



The Child's Primary

SCHOOL

A learning community since 1983

Parent Handbook

Dear Parents,

This handbook will be a useful reference to you throughout the school year. It has been designed to be a resource to you and as such, your suggestions and comments on its contents are valuable to us. We encourage your comments, both for proposed changes and aspects you find most helpful in this year's handbook; email me (jprice@tcps.org) or call with your ideas.

Thank you.

We are looking forward to another wonderful school year!

Jim Price

Executive Director

The Child's Primary School

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I. TCPS ORGANIZATION

Board of Trustees

The Child's Primary School (TCPS) is a non-profit corporation governed by a Board of Trustees. The Board is responsible for:

- Ensuring adherence to the mission, values, and philosophy of TCPS
- Developing and implementing a long term strategic plan to promote the future success of TCPS
- Hiring, managing, and establishing compensation for the Executive Director
- Providing financial oversight for the school through approving the budget, establishing annual tuition rates, and appropriately managing the school's capital assets
- Developing, reviewing and maintaining the necessary policies to ensure the school operates in compliance with applicable legal standards and to minimize the school's exposure to legal action

The Board meets monthly. Parents may contact the Board President regarding specific issues or with requests to be added to a meeting's agenda.

Founders and Principal: Margaret C. Price & Sherry Risch

One of the things that makes TCPS unique is that after twenty-seven years, both of the school's founders are still classroom teachers. Sherry fills an additional role as Principal. This means that the Administration is not removed from the day-to-day events in the classroom. Many teachers in other schools feel that their principals are not in touch with the realities of what goes on in the classroom, and that decisions are based on theory, not experience with children. Her dual role strengthens the effectiveness of the staff as a team of educators. Their love of teaching is what inspired them to found TCPS, and it continues to excite and energize them.

Executive Director: Jim Price

The Executive Director oversees all of the day-to-day operations of TCPS and is responsible for the implementation of policies set by the Board of Trustees as well as annual goals and objectives, and the financial, program, and administrative management of the school. Jim possesses an M.B.A. and a Certificate in Non-Profit Management.

The TCPS Library

TCPS is very proud of its library. At a time when funding for libraries has been reduced and students are leaving high school with little knowledge of research skills, the TCPS library stands out as an exception to the rule. There are approximately 7,000 volumes in the collection, including a large number of Caldecott and Newbery Award winners and hundreds of curriculum-related non-fiction books.

Thanks to the generosity of the Karl R. Price Memorial Fund, the library converted to an electronic system several years ago. This system provides for many more things than can be listed here: a scanning system to check books in and out, an OPAC (Online Public Access Catalog) for the book collection, and an individualized account system for students and staff.

A part-time librarian and volunteers staff the library on a regular basis to help the students hone information skills and to suggest reading materials appropriate to each student's needs and interests. Books are frequently donated to the library by students, parents, and friends of the school. The more reading material available to students, the better their reading skills will become.

Extended Day Program

The purpose of an extended day program is to provide quality care for students. TCPS offers a safe, caring and nurturing environment. Ideally, childhood should offer a time for carefree play, creativity and fantasy with opportunities to join in outdoor games, crafts and theme-related projects. It is to that end that TCPS focuses its attention in this program.

The Office

The TCPS Main Office is open from 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM to assist students and parents. It serves as the school's business office and communications center. It is where permanent student records are maintained, tuition and Extended Day payments are accepted, attendance is recorded, campus visitors and parent volunteers sign in and receive identification badges, messages are relayed, voice mail is forwarded and deliveries are received. The sign-in/sign-out Sheet for students leaving campus before the end of the school day is located in the Main Office. Copies of lunch menus, activity flyers, and the Tuesday Notice are available there. The Main Office is where first aid is administered and medication authorized by parents is dispensed. It is the reception center for families seeking information about the school.

The Parent Group

Mission Statement

The Parent Group's (TPG's) mission is to promote the philosophy and mission of The Child's Primary School while fostering a sense of community through parent participation and support for the school. They offer structured volunteer programs for fundraising activities and social events.

Annual Fee

TPG collects an annual fee to support TPG activities. These funds supplement the very basic beginning operating budget for the new school year.

Volunteering

TPG has a volunteer program that is designed to meet a variety of school needs and to utilize the broad range of interests and talents of the parents. TPG parents log in an excess of 2500 volunteer hours per year for services, programs and fundraisers.

Volunteer opportunities include, but are not limited to TPG officer and sub-committee chair positions, class Room Parents, field trip drivers and campus improvement efforts. Volunteers also serve at various events including the Halloween Carnival, the Thanksgiving Feast, and the Jogathon and Auction.

Each family is required to donate 20 hours per school year to this important and valuable school support system. Volunteer hours are tracked using an online tracking system. For accounting purposes, quarterly statements will be sent to families.

With all this said, TPG realizes that not all families are able to volunteer at the same level. Parents have asked what they can do when they are unable to volunteer their time at the school. As a result, TPG implemented a Volunteer Buyout Option at a rate of \$10.00 per volunteer hour (up to 20 hours or \$200). This option provides an alternative avenue for parents to offer volunteer support at the school. The Volunteer Buyout Option may be exercised at any time during the school year. Volunteer hour statements are issued quarterly with a final statement issued at the end of the year.

II. PHILOSOPHY STATEMENTS

Mission Statement

The Child's Primary School was founded in 1983 based on the principles of value and respect for the individual uniqueness of each child. TCPS believes that learning is promoted in an environment that supports each child within a community that includes family, school, and all those who influence the life of the child.

