



THE POTOMAC SCHOOL

2023–24 ACADEMIC PROFILE

1301 Potomac School Road
McLean, Virginia 22101

CEEB #471396

JOHN KOWALIK
Head of School

TIM JAEGER
Associate Head of School

DOUG McLANE
Head of Upper School

THE SCHOOL

- Founded in 1904 in Washington, DC
- K-12; co-ed
- Upper School added in 1987
- Accredited by Virginia Association of Independent Schools
- Enrollment K-12, 1,068; Upper School, 475
- 181 full and part-time faculty
- 71% of faculty have advanced degrees
- Students receiving financial aid: 21%
- Students of color: 44%
- Senior class enrollment: 117
- Graduates attending four-year colleges: 100%
- Upper School average class size: 15
- Class of 2024 National Merit Semi-finalists: 7
- Class of 2024 National Merit Commended Students: 19

COLLEGE COUNSELING

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ACADEMIC PROGRAM

- All courses are highly rigorous and college preparatory.
- All Upper School students take at least five academic courses each semester.
- The school year consists of two semesters.
- Each year-long course is worth one credit.
- Honors and Advanced enrollment is based upon departmental approval.
- Due to the structure of the curriculum, very few students take AP or Advanced courses prior to 11th grade.
- The Potomac School does not rank students or provide a GPA.
- At Potomac, English and history do not offer an Honors level in grades 9 and 10. In 11th grade, students have a choice of College Prep or Honors English and Advanced U.S. History, in addition to the regular level. While the 12th grade English, history, and science electives are not designated as honors courses, they are taught at a level commensurate with work done after the completion of 11th grade work.
- Beginning with the 2023-24 academic school year, Potomac transitioned from a two-day rotation with classes meeting every other day for 75 minutes to a six-day rolling rotation with classes meeting every other day for 70 minutes.

UNDERSTANDING COURSE NOMENCLATURE

- In an effort to streamline and clarify courses that are accelerated, Potomac faculty and administration made the decision in 2019 to rename all courses that are taught at an honors or advanced level. While these courses were denoted on the transcript with an (H) under 'level' prior to 2019–20, many courses carried different names depending upon department. Former names included accelerated, advanced, and honors. In the case of honors science courses, the course name did not contain 'honors' at all (e.g., Physics: Mathematical Models and Chemistry: Quantitative Analysis).
- The Math Department has three levels: Honors, Extended, and Regular. Former names were Accelerated (H), Advanced, and Regular.

SCHOOL MISSION

At The Potomac School, we believe that intellectual development, love of learning, and strength of character are complementary, and equally essential, educational goals. With a firm commitment to our core values and a rigorous academic program, we prepare students to lead lives of purpose, achievement, and generosity of spirit.

CONCENTRATION PROGRAMS

Potomac offers four concentration programs for students who are interested in intensive study in a particular discipline. Students in the EFEB, GPAC, and SERC concentrations design and conduct original research projects. All four programs have required courses; VPAC includes after-school and/or co-curricular commitments, and the SERC and EFEB concentrations require summer work between 11th and 12th grades. The number of students admitted to GPAC, SERC, and VPAC is limited, and admission to these programs is competitive.

- Global Perspectives and Citizenship Program (GPAC): 13 students in the Class of 2024
- Science and Engineering Research Center (SERC): 8 students in the Class of 2024
- Visual and Performing Arts Concentration (VPAC): 5 students in the Class of 2024 – 2 Music, 1 Studio Art, 2 Theater
- Economics, Finance, Entrepreneurship, and Business (EFEB): 18 students in the Class of 2024

POTOMAC HONORS AND ADVANCED COURSE OFFERINGS

30 courses at the Honors level

Honors Algebra 2
Honors Art History
Honors Biology
Honors Classics: Introduction to Homeric Greek
Honors Chemistry
Honors Concert Band/Jazz Band
Honors English 11
Honors French 2, 3, 4, 5
Honors Geometry
Honors GPAC 10: Global Studies
Honors GPAC 11: Research

