



AMERICAN  
SCHOOL  
TEGUCIGALPA

# ELEMENTARY STUDENT HANDBOOK

2025-2026



# MISSION

The American School is a student-centered, college-preparatory institution that fosters globally-responsible citizens and leaders by offering a rigorous international education which promotes core values in a safe innovative and collaborative environment.

# VISION

To be the leading innovative educational institution that prepares responsible global citizens, leaders and life-long learners.





# ACCEPTANCE OF DIVERSITY

In keeping with our mission and philosophy, the American School strives to be a haven of safety and acceptance for all members of our school community. As an institution of learning, our school endeavors to be a stalwart model of progressive values that welcomes diversity. Being devoted to the noble cause of educating young people, the American School is an institution intent on seeing the unique and individual potential and talents of all our students fulfilled without prejudging or making distinctions between individuals. It is of vital importance that all members of our school community feel not only safe and welcome but fully accepted as well, and, therefore, all of us, to include students, faculty, staff, administrators, parents, etc., are expected at all times to model values of acceptance and courtesy.

Acceptance of diversity goes beyond simple tolerance. Simple tolerance requires only that we not mistreat others because of their individual characteristics. Acceptance, though, occurs when we not only put up with the individual differences of others but willingly admit people different from ourselves into our group or community without insisting on treating them in any way differently. Acceptance occurs when we look beyond our individual differences and welcome each other. While the traditional motto of simple tolerance is "live, and let live," the traditional motto of acceptance is "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Failing to be accepting of diversity can be committed both with malicious and non-malicious intents. While at times it is committed understanding the harm being caused, at other times it is done without meaning to offend or mistreat others. Examples of malicious un-acceptance of diversity include marginalizing or ostracizing someone because of such characteristics as their physical appearance, socio-economic level, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, etc. Non-malicious un-acceptance of diversity occurs when, without intending to offend, we treat others differently based on their differences from us that, in reality, are superficial and insignificant. Anything less than full acceptance of everyone in our community is simply wrong and should not occur at the American School at any time by any members of our school community.



## INTRODUCTION

### About The American School

The American School is a private, non-denominational, non-profit, experimental college-preparatory institution sponsored by The Interamerican Educational Society of Tegucigalpa (S.E.I.T.). The School holds full accreditation from the Honduran Ministry of Education, Cognia, and the International Baccalaureate Organization (I.B.O.). Additionally, it is a proud member of the College Board, the Association of American Schools in Central America (A.A.S.C.A.), and the Association of Bilingual Schools of Honduras (A.B.S.H.).

Instruction is primarily delivered in English, with exceptions for courses such as Spanish language and Honduran social studies.

S.E.I.T. is an organization composed of parents whose children attend the American School. The highest governing authority is the Parents' General Assembly, which elects a Board of Directors from among its members. The Board of Directors establishes policies and the philosophical framework that guide the School's operations. Board members serve two-year terms. The Board appoints a Superintendent to serve as Head of School.

**This Handbook does not encompass all applicable rules and regulations.**

**The Superintendent and Principals reserve the right to exercise discretion in addressing each individual case.**

### The American School is affiliated with the following associations:

The Honduran Ministry of Education

The International Baccalaureate Organization (I.B.O)

The Association of American Schools of Central America (A.A.S.C.A.)

The Association of Bilingual Schools of Honduras (A.B.S.H.)

The Association of American Schools of South America (A.A.S.S.A)

### Notice

This Handbook does not in itself include all pertinent rules and regulations. The Superintendent and Principals of the school will use discretion in the handling of every individual case.



## ACTIVITIES

### Extracurricular Activities

The American School offers a wide variety of co-curricular and extracurricular activities, along with a strong and diverse athletic program. These opportunities provide students with valuable venues to make friends, become more involved in the life of the school and community, and enrich their overall educational experience.

Students should carefully consider how participation might impact their attendance and academic performance, as involvement in activities does not excuse them from fulfilling their academic responsibilities.

### Some of the activities that could be offered in the Elementary School

- Bible Club
- Dance Club
- Gymnastics
- Eagle League
- Eagle Cup
- Piano Lessons
- Math Club
- Violin Lessons
- Musical
- Science Club
- Science Club
- Cheerleading
- Mandarin
- Catechism
- Band (Gr. 5)
- Chess
- Karate
- Robotics
- Tae Kwon Do
- Guitar Lessons



# Progress Reports & Report Cards

## Progress Reports & Report Cards

The school year is divided into four grading periods (quarters) for all homeroom classes.

Progress reports are distributed four times per year, at the midpoint of each quarter, and additionally whenever a teacher deems it necessary to inform parents of academic progress or concerns. These reports are given directly to students, who are required to return them signed by a parent the next day. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary measures, including referral to the Principal's office and immediate contact with parents by phone.

Furthermore, if a student receives a grade of "Approaching Standard with Minimal Progress" or "Below Standard" on any assignment, project, quiz, or test, the corresponding document must be signed by a parent and returned the following school day.

Students with outstanding debts, overdue library books, or unresolved school matters will not receive their report cards or be allowed to take make-up exams until all obligations have been cleared.

Quarter	Progress Reports	Quarter Ends	Report Cards
1	September 8th	October 10th	October 24th
2	November 10th	December 17th	January 23rd
3	February 13th	March 13th	March 27th
4	April 7th	May 29th	May 29th

## Citizenship Description

The following description pertains to the criteria used to assess citizenship and behavior in Elementary School report cards:

### Need Improvement (N)

Repeated incidence of any of the following behaviors:

- Disruptive in class.
- Failure to come prepared for class (includes materials and homework).
- Failure to follow class and school rules.
- Impolite to teachers and/or peers.
- Failure to take responsibility for own actions.
- Side conversations.
- Asking questions unrelated to class material.
- Offering excessive excuses for inappropriate behavior.
- Inappropriate use of second language (English or Spanish).
- Cheating or copying on tests and homework.
- Tardiness and/or absenteeism.
- Inattentive or self-absorbed behavior.
- In school or home suspension.

### Satisfactory (S)

Occasional incidence of unsatisfactory behaviors and consistent display of ALL the following behaviors:

- Politeness to other students and teachers.
- Punctuality
- Prepared for class
- Seeks out and does make-up work.

### Excellent (E)

Consistent display of the following behavior:

- Active and positive contribution to class activities.
- Encourages peers to their best performance and behavior.
- Shows extra effort in class work.
- Displays self-discipline in academic and personal responsibilities.
- Consistent use of English as means of oral communication.

# GRADES

## Grades 1 - 4

Elementary grading system is based on standards:

### **Meeting Standards (M)**

Exhibits proficiency at grade level standards

### **Approaching Standards**

Proficiency is close to grade level standards

Approaching Standards with Great Progress (A+)

Approaching Standards (A)

Approaching Standards with Minimal Progress (A-)

### **Below Standards (B)**

Needs significant improvement

### **Exceeds Standards (E)**

Exhibits proficiency exceeding grade level standards

The Work Habits Section with:

**Excellent**

**Satisfactory**

**Need Improvement**

is just as important as the academic grading. Work habits reflect how a student performs on a day to day basis in each subject area. Special attention should be placed to these grades.