The educational philosophy of TCPS is grounded in the richness of individual diversity and respect for all people. Learning is understood to be an exciting and lifelong process and to include all aspects of the whole child: physical, emotional, social and intellectual. We promote a safe environment where trying is valued over always being right . . . where positive self-esteem is fostered . . . and where the curiosity and quest for learning of all persons – including children, family, faculty and staff – are encouraged, supported and challenged.

The School

The Child's Primary School is a Kindergarten through Eighth Grade independent private educational program within a consistent and supportive environment that fosters the unfolding of the whole child. Founding Directors Margaret C. Price and Sherry Risch founded the school in San Diego, California in 1983. TCPS has small classes – 12 to 14 students per grade level in the lower grades and 12 to 16 students per grade level in the middle school.

Philosophy

Certain fundamental principles guide our program:

- Learning is an exciting and lifelong process.
- Each person is unique and complex. Ethnic, cultural and individual differences are respected and add to the richness of life.
- Students are entitled to a learning environment which is safe, nurturing, and non-prejudicial, and which allows them to work to their full potential.

Educational Environment

TCPS offers a curriculum that is consistent and cumulative, beginning with the kindergarten program and culminating in graduation at the end of grade eight. This success-oriented program is designed to be supportive and challenging, and to focus on teaching the student how to learn. Students feel safe to take risks in an atmosphere that nurtures their self-esteem and teaches responsibility for their own actions. Inherent in the TCPS program is a celebration of the wonders of life and the excitement of learning. In-depth learning is encouraged, allowing for an exploration of both the abstract (theoretical) and concrete (hands-on)

aspects of a subject. In addition to the acquisition of excellent academic skills, TCPS promotes the learning of life skills (such as communication and problem solving) and developing positive interpersonal relationships.

The Child's Primary School believes that a school should have a role in a family's life, not just the student's academic life. Therefore, the student's whole family is welcomed and considered an important addition to the school. Each and every decision - whether it be in regard to curriculum, fundraising, or admission policy - is guided by our basic values and philosophy... the child is primary.

Holidays and Special Events

Holidays and Special Events are times that bring families together. It is recognized that in a diverse culture, all holidays are not universally celebrated. The role of educators here at TCPS is to expose and teach students about different cultures and their customs.

As an example, Thanksgiving at TCPS is a time of sharing and fellowship for students and staff. The holiday is celebrated with a big Thanksgiving feast prepared by the students. The students make table decorations, place cards, costumes and food. This event is tied into the curriculum for each class. There are also a number of other special events during the year, which bring families together and contribute to a sense of community.

The spring Jogathon and Auction is one of two major fundraisers. However, as well as raising money to support the school's mission, it is always a day full of fun as families get together and picnic.

Each year the school works on a special Big Event. It does not represent just a month or two of work, but reflects the year's focus on a particular theme. The students and staff love to keep the preparations a secret. On the day of The Big Event students are excited to share this major project, which always underscores that "children can and do!"

Unofficial School Activities

There are a number of unofficial school activities, which enrich the school environment and build a sense of community. At all of these events, parents are completely responsible for the safety of their families. Many staff may be attending and helping with these events; however, they are not responsible for student supervision. These programs are voluntary and students will not be penalized for not participating. Parents may call the office if they are unsure about the official status of an activity.

Fundraising at TCPS

The Child's Primary School changes lives! TCPS does this by enabling students to discover the joy of learning, thus empowering them to become lifelong learners with the skills and confidence to facilitate success in all aspects of their lives. In many educational settings, the educational experience is often viewed as restricted to curriculum and academics. This may lead to an educational experience where teachers are expected to provide a body of content to students, and then measure whether or not students received and retained that content through measurements such as standardized tests. They are given content, their

retention of content is measured and that is how the quality of the student's educational experience is measured. This approach allows the school to evaluate and track the progress of large numbers of students. This often leads to a very rote, rigid and structured environment which focuses totally on the academic child at the expense of other areas such as art, music and physical education.

TCPS believes the role of education is to develop the whole person and help them discover the joy of becoming a lifelong learner. To meet this goal, TCPS offers a creative, expansive, and challenging program. This program includes the arts, technology, Spanish, physical education, and a social-emotional emphasis designed to assist the student in developing strong personal, interpersonal, and conflict resolution skills. Through helping students discover the process of learning, we assist the student in attaining academic goals that are high, appropriate, and internally motivated. Most importantly, we provide students with the tools that allow them to become lifelong learners who are confident in their ability to apply high level thinking skills to new learning situations. At TCPS we strive to have all students enter adulthood with the skills they need to succeed – and excel – in the future they will face. We know that beyond the basic academics, the “soft skills” of leadership, the ability to work in a team, and character will be vitally important for their success. TCPS supports the development of these skills through a commitment to small class size and through the Keys to Learning, which help students become independent learners who have confidence in their interpersonal skills.

Small class size is an essential element of the educational community that is necessary to prepare our children for their future. The small class size at TCPS provides an environment where students are able to develop personal relationships, where staff is able to pay attention to individual needs, where there is recognition of different learning styles, and where there exists a wide variety of opportunities to express and demonstrate learning. Maintaining the small class size necessary to provide the educational experience our students deserve is expensive. The cost of education per student is significantly higher than tuition. In order to bridge this gap and to keep tuition as low as possible so cost does not become a prohibitive factor to students and their families, TCPS sponsors two fundraising events each year to mitigate the difference between tuition and the actual cost per student.

