



## Family Handbook 2023-2024

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## MISSION STATEMENT

The International School of Texas (IST) provides a comprehensive education that is internationally minded and inquiry based, enabling students to become lifelong learners.

The students of IST are knowledgeable, empathetic, and caring global citizens, inspired to take action and solve problems for the betterment of themselves, others, and the world around them.

## CURRICULUM

As an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School, IST focuses on the development of the whole student as an inquirer, both in the classroom and in the world outside.

The International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP) for JPK through G4:

- Encourages international mindedness in IB students
- Encourages a positive attitude to learning by engaging students in inquiries and developing their awareness of the process of learning so that they become lifelong learners
- Reflects real life by encouraging learning beyond traditional subjects with meaningful, in-depth inquiries into real issues
- Emphasizes through the learner profile and attributes the development of the whole student: physically, intellectually, emotionally, and ethically.

The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (IB MYP) for G5 through G8:

- Encourages practical connections between their applied studies and the real world.
- Encourages international mindedness, explorations into global issues, and taking independent action in our communities.
- Approaches learning in an authentic manner through experiential learning.
- Develops a more autonomous individual through the development of key attributes.
- Showcases skills, understanding, and service in a capstone Community Project in Grade 8.

## EXPECTATIONS

### EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

Using the IB Learner Profile attributes (see Appendix A) as the basis of its core values, the International School of Texas implements a school-wide behavior code that establishes high expectations and provides support for socially appropriate behavior to maintain an environment that is safe for all students. The School understands the advantages of encouraging constructive, positive, and independent behavior rather than the negative attitude implied in a long list of prohibitions.

The entire school community must be committed to behaving responsibly. School-wide agreements are communicated clearly to all parties so that all students can follow them consistently.

Responsibilities for each student include:

- Coming to school on time
- Wearing the correct uniform for the day
- Arriving at class prepared to learn
- Following the applicable behavior and technology policies

Courtesy and respect are expected at all times. This includes:

- Respecting oneself and others, their rights, and property
- Avoiding disrespectful language, teasing, bullying, or provoking others
- Accepting responsibility for one's own behavior
- Expressing anger or frustration in a non-physical way
- Refraining from any behaviors that disrupt the learning of others in the classroom
- Honesty in dealing with all people

### EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS

The School is a community of students, parents, teachers, and administrative staff. Acting in the best interests of the students is the center of this community, both individually and collectively. Parents play a crucial role in the education of the students, and the School expects parents to adhere to behaviors consistent with IST values. This includes:

- Becoming familiar with and supporting the School's mission, policies, guidelines, and channels of communication.

- Partnering with the School to support the education of the students. This includes:
  - Ensuring that students are brought to school and picked up in a timely manner (or are logged in and ready to learn via remote/distance learning) and ensuring that students are in school for all scheduled school days. Punctuality and attendance are imperative to maximize a student's learning potential.
  - Reading all materials sent home via the student's backpack, email, or newsletters.
  - Attending parent-teacher conferences, performances and other school events.
  - Providing a quiet place to study at home (as appropriate for the age of your student) and encouraging him/her to be responsible for his/her work. Students benefit from knowing that their parents understand and value the need for homework, that reasonable time is set aside for its completion, and that other activities hold a clear second place to fulfilling the responsibilities of the student to school. (See homework policy below.)
  - Providing technology and support if remote or distance learning is required.
  - Cooperating with the School in any matters of discipline or academic impediment and dealing promptly with any situations that may arise.
- Keeping in close communication with the School about your student's physical and emotional health, allergies, or any prescribed medications, informing the School about changes in the home environment (e.g., birth of a sibling, separation, death of a family member or close friend, etc.) or any conditions which may impact your student's well-being. *Please see Health Protocols for further information.*
- Following the proper communication channels regarding any concerns/complaints. We would be delighted to work with you to resolve any issues you may have. However, we ask that you seek information directly from the School when a situation seems problematic in any fashion. Engaging in discussions with other parents that are based on partial information or misinformation is generally counterproductive.
- Following all health guidelines to ensure a safe learning environment.
- Making timely payments of all fees due.

**It is important that a positive working relationship is established between the School and our families. Therefore, the International School of Texas reserves the right to cancel the enrollment contract and/or not offer re-enrollment should the School conclude that the actions of a parent or guardian interfere with the School's ability to accomplish the educational purposes set forth for the entire school community. Places are offered yearly, and the Head of School reserves the right to refuse invitations to re-enroll on a yearly basis.**

## BULLYING | MOBBING

IST embraces a culture where bullying or mobbing is not tolerated in any form. This expectation extends to all aspects of our community life and is not limited to behavior amongst students. Bullying between and among parents and/or staff will receive the same intervention and no-tolerance approach as with students. At IST, the adults in our community model the behavior we look to foster in our students.

Bullying is defined as "any *persistent* behavior which *deliberately* hurts, frightens, or upsets another person." Students are encouraged to discuss any concerns with an adult. Adults are encouraged to discuss any concerns with the appropriate Deputy Head. All reports are taken seriously by all staff and administration, and subsequent action is taken appropriate to the outcome of any investigation, including but not limited to disciplinary measures, sanction, intervention from the Head of School, involvement of parents, or contractual measures.

The school recognizes the reality that bullying may take place both on campus as well as off campus, and therefore reserves the right to use information related to actions taken outside of the school grounds or school platforms as evidence in investigations for bullying or mobbing behavior. External actions that affect the learning, social, and cultural environment of the school in any substantive fashion are subject to investigation and evaluation by the school in any measures taken.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND TRAILBLAZER PARENT LEAGUE

We encourage our families to be actively involved in the School community. There are two main formal ways to get involved in the school: serving as a Class Parent or volunteering with the Trailblazer Parent League (TPL). Class Parents serve as the bridge between the teacher(s) specific to each cohort and the parents of that individual grade level. The TPL supports the school in living out its mission and vision to the fullest by providing cultural enrichment through the organization of activities, events, and other various volunteer needs that arise during the school year. These events serve our community through not only cultural enrichment but also by providing opportunities for the IST community (including parents, teachers, and staff) to join together and build relationships that strengthen the cohesion of our school. The five TPL administrative positions and Class Parents are nominated by the Head of School. All parents are welcome to indicate their interest in serving in these roles as well as volunteering at individual events organized by the TPL and Class Parents.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

### HEAD OF SCHOOL

The Head of School serves the needs of students throughout the entire school and prioritizes the needs of students above all else. The Head takes responsibility for the strategic planning of the School and serves as a liaison between the Board of Trustees and the School. The Head of School also oversees school planning and performance related to

teaching and learning. Through the Head's presence, knowledge, and example, he/she brings the School's vision and mission to life and focuses on the specific needs of the students of IST. The Head verifies that the students who are admitted are capable of accessing the curriculum and the overall program.