## Grade 5

Grade	Percent
A	100-93
B	92-85
C	84-78
D	77-70
F	69-0

A special comment will be made in report cards for special education classes or students obtaining grades with lots of teacher help.

Each quarter, students could receive awards depending on their academic improvement for the quarter. These will be given out in class and/or be included in the report card which is sent home with the student.

Parents may be notified if special meetings are held for this purpose.

# Elementary Discipline Code

## Student Discipline and Behavior Expectations

Good student discipline is essential for the daily operation of a safe, respectful, and productive learning environment. At our school, we expect all students to demonstrate respect for themselves, others, school staff, and school property. They are also expected to recognize and uphold the rights and beliefs of others at all times.

To ensure clarity and shared understanding of our expectations, the following official documents have been created and must be reviewed by both students and their parents or guardians. These documents are included as annexes to this Handbook:

1. Student Agreement on Minor Offenses
2. Student Agreement on Major Offenses
3. Play Fair, Stay Safe: Expectations for Soccer and Outdoor Games
4. Guidelines for Safe and Respectful Soccer Play
5. Restorative Discipline Process Elementary School
6. Elementary School Expectation

All families are required to read, understand, and acknowledge the content of these documents. Each student and their Parent / Guardian must sign the corresponding forms as a mandatory requirement.

**All signed documents must be submitted to the homeroom teacher within the first five (5) days of school.**



## ● DETENTION ●

### **Timing:**

**Detention will be held on designated Thursdays throughout the school year, beginning promptly at 2:35 pm.**

### **Dismissal:**

- **Grades 1–2: 3:30 pm**
- **Grades 3–5: 4:30 pm**

### **Location:**

**Detention will take place in the assigned teacher's classroom.**

**Parents must pick up their children directly from the assigned detention classroom.**

### **Activities:**

- Students are required to complete a reflective writing template during detention.
- The teacher will review the completed templates. If the writing does not meet expectations, it will be returned to the student for revision and correction. The student must continue revising until the work meets the expected standards for their grade level.
- Students are expected to remain quiet throughout the detention period without interruptions. If a student misbehaves, the teacher responsible for detention will report the incident to the Assistant Principal the following day, and the appropriate next steps will be determined.
- After completing the writing task, students are permitted to engage in quiet activities such as reading a physical book, working on an assignment, or remaining seated quietly until dismissal.

### **Breaks:**

**Each student will be allowed one bathroom break during detention.**

## Leveling Assessments

**Leveling Assessments** As required by Honduran law, a student who fails a subject necessary for obtaining the Honduran Baccalaureate for the I Quarter and /or III Quarter will be given feedback and a chance to make up some points to achieve a passing grade of 70%. The maximum point that a student can earn to achieve that 70% are 20. Each course may have a different way of assessing the missing information, hence leveling assessments vary across the curriculum. Leveling assessments will take place during the first three weeks after report cards have been distributed

## Recuperation Exams

As required by Honduran law, a student who fails a subject necessary for obtaining the Honduran Baccalaureate for the semester or the year, has the right to take a recuperation exam to demonstrate a minimum degree of mastery of the objectives of the entire course, even though the student may have passed certain quarters. Recuperation exams are normally administered in late January (for First Semester course) early June (for Second Semester courses) and early August for the ones that failed the year. As of August 2013, and following the Ministry of Education policy #0700-SE -2013 of May 17 of 2013, the passing grade for any subject is a 70%. Any student unable to achieve such a grade will be considered as failing the course. Hence, seventy percent (70%) is considered a passing grade on recuperation exams as well. For all recuperation exams, a recuperation study guide will be provided, indicating all areas to be covered on the exam. Students taking recuperation exams will not be informed of their results on these exams until all scheduled recuperation exams in all subjects have been completed and the results have been reviewed by the Division Principal.



## Academic Deficiency Policy (Grades 4–12)

Conforming to Board policy 8.502, the policy of the American School concerning students who are academically deficient states that students who fail one or more courses for the year or the semester, in the case of semester-long courses, are placed on academic probation for the following school year. After spending a school year on academic probation, students who again fail one or more courses are subject to being denied re-enrollment to the school for the following school year, regardless of the results of their recuperation exams. Whether on academic probation or not, students who earn grade point averages of below 75% for the school year are likewise subject to being denied re-enrollment for the following school year. Decisions concerning the denial of re-enrollment of a student are made in the best interest of the student and the school by the administration in consultation with the faculty and counseling staff. Only one failed course made be repeated the following school year. Therefore, students who have two or more failing grades for the school year that have not been remediated either by repeating the course or through recuperation exams are subject to being denied promotion to the succeeding grade. Such students must either repeat the grade with approval from the administration or be denied re-enrollment for the following school year. Students who need to repeat a school year may do so only with the approval of the administration, and those who need to repeat more than one school year are subject to being denied re-enrollment for the following school year.

# Academic Probation Policy

## Grades 4-12



AMERICAN  
SCHOOL  
TEGUCIGALPA

Conforming to Board policy 8.502, the policy of the American School concerning students who are academically deficient states that students who fail one or more courses for the year or the semester, in the case of semester-long courses, are placed on academic probation for the following school year. After spending a school year on academic probation, students who again fail one or more courses are subject to being denied re-enrollment to the school for the following school year, regardless of the results of their recuperation exams. Whether on academic probation or not, students who earn grade point averages of below 75 or Below Standard for the school year are likewise subject to being denied re-enrollment for the following school year. Decisions concerning the denial of re-enrollment of a student are made in the best interest of the student and the school by the administration in consultation with the faculty and counseling staff.

Students who have two or more failing grades for the school year that have not been remediated through recuperation exams are subject to being denied promotion to the succeeding grade. Such students must either repeat the grade with approval from the administration or be denied re-enrollment for the following school year. Students who need to repeat a school year may do so only with the approval of the administration, and those who need to repeat more than one school year are subject to being denied re-enrollment for the following school year.

### Student Discipline- Social Probation

The disciplinary code states that certain behaviors constitute major and minor offenses (American School handbook pgs. 8 and 9) which are sanctioned with infractions, detentions, suspensions, and school transfers.

The American School policy states that:

"The students that consistently violate the rules or are involved in major infractions can be placed on discipline-social probation. The disciplinary stature will be determined on a semestral basis. The students and parents will be informed in writing and through conferences of the terms and reasons for this probation. The students who do not follow these rules can be expelled and the admission can be denied for the next school year in the American School."

In the Elementary, this is especially applicable to students with continued bullying/harassment behavior.

## Attendance

Students are expected to be punctual and attend school every day of the academic year. Attendance will be recorded in PowerSchool, and it is the responsibility of both students and parents to monitor and track this record. Excessive absences—excused or unexcused—may result in loss of credit or ineligibility to participate in examinations. Determinations regarding excessive absences will follow the policies and practices established by the school's accreditation agencies.