During the first semester of each year, TCPS sponsors its Annual Giving Campaign. The Annual Giving Campaign offers several donor clubs designed to provide giving opportunities for donors at all levels. The annual Jogathon and Auction, sponsored by The Parent Group (TPG), takes place during the second semester. During the weeks leading up to the Jogathon, students and staff collect pledges for laps they run. Parents, family and friends have the opportunity to underwrite, advertise and bid on a broad range of items in the silent and live auctions

Support of Annual Giving and the Jogathon ensures that TCPS will continue to influence young boys and girls in a way that will have an everlasting impact on their lives.

III. GENERAL INFORMATION & PROCEDURES

Hours

School hours are 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM for kindergarten and 8:30 AM - 3:00 PM for Grades 1 - 8. We begin our program promptly at 8:30 AM. We are trying to teach students to be responsible and develop good work habits -- including punctuality. Those first precious minutes of the day are critical minutes, which require students to utilize and strengthen their organizational skills. Homework is collected, announcements are made, and instructions are given. A sixth grader once calculated that if a student was only 10 minutes late every day, he or she would miss more than 28 hours of school in a year!

Our Extended Day program operates before school (7:30 - 8:30 AM) and after school (2:45 - 6:00) and is billed according to use at the end of each month.

Personal Belongings

Each student has a locker or bin where personal belongings may be kept. We expect that TCPS students respect the privacy and personal property of all others in the school environment. No student should touch anything in another student's bin without the owner's permission. Students in Grades 6 - 8 should bring a combination lock for their metal lockers. The combination must be given to the classroom teacher.

Students are not permitted to bring to school: gum, pocketknives or weapons of any kind. Generally, students are not to bring money to school. When a student does bring money for a particular purchase (e.g. Student Store, book fair) he/she is responsible for that money. Students may give money to teachers for safe keeping if they wish.

Toys - any item not directly related to school - are not to be brought to school. Students who bring toys will be asked to leave them with a teacher or bring them to the Main Office to be kept until the end of the school day. The school has been very thoughtful in its choice of activities for our environment. It is important that everyone adheres to this policy because students are very conscious if someone else is allowed to do something that they are not allowed to do. If your child is convinced that a particular item would be great for a special school activity, the child must check with the classroom teacher before bringing it to school. Playground equipment (such as balls, baseball mitts, jump ropes, yoyos) may be brought.

Electronic Devices

The Child's Primary School believes that instructional time is precious and must be protected from unnecessary disruptions. We also recognize that students and parents utilize various electronic devices. The challenges arise when these devices are used in ways that interfere with the learning process or with TCPS' philosophy/values.

In order to balance these factors, TCPS maintains the following policy regarding electronic devices at school:

1. Students may have electronic devices in their possession while at school

2. During the instructional day, between the hours of 8:30 and 3:00, students should not use the devices in a way that interferes with the learning environment. Activities that may interfere include, but are not limited to:

- Communicating (by voice, by text, by video);
- Accessing information (e.g. during a test or a classroom assignment);
- Accessing entertainment (e.g. listening to music, watching videos, playing games, etc.).

If, however, use of the device is in support of the curriculum and its use is approved by staff the device may be used during instructional time. For example, accessing information about an item/location while on a field trip, sharing a podcast made for a class project, etc.

3. During after school activities students should not use the devices in a way that interferes with their or other students' participation in the activity.

4. At all times while on school property or at a school event students should not use the devices in a way that would conflict with TCPS' philosophy/values. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Bullying, harassing, slandering, coercing, etc.;
- Accessing inappropriate materials (pornographic, racial jokes, etc.);
- Sharing inappropriate materials.

5. The devices may be used for emergency communication when appropriate.

In permitting the possession of personal electronic devices, TCPS administration and staff assume no liability for the loss or damage of the devices or their misuse by another person. The school will not investigate or be responsible for loss or theft of any electronic devices.

If a student uses an electronic device inappropriately then staff will address the issue with the student. In some cases this may entail reviewing the rules and why the activity is not appropriate. If, however, staff determine that the behavior is severe or repeated the student will be instructed to deliver the device to the Executive Director or Principal for the remainder of the day. If the behavior is deemed to be significant the parents will be contacted and appropriate action taken.

A student who violates this policy may be prohibited from possessing a personal electronic device at school and may be subject to other disciplinary measures as outlined in the discipline section of the TCPS Parent Handbook.

Dress Code

TCPS students are active learners; students should dress comfortably. The school does not have a school uniform; however, students are expected to dress appropriately. TCPS teaches students to use critical thinking and evaluation skills in all areas of life. Therefore, a list of dress code rules is not published. Here are a few guidelines:

- No overly tight clothing, no sagging pants
- No bare backs or midriffs, no halter or tube tops
- No underwear (bra straps or boxers) should be showing

- No clothing with inappropriate designs or messages
- Any dyed hair can only be normal hair colors
- No "gang" associated attire
- Closed-toe shoes are strongly recommended

If a student is wearing inappropriate attire he/she will be warned and the matter will be discussed. For future infractions, the student's parents may be called to come and pick up their child. A good rule of thumb: if a student has a question about a particular piece of clothing, it should probably not be worn to school.

Please label your child's personal belongings, especially sweaters, jackets, and sweatshirts. Every year, a great deal of clothing, all unmarked and unclaimed, is accumulated. Several times during the school year, these items are donated to charity. Labels will help ensure that clothing, lunch boxes, binders, etc. get returned to the rightful owner.

Food

Mid-morning, students are given time to eat a snack which they bring from home.

Students should bring their own lunches. Kindergarten and Grade 1 have lunch at 11:30 AM, Grades 2 - 5 at 12:00 Noon, and Grades 6 - 8 at 12:30 PM. The school provides a snack to students during the afternoon Extended Day Program. Please do not include glass containers when packing lunches and snacks. There is no refrigeration or microwave available for student use.