## DEPUTY HEADS OF SCHOOL

The Deputy Heads of School (for PYP and MYP) support the Head of School to serve the needs of all IST students and parents on a day-to-day basis. Any concerns or questions can be brought to the attention of the Deputy Heads via personal appointment. Please contact the School's Front Desk Administrator to schedule a convenient time. The Deputy Heads serve as a liaison between the Head of School and the teachers and also help manage the pastoral care of our students. The Deputy Head is pivotal in the development of innovative curriculum design, development, and delivery, and provides best practice leadership to school teaching staff.

## TEACHING STAFF

The teachers not only work with your student in the classroom, but they also serve the students' best interests throughout the School. **The teachers should always serve as your first point of contact for any questions, comments or concerns that you may have** — they are in the best position to help both you and your student. The communication journals (lower school students), agendas (upper school students), Toddle, and email are valuable tools to share any comments, questions, or concerns with your teacher and also for information teachers wish to share with you regarding your student's learning day. Teachers want you to keep in touch! For a meeting with your teacher, email or phone the School in advance to set a mutually convenient time.

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Our school community also includes many support staff members in the areas of admissions, marketing, finance, administrative assistance, premises management, and food service.

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The ultimate responsibility for seeing that our school stays on course, as well as furthering the direction and mission set by the School's Board of Trustees, rests with the Head of School. In this mission, the Head of School is supported by the Board of Trustees. In private schools, educational principles, not popular opinion or mandate, dictate this direction. The Trustees are responsible for guarding the School's mission and supporting the School's growth and development at a strategic level. The Board has entrusted the School's daily operation and leadership to the Head of School. The Board holds public meetings each year and they meet formally on a regular basis. If you wish to contact the Board about its governance or strategic direction of the school, please contact the School's Front Desk Administrator. Operational questions should be directed to the school's administration.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

**NOTE:** Operational parameters in this section, such as start and end times, drop-off and pick-up procedures and availability of before-school and after-school clubs are subject to change. Families will be notified, and up-to-date information can be found on the IST website ([www.istexas.org](http://www.istexas.org)).

### ARRIVAL

International School of Texas students are expected to be on time each day. This is not just a good habit, but a prerequisite of the School's function and curriculum. Arriving on time will set the tone for the rest of the day.

The School's daily schedule may be viewed at [www.istexas.org](http://www.istexas.org). Please review the schedule to know when you may drop off your child. In addition, you will receive updated information from the School regarding where to drop off students at each of our campus locations.

### DISMISSAL

Afternoon pick-up will commence each day at 3:25 p.m. for PYP and 3:35 p.m. for MYP unless there is a specifically scheduled holiday or early release day. IST uses the **PikMyKid** app to facilitate a smooth and efficient afternoon pick-up. New families will receive a welcome email with instructions on how to register for PikMyKid.

Students are released only to authorized persons. Please use the PikMyKid app to designate additional authorized persons.

Students taking the International School of Texas shuttles will be escorted to the shuttle under supervision at dismissal. Please see our Transportation section on pg. 31 for more information about our private transportation services.

Students not picked up by the designated time will be placed in the after-school club, which runs until 5:00 p.m. Drop-in rates will apply. Additional fees may apply for Students not picked up by 5:00 p.m. Please see our After-School Club section below for more information.

### EARLY BIRD DROP-OFF AND BEFORE-SCHOOL CLUBS

For Early Bird Drop-Off and Before-School Clubs, you will need to escort PYP students to the designated entrance. MYP students can enter independently. You will receive additional information from the school regarding designated entrances.

### AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

The International School of Texas provides after-school clubs staffed by teachers or school approved instructors. Activities begin after school is out and end at 5:00 p.m. every day except for school days with early dismissal. Please note that extra charges may apply for

pick-ups after 5:00 p.m. Parents are encouraged to provide a healthy snack (e.g., a protein or whole fruit). Details regarding the activities and pricing are provided prior to the start of each term and more information may be provided by contacting the Front Desk.

## ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance and a regular schedule are essential to success in school. Therefore, we expect students to be in attendance every day that school is in session. All late arrivals and absences are tracked and will be included in school reports.

## ABSENCES

In general, the only excused reasons for absence are religious holidays, illness, and emergencies. In the case of illness, the School asks that parents call or advise the School no later than 8:00 a.m. at 512.351.3403 or email the Front Desk at [frontdesk@istexas.org](mailto:frontdesk@istexas.org). Students who are out two consecutive days due to illness will be required to submit a doctor's note to the office. If a doctor's visit was not undertaken, the parent should supply a note detailing the reason for the absence.

Please note that the following communications will occur in the School's efforts to ensure proper attendance of all students in our community:

- After 5 student absences: Teacher will contact student's family.
- After 8 student absences: Deputy Head will email the student's family.
- After 10 student absences: Deputy Head will contact the student's family by phone.
- After 12 student absences: Head of School will contact the student's family.

## UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Family vacations should be scheduled around the school calendar if possible. Absences due to extensions of vacation periods create difficulties for the classroom teacher and student and undermine the integrity of the School as a whole.

If a family wishes to ask for an authorized absence during the school year, please email or write to the respective Deputy Head of School ([Ashley Swindle](#) for PYP and [Chad Hyatt](#) for MYP) to request such absence in advance.

## LATE ARRIVALS (TARDIES) / EARLY DISMISSALS

Occasionally, Students must arrive late or leave early. These departures from our schedule are difficult, both for the individual student and for the class teacher and other students. The beginning and end of the day are critical times in our classrooms. A student who arrives late often misses a discussion of the day to come and one who leaves early may miss important homework or other information. Please discuss any planned late arrivals or early departures ahead of time with the teacher.

For security purposes, parents/authorized individuals must sign their students in/out at the Front Desk. Parents/authorized individuals are not permitted to bring their students

directly to class while school is in session. All students should be dropped off at the Front Desk where they will be signed in and escorted to class by a staff member.

Medical, dental, and optical appointments should be scheduled outside of school hours whenever possible. Frequent absences or lateness for reasons other than those listed above adversely affect school performance. Students are responsible for making up all work missed while absent.