Please take the following points into consideration when any academic time is to be missed:

1. **Scheduling of Appointments:** Classroom attendance is of utmost importance. Medical and personal appointments should, whenever possible, be scheduled outside of school hours. Students may leave campus during the school day only with prior written permission from parents and approval from the Principal. Students must check out with the secretary before departing. Following an absence, students are responsible for obtaining missed materials from their teachers and/or checking PowerSchool.
2. **Personal Days:** Students may take up to five (5) personal days per academic year, which will be considered excused absences. These days must be requested and approved in advance by both students and parents. Any personal days taken beyond the five (5) approved days will be recorded as unexcused absences. Work missed during unexcused absences may receive up to a maximum of 70% credit, in accordance with school policy.
3. **Absences longer than five (5) days:** must be accompanied by a Medical Note. If the school office does not receive written communication within the established time frame, the absence will be recorded as unexcused. Unexcused absences are subject to the school's grading policy and may receive up to a maximum of 70% credit for any missed work. Only excused absences allow full make-up of missed assignments and assessments.
4. **Extended Absences:** Parents and students must notify the appropriate school office in advance of any anticipated extended absence. Each case will be reviewed before an excuse is granted. Students are responsible for contacting teachers to arrange make-up work. Parents and students must verify the status of the absence in PowerSchool.

## Attendance

5. Make-Up Work: Students returning from absences will be given sufficient time to complete missed assignments and tests, generally equivalent to the number of days absent. Scheduled assessments may not follow this timeline. Students involved in school-specific sporting events may be given additional time through the following weekend due to physical exertion. Excused absences for outside-of-school activities (e.g., tennis, swimming, equestrian) require official documentation from the relevant organization.
6. Unexcused Tardies: Accumulating nine (9) unexcused tardies, whether due to late arrival to school or tardiness during transition time between classes, will result in a detention.
  - Students arriving after 7:45 a.m. will not be admitted without an official excuse (doctor's note, medical laboratory report, immigration document, etc.).
  - No student is permitted to enter the school after 9:00 a.m. under normal circumstances. In exceptional cases only, parents must request prior authorization from the Principal. Admission after 9:00 a.m. will be granted solely at the Principal's discretion, and students may be denied entry if approval is not granted.
7. Emergency Departures: In cases of emergency, the school will contact parents prior to a student's departure. Students leaving school early for non-essential activities are not permitted to make up work unless it is claimed as a personal day.

## Elementary School Absent | Late Work Policy

- Students are allowed up to five personal days throughout the school year, which will be considered excused absences. Since personal days are typically planned in advance, students and their parents are expected to notify the school ahead of time to request the absence.
- Upon returning from an absence, students MUST provide a written excuse or have their parent send an email within two days. For absences extending more than five days, a Medical Certificate must accompany the excuse. Failure to provide this documentation within the specified time will result in an unexcused absence.
- Unexcused absences will impact a student's missed work, with a maximum of 70% credit given for assignments or tests missed during the absence.
- Teachers will provide make-up work upon the student's return to school, ensuring students have all necessary assignments.
- Students will be given sufficient time to complete missed assignments and tests upon returning from an absence. Generally, the make-up period will match the number of days the student was absent. However, assessments and assignments may be scheduled outside this period at the teacher's discretion, and parents will be notified of any adjustments.
- Teachers will schedule make-up sessions from 2:30 to 3:00 p.m. to assist with make-up work. Parents will be notified via email at least one day in advance to ensure proper arrangements can be made.
- Regardless of whether the student is excused or not, the teacher will immediately enter a zero in PowerSchool for the missed assignment (or a 10% score for classwork, projects, tests, or quizzes where the student was present but did not complete the work).
- The assignment will be marked as "Missing" in PowerSchool, indicated by a yellow square. Once the student submits their work, the teacher is responsible for updating the grade within one week.

This immediate action is meant to provide clarity to the student, helping them understand the impact of not submitting their work on time and encouraging accountability for their academic progress.

## Elementary School Absent | Late Work Policy

**Late Work Policy: Classwork, homework, projects, and essays not submitted on time will be handled as follows:**

- For each school day the assignment is late, a 10% penalty will be applied. The assignment will be marked as "Late" in PowerSchool (indicated by a red triangle).
  - 1 day late: Score x 0.9
  - 2 days late: Score x 0.8
  - 3 days late: Score x 0.7

### Late Submission Window:

- After three school days, assignments can still be submitted for up to 70% credit until five school days before the end of the quarter.
  - Q1 2025-26 final make-up date: Friday, October 10th
  - Q2 2025-26 final make-up date: Wednesday, December 17th
  - Q3 2025-26 final make-up date: Friday, March 13th
  - Q4 2025-26 final make-up date: Friday, May 15th

### Final Submission Deadline:

- Assignments not submitted by the final make-up date will receive a 10% grade in PowerSchool and will be marked as "Never Turned In," along with notes on teacher interventions (e.g., conversations or emails, scheduled missed make-up days).

### Make-Up Sessions for Missing Work:

- To support students in completing missing or pending assignments, teachers will be available from 2:30–3:00 p.m. for make-up sessions.
- Teachers will notify parents at least one day in advance if their child is required to attend, allowing time to make the necessary arrangements.
- Academic work is the priority, and once students have completed their assignments, they will be allowed to rejoin any extracurricular activities or sports.

### Drafts and Final Work:

- If an assignment is a draft (e.g., a rough draft of an essay), it will be treated as such. If no final version is submitted, the draft will be graded as both the rough and final version, and the student will lose the opportunity for feedback.



# DAILY SCHOOL

U  
N  
I  
F  
O  
R  
M

American School students are expected to arrive appropriately dressed and groomed. Students who come to school in inappropriate attire will not be permitted to attend class until they obtain proper clothing. Any absences resulting from failure to comply with the dress code or appearance expectations will be considered unexcused.

## Boys Uniform

All Elementary Levels  
-Bottoms: Blue pinstriped slacks or Bermuda-length pants  
-Top: Polo shirt with embroidered school emblem  
-Socks: White, black, or navy blue ankle-length socks

## Girls Uniform

-Blue pinstriped knee-length jumper with a tucked-in white polo shirt with embroidered school emblem  
- White ankle-length socks must be worn

### General Guidelines (All Students)

Undershirts: Only solid gray, navy blue, black, or white undershirts are permitted, and they must be tucked in at all times.

### Shoes

-Students may wear leather dress shoes (black or navy blue), or  
-Sneakers must be solid navy blue, white, black, grey, or a combination of these colors.

### Jackets and Sweatshirts:

Only official school jackets or AST sweatshirts (available at the [AST Eagles Supply Store](#)) may be worn. Either wear them or store them in your backpack to prevent loss.

**Undershirts and Leggings:** If worn, these must be solid navy blue, white, black, or gray.

Thursday

# HOUSE SHIRT

Every Thursday, all students (boys and girls) are required to wear their House shirt as part of the school spirit and team-building initiative.

If a student has a House activity on a Thursday that coincides with P.E., the House shirt may be worn in place of the regular uniform shirt for that day.

This applies to all grade levels, and compliance is mandatory.

