

KAPS STUDENT HANDBOOK  
SIGN-OFF FORM

We understand the Student/Parent Handbook of the Katherine Anne Porter School is available at the school, and is also posted on the school website at [www.kapschool.org](http://www.kapschool.org). We have read the Student/Parent Handbook of the Katherine Anne Porter School and agree to abide by its provisions.

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Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date



The Katherine Anne Porter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, religion, color, national origin, academic, or athletic ability in providing education or access to benefits of educational services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act. All staff and students will act in a non-discriminatory way.

**1. What is the KAP School?**

The Katherine Anne Porter School (KAPS) is a Charter School established under the laws of the State of Texas. It is established to provide educational services to students in the counties of Hays, Blanco, Travis, Caldwell, Comal, and Gonzales. A Charter School is a school district unto itself. Charter Schools are funded partially by state financing and partially by private fundraising. The KAP School is a non-profit corporation headed by an elected Board of Directors.

The KAPS currently provides a full high school curriculum with an emphasis on the creative arts for students in grades 9 through 12 and offers a TEA-accredited high school diploma to its graduates.

KAPS is NOT a private school; there is no tuition or fee structure, and it is open to all applicants who meet normal high school prerequisites, subject to availability of openings.

The KAPS mascot is the Dragon; KAPS colors are blue, black, and silver. KAPS is a member of the Texas UIL and fields limited athletic and academic teams in interscholastic competition.

**2. What is the mission of the KAP School?**

The Katherine Anne Porter School will foster an appreciation for learning, nurture individual interests, and enhance community responsibilities. In small classes, using an integrated and practical approach, students will be encouraged to become lifelong learners and to achieve an accredited high-school diploma.

Let's review the Mission Statement for some particulars:

"...will foster an appreciation for learning..." - The school is founded on the belief held by Katherine Anne Porter that "knowledge of great art and great thought is a good in itself, not to be missed for anything." It is our goal to develop in our students a lifelong thirst for learning and the skills for obtaining it.

"...nurture individual interests..." - KAPS believes that all people are different. Not all learn in the same way or have the same interests or aptitudes. KAPS celebrates this difference and strives to provide flexibility in terms of school structure, curriculum, and classroom approaches.

"...enhance community responsibilities..." - It is the goal of the KAP School to produce productive, responsible citizens. Accordingly, programs are created to expose the students to community responsibilities and to offer them a positive, active role in their communities.

"In small classes..." - KAPS strives for an optimum student to teacher ratio of 10:1. In many classes, this number is lower; occasionally it may go to 13:1 or 14:1. The smaller class sizes allow more quality attention to individual students, as well as the adaptability to "individual interests". Classrooms are also smaller, providing a more intimate learning environment.

"...using an integrated and practical approach..." - The KAP School believes that all subjects are interrelated and that students learn better when examining all facets of an issue. To this end, the school has implemented "themes" for given six-week periods in which all classes attempt to relate the subject matter to the given theme, e.g. "Africa," "The Renaissance," "The Cold War," "Trust," or "Citizenship." Students also are more interested if they can see the practical value of a given class; KAPS employs teachers with significant life experiences in various subjects in order to help show the relation of those subjects to the "real world".

"...students will be encouraged..." - Many students have been led to believe that they can't achieve. It is KAPS' goal to prove that they can. This requires encouragement and support, which KAP believes it can provide with its innovative style, character development, and low

student to teacher ratios.

"...to become life-long learners..." - the KAP Schools are here to provide the basis for life-long learning: encouragement, basic skills, learning how to learn, creative and critical thinking, accessing information sources, how to analyze and sift information, how to use logic and deduction - all in the hope that KAPS students will develop the thirst for learning for its own sake.

"...to achieve an accredited high school diploma." - KAPS offers a diploma with 24 appropriate credits. For some students, an accelerated graduation plan, or gifted/talented curricula may be appropriate.

### **3. Who was Katherine Anne Porter?**

Katherine Anne Porter was born near Brownwood, TX in 1890 and moved to Kyle, TX in her early childhood. She worked as a writer and teacher most of her life in various spots around the United States, Mexico, and Europe. She wrote articles for a number of magazines and newspapers and published several notable short stories. In 1962, she wrote the very popular novel Ship of Fools, which was awarded the Pulitzer Prize and was later made into a film.

She is known as a writer of great clarity, achieving a style of objectivity without sacrificing sensitivity. Many of her stories used the geographic locales of the South, the Southwest, and Mexico. Although most of her works were written and published outside of Texas, she is considered one of the state's best and most famous writers.

Katherine Anne Porter died in September of 1980. Her childhood home in Kyle was purchased by a group dedicated to preserving her memory. That group evolved into the founders of the KAP School, who saw a need for a school focused on the arts in the rural hill country area.

### **4. Who will KAPS accept as students?**

KAPS sets an enrollment limit for each semester in an effort to keep the school size at a manageable level; our staffing is configured in order to maintain a targeted 10:1 teacher to student ratio. Existing students are given priority over new students, and when the enrollment limit is reached, no new students can be added until enrollment is again

below the limit.