### PARKING LOT SAFETY

Our parking lot can be very busy at drop-off and pick-up times and as such, for the safety of our students, we ask you to observe the instructions you will receive directly from the School. While you are on campus, we ask that you refrain from texting or otherwise using your phone while driving. If you need to check-in via the PikMyKid app, please only do so when you are at a complete stop. Thank you for your courtesy and help in keeping our students safe.

### LIBRARY

A wide selection of fiction and non-fiction titles, as well as encyclopedias, dictionaries, and other reference materials are available in our Library. Donations of books are always welcome, so please ask the Head of School if you are interested in supporting our library. If a book is lost or damaged, please send a note to the student's class teacher. If, after more than one request has been made, a book has not been returned and no explanation has been given, the School will request a donation to replace the book.

### PHOTOGRAPHS AND USE OF IMAGE

The International School of Texas's enrollment module and annual Media Release Form provide parents the opportunity to officially grant or withhold permission to International School of Texas to use a student's photograph and/or videotaped image for publications, video productions, the School's website, news media, advertising and marketing materials, or other nonprofit, education-related organizations' publications.

By checking the "yes" box, you indicate that you understand and agree that International School of Texas may use these photos and/or videotaped images in subsequent school years unless you revoke this authorization by notifying the Head of School in writing. You also grant International School of Texas permission to allow your student to be photographed, audiotaped, videotaped, or interviewed by the news media or other organizations for school-related stories or articles.

### ALCOHOL ON CAMPUS

The School frequently invites parents and members of our community onto our campuses to celebrate the learning accomplishments of our Students. Parents are not permitted to bring or consume alcohol on school grounds. The noted exception to this rule is when the School hosts events for parents, at which the School provides alcohol in accordance with all applicable regulations.

## COMMUNICATION

### GENERAL COMMUNICATION METHODS

The International School of Texas (IST) promotes open and honest communication between families and the school. While email and voicemail are effective means of communication, we also believe there is immense value with in-person communication. The administration, faculty, and staff of IST will respond to emails and voicemails within 24 hours. In addition to weekly emails from the school, you can expect classroom newsletters, social media posts, and updates on our website. You also have access to Toddle (our parent portal) which has relevant information for your student(s). If you ever have any questions, check the contact guide or contact our front desk at 512-351-3403 or email [frontdesk@istexas.org](mailto:frontdesk@istexas.org).

### WEEKLY NEWSLETTER & HEAD OF SCHOOL REFLECTION

*IST at a Glance* is our weekly newsletter, featuring spotlights on academic happenings, stories about special initiatives and events, and unique insights into the daily operations of the school. We encourage you to read this document as a family, ensuring accurate information is shared. Additionally, *IST at a Glance* offers key pieces of logistical information pertaining to the coming week and a letter from our Head of School, giving thematic reflections on the current state of IST. Most importantly, we also celebrate students' achievements and successes in *IST at a Glance*. Please ensure that your email is up to date with our admissions and communications team.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

The International School of Texas is eager to communicate with our community via social media platforms, including (but not limited to) Facebook and Instagram. These platforms are meant to serve as a connection point between home and school. Our social media goals are to inform our community of events and initiatives, celebrate achievements of our faculty, staff, and students, and to further the mission and brand of The International School of Texas. Therefore, comments and shares by current families, faculty, and staff should remain positive and inclusive in nature, ultimately complementing the work of the IST communications team. IST Communications staff reserve the right to remove comments, edit posts, and/or act in a manner that protects the integrity of both the school and the school's brand. If you have questions or concerns about social media, please contact the Community Relations Coordinator.

### CLASS COMMUNICATION

International School of Texas uses electronic notifications as a means of keeping parents informed about class work related to the Units of Inquiry, and all areas of the curriculum generally, as well as class events such as field trips. Please update email contact as needed by advising the Front Desk at 512.351.3403 or by emailing [frontdesk@istexas.org](mailto:frontdesk@istexas.org).

## PROGRESS REPORTS/PARENTAL CONFERENCES

Parents are fully informed of their student's progress in school by the following:

- Throughout the year, opportunities are offered for parents to meet teachers and discuss student progress and individual targets. Parents meet with their student's class teacher twice a year for a formal consultation in addition to the Meet the Teacher Night. At the end of the year, parents are also invited to a Student-Led Conference, to go through their student's learning, which will be led by their student.
- Formal reports are sent home to parents covering all areas of the curriculum at the end of each term. Parents are reminded that teachers or parents may request additional conferences where circumstances require.

## CONTACTING TEACHERS

Email is usually the best way to connect with your student's teacher(s) with the understanding that teachers are not reading emails throughout the day. Teachers typically check school email accounts after school hours and will acknowledge emailed messages within 24 hours.

If you need to contact your student's teacher(s) during the school day, please call the front desk at 512.351.3403 and leave a message for them. They will contact you as soon as they are available to do so.

At the start of the day, teachers are usually very busy attending to their students and will not be able to discuss individual student matters at that time unless prior arrangements have been made.

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

We are committed to providing a high-quality educational environment for all our students, teachers, and parents. Parents who have questions or concerns about their student's academic or behavioral performance should first contact the student's teacher via email in order to raise the question/concern or to set up a meeting, if necessary. If the situation is not resolved by the teacher, or if the need to raise a formal complaint arises, please contact the respective Deputy Head of School, who will then consult with the teacher in order to respond or will set up a meeting with the parents (possibly including the teacher). If it is felt that the matter remains unresolved, you may contact the Head of School.

## IN THE CLASSROOM

### BOOKS AND SUPPLIES

In general, International School of Texas students are supplied with consumable workbooks and activity books, teacher-prepared lessons and art and crafts supplies. School supplies are also included in the price of your tuition, although from time-to-time teachers

may request small items from home for specific class or art projects.

On occasion, textbooks and reference materials are supplied for the students' use during the school year. Families are required to return them in good condition at the end of each year. A charge will be made for lost or damaged books.

### BACKPACKS AND BOOK BAGS

Books may be carried in book bags or backpacks only if the pack is small enough to fit into the student's locker and/or cubby or can hang from the coat hook assigned to the student. Duffel bags and sports bags are too large to bring to school and present a safety hazard. Please note that we kindly request students not bring rolling bags of any kind due to safety concerns.

### PERSONAL PROPERTY

Students are expected to respect the property of others. They should not touch, move, or deface in any way books, bags, or other property belonging to another student, a teacher, or the School.

### BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS, CULTURAL CELEBRATIONS AND PARTIES

With prior teacher approval, parents may send in a treat to celebrate with classmates at a prearranged time (usually toward the end of the day), if they wish. If you are celebrating your student's birthday or a meaningful cultural event at school, you may bring a treat, fruit or similar, to share with the whole class. Healthy treats are encouraged but not required. **Any food brought to school must be free of nuts or nut products.**

Regarding birthday celebrations, it is strongly encouraged that all out-of-school parties be held on Fridays and weekends. Additionally, it may not be possible to include all members of the class in the party, therefore, we ask that parents:

- Do not ask teachers to distribute invitations unless the entire class is invited
- Be discreet with invitations if all are not invited. Distribute invitations off-campus or via email.
- Make arrangements for guests to go to the party from their own homes, not from school.
- Do not have your student change into party clothes at school.

Please note that party 'goody bags' are not to be distributed in school for health and safety reasons.

### FIELD TRIPS

All field trips are included in tuition fees with the exception of certain "opt-in" trips such as the School's international trip, the MYP class trips, and others that may be designated on the tuition schedule.

All families are required to sign a waiver that gives the School permission to take the Students off school premises for educational trips during the School day. Written communication with information about specific field trips is sent by class/specialist teachers prior to the trip. All parents must sign a field trip authorization during the admissions and enrollment process that will cover all field trips conducted during the academic year. If the School does not receive the field trip authorization, the student will not be able to attend the field trip. A risk assessment is always undertaken for each trip and an appropriate number of chaperones is organized.

For security and safety purposes, the International School of Texas Field Trip Policy requires that students ride the school van, charter van, or with a designated driver to and from the field trip site and remain with the group supervised by school staff throughout the field trip. If a parent is asked to undertake transport, this will be noted by the teacher.

## HOUSE SYSTEM

Upon arrival at the International School of Texas, each student will be placed in one of four Houses. Each House acts as a family within the School. School Houses are named after trailblazers who serve as role models and sources of inspiration for our students: (Neil) Armstrong, Malala (Yousafzai); (Nelson) Mandela, and (Amelia) Earhart. Throughout the course of the year, the School runs a variety of inter-House competitions and events. All the competitions earn points toward the end-of-year totals and the winning House is announced at the end of the school year.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Every student is expected to participate in physical education as part of the standard curriculum. Reports are based on participation, effort, attitude, and skills. To be excused from participation in P.E. activities for any reason requires a written note signed and dated by a parent. After three days, a doctor's note is required. All P.E. excuses should be delivered to the class or P.E. teacher on the first excused day. Students may change into athletic shorts and/or IST t-shirts if they wish, otherwise, students may wear their regular IST uniform. Athletic shoes are required on P.E days.

## UNIFORMS AND UNIFORM GUIDELINES

The School uniform is designed to give our students a smart, practical dress code that allows them to focus on their academics while being comfortable. We ask that students follow our Uniform Guidelines at all times in school. Check the IST website for the [up-to-date Uniform Guidelines](#). We recommend that all uniform items must be clearly labeled with the student's first and last name.

We recommend that each student wears a hat when they are outdoors. Since we have multiple recess periods every day, plus outdoor learning, hats should be brought to school every day. Students can choose the hat so long as there is no inappropriate content.

Shorts and pants may be purchased from other sources (Gap, Target, etc.), so long as they

are consistent with uniform guidelines. No drawstring waists or cargo shorts are permitted. Fingertip length is required.

Closed-toe shoes are required every day and need to be worn with socks or tights. Sandals of any kind are not allowed. “Jelly” shoes, Crocs, slick-soled shoes, heels, sandals and any shoes with wheels are unsafe on playgrounds and are not allowed at school.

For safety reasons, body piercings are not allowed except for one pair of stud-type earrings. Tattoos of any kind, whether permanent or temporary, are not allowed. We are more than happy to consider accommodations for cultural and/or religious purposes. Please contact the Head of School.

Limited jewelry and watches are allowed as a way for the students to express themselves. The same goes for hair styles and coloring so long as choices aren't distracting or disruptive to fellow classmates.

Extreme styles, short, tight, or revealing apparel, unbuttoned shirts, ragged edges, holes in clothing or visible underwear are not permitted.

On Fridays, our students can choose to wear their casual uniform or change it up a bit by wearing an IST school t-shirt. These shirts can be for clubs or sports teams, or IST Spirit Wear! Spirit Wear can be purchased at [www.challengewear.com](http://www.challengewear.com).

On free dress days and at all school-sponsored activities, the following items are NOT acceptable:

- Overly revealing clothes such as bare-midriff or spaghetti-strap tops, tube tops, sheer clothing, shorts or skirts above fingertip length, tights or spandex worn as outerwear, etc.
- Torn or frayed clothes or hems.
- Visible underwear, clothing or personal items such as T-shirts with logos or ads, etc. that support alcohol, drugs, gangs, profanity, sexual conduct or violence.
- Flip-flops, steel-toed shoes, high heels, and shoes without socks, stockings, or tights.

## ACADEMIC POLICIES

### ASSESSMENT

Assessment is an integral part of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme and Middle Years Programme. Assessment and tracking of student progress is integral to all teaching and learning and impacts directly on teachers’ planning. It identifies what students know, understand, and can demonstrate at different stages in the learning process. By using a variety of assessment strategies and tools, the different learning styles and intelligences of the IST students can be more effectively utilized. Students themselves are central to the process of assessment and should take an active role in their own

learning with an emphasis on reflection and self-assessment.

Assessments are both formative and summative and all information gathered through assessments is used for diagnostic purposes. Information gathered through these assessments as well as ongoing teacher assessments are communicated to parents through reports sent at the end of each term. Reports cover not only the academic progress and attainment of each student, but also their social and emotional development. In addition, students will take part in a Measure of Academic Progress three times a year. Results will be communicated to parents after each session.

Our assessment tasks are:

- clearly linked to defined learner outcomes which are known and understood by the students in advance
- reviewed and used to modify curriculum plans
- collaborative across grades and subjects through moderation and common task setting
- used by teachers to monitor and improve the quality of instruction

The assessment tasks are student-focused to:

- encourage reflection
- ensure ongoing student involvement
- allow students to demonstrate what they know and are able to do
- consider attitude, behavior, and effort as well as knowledge, skills, and content
- give opportunities to participate in self-directed learning
- allow students to evaluate their own performance and set targets for personal improvement based on a clear understanding of their strengths and weaknesses

Parent Conferences will be scheduled to provide opportunities for parents to learn more about student progress and achievements. Participation is highly encouraged.

In addition, PYP classes may present Sharing Assemblies. Parents are encouraged to attend these events, as they represent not only part of the IST assessment procedure and give students opportunities to develop performance and public speaking skills.