TCPS also offers an optional catered lunch program. Students may order lunch on as many or as few days as they like. Menus are posted on the TCPS website at mid-month and must be returned with payment to the Main Office by the stated deadline.

Children who wish to bring special birthday snacks to share with the classmates are welcome to do so. Because some students may have special dietary restrictions, it is important to check with the teacher first when making arrangements for birthday snacks.

Illnesses

We all know that diseases are easily spread among children; we ask every school family to feel responsible to the other members of the school community and keep sick children at home. If students are running a fever or appear to be ill at school, they will be removed from the classroom, brought to the office, and parents will be contacted to come and pick up their child. **The school does not have the capability to care for sick children.** If the office is unable to reach the parents, emergency references will be contacted to come and pick up the child as soon as possible. If the illness involves a fever, the child's temperature must be normal (under 99 degrees) for 24 hours before a child is sent back to school.

Medication

All medication must be stored and administered in the Main Office. Students who require medication (antibiotics, cough drops, ointments, etc.) during the school day should bring it to the Main Office with written instructions including:

- permission for TCPS staff to dispense the medication
- the period of time for which the instructions apply
- the times of day and dosage to be given
- any side effects to look for

Vitamins and supplements are considered medications and must also be stored and administered in the Main Office.

If a student needs medication on a frequent/regular basis (asthma inhaler, Tylenol, etc.), a school form is filled out and kept on file in the office.

Gifts

At TCPS, our teachers are loved and appreciated. However, organized gift giving on teacher birthdays, holidays and the end of the school year is strongly discouraged. Organized class gifts include, but are not limited to, gift certificates, classroom supplies and student art projects.

TCPS families are more than welcome to give tokens of appreciation to staff on an individual basis. If the decision to give gifts is made, please remember that each child has several teachers, not just one.

Extended Day Program

When arriving between 7:30 AM and 8:15 AM, students must be brought to the Fine Arts room and signed-in via the sign-in/sign-out notebook. Students should not be dropped off before 7:30 AM. Before 7:30 AM the staff has other responsibilities and is not "on duty" in the Extended Day room. Students arriving at school between 8:15 AM and 8:30 AM should go directly to the playground where the morning Extended Day staff will be on duty. Students not picked up by 2:45 PM (Kindergarten) and 3:15 PM (Grades 1 - 8) are automatically checked into the Extended Day Program.

All students who have been checked into the Extended Day Program must be signed out by an authorized adult. An authorized adult is a student's parent or an individual named by the parent on a student's Emergency Care Information form for the current school year.

The after-school Extended Day Program ends at 6:00 PM. Parents picking up students after 2:45 PM (kindergarten) and after 3:15 PM (Grades 1 - 8) are to sign out via the Sign In/Sign Out notebook and notify the Extended Day staff that they are taking their children.

The Extended Day Program is an extension of the school day for TCPS students. Those students who do not attend school during the day may not take advantage of that day's Extended Daycare.

TCPS is responsible for the care and safety of all students on campus between the hours of 7:30 AM and 6:00 PM. For this reason, parents are billed for daycare for all students, regardless of whether the parent is present or not, including those in after-school classes.

The after-school programs of TCPS are part of the extended day programs and, due to licensing parameters, are available only to those students who are enrolled in the school's full day program. Daycare is not included in enrichment class fees offered by outside vendors. Since day care staff is still responsible for the safety and supervision of children, even while they are in after school programs offered by outside vendors, daycare fees will be charged during the time the student is in the after school program. Students are not to go to classrooms before or after regular school hours unless accompanied by a teacher or parent.

Middle School Extended Day Privileges

Before school: middle school grade students arriving before 8:15 AM **must sign in with the Extended Day staff** via the sign-in/sign-out notebook in the Fine Arts room as usual. At 8:15 AM they are not required to go to the yard with the other students.

After school: At 3:00 PM dismissal, 6th - 8th grade students who are staying for the Extended Day Program may be anywhere inside the school building after checking in with the after-school staff. Middle school students leaving the campus after 3:15 PM must be signed out via the sign-in/sign-out notebook by an authorized adult.

Rainy Day Policy

On rainy mornings, students who are a part of morning Extended Day will go to the Extended Day room as usual. Students arriving at 8:15 AM or after will go directly to their classrooms. On these days teachers are in their classrooms by 8:15 AM to supervise students.

School Meetings

TCPS believes it is very important for the students to feel a part of the whole school - part of a "family" that helps one another and works and plays together. This concept is reinforced by periodic meetings of the whole school. These whole-school meetings are used as a time for announcements, group singing, special resource visitors, discussions about school concerns or problems, presentations by classes (poetry recitations, short plays, reader's theater...), and more! Parents are always welcome to attend.

Security

When parents complete the Emergency Care Information form at the beginning of the school year, they list the adults authorized to pick up their child from the facility. Staff adheres RIGIDLY to the authorized list. Even if the student identifies the person, staff members DO NOT release students to anyone not on the list. TCPS feels certain that all parents will appreciate that the I.D. of a person picking up a child will be checked if a staff member does not recognize that person. If a person not on the list comes to pick up a student, that person will be escorted to the Main Office where staff will contact the student's parent.

Parents are expected to notify the Main Office if anyone not on the list will be picking up a child (written notice, please). This includes other school parents. All notes regarding a student being picked up after school, at a different time, or by a different

person, etc., are to be directed to the office. The office staff is then responsible for providing this information to the Extended Day staff or anyone else concerned. For the safety of the students, support of this policy is appreciated.