Honors GPAC 12: Documentation and Presentation
Honors Handbells Ensemble
Honors Latin 2, 3, 4
Honors Physics
Honors Precalculus
Honors Rhetorical Analysis
Honors SERC 10: Integrated Chemistry & Physics
Honors SERC 10: Topics in Science & Engineering
Honors SERC 11: Independent Research
Honors SERC 12: Documentation & Presentation
Honors Spanish 2, 3, 4, 5

34 courses at the Advanced level (college-level equivalent)

Advanced Biology
Advanced Calculus 1
Advanced Calculus 1 and 2
Advanced Chemistry
Advanced Chinese
Advanced Comparative Politics: Power and Politics in the 21st Century
Advanced Computer Science
Advanced Ethics
Advanced Film Studies
Advanced French: Global Challenges and the Francophone World
Advanced French: Francophone Literature
Advanced Humanities Seminar: World War I, “The Wasteland,” and the Aftermath
Advanced Latin: Vergil’s *Aeneid* & Caesar’s *De Bellis Gallicis*
Advanced Linear Algebra
Advanced Lyric Poetry
Advanced Macroeconomics
Advanced Masterpieces of British Women’s Literature

Advanced Mechatronics
Advanced Microeconomics
Advanced Minds on the Edge: Representing Troubled Psyches in Literature
Advanced Modern Women Writers
Advanced Multivariable Calculus
Advanced Music Theory
Advanced Organic Chemistry
Advanced Physics: Electricity and Magnetism
Advanced Physics: Mechanics
Advanced Python Programming
Advanced Representing Women in Literature
Advanced Spanish Language & Culture
Advanced Spanish Literature A: Pícaros, Donjuanes and Quijotes: Archetypes of Spanish Golden Age Literature
Advanced Spanish Literature B: Identity and Reality in Spanish and Latin American Contemporary Literature
Advanced Statistics
Advanced United States History
Advanced U.S. Government & Politics

2023–24 STANDARDIZED TEST RANGES

ACT (47 tested)	MIDDLE 50%	MEAN
COMPOSITE	30-33	31.6

SAT (63 tested)	MIDDLE 50%	MEAN
COMBINED	1290-1500	1388
EBRW	650-740	700
MATH	640-760	688

AP SCORES

- 66 members of the Class of 2024 took 116 exams in 16 subjects in May 2023.
- 70% of them earned a 4 or 5.
- 91% earned a 3 or better.

MOVING BEYOND THE AP

Beginning with the 2022–23 academic year, The Potomac School will no longer subscribe to the AP curriculum. The highest level of course work is designated as “Advanced.” We made this decision as part of our ongoing curriculum review and in the interest of offering our students the most relevant and enriching education possible.

Our Upper School faculty and administration began the work of developing rigorous course options that will offer students interdisciplinary learning experiences and opportunities for independent work. Potomac faculty continue to develop challenging advanced courses that address student interests and build critical skills.

GLOBAL ONLINE ACADEMY

The Potomac School partners with Global Online Academy (GOA), a consortium of independent schools that enables its members to offer their students online courses that address particular academic interests and may be outside the scope of their curricula. GOA has over 125 member schools and currently offers approximately 39 rigorous online courses available to Potomac students in a wide range of academic disciplines. Taught by faculty from the member schools, GOA classes bring together students from across the U.S. and around the world, creating an academic experience shaped by shared interests and multiple perspectives. Potomac credit is awarded upon successful completion of these courses.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

21 credits, including successful completion of

- English (4 years)
- History (3 years: 2 world history and 1 U.S. history)
- Mathematics (3 years, including geometry and algebra 2)
- Science (3 years: biology, chemistry, and physics)
- World Languages (3 years of the same language)
- Arts (3 semesters in 2 different areas: visual art, music, or theatre. Distribution requirement waived for four-year participants in a music ensemble group or VPAC)
- Non-academic requirements (8 of 12 seasons of athletics/activities)

The Potomac School is a founding member of the Association of College Counselors in Independent Schools (ACCIS) and a member of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) and complies with the Guide to Ethical Practice in College Admission.