Ordinarily, a student will be placed in a waiting pool if no available slots under the enrollment limit are available. Students are selected from the waiting pool by lottery. KAPS enrollment is open to all students regardless of race, gender, class, appearance, or disability, provided that the student is less than 22 years of age as of September 1 of the given school year. Other students will be considered on an individual basis via application to the KAPS administration or Board of Directors. KAPS reserves the right to exclude a student who has a documented history of criminal offense, juvenile court adjudication, or discipline problems under TEC, Chapter 37, Subchapter A.

## 5. How does one enroll in KAPS?

First, the student or parent should pick up an enrollment packet to complete and return to the KAPS office. To view the packet on-line, visit our school website at [www.kapschool.org](http://www.kapschool.org).

Second, the enrollment packet will be reviewed by the KAPS administration for completeness. No student will be enrolled without completion of all the enrollment materials, including the transfer of transcripts from previous schools. If any discrepancies are noted, the parent will be contacted and instructed on how to obtain or complete the needed materials.

Third, an appointment must be scheduled with the KAPS registrar. The registrar will discuss the environment at KAPS as well as the student's prior educational history. A file for that student will be initiated.

Fourth, the KAPS registrar will develop a long-term, academic plan for the student and schedule the student into that semester's classes. The student can then begin attending KAPS.

By law, students must be current with all their immunizations or will not be permitted on campus. Included in the enrollment packet is a TB screening form, which must be completed. Freshmen will be tested for vision and hearing acuity as well as scoliosis during the school year.

## 6. ACADEMIC INFORMATION

### GRADE LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

The listing below is a summary of the minimum number of state course credits required for grade level classification:

**Sophomore: 5 credits**

**Junior: 10 credits**

**Senior: 16 credits**

Credits earned prior to High School enrollment will not be used for classification purposes. Changes in the grade level classification will be made after the completion and calculation of earned credits from each school year.

The Katherine Anne Porter School, in compliance with State Board of Education Rules, will make all promotions only on the basis of academic achievement.

### GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)

The Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) is a calculation based on a weighted Grade Point Average Scale. All courses will be designated with a weighted numerical value of 4.0 for Regular Courses, 5.0 for Pre-Advanced Placement and Honors Courses, and 6.0 for Advanced Placement Courses. Course weight will be determined by a consensus of the faculty department chairperson, the high school principal, and the superintendent of schools, in compliance with state-mandated guidelines.

GPA calculation is determined by the addition of accumulated grade points divided by the number of grade point credits.

GPA is rounded to the nearest 1/1000th decimal place.

*The following courses receive earned credit only (not counted in GPA.):*

- College courses
- Office Assistant
- Local Credit Courses
- Home school courses

In a full session course where the first term grade is 60 or above, full credit shall be awarded if the two term grades together average to a grade of 70 or better and the student passes the comprehensive final exam.

## **CLASS RANK**

Class rank is determined by a numerical listing of the Cumulative GPA, from highest to lowest, within each grade classification. Class rank is calculated upon completion of each school year.

Class rank for graduating seniors is calculated upon the completion of the junior year (minimum of 15 credits), upon the completion of the fall semester of the senior year, upon the completion of the fifth six weeks of the senior year, and finally upon completion of all state and KAPS graduation requirements.

The following conversion chart will be used when a transfer student's grades are reported by letter grades only:

A+ 98 B+ 88 C+ 78 D 70

A 95 B 85 C 75 F 69

A- 92 B- 82 C- 72

Class rank for early graduates will be established in accordance with the expected completion date of all graduation requirements. Students attempting to complete state and KAPS graduation requirements *during the school year* will be included in the class rank of the current year's graduating senior class. Students attempting to complete state and KAPS graduation requirements *outside of the regular school year* will be included in the class rank of the following year's graduating senior class.

## **VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN**

In accordance with KAPS policy, *valedictorian* and *salutarian* are respectively named as the two students with the highest cumulative GPA in the graduating senior class at the conclusion of the fifth six weeks grading period. To be eligible for valedictorian status a student must have continuously attended KAPS for at least 2 school years. To be eligible for either honor, a student must have completed the Recommended or Distinguished Graduation Program. Administrative discretion by the principal, or principal's designee, is retained in resolving conflict arising from stated policy.

In the event that the top two students maintain the same GPA/Class Rank, both students will share the valedictorian honor with no salutarian being named. Should a tie develop for salutarian, all those tied shall be recognized.

## **STUDENT INITIATED SCHEDULE CHANGES**

All student initiated schedule changes must be made by the KAPS Registrar within the first ten academic days of the semester. After this period all requested schedule changes will have the following conditions applied:

1. All applicable attendance data and grades will transfer to the new class
2. Schedule change must meet with the approval of the educator of the new class, the parent of the student, and the Principal after a conference has been completed between the parent and the Principal
3. The Student is wholly responsible to make-up all work missed and will be penalized for any work not turned in

## **CREDIT BY EXAMINATION**

Students who have no prior formal instruction in a course may take a credit by exam for acceleration for that course. Examinations used to earn credit shall assess the student's mastery of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and shall be properly evaluated before credit will be granted.

If requested by a parent, examinations may be purchased at the expense of the parent from either Texas Tech University or The University of Texas and administered by KAPS Staff on the KAPS campus. In order to receive credit for that course, the student must earn a grade of 70 or above for courses the student has already attempted and 90 or above for courses in which the student has never been enrolled.