All visitors to the TCPS campus, including parent volunteers, must sign in at the Main Office upon arrival and receive a "Visitor" or "Volunteer" badge. Visitors must sign out and return their badges when departing the site.

Students leaving the campus before the scheduled dismissal time must be signed out by a parent or authorized adult on the appropriate form in the Main Office. Students must be signed in by a parent or authorized adult if they return to campus.

Gates

All gates around the school are locked Monday - Friday from 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM. This is for the safety and security of the students and staff. During these hours all visitors to the campus must enter through the Main Office, sign in, and obtain a "visitor" badge before proceeding to the classrooms or playground.

Parking Lot Procedures

During school hours (7:30 AM - 6:00 PM), parents may park in the parking lot directly in front of the school to drop off and pick up their children. Students should not be dropped off before 7:30 AM. Extended Day staff is not "on duty" for students until that time.

Students arriving prior to 8:15 AM should go to the Fine Arts room. After 8:15 AM, students being dropped off should walk to the back playground area where they will be met and supervised by the morning Extended Day staff. When picking up students at the end of the day, please pull into a designated parking space or park on the street. Parents should not park in the blue handicapped spaces, the spaces reserved for church use or along the red fire lane curb. Because of the small size of our lot, please do not block traffic while waiting for a child. Teachers will bring students to the north gate/fence of the school at 2:30 PM for Kindergarten and 3:00 PM for Grades 1 - 8. There, all students must be checked off a master list as they leave. Be sure a staff person knows that a child is leaving with an authorized adult. Students not picked up by 2:45 PM for Kindergarten (and 3:15 PM for Grades 1 - 8) will be checked into the Extended Day program.

IV. ACADEMIC & STUDENT-RELATED POLICIES

Homework

At TCPS, one of the main goals in the assignment of homework is to encourage and develop responsibility for taking home an assignment, completing it, and returning it to school. It is not the parent's job to make sure homework is remembered; neither are parents expected to spend time helping with the assignments. Homework usually is something the student should be able to do independently. The teachers engage their students in discussions about when and where they do their homework at home and brainstorm ways to remember to bring homework back to school.

Homework Guidelines:

Kindergarten: Once per week, assigned on Tuesdays. At this age parents usually need to be involved. Kindergartners begin to learn this homework responsibility during the year and it's a fun way to reinforce class work at home.

Grade 1: Three nights per week. The homework activity should take approximately 10 minutes.

Grade 2: Three to four nights per week. The homework activity should take approximately 15 minutes.

Grade 3: Three to four nights per week. The homework activity should take approximately 20 minutes.

Grade 4: Three to four nights per week. The homework activity should take approximately 30-40 minutes.

Grade 5: Three to four nights per week. The homework activity should take approximately 40 minutes.

Grade 6: Four nights per week. The homework activity should take approximately 15 - 20 minutes per subject.

Grades 7/8: Four nights per week. The homework activity should take approximately 20 minutes per subject.

Independent Reading Homework

This is a program for all students K - 8. In the earlier years, the goal is to build reading skills; later, the goals are to enrich curriculum, encourage leisure reading, and expand the students' exposure to rich and varied literature. This independent reading is in addition to any other homework assignments.

Additional Assignments

In addition to the regular nightly assignments, students may have long-term projects. They will also need additional study time to prepare for tests. Students are taught organizational methods for managing time and keeping track of dates and deadlines.

In Grade 1, homework information on the Progress Report and at conferences is presented as the number of homework assignments turned in and the number of homework assignments missing.

In Grades 2 - 5, homework information on the Progress Reports and at conferences is presented as the number of homework assignments turned in compared to the number of assignments given, and the number of homework assignments turned in on time compared to the number of assignments.

In Grades 6 - 8, homework completion and timeliness will be factored into the overall percentage grade for a particular subject. How "homework" is weighted into the percentage will depend upon the subject and teacher discretion.

Parents with any concerns or questions regarding homework are encouraged to contact the teacher.

Incomplete/Late Work Policy

TCPS stresses the importance of developing responsibility for turning in assignments. Our policy is to emphasize the importance of good organizational and planning skills so that assignments are turned in on time. Teachers spend time in the classroom teaching planning strategies for completing long-term assignments.

A student may not graduate to the next grade level if a major assignment is incomplete or if there is a significant number of missed assignments.

Late Assignments or Incomplete Work in Middle School

20% will be deducted from the final score for all late papers.

An assignment missing from the previous week is due the following Monday. If it is turned in after that, it will not receive credit.

This policy is designed to:

- reinforce daily practice that supports learning the subject
- help work within a deadline

Homework Passes

It is recognized that circumstances occasionally arise that make homework difficult to complete.

In Grades 4 - 5, students receive 2 homework passes per semester to be used for nightly homework in all core subjects. For Grades 6 - 8, all subject teachers offer 2 nightly homework passes per semester.

These passes enable students to turn in an assignment late (e.g. by the following Monday for an assignment due on Friday) with no penalty. Homework passes do not apply to long-term homework or projects. Teachers issue passes at the beginning of the semester and students are responsible to hold on to them and turn them in when they wish to use them.

Student Textbooks

All TCPS students use some non-consumable textbooks. Books are assigned to students for the current school year and need to be returned to the school at the end of the year in good condition. At the beginning of the year, the student and teacher examine books, noting any damage, and then the book becomes the responsibility of the student. Students are required to cover any books

that they will be taking between school and home. A fine may be assessed when damage goes beyond the ordinary wear and tear. When a textbook has been lost, it will be the student's responsibility to pay for the book.