COLLEGE MATRICULATION LIST 2020-2023

American University (3)
Amherst College (2)
Auburn University (2)
Barnard College (2)
Bentley University (1)
Berklee College of Music (1)
Boston College (12)
Boston University (7)
Bowdoin College (1)
Brown University (7)
Bucknell University (7)
Carleton College (2)
Carnegie Mellon University (1)
Case Western Reserve University (4)
The Catholic University of America (1)
Claremont McKenna College (2)
Clemson University (4)
Colby College (4)
Colgate University (7)
Colorado College (1)
Columbia University (5)
Cornell University (5)
Dartmouth College (11)
Davidson College (3)
Denison University (1)
Dickinson College (2)
Drexel University (1)
Duke University (8)
Elon University (1)
Emory University (5)
Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (1)
Fordham University (2)
Franklin and Marshall College (2)
George Mason University (2)
Georgetown University (10)
Georgia Institute of Technology (2)
Hamilton College (6)
Harvard University (10)
Haverford College (1)
High Point University (1)
Howard University (1)
Imperial College London (1)
Indiana University-Bloomington (3)
James Madison University (3)
Johns Hopkins University (3)
Kenyon College (2)
Lafayette College (3)
Lehigh University (2)
Loyola University Maryland (1)
Macalester College (1)
Manhattan College (1)
Marymount University (1)
Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (1)
Massachusetts Institute of Technology (2)
McGill University (1)
Michigan State University (3)
Middlebury College (5)
Missouri University of Science and Technology (1)
Morehouse College (1)
New York University (7)
Northeastern University (4)
Northwestern University (8)
Oberlin College (1)
Occidental College (1)
Old Dominion University (1)
Pennsylvania State University (3)
Pitzer College (1)
Pomona College (3)
Princeton University (4)
Providence College (1)
Purdue University (2)
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (1)
Rice University (5)
Saint Anselm College (1)
Santa Clara University (3)
Savannah College of Art & Design (1)
Shepherd University (1)
Skidmore College (2)
Smith College (1)
Southern Methodist University (4)
Spelman College (1)
St. Lawrence University (1)
Stanford University (6)
Stevenson University (1)
Swarthmore College (2)
Syracuse University (4)
Texas Christian University (1)
The George Washington University (3)
The University of Edinburgh (1)
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (2)
The Ohio State University (1)
Trinity College (1)
Trinity College Dublin (3)
Tufts University (5)
Tulane University of Louisiana (6)
United States Naval Academy (2)
University of Arizona (1)
University of California, Berkeley (1)
University of California, Davis (1)
University of California, Los Angeles (1)
University of California, Santa Cruz (1)
University of Chicago (8)
University of Colorado Boulder (1)
University of Denver (3)
University of Georgia (2)
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (1)
University of Mary Washington (2)
University of Maryland-College Park (2)
University of Miami (5)
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor (5)
University of Northern Colorado (1)
University of Notre Dame (5)
University of Pennsylvania (10)
University of Richmond (3)
University of Rochester (1)
University of Southern California (4)
University of St Andrews (3)
University of Virginia (21)
University of Wisconsin-Madison (2)
Vanderbilt University (3)
Vassar College (1)
Villanova University (2)
Virginia Commonwealth University (1)
Virginia Tech (6)
Virginia Wesleyan University (1)
Wabash College (1)
Wake Forest University (13)
Washington and Lee University (8)
Washington University in St Louis (7)
Wesleyan University (4)
William & Mary (20)
Williams College (5)
Worcester Polytechnic Institute (2)
Yale University (1)