



THE POTOMAC SCHOOL

2025–26 ACADEMIC PROFILE

1301 Potomac School Road
McLean, Virginia 22101

CEEB #471396

JOHN KOWALIK
Head of School

TIM JAEGER
Associate Head of School

RYAN JORDAN
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, 1,063; Upper School, 472
- 180 full and part-time faculty
- 72% of faculty have advanced degrees
- Students receiving financial aid: 20%
- Students of color: 43%
- Senior class enrollment: 115
- Graduates attending four-year colleges: 99%
- Upper School average class size: 15
- Class of 2026 National Merit Semi-finalists: 9
- Class of 2026 National Merit Commended Students: 25

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 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 College Prep level. In 12th grade, students have the opportunity to take electives, some of which are taught at the Advanced level.
- 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 four levels: Advanced, Honors, Accelerated, and College Prep. Honors is the highest level for Algebra and Geometry. Former names were Extended, (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): 7 students in the Class of 2026
- Science and Engineering Research Center (SERC): 10 students in the Class of 2026
- Visual and Performing Arts Concentration (VPAC): 3 students in the Class of 2026 –2 Music and 1 Studio Art
- Economics, Finance, Entrepreneurship, and Business (EFEB): 38 students in the Class of 2026

POTOMAC HONORS AND ADVANCED COURSE OFFERINGS

29 courses at the Honors level

Honors Algebra 2
Honors Art History
Honors Biology
Honors Chemistry
Honors Chinese 2, 3, 4
Honors Concert Band/Jazz Band
Honors Contemporary Issues of the Hispanic World
Honors English 11
Honors French 2, 3, 4
Honors Geometry
Honors GPAC 10: Global Studies
Honors Handbells Ensemble
Honors Latin 2, 3, 4
Honors Latin Dance: People and Place
Honors Physics
Honors Precalculus
Honors Rhetorical Analysis
Honors SERC 10: Integrated Chemistry and Physics
Honors SERC 10: Topics in Science and Engineering
Honors Spanish 2, 3, 4, 5

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

Advanced Becoming & Belonging
Advanced Biology
Advanced Calculus 1
Advanced Calculus 1 and 2
Advanced Chemistry
Advanced Chinese 1
Advanced Comparative Politics: Power and Politics in the 21st Century
Advanced Computer Science
Advanced Ethics
Advanced Film Studies
Advanced French: Francophone Literature
Advanced French: Global Challenges and the Francophone World
Advanced GPAC 11: Research
Advanced GPAC 12: Documentation and Presentation
Advanced Humanities Seminar: World War I, “The Waste Land,” and the Aftermath
Advanced Humanities: Thesis
Advanced Investments in Financial Markets
Advanced Latin: Vergil’s *Aeneid* & Caesar’s *De Bellis Gallicis*
Advanced Lyric Poetry
Advanced Macroeconomics
Advanced Mechatronics
Advanced Microeconomics
Advanced Minds on the Edge: Representing Troubled Psyches in Literature
Advanced Multivariable Calculus
Advanced Music Theory
Advanced Organic Chemistry
Advanced Physics: Electricity and Magnetism
Advanced Physics: Mechanics
Advanced Population Ecology and Global Change
Advanced Probability and Statistics
Advanced Python Applications
Advanced Python Programming
Advanced Representing Women in Literature
Advanced Research Seminar
Advanced SERC 11: Independent Research
Advanced SERC 12: Documentation & Presentation
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 United States History
Advanced U.S. Government & Politics

2025–26 STANDARDIZED TEST RANGES

ACT (30 tested)	MIDDLE 50%	MEAN
COMPOSITE	31-34	32

SAT (85 tested)	MIDDLE 50%	MEAN
COMBINED	1270-1520	1394
EBRW	640-740	695
MATH	640-770	700

AP SCORES

- 66 members of the Class of 2026 took 133 exams in 22 subjects in May 2025.
- 94% earned a 4 or 5.
- 100% earned a 3 or better.

MOVING BEYOND THE AP

Beginning with the 2022–23 academic year, The Potomac School no longer subscribes to the AP curriculum. The highest level of coursework 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 40 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 or four full years of art in the same area)
- 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 2022-2025

American University (1)	Lafayette College (3)	Trinity College (1)
Amherst College (2)	Lehigh University (2)	Tufts University (4)
Auburn University (3)	Loyola Marymount University (1)	Tulane University of Louisiana (7)
Barnard College (4)	Loyola University Maryland (1)	United States Naval Academy (3)
Bates College (2)	Macalester College (1)	University of Arizona (1)
Boston College (9)	Marymount University (1)	University of California, Berkeley (3)
Boston University (4)	Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (1)	University of California, Los Angeles (3)
Bowdoin College (2)	Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1)	University of California, San Diego (1)
Brown University (8)	McGill University (1)	University of California, Santa Barbara (1)
Bucknell University (4)	Merrimack College (1)	University of Chicago (7)
Carleton College (2)	Michigan State University (4)	University of Colorado Boulder (2)
Carnegie Mellon University (2)	Middlebury College (8)	University of Denver (1)
Case Western Reserve University (3)	Missouri University of Science and Technology (1)	University of Georgia (2)
Christopher Newport University (1)	Morehouse College (2)	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (1)
Claremont McKenna College (1)	New York University (8)	University of Mary Washington (1)
Clemson University (4)	Northeastern University (6)	University of Maryland, College Park (5)
Colby College (8)	Northwestern University (8)	University of Massachusetts, Boston (1)
Colgate University (7)	Oberlin College (1)	University of Miami (9)
College of the Holy Cross (1)	Penn State University (University Park) (7)	University of Michigan (4)
Columbia University (3)	Pitzer College (1)	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (2)
Cornell University (4)	Pomona College (2)	University of Notre Dame (2)
Dartmouth College (12)	Princeton University (6)	University of Oxford (2)
Davidson College (3)	Providence College (1)	University of Pennsylvania (7)
Denison University (2)	Purdue University (Main Campus) (3)	University of Richmond (4)
Dickinson College (3)	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (1)	University of South Carolina (1)
Duke University (9)	Rice University (3)	University of Southern California (6)
East Carolina University (1)	Roanoke College (1)	University of St Andrews (1)
Emory University (5)	San Diego State University (1)	University of Toronto (1)
Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (1)	Santa Clara University (1)	University of Virginia, Main Campus (24)
Fordham University (1)	Santa Fe College (1)	University of Wisconsin, Madison (3)
Franklin & Marshall College (1)	Savannah College of Art and Design (2)	Vanderbilt University (6)
George Mason University (3)	Shepherd University (1)	Villanova University (1)
George Washington University (4)	Skidmore College (1)	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (7)
Georgetown University (9)	Smith College (1)	Virginia Wesleyan University (1)
Georgia Institute of Technology (1)	Southern Methodist University (2)	Wabash College (1)
Gettysburg College (1)	Spelman College (4)	Wake Forest University (13)
Hamilton College (4)	St. Lawrence University (1)	Washington and Lee University (6)
Hampden-Sydney College (1)	Stanford University (4)	Washington University in St. Louis (6)
Harvard University (8)	Stevenson University (1)	Wellesley College (1)
Haverford College (2)	Swarthmore College (2)	Wesleyan University (4)
High Point University (1)	Syracuse University (5)	William & Mary (18)
Howard University (2)	Texas Christian University (3)	Williams College (7)
Indiana University (Bloomington) (4)	The Ohio State University (1)	Xavier University (1)
James Madison University (3)	The University of Montana (1)	Yale University (2)
Johns Hopkins University (3)	The University of Texas at Austin (1)	
Kenyon College (3)		