# PHISICAL EDUCATION DAYS

-Proper athletic footwear with ankle and heel support is highly recommended.  
--Fashion sneakers are discouraged.  
-Canvas-style shoes are not permitted in P.E.  
-White ankle-length socks must be worn on P.E. days

### **Weather Attire**

During cool or cold weather, students may wear:

- The official school sweatpants and sweatshirt in place of the regular pants and polo shirt on non-P.E. days.
- Only official school jackets or sweatshirts (available at the AST Eagles Supply Store) are permitted on campus.

### **Not permitted:**

- Jean jackets, or jackets with inappropriate language, large logos, or non-school-related emblems.
  - These items will be confiscated by the teacher and may be returned at the end of the day or only to a parent/guardian.

### **Fridays:**

- Students may wear an Once an Eagle or La Furia shirt.

### **Uniform Purchase and Grace Period:**

Uniforms and sweatshirts must be purchased through the AST Eagles Supply Store.

Students new to the American School are granted a two-week grace period from the date of enrollment to comply with full uniform expectations.

### **Headwear Policy:**

Baseball caps, bandanas, head kerchiefs, or other forms of headwear are not allowed on campus during school hours, including during class, recess, or lunch, unless required for a medical or religious reason and previously approved by administration.

### **Use of Uniform Off-Campus:**

The school uniform is to be worn only while attending school or during official school events.

Wearing the uniform in public spaces unrelated to school is considered inappropriate.

Inappropriate behavior while wearing the uniform off-campus may lead to disciplinary action.

## **Expectation of Appearance**

### **Personal Appearance Expectations**

In addition to the proper wearing of the school uniform, students are expected to maintain a neat, clean, and appropriate personal appearance at all times while representing the American School—whether on or off campus. This includes school hours, field trips, co- and extracurricular activities, athletic competitions, and school ceremonies (including graduation).

### **Jewelry and Accessories**

- Students may wear conservative jewelry. However, jewelry that displays inappropriate symbols, messages, or designs is not permitted.
- Colored or excessive bracelets, long or flashy necklaces, and oversized or brightly colored earrings are not allowed.
- Boys may not wear earrings, nose rings, or any other studs/rings that pierce the skin.
- Girls may wear small, conservative earrings only. Dangling or oversized earrings are not allowed.
- Girls may not wear nail polish or head kerchiefs during school hours.

### **Hair and Grooming**

- Hair dye or any coloring that appears unnatural, including color spray paint, is strictly prohibited.
- Boys' hair must be kept neatly groomed. It should not touch the eyebrows, neck, or ears.
- Extreme hairstyles (e.g., shaved designs, mohawks, or spikes) are not permitted.

### **Authority and Enforcement**

The school administration reserves the right to make final decisions regarding the appropriateness of each student's appearance, including uniform compliance, grooming, and accessories.



# Expectation of Student Conduct

At the American School, student behavior reflects on the individual and the entire school community. All students are expected to act responsibly, respectfully, and with self-discipline to foster a safe and positive learning environment. Respect for school rules, fellow students, faculty, staff, and the diverse cultural community is essential.

School policies and expectations apply at all times on campus, including weekends, during school-sponsored off-campus events, and in the immediate vicinity of the school. School officials may question students about their conduct while under supervision, and may search school property, lockers, and belongings when necessary.

Students must contribute to maintaining cleanliness and order: littering is prohibited, and all trash must be disposed of properly. Behavior that damages property or disrespects others may lead to disciplinary consequences and restitution.

## Food and Beverage:

Consumption is only allowed during designated times and locations. Food deliveries require prior administrative approval.

## Use of Personal Electronic Devices

To promote focus, healthy interaction, and responsible use of technology, Elementary School students must comply with the following **"Away for the Day"** policy:

- All personal electronic devices – including cell phones, smartwatches and any other wearable smart devices, tablets, headphones, and personal laptops – must remain powered off and securely stored in lockers or backpacks from arrival (before 7:30 a.m.) until dismissal at 2:30 p.m.
- Devices must remain stored and unused during class time, recess, and lunch.
- Students may only use their personal devices after 2:30 p.m., once the school day has ended.
- Smartwatches are strictly prohibited on campus under any circumstances.
- If any school authority detects a personal electronic device or smartwatch in use or visible, it will be confiscated immediately, and the student will receive a warning or disciplinary consequence as determined by the Elementary Principal.
- In case of emergencies, parents and students must communicate only through the school office.
- Students are generally not allowed to bring cell phones. Exceptions require prior approval from administration, and only basic phones without internet or messaging apps will be permitted.

Failure to comply with this policy will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the school's code of conduct. This policy aims to foster an environment where students fully engage in learning and peer interaction, supported by ongoing education on responsible technology use.

# Assembly Behavior

## Assembly Behavior:

To foster a respectful and attentive environment during school assemblies, all students are expected to follow these guidelines: Students must proceed to and from assemblies quietly, in a respectful and orderly manner, staying with their assigned group and supervising teacher at all times.

Students may not leave during an assembly unless there is an emergency.

Disruptive behavior, including whistling, shouting, or making unnecessary noise, is not permitted and will result in disciplinary action.

Upon entering and exiting the assembly venue, students are expected to demonstrate courteous and considerate behavior.

Students are to remain seated and attentive throughout the assembly, showing proper respect to speakers, presenters, and performers.

Dismissal from the assembly will be done only by the teacher or adult in charge; students may not leave independently.

All materials intended for distribution or display during assemblies (e.g., videos, posters, flyers) must be submitted for approval to the Elementary Principal at least 24 hours in advance.

**These expectations are aligned with and further detailed in the Assembly Behavior section included in the Matrix Student Behavior annex.**

These guidelines are designed to help students build respectful habits and appreciate shared learning experiences within our school community.

## Cafeteria Rules

### *Each student will:*

1. Enter the cafeteria quietly
2. Use common courtesy when buying/paying for food.
3. Remain quietly in line while buying food.
4. Talk quietly with students at his table only.
5. Sit on benches, not tables.
6. Dispose of all uneaten food, straws, empty cups, milk cartons,etc. before leaving cafeteria.
7. Walk, not run, in the cafeteria

### *A student breaking the rules will*

1. Lose time from his recess.
2. Be placed on detention.
3. Lose cafeteria privileges for repeated infractions.

## Bus Passes



Students may not use the school bus as means of transportation to a friend's house for party or play purposes. We recognize that certain special events require the need of your child/children to ride a different bus. For example: if parents will be away on a trip and students are staying with a friend or relative and no one will be home at arrival time. If this is the case, please notify the Principal and homeroom teacher in writing beforehand. Without written permission from the elementary office based on a written request from the parent, the child/children will not be allowed to board a bus he is not assigned to. We do not accept verbal messages from students.