Invoices for damaged and/or lost textbooks will be sent out at the end of the school year or when a student leaves TCPS.

Students may purchase personal copies of textbooks as second copies to write in or highlight. Requests should be given to the Main Office staff.

Grading

Teachers give the utmost effort to grade work in a timely and accurate manner. Class work and homework assignments are corrected, reviewed and returned on a daily or weekly basis. Projects of a larger nature may take a few weeks to be carefully reviewed and returned to students.

In Grades 6 – 8, students will receive percentage scores for class assignments, tests, and papers/projects. These percentage scores will coincide with the standard grading values of:

90% - 100% - regarded as "A" work

80% - 89% - regarded as "B" work

70% - 79% - regarded as "C" work

60% - 69% - regarded as "D" work

59% and below is regarded as failing work

Occasionally, parents may desire further clarification of a grade. In this instance, it is important to contact the teacher and ask for a conference to better understand how the individual or overall performance score was reached. All teachers in Grades 6 - 8 (including Science, Spanish, and P.E.) may have individual determinants for scores: class work, tests, special projects, participation and their respective weights.

If a parent chooses to challenge a grade after the first step of a parent/teacher conference, the next step would be to speak to one of the school's Directors, who are authorized by The Board of Trustees to make such academic decisions.

If a student (K - 5) fails a required subject for the year:

- She/he may be required to complete an approved course of study in the summer. This required work could be fulfilled by working with a tutor or by taking a summer school class.
- She/he may not be accepted at TCPS for the following year.

If a student in 6th or 7th grade has below a 70% average for a required subject for the year:

- She/he may be required to take a summer school class or work with a tutor.
- TCPS may recommend an alternative program for the following year.

If a student in 6th or 7th grade has below a 60% average for a required subject for the year:

- She/he may not be accepted at TCPS for the following year.

If a student in 8th grade has below a 60% average for a required subject for the year:

- He/she may not graduate.

Note: Both semester grades will be averaged to determine the year's grade.

Academic Honesty

TCPS encourages an environment of respect, responsibility, caring, and honesty; we work to promote an atmosphere that encourages fairness, good citizenship and integrity.

Academic honesty expects that students will do their own class work and homework, relying on teachers/parents for support and guidance. Cheating on assignments, quizzes, tests or projects will not be tolerated. If instances of cheating occur, there will be consequences, and parents will be informed.

Plagiarism - the knowing use of someone else's words, thoughts, or written material as one's own - falls under the category of cheating. There are times when a student wishes to use the work or thought of others; this is acceptable if the source of the material is acknowledged and the author is credited within the assignment. This is of the utmost importance when students are using materials from encyclopedias and other reference/resource materials. The best rule to follow is that if there is doubt, give credit. Individual questions about what or how to cite should be directed to the teacher giving the assignment.

Library Checkout Privileges

In order to promote the goal of developing lifelong learners, K - 5 students are able to check out up to four books at a time for a period of two weeks and Middle School students in Grades 6 - 8 can check out up to six books for a period of three weeks. All students may renew books (particularly useful for research projects!) as long as they do not have any overdue books that have not been checked in. There are no fines for late books; however students will not be able to check out any more books if they have overdue books. There is a minimum charge of \$15.00 to replace a lost or damaged book. A Library Card Agreement sent home with each student at the beginning of the school year has more details.

Make-Up Work Due to Absences

TCPS appreciates that many planned absences offer special family time together and wonderful enrichment experiences. Students are encouraged to share their travels and activities with their schoolmates; such experiences can enrich the program here at TCPS. On the other hand, parents are asked to select these experiences thoughtfully. The TCPS curriculum has been carefully planned and consistent attendance is essential for the student to receive maximum benefit. This is especially true because active involvement and hands-on experiences are such an integral part of TCPS.

Students are expected to complete assignments missed due to any absence. For planned absences, parents need to give the teacher one week's notice. This allows time for important assignments to be compiled so that the student has them available to work on while gone and ready to turn in completed upon return to school. These assignments may require parental involvement or assistance especially in the lower grades.

When students are sick and absent from school, it is their responsibility, upon their return, to request missed assignments. It is their responsibility to complete and turn in all missed work no later than the Monday following their return. No work will be accepted for a grade after the Monday following a student's return.

When students are absent for tests, they must be prepared to take the test on the day they return to school. Depending on class and teacher schedules, the teacher may arrange for a later test-taking date. Students will not know this in advance, so they must be prepared.

Selling/Soliciting on School Grounds

Students wishing to sell items/chances, etc. for an organization (such as Girl Scouts or a baseball team) may do so only if they first get permission from the Executive Director. After permission is granted, students register in the Main Office to obtain vendor's badges which must be worn while selling.

Under no circumstances may a student sell any item for his/her own personal profit.

V. DISCIPLINE

Discipline Philosophy

At TCPS, issues of discipline are considered to be opportunities for learning, and when incidents occur time is taken to problem-solve difficulties. In this way, students learn the skills of communication, problem solving, and compromise, and learn to accept responsibility for their own behavior. At TCPS, parents and staff cooperate as a team to guide its students. This is one reason TCPS is such a special learning environment. Every year staff, students and parents reaffirm what is needed to insure that TCPS is a safe, enjoyable learning environment.

At TCPS we:

- treat others as we would like to be treated
- make good choices
- do our best

The TCPS goal in this area is a student's self discipline. The following are believed to be important:

1. The immediate goal may be to stop a certain behavior, but there is always the additional goal of influencing the student's future actions.
2. Consistency of the whole staff and some standardization of consequences are essential.
3. Consequences relate directly to the behavior incident (e.g., incorrect use of equipment means not using the equipment for a period of time). The frequency and severity of an issue is always considered.
4. The student is actively involved in the process of problem-solving conflicts.
5. Students are made aware of their responsibility for their behavior and the consequences of their choices.

