card before paying for your purchase and Publix will donate a portion of your sale directly to our school.
- **Box Tops** – Just clip the box top logo from your everyday products and bring them into school. Each box top is worth 10 cents.
- **Target Visa and Target Red cards**

We welcome your ideas and support in this effort as we continue to actively seek other sources of funding. These include:

- Government or private grants
- Donations from parents and friends of the school
- Annual Fund
- Capitol campaign/building fund
- Other fund raisers that involve students

Scholarships

The Great SSO

The Great SSO Inc., Student Scholarship Organization provides tuition scholarships to children in grades K-12 that are currently enrolled in public school transferring to private school. Scholarships are given on a case by case basis and are awarded based on availability of funds. Parents or guardians who are interested in applying for a scholarship for their child should contact Barbara Ramer. If you are interested in donating to the Great SSO for Porter Academy through the tax credit program please contact Barbara Ramer. The law provides for individuals to receive a dollar for dollar state income tax credit of up to \$1,000 per year, or \$2,500 for a married couple filing jointly.

Georgia Special Needs Scholarship (SB-10)

Senate Bill 10 provides public school student who currently have an Individual Education Plan and are transferring to a private school a voucher for state funds to aid with tuition.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition includes the academic program and books. The Testing Fee covers the cost of testing performed throughout the school year. Testing helps to determine placement of your child and the appropriate teaching/learning strategies, as well as to assess your child's progress throughout the school year.

PAYMENT POLICIES

Tuition and fees must be paid on time by check or money order payable to **Porter Academy, Inc.** A late fee of \$50 will be charged for any payment that is between one day and two weeks late. After two weeks, an additional late charge will be assessed at the rate of 1% per month on past due amounts. A fee of \$30 will be charged for returned checks.

Credit card payments are accepted with a service charge of 2.0% for Discover Card, 2.5% for MasterCard & Visa and 3.0% for American Express. The service charge will be added to each payment. If you would like to use your credit card to make a payment, send an email to phigginbotham@porteracademy.org and we will determine the most secure method of attaining your credit card information.

It is imperative that tuition be paid in accordance with the payment plan selected on your enrollment contract. There can be no exceptions to the payment schedule.

If tuition or fee payments are more than 30 days past due, a meeting with the Business Manager will be scheduled. Please note: Your child may not be allowed to attend classes until a plan for payment is agreed upon.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Business Office	Pam Higginbotham-ext.221
Enrollment	Barbara Ramer -ext.222
Homework	Teacher
Medication	Pam Higginbotham-ext.221
Principal	Barbara Ramer
School Founder	Claudia Porter -ext.223
Testing	Barbara Ramer
Tuition/Fees Payments	Pam Higginbotham-ext.221

STAFF E-MAIL

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