To avoid any problems and/or misunderstanding with school transportation, please take note of the following:

- If your child uses the school bus on a regular basis and for a special reasons will not use the bus for any number of days you must notify the teacher in writing. Include the name of the person who will be picking up the child at school.
- If your child does not use the bus on a regular basis but because of a special circumstance will need to, please send note to your child's teacher. At this time you must also notify the Elementary School in writing. He/She will be given a note allowing him/her to board the bus.
- Any child needing a bus pass for the day must make arrangements in the Elementary Office before 10:00 a.m. of that same day, either during morning hours or at lunch recess. Requests will not be accepted at dismissal time (2:30 p.m.).



## Bus



### Regulations

Transportation to and from school is available to all American School students who are registered for and pay for this service. In order to ensure the safety and well-being of all passengers, students are expected to follow proper behavior at all times while on the bus.

Students may lose their bus privileges if involved in any of the following infractions:

1. Eating or drinking on the bus.
2. Placing arms, hands, head, or any body part outside the bus window.
3. Loud talking, standing or walking while the bus is in motion, rough play, or fighting.
4. Throwing objects inside or out of the bus.
5. Getting on or off the bus at a location other than their designated stop, unless authorized with a bus pass.
6. Showing disrespect or failing to follow instructions given by the bus monitor, driver, or the assigned nanny on the route.
7. Any behavior that jeopardizes the safety of the passengers or creates distractions for the driver.
8. Damaging or vandalizing the bus or bus property.
9. Repeated misbehavior or violation of other American School conduct expectations while on the bus.
10. Using another student's assigned bus without prior written authorization.

Any change to regular bus transportation must be submitted in writing to the Elementary Office no later than 10:00 a.m. the same day. Verbal messages from students, phone calls, voice messages, or text messages from parents will not be accepted.

### Rules For Private Transportation

Each student will:

- Walk quietly to the car loading area.
- Place lunchboxes and bags away from the steps and walking areas.
- Be ready to board immediately when their car arrives.
- Refrain from crossing traffic lanes and wait only in designated areas. Waiting along the curb or near the parking lot entrance is strictly prohibited. Cars may not enter the lower (bus) loading area during dismissal, as it poses a safety risk for children boarding buses. Parking in the lower bus lot for drop-off or pick-up is not allowed.
- Refrain from playing ball near the elementary library or in car loading areas.
- Students must leave school at dismissal time unless participating in an authorized extracurricular activity. Remaining on campus for additional playtime or to socialize is not permitted. For safety reasons, parents are required to pick up their children promptly.
- For safety reasons, students must not walk to other areas on their own.

This expectation also applies during early dismissals, late starts, and parent-teacher conferences.

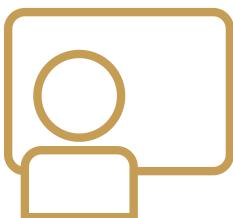
Students must not be dropped off before 7:10 a.m. when there is no teacher supervision or left on campus while parents attend meetings. The school is not responsible for unsupervised students during these times.

# B u l l y i n g

Is any type of verbal, emotional or physical abuse against a person associated to AST, which is a conscious, repeated, willful and deliberate hostile activity, intended to harm and/or induce fear through the threat of further aggression. Bullying underlying purpose is to humiliate or hurt another person. A bullied person is one who **repeatedly** is exposed to negative actions or one or more persons. Bullying may include, but it is not limited to:

<b>Verbal Bullying</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Name calling, teasing</li> <li>2. Making fun of or being disrespectful of another person's physical characteristics, nationality, creed or beliefs, color, size, physical challenge or disability, family problems, ability to learn, or athletic ability.</li> <li>3. Using inappropriate language (i.e., swearing).</li> <li>4. Spreading lies or rumors about a person.</li> <li>5. Laughing at another's misfortune.</li> <li>6. Inciting others to fight or bully someone in any way.</li> <li>7. Putting someone down.</li> </ol>
<b>Threatening</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Threatening to physically hurt a person if she/he does not comply with the bully's requests.</li> <li>2. Using antagonistic language toward someone – e.g., "I don't like the way you are looking at me."</li> </ol>
<b>Social Exclusion</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Not allowing a person to play with or to participate in group activities.</li> <li>2. Forming a circle of friends or group on the playground or in the hallways so that another person can not join in.</li> <li>3. Speaking with a group so that one person is excluded either because of language or slang used by only a group.</li> <li>4. Ignoring a person.</li> <li>5. Refusing to be someone's friend, or participating in a group's efforts to isolate or exclude someone.</li> <li>6. Refusing to allow someone his or her place in a line or on the bus.</li> </ol>
<b>Physical Bullying</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pushing or shoving someone, hitting someone, poking or jabbing someone with hands, fingers or objects such as pencils, sticks, etc.</li> <li>2. Grabbing someone's clothes (e.g., taking off someone's hat and throwing it down or to someone else, grabbing a person's clothes with the intent to tear).</li> <li>3. Fighting.</li> <li>4. Making threatening gestures</li> </ol>
<b>Vandalism Extortion Theft</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Damaging someone's property or locker.</li> <li>2. Breaking someone's pencils, pens, or art supplies.</li> <li>3. Writing on someone's notebook or binder without their consent or permission.</li> <li>4. Taking someone's lunch money against their will.</li> <li>5. Taking someone else's lunch.</li> <li>6. Taking/hiding somebody else's property.</li> <li>7. Graffiti</li> </ol>
<b>Sexual Bullying</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Unwanted or deliberate touching or cornering.</li> <li>2. Unwanted letters or pictures of a sexual nature.</li> <li>3. Making kissing sounds, howling smacking lips.</li> <li>4. Staring in an inappropriate manner</li> <li>5. Making sexual gestures or sexually-suggestive facial expressions or body movements</li> <li>6. Making unwanted, sexually-suggestive sounds</li> <li>7. Speaking either to or about someone in any way that is sexually suggestive.</li> </ol>
<b>Cyber Bullying</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sending or posting messages or images online that negatively affect other peoples' self esteem and or integrity.</li> </ol>

## Guidance and Counseling



The Counseling Department of the American School is designed to help all students develop their educational and social strengths and to become responsible and productive citizens. This program takes into special consideration the needs of the international and transitory student, specifically addressing the issues of cultural and language differences. These needs are addressed through large and small group counseling, individual counseling, consultation and coordination with other resources.

## Infirmary

The responsibility of the school nurse is to provide first aid for emergencies and to treat minor injuries or illnesses occurring during the school day. Any student who is required to take medication during school hours must bring the medication to the Nurse's Office, accompanied by specific written instructions from a physician or parent/guardian.

Any special health conditions (e.g., asthma, allergies) must be reported to the classroom teacher at the beginning of the school year and communicated to the Nurse's Office. A written note from a parent or guardian is required for a student to be excused from P.E. A doctor's note is required if the student is to be excused from P.E. for one week or longer. It is especially important that both the school nurse and teachers are notified if a student's condition requires special supervision during P.E. or recess. All medications must be stored and administered exclusively by the Infirmary.

In the event that a student requires medication, parents must submit to the Nurse's Office a document from the attending physician specifying the purpose and dosage of the medication. The Nurse's Office will keep on file the parents' written authorization for the administration of either temporary or long-term medication. Parents are also responsible for informing both the Nurse's Office and teachers of any food restrictions or allergies so that appropriate precautions may be taken, particularly during special celebrations.