Expectations and Consequences

The Child's Primary School expects thoughtful action from all the members of our community.

We expect that students will respect and take care of equipment, materials, and property.

Students are responsible to replace/repair damaged property.

We expect that students will use appropriate and kind language.

Students may be required to write a note to parents stating the inappropriate or unkind language.

A student who is too young to write would dictate the note.

We expect that students will speak and act honestly.

In addition to reinforcing the importance of being truthful, consequences are based on the behavior to which the untruth relates.

We expect that students will respect others' right to learn.

A student may need a time-out in the classroom or office. If it is necessary for the student to go to the office for his/her time-out, a time-out form is sent to the parents.

We expect that students will keep themselves and others safe physically.

Physical aggression is not tolerated. All incidents are documented and consequences are given.

Sexual Harassment

Students are expected to treat all members of the school community with respect. Students may not engage in conduct constituting sexual harassment such as, but not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, including harassment for sexual orientation, severe enough to have a negative impact upon another student's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Any student wishing to make a complaint of sexual harassment should immediately report it to the Executive Director or Principal. Complaints must be initiated no later than six (6) months from the date of the initial problem.

Time-outs

TCPS feels that time-outs can be a support to the student, but that in many programs they are overused. Their purpose at TCPS is to give a student time to get control, to prevent one student from infringing on the rights of others, and to make a point about physical behaviors.

We know families at TCPS value communication and want to be involved with their children's growth. For effective and efficient communication, a Time-out form, which the parent receives when a child is sent to the office has been developed. The time-out form is given to the person who picks the K - 2 student up from school that day. Students in Grades 3 - 8 may be given the responsibility to deliver the form to their parents. It is the parents' responsibility to communicate so that both parents are aware of the incident. If the notice is not signed and returned to the office the next day, the office will follow up by contacting the parents. All questions or requests for clarification about an incident should be directed to the child's classroom teacher or the staff person who signed the notice.

Frequent/Severe Behavior Issues

It is recognized that self-control, decision-making, and acting responsibly are learned skills. This is why time is taken to help problem-solve and guide this important learning process. The importance of providing a safe environment for students and staff is also recognized. Frequent or severe behavior incidents will lead to further actions, such as parent meetings with the Directors, loss of Extended Day privileges, or suspension or expulsion from school.

The TCPS Keys

Kindergarten to Grade 3:

- Integrity
- It's okay to make a mistake
- Think – Before you speak – Before you act
- Responsibility
- Balance
- Do your best

Grade 4 to Grade 8:

- Integrity
- Speak with good purpose
- Flexibility
- Failure leads to success
- Balance
- Commitment
- Ownership
- This is it!

VI. COMMUNICATION

Communication

Communication is an essential element of the TCPS environment. Students are taught the elements of good communication and are given many opportunities to practice this skill. Open exchange between parents and staff are valued and encouraged. Together, staff and parents can support students in the most positive and effective way.

Open, positive, and respectful communication is key in a school environment and is especially important to the children and the adults in the TCPS family.

TCPS prides itself in its comprehensive, effective, and caring communication.

- Weekly Tuesday Notice
- Newsletters
- Parent/Teacher Coffees - periodically throughout the year
- Conferences/Conference letters
- Before-school Parent Potluck
- Visiting day for students
- Google Class Pages
- Classroom Blogs
- Open House
- Teacher availability
- Parent letters throughout the year
- Weekly work feedback (K – 5)
- Communication re: discipline and academics
- Progress Reports
- Semester Reports
- Forms: Special Note to Parents/Time-out notices

Tuesday Notices/Newsletters

In order to keep parents informed of TCPS's happenings, the school publishes a notice every Tuesday. The weekly notice will contain important dates, items due back at school, and other important facts. Parents are responsible to make sure that they get a notice every week and read it.

Copies of the Tuesday Notice are:

- emailed to families of current students
- posted on the bulletin board outside the Main Office
- kept in a Tuesday Notice notebook in the Main Office
- posted in the display case at the pick-up/drop-off area by the north entrance

Teachers try to send special classroom notices on Tuesday whenever possible to reduce the number of days parents are receiving information from school.

Parent/Teacher Coffees

The school schedules parent/teacher coffees periodically throughout the school year. They take place on Fridays from 8:15 AM - 9:15 AM. Each scheduled coffee focuses on a particular area of curriculum or a particular grade level. It's another informal opportunity for teachers and the Directors to communicate important issues, developmental stages, curriculum areas, and philosophy to parents.

The dates of the coffees will be posted in the Tuesday Notice. We hope that all parents will be able to join us for these informative meetings.

Conferences/Conference Letters

There are a number of scheduled meeting times with parents. One of the earliest is a potluck dinner that takes place the week before school begins. This offers the parents and staff a time to get to know one another in a relaxed atmosphere. Staff is introduced, TPG shares details about its important role at TCPS, and each teacher briefly discusses the upcoming year with his/her class of parents.

Before the first day of school, each teacher has a beginning-of-the-year conference with the parents of each of his/her students. These initial conferences are extremely valuable as they offer the teacher some information about students before school begins. They also help establish the important relationship between the parents and the teacher.

There are two other scheduled conferences: one approximately mid-year (January) and another just as school is ending in May or June. During the end-of-the-year conference, the teacher also discusses standardized testing. These conferences are 40 minutes in length.