Should a student take the examination and fail to pass it, the grade will not be recorded on the transcript. For credit earned by exam, "Credit by Examination" shall appear on the academic achievement record for that course. Credit by exam is provided both during the Fall Semester and during the Spring Semester on dates set by KAPS.

## **CORRESPONDENCE COURSES**

KAPS students may choose to take correspondence courses through approved institutions in order to gain graduation credit. Any tuition and

related costs for correspondence courses shall be incurred by the parent/guardian or the student, not KAP School. Credit toward state graduation requirements shall be granted only under the following conditions:

1. The institution offering the course if The University of Texas at Austin, Texas Tech University, or another public institution of higher education approved by the Texas State Commissioner of Education.
2. The correspondence course includes the state required TAKS for that course.
3. The specific course has been approved by the Texas State Commissioner of Education.

### **DUAL CREDIT**

KAP School currently has an agreement with Austin Community College (ACC) and the University of Texas which allows juniors and seniors, with permission of parent, counselor and principal, to take up to two college credit courses per semester. The college course is referred to as "dual credit" if it will be used to satisfy a high school graduation requirement. If the college course is not going to satisfy a high school graduation requirement, it is referred to as "co-enrollment." In either situation, students are able to get an early start on earning college credit.

The requirements for a college course to be considered for dual credit at the high school level are:

1. it must provide advanced academic instruction beyond, or in greater depth than the essential knowledge and skills as defined by the Texas Education Agency.
2. the college offering the course must be accredited,
3. the student must have the permission of the parent and the principal, and
4. the student must meet all admissions requirements established by the college.

The requirements for a course to be considered for co-enrollment (meaning the student is taking the course only for college credit) are numbers 3 and 4 above.

Dual credit courses may meet criteria for the Distinguished Achievement Program. Dual credit and co-enrollment college-level classes generally are transferable. The college offering the class can tell you if the college course transfers to public colleges and universities in Texas. However,

students should always check with the college to which they plan to transfer, especially if it is out of state and/or private, to determine if courses will be accepted as transfer.

The following conditions apply:

1. All students must attend KAP School for at least four hours (five class periods) per day unless given special permission by the principal.
2. Students must pass any dual-credit course required for graduation with at least a C. KAP School does not recognize a grade of D. A grade of B is required for a course to count as one of a student's Advanced Measures for the Distinguished Achievement Program.
3. Students must receive approval from a Counselor by completing the appropriate steps.

Students must complete the appropriate college admission packet and must take the TASP (or ACC Alternative Test) prior to enrollment in a course. Student exempt from the TASP but TAAS, ACT, or SAT must provide verification and a KAPS transcript to the college to which they are applying to enroll. All items must be completed in compliance with KAPS and college deadlines for admission.

### **VIRTUAL SCHOOL PROGRAM**

The Katherine Anne Porter Virtual School Program (VSP) is committed to providing quality online courses with flexible, student based programs that will facilitate academic engagement without prejudice. The virtual school is set up for students who are ready to complete their high school careers at an accelerated pace and to accommodate individual education plans. It is designed for Junior and Senior students who have proven they are motivated and focused enough to work independently to achieve their goals.

#### **Criteria For Admission**

1. Enrollment in the KAP School as at least a part-time student
2. A reference from a previous teacher testifying to the students ability to work in a self-paced environment as well as a reference from the instructor of the course being applied for testifying to the students academic readiness in that course. In addition, all prospective applicants must be approved by the Virtual School Program Coordinator.
3. You must be highly motivated, focused, and able to work independently.

4. Courses must be completed in the semester of enrollment, regardless of the date of enrollment; incompleting work in the course will be zeroed out and the overall grade will be reported on the transcript.
5. Maintain a passing grade of 70%
6. All Katherine Anne Porter School rules and regulations apply including the Attendance Policy and the computer Acceptable Use Policy.

### **GIFTED/TALENTED EDUCATION PROGRAM**

In accordance with the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students, KAPS is committed to the identification, selection, and placement of gifted/talented students. Parents are encouraged to notify KAPS if their students have been previously identified and selected as gifted/talented students. Students identified as gifted/talented are encouraged to enroll in Pre-Advance Placement, Honors, and Advancement Placement Courses.

### **7. What are the expectations for students at KAPS?**

Students at KAPS are expected to come to the premises prepared for learning, to participate in the learning process, to respect their fellow students and their property, to respect school teachers and staff and their property, to adhere to the Code of Student Conduct, to adhere to all school rules, to represent the school in a positive manner at all times, and to work to develop themselves into high school graduates and productive citizens of the community.

#### **The KAPS Code of Student Conduct states:**

- 1) *Students have the right to an education in an environment conducive to learning.*
- 2) *Students have the right to respect and dignity.*
- 3) *Students have a responsibility to attend school punctually.*
- 4) *Students have a responsibility to be prepared for class with appropriate materials.*
- 5) *Students have a responsibility to maintain and improve the school environment, respect school property, and exercise due care while using school facilities and equipment.*
- 6) *Students have the responsibility to conduct themselves in such a way that they do not disrupt, distract, or otherwise interfere with the*

*teaching and learning process.*

- 7) *Students shall not jeopardize the health and safety of others by their acts.*
- 8) *Students shall refrain from slander and obscenity in verbal or written form.*
- 9) *Students shall be appropriately dressed and groomed.*
- 10) *Students shall follow the Code of Student Conduct and shall seek changes in school policies in a cooperative manner.*