When a student feels unwell during the school day, the student must report directly to the Infirmary for evaluation. Students are not permitted to contact their parents directly to report illness or to request early dismissal.

The Infirmary is the only department authorized to assess a student's health condition and determine whether the student needs to be sent home due to illness. If the Infirmary determines that dismissal is necessary, the Nurse's Office will contact the parent or guardian directly.

Once the parent has been notified and dismissal approved, the Infirmary will request the Elementary Office to issue the official dismissal pass. Students may only be released following this established procedure.



## Text Book Loan

Teachers distribute textbooks for their courses, which are to be returned at the end of the course. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged textbooks. Replacement costs will be assessed if books are damaged, stolen, or lost. Students losing a textbook during the school year will pay for its replacement before being issued a second text. Should the lost book be found, the replacement cost will be reimbursed to the student. Students who fail either to turn in their textbook in good condition or pay for its replacement are subject to being barred from receiving final report card.\*



\*Same consequence applies to students losing or not returning library books each quarter.

\*Lost classroom library book cost will be divided amongst all students in the class.

## Parent-Teacher Organization | P.T.O



The Parent-Teacher Organization (P.T.O.) actively assists the school in various ways. One of the main purposes of the P.T.O. is to bring together parents and school personnel in support of school programs. The P.T.O. and the school administration provide leases for cafeteria and bookstore services.

## Chromebook



Responsible use of a Chromebook is mandatory and includes proper care, secure handling, daily charging, and full compliance with all financial and repair policies. Students are fully responsible for any physical damage to their assigned Chromebook and will be held financially liable for all predetermined repair or replacement costs. Failure to comply with these expectations may result in disciplinary consequences.

## EARLY DISMISSAL PROCEDURE:

*In the event that a student requires early dismissal, parents must obtain a Dismissal Slip from the Elementary Principal's Office. All requests must be submitted in writing; verbal messages from students will not be accepted. The homeroom teacher must be informed—either by the parent or by the authorized adult picking up the child—before the student leaves campus. Parents are expected to pick up students at the agreed dismissal time and should not allow children to remain at school after dismissal to play with friends. If the early dismissal is indicated by the Nurse's Office, the dismissal slip will be prepared by the office and handed directly to the parent. If the dismissal is for any other reason, the child must be picked up exclusively at the Elementary Office, as there is no teacher supervision at the different exits of the school.*

## DELIVERY OF FORGOTTEN MATERIALS

*Items must be left at the Elementary Office, clearly labeled with the student's full name, grade, and section. The distribution of these items to classrooms will be done at specific times determined by the office staff.*

*Parents are not allowed to take materials directly to their child's classroom.*

*Parents may not determine the level of urgency for deliveries. While we understand that unforeseen circumstances may arise, we strongly encourage students and parents to ensure that all required materials are packed and brought to school at the beginning of the day. This helps students build responsibility and prevents disruption to the learning environment.*

***Please note that any lost items that are not labeled and are not claimed by the end of each quarter will be donated.***

## AFTER-SCHOOL SUPERVISION:

*The American School is not responsible or liable for students who remain on campus after official school dismissal hours unless they are participating in an authorized, school-sponsored activity under direct adult supervision.*

*All families are required to strictly adhere to established dismissal times. Elementary students may **not remain** on campus after dismissal to wait for siblings from any division, including cases in which siblings are participating in extracurricular activities, after-school classes, tutoring sessions, sports practices, or any other activity that requires the sibling to stay on campus.*

*Once dismissal times have passed, teacher and staff supervision is no longer provided, and students are not permitted to remain on campus without supervision or to move around campus without a justified purpose.*

*These guidelines are enforced to ensure student safety, which is the school's highest priority, and to maintain a secure and orderly campus environment.*

## FAMILY TRIPS AND ABSENCES:

*Throughout the school year, classes will participate in various celebrations and class parties. Families are encouraged to support these events by signing up to assist with at least one celebration during Open House.*

*Each class will have a designated Room Parent (mother or father), appointed by the teacher and/or administration. The Room Parent works closely with the teacher and administration to plan and coordinate class celebrations. Parents who sign up for specific events will support the Room Parent in the organization and execution of each celebration.*

*To cover the cost of class celebrations, families will be asked to contribute to a class fund. The assigned Room Parent is responsible for managing this fund, including tracking expenses, processing reimbursements, and ensuring funds are used appropriately. At the end of the school year, the Room Parent is expected to provide a final expense report, which will be shared with class families.*



## **PARTICIPATION IN YEAR-END EVENTS**

*Students who are absent due to extended vacations or unexcused absences during the second semester may be excluded from participating in Carnival Night or other end-of-year events.*

## **SIBLINGS' BIRTHDAY PARTIES**

*Students are not permitted to miss class in order to attend a sibling's birthday celebration, unless the event is scheduled during the student's lunch period. In such cases, the student may only leave the classroom if accompanied by an authorized adult and with prior written permission submitted to the Elementary Principal's Office.*

## **AFTERSCHOOL SPORTS PARTICIPATION**

*Students who are absent from school on a given day—regardless of the reason—may not participate in afterschool practices, Eagle League, or Eagle Cup games on that same day.*



Parties will be discussed during Open House and amount to be paid by each child to cover for these activities must be sent to Room mom by the end of August.

Parents are asked to assist the teachers by volunteering as room mothers/fathers for the entire year. Room Moms/Dads appointed by the teacher will assist or coordinate activities throughout the school year. They are expected to manage the class fund for expenditures and reimbursements. They are also expected to send a final expense report with each child at the end of the school year.

Parents are allowed to serve refreshments and cake to their child's class to recognize a birthday during lunch or recess time. This must be coordinated with the classroom teacher well in advance. Parents must be present during the celebration.

**Birthday celebrations in the classroom must not include gifts, balloons, or other activities beyond the refreshments.**

Party invitations for celebrations at home may not be distributed at school unless every child in the class is receiving an invitation.

Parents are asked to refrain from inviting photographers to any celebrations. For safety reasons, only photographers authorized by the Development Office may take photos on school grounds, and prior approval must be obtained.

## Fund - Raising and School Representation

All activities involving fundraising by student or class groups must be authorized by the school administration. All monies collected from any activity or by any student organization must be deposited in accounts managed by the School's activities coordinator.

No individual student or student group may represent the American School without prior school authorization. The school's name may not be used to advertise groups or activities, without the school's expressed consent.

## Field Trips

Field trips serve to support the written curriculum and align with the mission of the school. While they are often enjoyable experiences, their primary purpose is educational rather than recreational. Field trips are planned by teachers as extensions of classroom learning, and students are expected to engage in instructional activities before, during, and after the trip, including reflection or review.

Parents may be invited to assist as chaperones. As a general guideline, one adult is assigned for every five students. All parents will be notified in advance about each field trip, and a signed permission slip is required for a student to participate. Students without a returned permission slip will not be allowed to attend.

No field trips will be scheduled during the last two weeks of the school year.