We truly feel that conferencing with parents, telling them how we have seen the student grow in every area of development, and very specifically what skills the student has been working on and accomplished, gives a more complete picture of the student than any report card. TCPS teachers' substantial commitment of time to the individual student's conference is a tribute to their professionalism and dedication. This thorough communication is invaluable to our students.

We strongly encourage both parents to attend the conferences. Parents or teachers should feel comfortable requesting additional conferences at other times during the year.

Progress Reports

Progress Reports are written summaries that are mailed mid-semester in October and March to help keep parents apprised of student progress. The reports are presented as percentages for Grades 5 - 8. Parents are encouraged to speak personally with a teacher if there are any questions, concerns or thoughts regarding the reports. These reports help to supplement the twice-yearly parent teacher conferences and the Semester Reports.

Semester Reports

At the end of each semester (January/June) in addition to the parent-teacher conference, the teacher fills out a report for each student. The teacher shares the content of the report during the end of the semester parent conference. Copies of these reports are mailed to parents within two weeks of the conference.

"Special Note to Parents" Form

This form is designed as a quick vehicle to communicate immediate issues such as frequent tardiness, a poor test score, noticeable improvement, stellar performance, and patterns of behavior.

Parents are Expected to Notify the School

- When a child is absent or will be late.
- If someone not authorized on the Emergency Care Information form is picking up a child from school (written notice, please).
- If a child is particularly upset about something at home. A parent's business trip, the death of a pet, etc., are issues the child does not leave at home when he/she comes to school. The school can best support a child - and parents - if it is aware of the situation.
- If a child relates to the parent something which upset him/her at school. Teacher will notify parents of any school incident which seems significant to a child.

VII. FEES & FINANCIAL POLICIES

School Tuition and Fees

The Non-Refundable Application Fee for new students is \$100.00.

The Non-Refundable Deposit for returning students is \$1,000.00. This amount is applied to the entire tuition.

The Non-Refundable Deposit for new students is \$1,500.00. This amount is applied to the entire tuition.

Tuition (K - 5)	\$11,800.00
Tuition (6 - 8)	\$12,800.00
Extended Day Program	\$5.00 per hour or any part thereof
Middle School Camp	Included in tuition cost
The Parent Group	
Annual dues	\$40 per child
Volunteer Buyout Option	\$10 per hour (up to a maximum of \$200)

Tuition Payment Policy

The tuition payment policy at TCPS is outlined below.

The following guidelines are taken from the enrollment agreement:

1. All tuition payments are due on the first of the month.
2. Tuition payments not received in the office by the fifth of the month are considered late and will be assessed a late fee of \$15.00.
3. Returned checks are assessed a \$20.00 fee plus any bank charges. They are also considered a late payment and will be assessed the late fee as well.
4. The TCPS office will mail a late notice to delinquent accounts on the sixth of the month and this notice will include late charges. Late notice payment is due immediately upon receipt (includes tuition and late fee).
5. On the tenth of the month the Executive Assistant will contact late tuition families.
6. Accounts that are more than 60 days past due will be submitted to an outside collection agency.

Tuition Recovery Reserve Plan

The Tuition Recovery Reserve is a plan that may allow families to recover some tuition should a student withdraw from TCPS after the Enrollment Agreement is signed. The Tuition Recovery Plan payment is required on all installment payment contracts and is optional (yet highly recommended) should tuition be paid in full at the beginning of the school year. Since parents are contractually obligated to pay the full year's tuition, this program makes it possible to recover a percentage of the tuition (subject to terms and conditions of the TCPS Tuition Recovery Reserve Plan) should the student be withdrawn. The program does not come into effect until a student has been in attendance 10 days of the school year.

Extended Day Program

PARENTS OR AUTHORIZED ADULTS MUST SIGN STUDENTS IN AND OUT OF THE BEFORE- AND AFTER-SCHOOL EXTENDED DAY PROGRAMS. The sign-in/sign-out notebook will be on the desk near the door in the Fine Arts room or with a staff member when students are outside. Students who are not signed out may be charged for the maximum time. Please let the Extended Day staff know when children are picked up.

Extended Day fees are a flat rate of \$5.00 per hour or any part thereof per child. Morning care is billed from 7:30 AM to 8:15 AM and afternoon extended care is billed from 2:45 PM to 6:00 PM for K and from 3:15 PM to 6:00 PM for Grades 1 - 8. Fifteen minutes prior to and after school hours will be considered a grace period and parents are not charged for that time.

***Late Pick-up Charge** - If a student is picked up after 6:00 PM, the parents will be billed at the rate of \$10.00 for the first half hour or any part thereof. After 6:30 PM, the rate is \$1.00 per minute.

Bills for the Extended Day Program will be attached to each student's sign in/sign out sheet in the Sign in/Sign out notebook during the first week of each month. Payment is due upon receipt. Parents who know their child has used the Extended Day Program and have not yet received a statement, should contact the Main Office. Accounts are considered delinquent if payment is not received in the office within ten days of the extended day billing date.

A 15% late fee will be charged to any account not paid before the delinquent date and a late notice will be mailed. If this account (including late fee) is not paid by the end of the month, the family will lose the privilege of using the Extended Day Program as of the first day of the following month.

Families with outstanding balances will receive a call from the office notifying them that their privilege to use the Extended Day Program provided by TCPS has been revoked. This privilege will be reinstated as soon as the account is paid in full. Accounts that are more than 60 days past due may be submitted to an outside collection agency.

A \$20.00 administrative fee plus any bank charges will be charged for returned checks from the bank. In addition, a returned check is considered a late payment and the account will be assessed the late fee.