Other key school rules include:

- 1) **Safety:** Students are obligated to ensure that the Katherine Anne Porter environment is safe and comfortable for all its members. Students will not engage in any conduct, be it physical, verbal, or otherwise, that poses any level of harm to themselves or others. Students will not exhibit any behaviors that create a physically, mentally, or verbally hostile environment for other members of the KAPS community. Bullying will not be tolerated.
- 2) **Disruption:** Students are expected to be attentive in class and other school functions and to be respectful of the staff and their classmates. Disruption of class or other school activities will not be permitted.
- 3) **Prohibited Substances:** Students shall not possess, use, or transmit illicit, prescription, or illegal drugs, alcohol, drug or alcohol paraphernalia, or tobacco (including cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, snuff, or other forms) or items that may be used as inhalants (e.g. aerosol sprays) on KAPS premises, in KAPS-provided transport, or while participating in KAP-sponsored events. Students shall not come to campus or any KAPS event under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The consequences for any of these behaviors could include involvement of law enforcement, medical assistance, and/or expulsion.
- 4) **Theft and Vandalism:** Students are encouraged to not bring large amounts of money or items of value to school in order to lessen the likelihood of theft. Vandalism is a serious infraction, and will result in disciplinary action.
- 5) **Weapons:** Firearms of any kind, knives, dangerous toys, spike jewelry, martial arts equipment, or any other material that could be used as weapons are not permitted on school grounds or in school transport.

These items will be confiscated if found. Possession of weapons at school or at school functions is considered a serious offense.

6) Threats of Violence: Threats of violence will not be permitted. Students are discouraged from any form of threatening behavior.

7) Unauthorized use of school equipment: All school equipment, including (but not specifically limited to) computers, audio/video gear, construction and mechanical tools, and science lab equipment shall be utilized only as authorized and supervised by KAPS staff. Engaging in any unauthorized computer activity such as illegal/unauthorized entry into files, illegal/unauthorized software installation, destruction of property, deletion of files, unauthorized Internet access, downloading of pornography, playing violent video games, etc. is prohibited. Construction, mechanical, and electronic tools shall only be utilized in a safe manner and under the direct supervision of KAP staff.

8) Dress and Grooming: Students are expected to wear appropriate clothing to school that does not distract from the learning process. Students shall not wear clothes that are threats to the health and safety of the student, other students, or KAP staff. Students shall not wear clothes bearing obscene language or images, or those words or images that are offensive to others. Students shall not wear clothes that advertise or glorify tobacco, alcohol, or drugs, express hatred or prejudice, portray or glorify violence, or identify the student as the member of a gang or cult. Undergarments or private body parts (including, but not limited to, buttocks and breasts) may not be exposed at any time. Sheer garments, backless garments, and strapless garments are not acceptable. A shirt must be able to touch the waist when pulled down. School staff may at any time judge any given clothing or grooming style to be in violation of this code and may direct the student to change to acceptable clothing. If the student refuses, the parent will be notified, and/or the student will face immediate disciplinary action. For students' health and safety, footwear should be worn at all times.

#### 9) School Transportation

Students will board and leave the van in an orderly manner at designated spots. Students will follow the driver's directions at all times and will be quiet and courteous. Students will wear their seat belts at all times and keep the aisles free of books and other materials during transit. Students will not eat or drink in the van nor deface the van or any of its furnishings. Students will adhere to all Code of Student

Conduct and other school regulations while traveling on the school van. Students will wait for a signal from the van driver before crossing in front of the van after leaving it. The van driver may elect to assign seats to students; if so, the students are expected to remain in their assigned seats while on the van. Violations of these rules may require a conference among the student, the driver, the parents of the student, and the Principal, and may further result in the suspension of the student's school transport privileges.

10) Personal Electronic Equipment: Personal electronic equipment, specifically including CD players, game devices, musical instruments, portable computers, and the like, shall only be brought into classrooms with the teacher's permission. Students are discouraged from bringing any of these items to school, other than musical instruments used in music classes and productions, or portable computers used for school projects. A teacher has the discretion to allow a student to listen to music through personal headphones while reading, writing, or independent work. Students are permitted to possess but not use cellular phones during regularly scheduled school hours. Use of cellular phones will result in temporary or permanent confiscation. The students will be fined \$10 if caught using a cell phone during the school day. The student's cell phone will be returned when payment is received.

11) Personal Vehicles: Vehicles are subject to search at any time.

Students are expected to drive safely entering, exiting, and within the parking lot to protect the lives or property of others. Students are expected to park in the center of a marked parking spot and to avoid handicapped spots unless they hold valid state handicapped tags. Students are expected to lock their vehicles and to not leave valuables in them. KAPS is not responsible for any damages to, or theft from, student vehicles on KAPS property. Students may visit their vehicles during the day to retrieve books or other materials ONLY IF explicitly granted permission by a school staff member. Otherwise, students are not to be in the parking lot between arrival and departure to/from KAP. Students are expressly prohibited from sitting in their vehicles during school.