Chaperones will receive a written guide outlining their responsibilities during the field trip to ensure student safety and a productive experience.

# Lost and Found



Students are requested not to bring any valuables to school such as jewelry, cell phones or large amounts of money, skateboards, toys, or other items of valuable nature.

Teachers are not responsible for these items nor is the second responsible for loss or theft of personal belongings on campus.

All personal belongings and school books found are taken to the main office where they can be claimed by the owner. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity at the end of each quarter.

All personal items and uniform should be clearly labeled with students complete name so these can be retuned to their rightful owner.

Students are expected to pay the full cost of lost textbooks and/or library books. The payment arrangements for textbooks and library books are made through the Principal. Possession of materials not assigned by the school to a student is a major infraction.

All personal items (lunchboxes, jackets, etc.) must be clearly labeled with the student's complete name.

# Telephone



The office telephone is for student use only for emergencies. This does not include homework left at home, projects, and other school related assignments. Students may not use the office phone to ask permission to go to a friend's house. Students may not bring cellular phones to school. All students must know their home phone number by heart. Knowing cell phone number only is not acceptable or safe.

## Communication with Parents

**Tutoring** The school recognizes that some students need additional help during the school year and the elementary office has a list of persons willing to tutor. In some situations, tutoring may be required by the school to ensure success.

The school is not responsible for any arrangements made between parents and tutor. Tutoring will be held off campus only, and teachers may not tutor their own students. Same grade level is not recommended.

The American School considers communication between the school and parents to be vitally important. The School communicates with parents through the use of school notices, newsletters, student progress reports, report cards and scheduled conferences between school personnel and parents. The school's webpage is another source of upcoming events, school calendar, and other important school information. The webpage of the school is [www.amschool.org](http://www.amschool.org).

Teachers also post information on the class Google Site. Parents are expected to check not only homeroom blogs/wikis but all special teachers (Art, Music, PE, Library, Values, Computer Science) and Spanish and Estudios Sociales (gr. 3-5) on a weekly basis.

Additionally, students in gr. 2-5 will take an Agenda Notebook home each day that must be checked and initialed/signed by parent once this is done. Homework, comments from teachers, tests, etc will be written in this notebook.

## Channels of Communication

The Board of Directors recognizes the need for proper communications between and among students, parents, teachers, administration and the Board. To assist in achieving this objective, the following general procedures are recommended for all concerned parties:

1. When the problem concerns your son or daughter and their work in school, the best person to see is the classroom teacher. An appointment to see an Elementary teacher may be made by sending a note directly to the teacher in the Assignment Notebook (gr. 2-5). Problems of a personal nature or questions regarding a student's program of study, overall potential, and progress may also be discussed with the counselor.
2. Problems which cannot be resolved through a conference with the teacher or counselor and questions of a more general nature concerning the operation of the school may be discussed with the appropriate principal. Appointments may be made by calling the Elementary School Office.
3. Problems which have not been resolved after conferences with the teacher and principal may be taken to the Superintendent, who will discuss any questions related to the general operation of the school or to school policies and will answer any such questions addressed to him/her by mail. An appointment may be made through her secretary.
4. The Superintendent is the Executive Officer of the Board of Directors and is responsible for the organization, operation and administration of the total school program. Therefore, she is the normal channel of communication between the Board and the public. Questions about school policy should be directed to the Superintendent. Normally, communications directed to the Board will be referred to the Superintendent for reply or action. Individual Board members do not directly involve themselves in administrative matters involving students, teachers and administrators.
5. Requests for changes in school policy and appeals of decisions made by the Superintendent may be addressed to the Board. All communications to the Board should be in writing and should be addressed to the President, Board of Directors. Decisions about school policy will be made only by the Board acting as a whole in a regular or special meeting.

## Emergency Evacuation Procedure

The signal for an emergency evacuation is communicated using the P.A. system and/or the bell system. In the case of such a signal, students are expected to pay close attention to their teachers, who will lead the students to their designated evacuation area following the evacuation maps found in each classroom. All students in the Elementary School will evacuate to the athletic field next to the gymnasium.

All classroom doors should remain unlocked in order to facilitate searching the buildings.

Students outside of class at the time an emergency signal sounds should report directly to the athletic field and either report to their teacher of that period or ask the nearest faculty member where their homeroom teacher is.

It is imperative that all emergency drills be treated seriously. All students, faculty, staff, and administration must report to the athletic field, as well as any visitors to campus. While evacuating the building and while waiting on the athletic field, it is vital that students remain quiet and attentive.



## Plagiarism

The following definition has been accepted by the American School in regards to plagiarism. All departments requiring term papers will actively instruct students citing examples to insure originality of work. The following definition of plagiarism is taken from the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Thesis, and Dissertations* (Student edition, Joseph Gibaldi and Walter S. Achtert, Modern Language Association, 1977):

Derived from the Latin word *plagium* ("kidnapper" and also "plagiarist" in the modern sense), plagiarism is defined by Alexander Lindley as "the false assumption of authorship: the wrongful act of taking the product of another person's mind, and presenting it as one's own" (*Plagiarism and Originality*, New York: Harper, 1952, p.2). Plagiarism may take the form of repeating another's sentences as your own, adapting a particularly apt phrase as your own, paraphrasing someone else's argument as your own, or even presenting someone else's line of thinking in the development of a thesis as though it were your own. Plagiarism applies to ideas in written, verbal, or electronic form. In short, to plagiarize is to give the impression that you have written or thought something that you have in fact borrowed from another. Although a writer may use another person's words and thoughts, they must be acknowledged as such.

According to the American School Disciplinary Code, plagiarism is considered a serious infraction and will be sanctioned as such.

## What is plagiarism?

"Plagiarism is pretending that an idea is yours when in fact you found it in a source. You can therefore be guilty of plagiarism even if you thoroughly rewrite the source's words. One of the goals of education is to help you work with and credit ideas of others. When you use another's idea, whether from a book, a lecture, a Web page, a friend's paper, or any other source, and whether you quote the words or restate the idea in your own words, you must give that person credit with a citation... you may have cited your source, but if you do an improper or inadequate job of it, you can still be guilty of plagiarism... No source may elect not to be cited" (Harris 133)

## When should you cite?

The first thing you should question of the material being used is "Did you think of it?" or "Is it yours?" Your opinions, observations, ideas, commentaries, arguments or analysis do not need to be cited. (154) "Whatever does not originate with you does need to be cited" (154). The only exception to this rule is that Common Knowledge does not need to be cited. Common Knowledge includes whatever can be located in an ordinary encyclopedia or is expected to be known by an educated person such as: Easily Observable information, commonly reported facts, and common sayings. (154) CAUTION! Even with common knowledge "The specific expression of common knowledge must be identified" (154). If you use someone else's words you must CITE THEM. Follow this simple: "IF IN DOUBT, CITE IT" (156)



# How To Avoid Plagiarism

## A Student's Guide

### (Continued from previous page)

#### What are your responsibilities?

Protect your writing – “Do not lend your papers to another for “reference” (137). If your paper ends up being copied you may be implicated as an accessory to plagiarism.