## HOMework

Teachers will set out homework expectations very early in the first term, and provide reminders, if necessary, during the school year. Homework guidelines are discussed by the whole staff in order to ensure age appropriateness, progress, and continuity throughout the School.

Homework fulfills an important purpose as it prepares students for a lifetime work ethic, supports their understanding of organization and time management, and most importantly, provides an opportunity for extending learning and understanding of topics covered in class. Each family is expected to support their student, their student's teacher,

and the School in abiding by these expectations.

## GRADING POLICY

Information relating to our grading policy will be provided by teachers early in the first term. International School of Texas does not attach grades to the work or efforts of JPK students as it would be developmentally inappropriate. Students in Pre-K, Kindergarten and in the first two terms of Grade 1 receive effort grades at the end of each term. MYP families will receive information regarding the very thorough MYP assessment reports from the MYP Deputy Head.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is at the heart of our educational community. It is a commitment to act responsibly, uphold trust, and produce genuine and ethical scholarly work. We believe in fostering a culture of integrity that guides us in our academic pursuits and prepares us for a principled future.

### **For PYP Students**

We understand that academic integrity means creating our own work and being honest in all we do. We will always do our best and take pride in our unique ideas and efforts. When we use information from others, we will give them credit, showing respect for their work. We will use technology responsibly and treat others with kindness and fairness. During assessments, we will follow the rules and do our own work.

### **For MYP Students**

Academic integrity is about taking ownership of our learning journey. We will produce original work, demonstrating our knowledge and creativity. When we draw on the ideas of others, we will properly acknowledge them, valuing their contributions. We will use digital tools thoughtfully and consider the impact of our online actions. In assessments, we will uphold honesty and ethics, showcasing our growth and understanding.

Educators play a vital role in guiding us toward academic integrity. By embodying these principles in teaching and learning, we develop the skills and character needed for a lifelong pursuit of knowledge and ethical conduct.

## ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS

It is the policy of International School of Texas to provide custodial parents and non-custodial parents equal access to all the official records and reports regarding their students, as well as school announcements and related information with equal access to the students, the teachers and administrators, without notification of the other party, UNLESS such access is limited by a court of law or the parents provide joint written instruction to the School. It is the responsibility of the parent(s) to provide the School with any such documentation.

## HEALTH & WELLNESS

### DAILY SELF-SCREENING

To promote a safe and healthy school environment, please do not send students to school with any of the following symptoms:

- Fever, which is measured as a temperature of 100.0 degrees F or above (oral, temporal, or axillary)
- Sore throat
- Eye redness/discharge
- Persistent, severe cough (unrelated to environmental allergies)
- Vomiting or diarrhea (more than one loose stool)
- Unusual rash or infected skin
- Lice/nits

If a student is excluded, they should remain out of school for at least 24 hours from the last sign/symptom. For fever, Students should remain home until they are 24 hours fever free WITHOUT the use of fever-reducing medications. If they are prescribed antibiotics, they should have 24 hours of antibiotics prior to returning. If a student is seen by a physician for a medical problem, the doctor needs to write a note that includes diagnosis, treatment, limitations and when the student can return to school. (Examples: rashes, pinworms or ringworm, strep throat, fractures or sprains).

**Students/staff must be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to school WITHOUT the use of medications to mask symptoms. In certain circumstances the School Nurse, at her discretion, may require additional screening and/or testing before allowing an individual to return to campus. If the student wishes to return to school prior to this timeframe, a note must be provided from the student's physician and they must obtain clearance from the School Nurse prior to returning to campus.**

Students who develop a fever of 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or above, vomiting, or diarrhea while at school will be sent home. Parents or guardians shall pick up their student from campus as soon as possible. With respect to faculty and staff, the person shall promptly leave the campus. Students, families, faculty, and staff shall communicate with the School about their progress at home, including allowing and facilitating communication between the School's nursing staff and their physicians as may be appropriate.

**Note:** Head lice and COVID-19 have specific school re-entry requirements. Please see below.

### SCHOOL NURSE

A School Nurse is on duty each day during school hours. The nurse will generally be stationed at the Hudson Bend campus but is available to consult with the Bee Cave campus via video conference. As needed, the nurse will visit the Bee Cave campus.

The School Nurse is responsible for the treatment of minor health problems, the dispensation of prescription and over-the-counter medications, communication with parents/guardians, and maintenance of required health records. In addition, many of the faculty and staff are CPR/first aid certified.

Basic first aid (band aids, antiseptic, ice, etc.) is provided for minor problems occurring during the school day. Health-related questions should be addressed to the School Nurse, who can be reached at 512-351-3403 or at nurse@istexas.org.

### COVID-19

Given the current status of the COVID-19 virus, there are no active COVID policies in place. Students or staff who test positive or suspect they may be infected with the virus should follow the standard self-screening procedure described above.

We remain a "mask-optional" environment for all students, staff, or parents who wish to utilize one and support them in their choice. There will be no testing of students or staff for the virus and no reporting procedures required in the event of a positively identified infection. There are also no contact tracing procedures in place.

### HEAD LICE - "NO LIVE LICE" POLICY

Head lice can be a nuisance but have not been shown to spread disease according to the CDC. With the desire to limit the spread of head lice across the School community, a "no live lice" policy is in place.

Whenever a case of live head lice is present, the student's parents/guardians will be notified and are required to pick up their child from school. Treatment options will be discussed at that time. The student may return to school only after the appropriate treatment has begun and the student is free from live lice. Before returning to the classroom, the student will be examined by the school nurse and periodically checked for signs of reinfestation.

Without revealing the student's name, the School may share information with parents/guardians of classmates who may have had contact with the student. It is up to the discretion of the Deputy Head and School Nurse whether to check other students or whole classrooms.

### HEALTH RECORDS, REGULATIONS, AND ACCESS

Families are asked to provide the School with information about the student's physical and emotional health. This is especially important with respect to chronic medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, etc. Physical examination must be completed annually; this can include the student's annual physician's report and an updated form must be returned to the School within 45 days of the student's birthday. If there are any changes to the health of the student between annual exams, parents are required to notify the nurse in writing

to determine if any additional steps are needed.

All required health forms are available from the School Nurse or Front Desk. All health forms are due back prior to the start of the School year. No student will be able to attend the School or participate in any school activities until all forms are up to date.