12) Leaving classes: Students are expected to be in their assigned classrooms from the beginning of a school period until the end of that period. If they have no assigned classroom, they may be

elsewhere on campus, but specifically NOT the parking lot, the sides or back of the school building, any prohibited areas within the building, or in the school office (without sufficient reason). Students may leave class only upon requesting and receiving a hall pass from their teacher. Teachers will sign only one hall pass at any time, and students are expected to attend to the requested business (bathroom, office visit, etc.) and return to class immediately. School staff will monitor students with hall passes; excessive delays in returning to class or visiting unauthorized areas with a hall pass may result in the suspension of those privileges for that student.

Other expectations:

1) Textbooks: Students may be assigned textbooks, or they may be used in a community pool, depending upon the class. If a textbook is assigned to a student, he or she is expected to take care of it and replace it if lost or damaged. Students are expected to treat pooled textbooks with the same care as assigned ones.

2) Library materials: Students are expected to take care of the school's library materials, to check them out of the library as needed, and to return them promptly to the library. Maximum borrowing time for books, videos, CD's, and other materials is two weeks. Our library works on the honor system; students must sign out materials in the logbook before removing them from the library.

3) Lockers: KAP may provide students lockers. The welfare of the contents of these lockers is the responsibility of the students. KAP reserves the right to search lockers if the circumstances warrant. Students are responsible for providing their own lock.

4) School assemblies, fire drills, and other group functions: Students are expected to attend all school assemblies and to listen courteously to the presentation. Likewise, from time to time, the school will hold fire drills requiring the cooperation of all students. At the conclusion of these events, students are expected to return promptly to class or their assigned location.

5) KAP Ambassadors: All students are expected to be ambassadors for the school to the surrounding communities. Students are expected to behave in those communities in a manner that brings credit to themselves, their parents, and the KAP School.

6) Phone Usage: Students may not use the school telephones for outgoing or incoming conversations unless authorized by the KAP office. The office phones may only be used at the discretion of the office

staff, during brunch or lunch, before school, or after all classes have been concluded; no calls may be placed during class time. Students' cell phones should be turned off during the school day.

7) Food and drink: No food or drink is allowed outside of the cafeteria area.

8) Responsibility: If a student creates a mess, s/he is expected to clean it up. If a student moves school property, s/he is expected to put it back. If a student damages school property, s/he should repair it, or the parent/guardian will be financially accountable for repairs to be made.

## **8. How does KAPS discipline students?**

### **Disciplinary authority of the Katherine Anne Porter School**

The Katherine Anne Porter School exercises in loco parentis authority to maintain high standards of student behavior. The KAPS will exercise this authority to administer discipline whenever the interests of the school are at stake on or off school grounds. This authority includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. During normal school operation and while the student is going to and from school on school provided transport. This includes pick up and drop off points.
2. At any time while a student is within 100 yards of the school property.
3. At any time while a student is on campus for any activity.
4. At any school related activity regardless of time or location.
5. At any time, regardless of location, that retaliation against a school employee is involved
6. At any time a student is involved in criminal mischief or a felony regardless of time or location

### **Behavior Management Techniques Employed by the School**

The following are examples of techniques that may be used to modify student behavior. These techniques may be employed alone or in combination. This list is not exhaustive and school personnel may employ professional discretion in application and other techniques as necessary. Students with special needs will be addressed as defined under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act.

1. Verbal correction and redirect
2. employment of a 'time-out' period with the intent to initiate student reintegration as soon as possible
3. classroom seating assignments
4. single or multiple advising sessions with school personnel
5. assignment of lunch, brunch, after school, and Saturday detentions
6. assignment of In School Suspension for days or parts of days
7. assignment of Out of School Suspension for days or parts of days
8. initiation of parent conferences with school personnel
9. confiscation of items in a students possession that constitute, to any degree, a disruption of the educational environment or that constitute a violation of school policy
10. assignment of alternate tasks outside of the regular scheduled classroom activity
11. revocation of privileges to participate in school related activities
12. revocation of school transport privileges
13. revocation of school network use
14. monetary remuneration to individuals or the school for damages or loss of property
15. involvement of appropriate outside officials

**Behaviors that are explicitly prohibited include, but are not limited to the following. Behaviors with an 'E' after them may result in student expulsion. Any behavior which is persistent, defined as numerous violations of the Student Code of Conduct in general or repeated occurrences of the same violation, may be referred to the Disciplinary Committee. The Committee is empowered to recommend expulsion.**

1. Scholastic dishonesty, plagiarism, or inappropriate use of the school's computer network
2. Leaving school grounds without permission
3. Use of inappropriate language on school grounds
4. Violence or threat of violence, either verbal or physical (E)
5. The creation of a hostile environment for any member of the school community whether intentional or unintentional (E)
6. Theft or vandalism
7. Any disruption of the educational environment, whether in or out of class
8. Engaging in inappropriate sexual or physical contact

9. Possession, use, trafficking, or transferring alcohol, any controlled substance, any drug, or any substance that through its intentional misuse would reasonably be considered a drug (e.g. aerosol sprays) (E)
10. Possession or use of tobacco products or paraphernalia such as lighters, matches, etc.
11. Extortion, coercion, or blackmail, including actions intended to modify another's behaviors or choices by the use or threat of force (E)
12. Bullying, including imitation, whether verbal or physical
13. any form of sexual harassment of peers or adults
14. Possessing knives of any length (E)
15. Gambling
16. Contributing to an unsafe environment for self or others
17. Possession of any weapons or weapon imitations (E)
18. Refusing to comply with reasonable requests of any staff member or school representative
19. Terroristic threats (E)
20. Truancy
21. Use of cellular telephones on campus during scheduled school hours. Any student in violation of this policy will have their cellular phone confiscated and a \$10 fee will be required for the release of the phone.

