

Our Honor Code
January 18, 2020

One of my goals for this school is that, because we are a small enough community, we will be able to talk to each other easily and often. As one way of doing this, I plan to write a letter to the school each week on Friday, with thoughts, reflections, observations, or maybe even a light-hearted joke or two. It is one of the ways in which I hope that I can guide us in this experience together. I encourage you each to find ways of expressing your own thoughts and opinions, however that takes shape.

We've only been here one day, so this first letter comes on Saturday instead. It is about our Honor Code, which is so important to the school that I have chosen it as one of the first things we talk about together.

Each of you has seen the Honor Code in the first letter that you received from me, when you were told that you had been accepted to the USAP Community School. It is also on the attached sheet of paper here.

We have an Honor Code because we want to make it very clear that the mission of this school is to teach you how to be a good person, who lives a life of purpose, in addition to being a successful student. If you finish your two years at USAP Community School and you have been a top student but you do not live by the values of integrity, service, curiosity or equality, then you have failed here.

Our Honor Code comes from our Quaker values, which you will hear more about tomorrow when we have our first service in the morning. For now, you should know that the Quakers believe in living a life of purpose, and letting your actions show other people what you believe in.

Because of this connection between belief and action, our Honor Code is a guide to the values that we believe you should live your life by, and the ones that we hope to build this community on. I hope it will be the lifeblood of our school, what holds us together. I hope it will make us more than simply a school, but a community - the USAP *Community* School.

Tomorrow night, we will all sign this Honor Code. When we sign it, we agree to act in accordance with it. Signing the Honor Code is an act of trust, which is especially important for us as a new school. It says that we trust each other to act in a certain way. I hope you will see that a lot of this school has been built on the belief that we trust you. We trust you to make decisions for yourself, such as how you wear your hair, and whether you want to stay at evening prep until bedtime or go back to your room a little earlier. We trust that you will look out for each other, and speak up when one of you needs something. And we trust you to help us create this school together.

In exchange for all this trust, I want one thing from you. I want you to be the best version of yourself that you can be. I want you to live with honor.

That is our Honor Code.

The next time you walk into the dining hall, I hope you will take a minute to read it. I hope you'll look at it every time you walk in here, and that when you do it will remind you to keep working to become the best version of yourself that you can be. I hope it will remind you to study and pursue

knowledge with curiosity, to serve others in this community and outside of it, to never consider yourself to be greater than or less than anyone else, and to live honestly and true to your word.

If you can do all of these things, then you will have truly learned what we want to teach you, and in two years we will be proud to call you graduates of the USAP Community School.



USAP Community School Honor Code, Class of 2021

Our honor code represents the values that guide our work and hold the USAP Community School together. Following from our Quaker principles, the honor code is a practical guide to how we should live together. By signing this honor code and acting with our full commitment in accordance with it, we are both beneficiaries of this school community, and the creators of it.

Equality

We respect each other's inherent and equal dignity, understanding that we are neither above nor below anyone else. We understand that each member of our community depends on one another, so that both successes and hardships are shared.

Service

Our actions show that we are grateful for our opportunities. Knowing that we all depend on each other, we strengthen our community by lifting each other up, listening to the needs of others, and serving them with humility, compassion, and dedication.

Curiosity

We are a community of scholars, and we each do our part to build this intellectual community, understanding that we can learn from everyone and everything around us. We challenge the status quo, learn new perspectives, and pursue ideas with energy and spirit.

Integrity

We keep our word, represent ourselves honestly, and are accountable for our actions. We have the courage to make mistakes and learn from them, and to do the right thing even when it is difficult.