Documentation of annual vision and hearing screenings are required for the following students: students age 4 by September 1, Kindergarteners, and any other first-year students. The screenings must be completed within 120 days of admission. Additionally, Grades 1, 3, 5, and 7 will be screened during the school year. The hearing and vision screening will be done on campus during annual campus screenings or can be done at the student's pediatrician office. Timing of on-campus testing will be determined by the administration and the School Nurse. Parents will be notified of these dates in advance. Results of screening are also available to parents upon completion. For more information about Hearing and Vision Screening, visit: <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/vhs/default.shtm>

## IMMUNIZATIONS

The School requires all students to provide proof of up-to-date immunizations or a certificate of exemption before attending school. Texas law allows (a) physicians to write medical exemption statements which clearly state a medical reason exists and the person cannot receive specific vaccines, and (b) parents/guardians to choose an exemption from immunization requirements for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief. Original Exemption Affidavit must be completed and submitted to the School. For vaccine records, any document will be acceptable provided a physician or public health personnel has validated it and month/date/year of vaccine is noted on the form.

If there is a risk of a vaccine-preventable disease, in the event of a public emergency, the School may exclude non-immunized students, including those with valid religious or medical exemptions, from school and all school activities. Excluded students will not be permitted to return until (1) the danger of the outbreak has passed; (2) the student becomes ill with the disease and completely recovers; or (3) the student is immunized. In determining whether there is a risk of a vaccine-preventable disease, the School may consult with appropriate medical professionals and/or the Texas State Department of Public Health.

## HEALTH EMERGENCIES

The School Nurse will always attempt to contact families regarding illness or injury, minor or serious. In circumstances that warrant immediate attention when staff is unable to reach the parents/guardians or the student's physician, an ambulance will be called, the student will be taken to the nearest hospital emergency room, and families will be notified immediately. Staff, including the school nurse, will neither diagnose nor treat injuries that occur outside of school time. They will, however, offer temporary first aid for problems that arise during school. If a student complains of a persistent illness, such as recurrent earache, sore throat, rashes, or joint pain, these complaints warrant a call to the student's

physician and families will be notified of an illness or injury that may require follow-up medical care.

## ALLERGY INFORMATION

Families of students who have severe allergies (of any type) with the potential for developing anaphylaxis must provide the School with an Allergy Action Plan that is developed and signed by the student's physician and parents. Upon completion of this form, parents must communicate with the School Nurse to discuss the Allergy Action Plan prior to the start of the school year. Classroom management will be discussed at that time. This plan must be reviewed prior to the start of each school year.

Teachers, administrators, and coaches are trained by the school nurse in the use and administration of epinephrine for life-threatening allergic reactions. Epinephrine pens are located in the School Nurse's office. If multiple epinephrine pens are available for a student then classroom teachers may bring one on field trips. Additional epinephrine pens may be requested for students playing sports in order for the coaches to be prepared should an emergency arise.

## FOOD ALLERGIES

Our goals are to provide a safe and respectful environment for all students, to educate the School community about the nature of food allergies, and to provide support and encouragement as our students develop good decision-making skills and learn the critical lessons of managing their allergies. We hope to foster self-confidence, self-respect, and self-advocacy in our students, and to support families as they help students learn to appropriately manage their allergies.

For students without allergies, our goals are to increase their awareness of food allergies, and to encourage the development of empathy and the skills needed for them to become supportive allies for their peers.

As a School, we strive to help our students graduate with the skills and confidence to advocate for their own and others' health and physical safety. International School of Texas is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all students. In consideration of the number of students with food allergies, the School has the following guidelines for management of these allergies:

- Products containing nuts and peanuts may not be brought onto the School campus
- Food prepared by the school lunch vendor is nut- and peanut-free
- For students with severe allergies, the School will be provided with an Emergency Care Plan written by a primary care provider or allergist with parental input

***There may be additional allergy restrictions in individual classrooms depending on specific student medical needs. This will be communicated to classroom parents as needed.***

Successful management of food allergies is the jointly held responsibility of the School, families, and the student with the allergy. Education encompasses the entire School community including employees, families, and students. It focuses on preventive strategies, the symptoms of anaphylaxis in individual students, and emergency care. We recognize that the management of food allergies is a developmental process, and we strive to take reasonable measures to protect our youngest students, while recognizing that students should learn to assume increasing responsibility for their own health and safety as they mature.

## MEDICATIONS AT SCHOOL

Students may not bring, and will not be permitted to maintain, medicine of any kind with their personal belongings. Parents/guardians are expected to attend to students' medication needs outside of school whenever possible; however, if a student must take a daily prescription medication, parents are required to provide the School with a Permission to Medicate Form signed by the student's health care provider and parent(s). Over-the-counter medications may be given during the school day if the medication is provided to the School and Permission to Medicate form is on file with the School Nurse; however, over-the-counter medications may not be given at school to mask symptoms of an acute illness, such as fever, sore throat, headache. The School Nurse, in collaboration with the parent/guardian and the student's health care provider and the School's consulting physician, will establish an individualized medication administration plan for any students who must take medications at school.

A parent/guardian should deliver medications to the School **in an unopened pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container**. Please ask your pharmacy to provide separate bottles for school and home. Medications will be dispensed by School Nurse or by School personnel who have been designated and trained in accordance with the School's policy regarding delegation of prescription medication administration. Over-the-counter medications can be given for a maximum of two weeks. After this point a signed doctor's order must be provided by your student's licensed physician in order to continue with administration of the medication. Medications may not be administered in excess of the dosing instructions without a signed doctor's order.

Medications should be picked up at the end of the school year. Any medications left after one week of school closure will be destroyed.

The School Nurse, in collaboration with the parent/guardian and the student's physician, will also establish an individualized medication administration plan for any student requesting medication self-administration privileges. The student will be involved in the decision-making process and the student's preferences respected to the maximum extent possible. In a collaborative effort, the School Nurse together with the student, the student's parent/guardian, and physician will determine the student's understanding of the student's medication(s) and competency in the administration of the student's medication(s). Based on this determination, the School Nurse will allow or disallow self-

administration privileges in accordance with state and federal laws. The self-administration of medication(s) shall include self-administration while on School property or during School-sponsored trips. A duplicate dose of life-saving medication provided by the parent/guardian will be stored with or at the direction of the School Nurse. It is the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the School Nurse in order to update the student's medication administration plan with respect to any medication(s), dosing revisions, and health status changes.

Misuse of the privilege to self-administer medication(s) will result in immediate revocation of said privilege(s). International School of Texas does not assume any responsibility for students not in compliance with this medication self-administration policy.

## TOILET TRAINING

All Students are required to be toilet trained during the daytime in order to attend IST. If there are any concerns related to this, your student may not be able to continue their attendance until they are properly toilet trained.