You bear the ultimate responsibility for your projects – Proofread your final paper or presentation material carefully to ensure the content matches your intention. (136) Avoid collusion – collaboration with fellow students or tutors should be clearly identified as acceptable by the instructor or the written instructions for the project. If there is no clear permission to collaborate you are expected to work individually.

When using sources, “mark the boundaries” – the ideas or words you are borrowing must have a beginning and an ending marked in some way. (159)

#### What are some improper use of sources?

Not using quotation marks because it is “just a couple of words”

When paraphrasing copying some “word for word” from the original without putting quotation marks.

When summarizing still retaining exact phrases without properly quoting them. (166)

Source: Harris, Robert, **The Plagiarism Handbook**. Pyrcsak Publishing; Los Angeles, California 2001 “Copyright 2001 by Pyrczak Publishing. All rights reserved. Reproduced with permission.”

## American School Standards for the Mechanics of Writing

**Introductory Note: The standards and expectations for formal writing below are largely taken from the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, and what follows builds upon and complements previous standards for all written works in both English and Spanish at The American School.**

#### Some Basics

##### Fonts

- 1) Font size for the main body of all text should be 12 point.
- 2) Though students often like to play with different fonts, for formal writing, especially writing to be sent to the IB, the fonts must be appropriate to the task. Roman times and courier are two fonts appropriate for formal writing.

##### Length of Work

Student writing is measured in words, not in pages. Four-thousand words is about ten pages typed and double spaced in 12 font; 1500 words is about two and half such pages.

##### Line Spacing

Formal writing, especially writing that needs to be graded by teachers or IB examiners, should be double spaced. This makes it easier to read and provides white-space for teacher/examiners to make comments within the text.

# American School Standards for the Mechanics of Writing

## (continued from previous page)

### **Underlining (Including online sources)**

- 1) Titles of plays, books, poems published as books, magazines, newspapers, films, television programs, ballets, long musical compositions, compact discs, cassettes, records, operas, paintings, sculptures, and pamphlets, must all be underlined.
- 2) When citing or referring to works from online, the writer should underline the scholarly project or database name. Professional or personal site names should also be underlined.
- 3) Exceptions to the above rules are: The Bible, Old Testament, Genesis, Gospels, Talmud, Koran, and the Upanishads. These works should be treated like any other book, however, in the works-cited list and bibliography.
- 4) Additional exceptions are: Laws, Acts, and Similar Political Documents. Some examples are: Magna Carta, Declaration of Independence, Bill of Rights, and Treaty of Trianon.

### **Quoting and Use of Quotation Marks (Including Online Sources)**

1. Quotation marks should be used to indicate the beginning and end of a character's speech in prose fiction.
2. Quotation marks should be used in formal writing to indicate when words, phrases or passages are taken from another person or source.
3. Quotation marks are to be used to indicate the titles of short works of poetry, titles of magazines or journal articles, short plays (one act), short stories, articles found online, and titles of songs.
4. Quotations of passages of three or more lines should not be put in quotation marks, but a line should be skipped before and after the quotation and it should be indented to separate it from the rest of the text. Parenthetical notation should also be used to indicate the page on which the quotation can be found. The following example comes from the opening two sentences of an essay.

Joyce's startling opening to A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man:

Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow that was coming down along the road and this moocow that was coming down along the road met a nicens little boy named baby tuckoo (3) often jars the readers senses as it places the reader in the mind set of a child. Faulkner found this technique so startling that he imitated when he decided to portray the thought processes of a mentally disabled person in his book The Sound and the Fury.

### **Contractions and Formal Writing**

A contraction is when two words are joined by an apostrophe. Examples are: haven't, you're, and I'll. Contractions should not be used in formal writing. The only exception to this is when quoting another source that uses contractions.

### **Sources Cited in the Body of the Paper**

#### **Parenthetical Notation**

The form of source citation currently accepted at the American School is the parenthetical citation in the body of the paper. This form has taken the place of endnotes (used for larger works that contain many chapters so as to prevent any interruption of the flow of the text) and footnotes (which are used for explanatory notes that are not part of the main body of a paper). The parenthetical citation provides a simplified yet effective method of crediting sources properly. Below are examples of parenthetical citation and the different ways it changes to accommodate the more complex issues of citation.

# American School Standards for the Mechanics of Writing

## (continued from previous page)

### Citation for Papers with One Source

According to Madge Poulson, "the most important factor involved in determining the correct amount of water to give a Venus Flytrap is the amount of flies eaten by the plant in one-week" (958).

### Citation for Papers with more than One Source

When citing more than one work in a paper it is necessary to include the authors name in the citation to make clear which work you are referring to:

There is a sharp contrast between the Kurtz's statement, "The horror! The horror!" (Conrad 153) and Hamlet's statement, "The readiness is all!" (Shakespeare 67).

### Citations for Internet Sources

Use the same practice as above, however, what is more important is to be sure the Works Cited and or Bibliography pages include the complete internet address of the site from which the source was obtained. To be sure this done properly, a basic guide is given explaining the steps that need to be taken for this under the heading Sources Cited at the end of the paper that appears hereafter. A more thorough and authoritative source can be found in the school library, and that is the 1999 Publication of the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. Because of the various types of sources that can be found on the internet, we do not provide a generic example here. Neither do we wish to provide more than we have in that section because of the rapidly changing practices for what is accepted as a conventional approach to these citations.

### The Difference Between Bibliography and Sources Cited Pages

A sources cited page serves as a limited Bibliography. It is a list of only those sources which are directly quoted or cited in paper, and very often it is also used as key to how each work will be cited. The Bibliography, by contrast includes works that have informed the thinking of the paper, but that may not be quoted from or directly cited in the paper itself.

### More on Mechanics and Style in Formal Writing

#### Foreign Words

- 1) Foreign words in quotations must be reproduced with all accents and other marks as they would appear in the original language. If the writer does not have a keyboard or typewriter that includes these accents and symbols, the writer should add these markings by hand.
- 2) Foreign words included outside of quotations must also be reproduced faithfully to the original language, and should be italicized to indicate that they are from another language.
- 3) If the paper or essay in which foreign words appear is handwritten, it is acceptable to substitute underlining for italics.

#### Numbers

- 1) In non-scientific or mathematical papers, use of numerals should be avoided. It is okay to use numerals for fractions, decimals, and large numbers. But other numbers should be written in letters. Numerals should not appear at the beginning of sentences.
- 2) Other instances that numerals are acceptable in non-scientific or mathematical papers are in reference to weight, height, time, percentages, money, dates, and page numbers.
- 3) For large numbers it is acceptable to use a combination of numerals and words:  
6.5 million.
- 4) Related numbers must be expressed in the same style:  
8 of the 120 board members between 1 million and 2.5 billion approximately 50 motorcycles and 25 cars



**The American School  
c/o The United States  
Embassy  
Tegucigalpa M.D.C.  
Honduras, Central America**



AMERICAN  
SCHOOL  
TEGUCIGALPA

# ANNEXES