Parental notification of any suspension resulting from a violation of the Student Code of Conduct will occur no later than three days after the appropriate administrator becomes aware of the violation

Pending grievances brought due to the assignment of a particular disciplinary consequence will not result in the deferral of the consequence.

All disciplinary matters are handled with the professional discretion of the school staff with relation to timing, intent, students involved, severity of offense, recurrence of offense, and the student's disciplinary history.

Out of School Suspensions will be treated as unexcused absences. Students who have been suspended out of school may not be on campus or at school sponsored or related activities during their suspension period without express permission from the Principal or Superintendent. Students in violation may be subject to criminal

trespassing.

Any student who has been expelled from the Katherine Anne Porter School is expressly prohibited from being on campus or from attending any school sponsored or related activity. Particular dispensations may be granted by the Principal or Superintendent.

### **Due Process**

Expulsions may be appealed to the Katherine Anne Porter School Board of Trustees. A written request to appear on the Board agenda must be received by the Superintendent no later than 5 days prior to the scheduled Board Meeting. A received request is not a guarantee that the item will be placed on the agenda. The Board agenda will be posted no later than 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting.

## **9. What are the expectations for parents at KAP?**

Your son or daughter has entered a unique learning environment. His or her success depends on individual motivation, as well as support from you. The KAP staff is dedicated and works very hard, but cannot always overcome apathy on the part of the students or their parents. We therefore encourage you to become actively involved in your child's education at KAP.

To this end, KAP has expectations of the parents:

- 1) Parents are highly encouraged to participate in community and school service activities and fundraising efforts (including Parents' Night, Java Jive, Writers' Roundup, Literary Festival, Market Days parking, etc.) each semester. Monetary donations and gifts-in-kind are always accepted and greatly appreciated. These gifts, along with dedicated grant-seeking, help to fund school activities. KAP also seeks low-cost or no-cost suppliers for everything from computer equipment to food and cleaning supplies. Your help in these efforts is crucial to the school's success.
- 2) Encourage your son or daughter to achieve, to learn, to participate, to attend, and to behave. KAP will do the same.
- 3) Provide support for your child when needed. KAP endeavors to challenge all students to raise their performance levels. We want struggling students to become good students, and good students to become outstanding ones. They will be assigned

homework and projects. Help them as needed. Read the course outlines for the classes your child is attending and elaborate on subjects of interest.

- 4) Stay in contact with your child's teachers. The teachers will contact you during the school terms. If your child is experiencing problems at school, work together with the staff to eliminate or reduce them.
- 5) Support the discipline efforts of the school. Reinforcing proper behaviors and habits in the home, such as general respect for others, proper nutrition, healthy sleep patterns, community awareness and responsibility, and a love of life long learning, will lead to the children becoming more successful academically and personally. It is our responsibility to work in concert with one another to achieve these ends.

## **10. When are students expected to be at school?**

Students are expected to be at school on all days in which classes and/or final exams are held, unless specifically instructed otherwise, or unless involved in a KAP-sponsored and -supervised activity.

School begins every weekday at 7:55 a.m. Students must be enrolled in at least 5 classes/4 instructional hours per day. Students may not leave campus during the day without express parental **and** KAP office permission until completion of the last enrolled class of the day. Students are expected to be in class at the beginning of each class period. Students arriving at class after the bell will be considered tardy. Students arriving at class later than 15 minutes into the period will be considered absent. See the attendance policy that follows for the consequences of excessive absences and tardiness.

## **11. What is the attendance policy for the KAP School?**

Each KAP student will receive a personal schedule at the beginning of each semester detailing exactly where the student is to be at assigned periods. Attendance is taken at every class, as well as once daily for the official attendance record. Students are expected to be in class and participating.

### **Attendance Policy**

## Section I: Truancy

- A. Definition: Katherine Anne Porter School subscribes to the Texas Education Code Section 25.093 which states, "Any student, under the age of 18, who has unexcused absences for more than 3 days or parts of days within a 4-week period, or 10 or more days or parts of days in a 6-month period must have charges filed upon them at the local court for 'Failure to Attend School'."
- B. Parent Contributing to Non Attendance (ED 25.093). A parent commits an offense:
1. If a warning was issued at the beginning of the school year;
  2. When the parent, with criminal negligence, fails to require the child to attend school as required by law; and
  3. The child has 10 or more absences within a 6-month period in the same school year, or 3 or more absences within a 4 week period
- C. Excused Absences: The Katherine Anne Porter School will excuse an absence in the following cases:
1. Observance of religious holidays
  2. Temporary absence resulting from a visit to a health care professional if that student commences classes or returns to school on the same day of the appointment.
  3. Any absence resulting from a visitation to a health care professional when accompanied by a *written note* from that health care professional within 2 days of the students return to school.
  4. Any absence resulting from a family emergency when accompanied by a *written note* from the parent/guardian of the student within 2 days of the students return to school.
  5. Any absence arising from compulsory attendance for legal reasons (e.g. appearances in court, meetings with parole or probation officers) when accompanied by a *written note* from the legal entity requiring attendance within 2 days of the students return to school.