## BALANCED EATING PROGRAM

### LUNCH PROGRAM

The International School of Texas believes in a balanced diet and uses a specialized school lunch supplier for our school-provided meals. You will receive instructions on how to create an account with the provider so that you may select and pay for your students' lunches. You may work directly with the lunch supplier regarding dietary restrictions and preferences. They are able to accommodate many common restrictions and provide a variety of options every day.

If you do not wish to utilize the lunch supplier, students may bring their own lunch but should follow the "Bring Your Own Lunch" guidelines below. Either way, a daily snack is provided and included in tuition.

### BRING YOUR OWN LUNCH

If you decide to have your student bring their own lunch, please follow the following guidelines:

- As the School is a "nut-free campus", please ensure that food items do not contain nuts, nut butter or nut oil.
- Please send the lunch in a small lunch container with an ice pack as students will not be permitted to store their lunches in a refrigerator.
- Please provide a lunch that does not need to be warmed, as the School will not be able to warm up lunches for students.
- Please do not send your student to school with soft drinks/sodas or candy.

## NUT-FREE CAMPUS

The School has established a food allergy policy to ensure the health and well-being of all students. The foods most likely to cause allergic reactions are peanuts, tree nuts, dairy products, eggs, soy, wheat, fish, and shellfish. While most food allergies produce symptoms that are uncomfortable, for some people, allergic reactions can be life-threatening.

This policy focuses particular attention on nuts because they present a special problem: they are the most common culprit in severe food allergies, and they are an oily substance. Nut oil residue is easily spread from hand to hand, and around kitchen surfaces and lunch tables. This policy is designed to prevent severe allergic reactions, to prepare staff to deal with allergy emergencies, and to minimize anxiety on the part of all students and staff around the issue of food allergies. Specific measures include:

- No nut products are served in the dining room
- No snacks containing nuts are used
- Parents are informed that this is a **nut-free campus** and are instructed not to send food items, containing nut butter, nuts, or nut oil to the School.
- Hand washing before and after meals and snacks is part of the daily routine.
- Tables will be washed with soap and water after snacks and meals.
- Parents of students with life-threatening allergies must provide the School with a written medical treatment protocol for their student along with two sets of emergency medication; one to be kept centrally by the School Nurse, the other for the student's teacher.

This food allergy policy does not guarantee that a student will never experience an allergy-related event at school. We believe, however, that these measures significantly decrease the risk to students with allergies and that they reflect the strong value that our school places on respect for individual differences.

## SAFETY AND SECURITY

### SECURITY

The School is committed to safety and security and has a comprehensive emergency plan in place to protect students and staff on a daily basis and in the event of emergencies. All visitors to campus, including parents, will need to check in at the front desk. An access policy has been established requiring all visitors to be properly identified by submitting a photo ID at the Front Desk and receive a security badge prior to entering the buildings. Exceptions may be made for certain school events.

Visitor identification is processed through our Raptor Security System and will be issued to all visitors, including parents, guardians (visiting outside of drop-off / pick-up times), vendors and contractors.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Our Emergency Preparedness Plan calls for the help of every staff member on campus and is designed to communicate plans to the staff and students, safely evacuate students and adults from buildings and playground areas, care for the physical, emotional, and medical needs of the students and staff in the first hours after an emergency, and provide for extended care of students and staff if necessary. Fire, severe weather and lockdown drills are scheduled during the school year.

We currently use an emergency notification system through One Call Now that alerts all parents by phone, text and email (as preferred) in the event of any emergency, disruption, or severe weather.

Emergency Evacuation Plans are posted by the door of each room. First Aid kits are also available by the door of each classroom and in each common area used by Students.

## TECHNOLOGY

### PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES / PHONES

In general, students may not use video games, personal laptops, or other expensive or unnecessary electronic equipment of any kind at school without the consent of the Head of School, the Deputy Heads of School or the students' respective teachers.

Older students may bring a mobile phone but must keep the phone stored out of sight with the ringer turned off during the School day. International School of Texas does not accept any liability or responsibility for loss or damage.

Such devices may interfere with the learning environment of the School and limit positive social interactions. Inappropriate use of any of the above items will result in their confiscation. They will be returned to parents/guardians, but not directly to the student.

### TECHNOLOGY USE POLICY

The age-appropriate use of computer and media technology and internet access are integral components of the School's educational philosophy and pedagogy. We expect that our students will use digital resources as tools to enhance learning, support research, and for solving meaningful educational problems in all academic classes. They will continue to learn to discern and evaluate resources as they explore the vast amount of data available in this "age of information" and develop the skills necessary to express themselves using the latest multimedia software applications and network to exchange thoughts with each other and with students worldwide via the Internet. Our integration of technology into the curriculum will provide extensive opportunities for our students to improve their ability to think abstractly, analytically and systematically.

Students and parents may be expected to read, sign and abide by essential agreements regarding the acceptable use of technology at IST. Students and parents of certain grades, such as those that receive Chromebooks may be expected to read, sign, and abide by specific policies relating to the use of Chromebooks.

## ONLINE SAFETY AND ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

All community members are expected to comply with the rules regarding use of the internet in order to avoid visiting inappropriate sites and are asked to exercise good judgment when using this resource. To the greatest extent possible, members of the community will be protected from harassment, and/or unwanted or unsolicited contact.

Restrictions may apply for use of specific software programs and Internet access. The School reserves the right to exercise the active use of filters to prevent the inappropriate access of Internet sites, email accounts, and/or firewalls. Users must adhere to all copyright laws and not infringe upon the intellectual rights of other users, sources provided by the School or obtained through Internet access.

## ONLINE ETIQUETTE

All IST internet users are expected to abide by the rules of school etiquette. When applied to the use of IT resources, these specifically include, but are not limited to, the following: Use appropriate language (users should not use inappropriate or abusive language). Respect the right of others to have equitable access to use of networked computers, peripherals (such as scanners, printers, interactive white boards etc.), and the Internet. All issues of etiquette are age- and experience-level appropriate.

## PRIVACY

The School can access any community member files and email correspondence on the School's network. If a user has violated the guidelines of this policy, a system administrator or teacher may use this ability to gain access to private correspondence or files. It is also understood that the system administrator may also have to access private files as part of maintenance of the system.

## TUITION, FEES AND DONATIONS

### PAYMENTS OF FEES AND TUITION

Tuition is assessed upon the academic term of enrollment. Students who enroll mid-term are liable for any and all tuition for the term in which they are enrolled. Acceptance of the Enrollment and Tuition Contract is acceptance of the tuition and fees for the entire academic year.