- D. Unexcused Absence: The Katherine Anne Porter School shall not excuse an absence in the following cases:
1. Any absence unaccompanied by a *written note* excusing the absence as defined in Section (B): Excused Absences.
  2. Transportation difficulties. All students are expected to be fully responsible for planning for and utilizing reliable means of transportation.
  3. Family events that are not emergencies or crises including but not limited to weddings, birthdays, reunions, vacations, etc.
  4. Misunderstandings concerning the school calendar. All students are expected to be in school on the days printed on the school calendar.
- E. Make-Up Work: Make-Up work is solely the responsibility of the student and will only be assigned for excused absences. Make-Up work must be completed turned in a timely fashion with respect to the length of the absence, amount of time students who were present were allotted, special needs, etc.

## Section II: Denial of Credit Due To Excessive Absences

- A. The Katherine Anne Porter School expects 100% attendance. If a student misses more than 8 days in one semester, either excused or unexcused, that child will be denied academic credit for the course(s) for which s/he failed to attend.
- B. Any child who is more than 15 minutes late to a given academic period will be deemed absent for that period. Three occurrences of being late by less than 15 minutes (tardy) will be regarded as one absence for that class period.
- C. Appellate Process
- 1) If the particular student or parents/legal guardians of the student feel that there exist extenuating circumstances surrounding excessive absences which

may mitigate denial of credit, an appeal may be made to the Katherine Anne Porter School Attendance Committee.

2. The Attendance Committee shall hear from the student/parent/guardian in order to evaluate the legitimacy and extent of any extenuating circumstances. The Committee will also hear from any interested educator or administrator to evaluate the student's classroom performance, grades, behavior, and any other information which they feel will aid the Committee in making a decision.
3. The Attendance Committee decision will result in one or more of the following
  - a. Denial of Credit for some or all of the period(s) in question.
  - b. Assignment of specific future requirements in the realms of academic performance, behavioral expectations, attendance considerations, etc.
  - c. Assignment of Saturday School(s).
4. Attendance Committee decisions may be appealed to the Superintendent or Principal in writing within 5 school days of the Attendance Committee's decision.
5. The Superintendent or Principal's decision may be appealed in writing to the School Board within 5 school days of the Superintendents or Principal's decision.
6. The School Board's decision may be appealed to the Texas Education Agency.

#### D. Governance of Saturday Schools

Saturday Schools are recommended for those students who have an excessive number of excused absences and need to make-up lost time and/or work in order to earn academic and/or attendance credit in those course(s) in question.

1. Attendance credits derived from Saturday School sessions may only be applied to *excused* absences.

2. Saturday School dates will be set by the Attendance Committee based on particular needs in particular semesters.
3. The cost for an individual attending one session of Saturday school shall be \$25.00, paid in advance. Receipt of payment is required to be admitted to the Saturday School session. The only time a refund will be granted is when the minimum attendance of 2 students per session is not met.
4. One 4-hour Saturday School will incur the removal of one 8-period school day's absence. This will be applied across the day with no exceptions. The student is required to attend the entire session to receive any attendance credit with no exceptions.
5. The student attending is wholly and entirely responsible for bringing and working on academic assignments to gain attendance credit.
6. The Saturday School proctor has final say on earned attendance credits based upon the attendee's work ethic, behaviors, and adherence to Katherine Anne Porter School policy.

#### **12. What are KAPS' policies regarding illness?**

Students are not expected to come to school if they are ill. If a student becomes ill and cannot attend school, they are expected to call in to the KAP office and report their impending absence. See the section on "Absences" regarding return to school procedures.

Students with communicable diseases are not allowed on school premises or in school transport. Parents of students with such diseases are requested to contact the school office so that other students who might have come into contact with the ill student can be alerted.

If a student becomes ill while at school and needs to leave, the KAP office will notify the parent/guardian of the student's illness and make arrangements for the student to leave campus after signing out. Parents need to provide the KAP office with daytime telephone numbers as well as alternate persons able to authorize student departures from campus.

KAP stocks minimal first-aid supplies for minor emergencies and is a short distance from Wimberley EMS in the event of major ones.

### **13. How do students get to KAP School?**

KAPS at Wimberley operates vans, providing pickup and return services to Blanco, Dripping Springs, Kyle, Buda, San Marcos, Comal, and additional routes as needed. Contact the school office for routes and schedules.

Many KAP students are delivered to school by parents, by carpools, or by driving themselves. KAP provides a suitably sized parking lot for student and staff vehicles. The parking lot is considered school property and all school rules apply there. Handicapped parking is available in the front of the building

### **14. Does KAP serve meals?**

KAP serves two official meals during the day: brunch and lunch. As KAP has basic kitchen facilities, some food is purchased from local vendors and is supplied at cost to the students during this period. Reduced price and no-pay options are available. Applications are available in the KAP Office for these programs. All students are encouraged to complete these applications.

Students may bring lunches; there is a microwave available to heat foods. There are to be no off-campus lunches.

### **15. What are the requirements for graduation at KAP?**

All KAP students are encouraged to follow the recommended or distinguished High School program. At minimum, a student must accrue 24 high school credits before he or she is eligible for graduation. Further, these credits include minimums in subject categories. For further information, inquire with the school registrar. Student schedules will be prepared and approved with an eye toward completing this requirement by the end of the senior year. All students are required to complete 5 hours of community service per semester during their tenure at the Katherine Anne Porter School. Community service hours must be completed two weeks prior to the completion of each semester. Completion of community service must be fulfilled in order to meet graduation requirements. All students are encouraged to attend extra tutorials for SAT and ACT exams.

Students desiring to attend college should accumulate

significantly more credits than this, including at least 4 credits in English, 3 credits in science, 3 credits in math, 4 credits in social sciences, and 2 credits in a foreign language.

### **16. Can prospective students visit the KAP school and observe the activities without enrolling?**

Yes. KAP encourages prospective students to visit the school and shadow a friend as he or she attends class. Before visiting, however, a prospective student must have parental permission and arrange the visit with the KAP office at least one day in advance, students must sign in, must wear a visitor badge while on KAP property, and must sign out when leaving.

ALL visitors to KAP must check in with the office; unauthorized visitors will be asked to leave immediately, and if necessary, will be

escorted off-campus by local police. This is necessary in order to ensure the safety of students and staff.

### **17. Can parents or other adults visit the KAP school and observe the activities?**

Certainly. Parents are encouraged to visit regularly and actively participate in KAP activities. Other adults are welcome, as well, but in all cases, the visitor must check in first with the KAP office and receive a visitor's badge. For the safety of the students and staff, unauthorized visitors cannot be allowed on campus. Anyone coming to campus should first check in with the office; unauthorized visitors will be asked to leave immediately, and if necessary, will be escorted off-campus by local police.

### **18. Options and requirements for students who have learning difficulties**

If a child has learning difficulties, the parent may contact the Special Education director (512-847-6867) to learn about KAPS' general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other support services that are available to all students.

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, KAPS must decide if the evaluation is needed. If evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to give consent to the evaluation. KAPS will complete the evaluation and the report within 60 calendar days from the date we received the written consent. KAPS shall provide a copy of the report to the parent.

If KAPS determines that the evaluation is not needed, we shall provide the parent with a written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice shall include a statement that informs the parent of his/her rights if s/he disagrees. Additionally, the notice shall inform that parent how to obtain a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards – Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities*.

## **19. Student Achievement Committee (SAC)**

### **Mission**

The SAC Mission is to improve the quality of the Katherine Anne Porter School. SAC acts as the KAPS Site Based Decision Making Committee and has a major leadership role. SAC includes representatives from the students, staff, teachers, parents, and community. The SAC shares information, plans and assesses the learning environment, communicates with all stakeholders, and reviews and make recommendations to the executive administration.

### **Specific Goals are as follows:**

- Improve the quality of students' work and performance
- Improve communication between stakeholders: providers, students, parents, and the community;
- Assess progress made in the School Improvement Plan and make recommendations;
- Generate support for KAPS' extra-curricular activities such as UIL, Java Jive, KAPS Literary Festival and Talent Show;
- Create a strong voice for adherence to school beliefs: respect for oneself, others, and the environment; participation; community service; and life-long learning.

### **Membership Guidelines**

An appropriate number of students representing a diversity of

demographics and denominations who have been attending Katherine Anne Porter School for at the least six months and have displayed academic achievement, leadership, and moral fiber shall be selected and nominated by SAC members and invited to attend by the Katherine Anne Porter School Faculty and Staff. At each meeting, a facilitator and minute-taker shall be elected. Minutes shall be taken of the main decisions and discussions at each meeting. The minutes of the last meeting shall be the first item of the agenda. One person shall speak at a time and shall limit their interventions appropriately. Members shall develop good listening skills, respect confidentiality, be honest, and respect the democratic process.

As a SAC member, one is expected to attend all SAC meetings and school events. This includes arriving on time and staying until the meeting adjourns. SAC members are expected to help at school events and play a positive leadership role.

## **20. Student Council Mission**

The Student Council is elected to represent the student body and to organize student events. The council will share information, plan and assess student services, communicate with providers, and review and make recommendations to the executive administration of the KAP School.

### **Specific goals are as follows:**

- Improve the quality of student services
- Improve communication between providers and students and all student groups
- Organize fundraisers for student dances and Prom
- Generate support for Java Jive and KAPS Talent Show
- Create a stronger voice within the school for student concerns and services

### **Membership Guidelines**

Two students will be elected by each grade within the first three weeks of school. Each member shall serve for one year. Meetings shall be held during brunch or lunch as a general rule. At each meeting a facilitator and a minute taker shall be elected. Minutes shall be taken of the main decisions taken at each meeting. The minutes of the past meeting shall be the first item on the agenda of each meeting. One person shall speak at a time and shall limit their intervention to no more than 3 minutes. Members shall develop good listening skills, shall respect confidentiality,

be honest, and respect the democratic process.

As a student council member one is expected to attend all student council meetings and events. This includes arriving on time and staying until the meeting adjourns. If one has more than two unexcused absences from student council meetings or student events s/he will be voted on for removal from the Students Council. It is a member's responsibility to sign in at every meeting, to review the minutes for accuracy, to participate fully in proceedings, and to inform your constituents about the decisions of Students Council

A student council member is expected to help at all student events and to represent the student body in a mature way.