Payments are due on the FIRST day of each month. Automatic payment plans are available via our Tuition Management System. All installment plans administered through the

Tuition Payment Management System and paid via credit card will incur a 3% administration fee plus an annual enrollment fee of \$45.00 per family.

In the event the student's tuition and/or fees are not paid on time, the student will not be allowed to participate in the next term's classes until the tuition and/or fees are paid. Students with unpaid tuition and/or fees will not be issued either a certificate of attendance or formal report(s) until the balance is paid in full.

In the event tuition and/or fees remain unpaid upon the published due date and the International School of Texas retains an attorney and/or collection agency to collect monies due, the parent(s) agree to pay reasonable attorneys' fees and collection agency costs.

## WITHDRAWAL

When registering your student for the school year, a space is reserved in the applicable year group specifically for the student, which also includes payment of non-refundable fees and tuition for the entire school year. Once a student is registered and guaranteed a space, the parent or guardian is obligated to forfeit the non-refundable fees and/or tuition down payment and pay for any outstanding tuition and/or fees through the end of the academic year as outlined in the Tuition Contract, regardless of if the student is withdrawn or dismissed.

## ENFORCEABILITY

The Tuition Contract shall be interpreted and enforceable under the laws of the State of Texas. If any portion of the contract is found to be unenforceable by a court of law, then the remainder of said contract shall remain in full force and effect. Any and all disputes arising out of, or concerning, the Tuition Contract, or the student's enrollment at the International School of Texas, shall be arbitrated in Travis County, Texas, by an arbitrator assigned by the American Arbitration Association (AAA).

## ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN | CAPITAL CAMPAIGNS

As a nonprofit organization, the School engages in fundraising within its community to support the ongoing excellence of our education and to support our teachers, students, and maintain operations on our campuses. As members of the IST community, families are encouraged to consider giving to IST to support our shared goals. Charitable donations to IST should be at a level which is meaningful to each family, and undertaken with the knowledge that every gift matters, and no gift is too small.

IST engages in an Annual Campaign which supports the Trailblazer Fund. Funds donated to the Trailblazer Fund directly support operating costs for the School and strengthen the financial foundation of the School. The annual campaign covers the additional costs not covered by tuition and donations help cover operating costs. Giving at any level from our families to strengthen our school community is appreciated but is not required.

As IST is engaged in building its purpose-built campus in Bee Cave, and/or developing a future IST High School, the School will also engage in a capital campaign, currently known as Here We Grow. As with other nonprofit organizations and private schools, capital campaigns have the specific goal of raising money to support campus construction and improvements and expenditures to support healthy growth. The support of our community has always been pivotal to IST's growth and success and continues to be as our School thrives and builds its future.

Donations may take the form of direct donations, donations of stock, gifts of property, or planned giving, all of which are tax-exempt to the extent permitted by law. Additionally, many companies have a Matching Gifts Program that will match all or part of the tax-deductible contribution and further information can be provided by the School's Chief Business Officer, Brandy Hoopaugh, reachable at [b.hoopaugh@istexas.org](mailto:b.hoopaugh@istexas.org).

## TRANSPORTATION

### SCHOOL SHUTTLE RULES

The School may provide shuttle service between its campus locations or for special events such as field trips. Registration is required. Expectations of students on the bus are the same as they are on campus, including:

- Riders are required to be on time, especially for the morning inter-campus shuttle.
- Courteous behavior will be expected, including greeting and thanking the driver each day.
- Board the vehicle quietly and remain in the student's assigned seat.
- Ensure that the seat belt/harness is secure at all times.
- Remain seated at all times while the vehicle is in motion.
- Sit facing forward with one's back against the seat.

Riding the shuttle is a privilege. Failure to follow the rules may result in loss of that privilege.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### LOST AND FOUND

Please label all uniforms, outerwear, and personal belongings. Young students often have difficulty keeping track of their belongings and sometimes fail to recognize their own things. Please check with the Front Desk for lost-and-found locations and encourage your

student to do the same. Every effort is made to return items to their owners, but the International School of Texas is not responsible for lost items. Unclaimed items may be donated to charity at the end of each term.

### **SOCIAL CONTACT WITH STAFF MEMBERS**

The International School of Texas strives to have parents, students, and teachers develop close relationships to help foster a positive educational environment. However, to help maintain personal boundaries between students/families and staff, it is required that:

- Teachers cannot undertake student or pet sitting duties
- Teachers may not privately tutor students in their own class(es)
- Staff are NOT allowed to attend students' birthday parties unless staff is also a parent of a student of the school attending the party.

The School does not prohibit or encourage parents and staff relationships on social media, but does request that if such relationships are established, that all participants respect the balance of personal and professional roles as they relate to the proper functioning of the School.

### **GIFT GIVING TO IST EMPLOYEES**

Our parents are very appreciative of the professionals who serve their students and can often be found to be incredibly generous in their gratitude. In order to prevent any possible appearance of impropriety, the school discourages individual gifts in excess of a \$50 value (per student per staff member). Gift giving is completely optional, although many of our families choose to give gifts to teachers and staff each year prior to Winter Break; for Faculty/Staff Appreciation Day and/or at the end of the year.

Sometimes, a class parent or club parent may organize a donation/gift pool for parents who are interested in participating in an additional measure. Participation in these joint efforts is also completely optional.

### **NO POLITICAL OR RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION**

The School has no political or religious affiliation and welcomes families from all backgrounds, political beliefs and religions. In keeping with the mission of the International Baccalaureate, we expect that all members of the IST community treat one another with respect, regardless of their differences.

#### [The mission of the International Baccalaureate states:](#)

The International Baccalaureate® aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and

rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

## ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The International School of Texas does not unlawfully discriminate in employment opportunities or admissions practices based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis protected by law. Admissions and employment decisions at the International School of Texas are made in a non-discriminatory manner and are based on qualifications, abilities, and merit.

## MANDATORY REPORTING

The School is committed to the highest standards of care for our students and seeks to ensure that our students are protected from inappropriate or hurtful actions by adults responsible for their care, as well as by anyone else who may mistreat a student. In accordance with Texas law, all School employees are required to report suspected abuse or neglect of any student under age 18 and to notify the Head of School.

*Teachers and all school employees are considered professional reporters in Texas and are required by law to report suspected child abuse or neglect immediately, but no later than 48 hours after the initial suspicions of abuse or neglect. Teachers cannot delegate to or rely on another person to make the report (Texas Family Code § 261.101(b)). Failure to report suspected child abuse and neglect is a crime (Texas Family Code § 261.109).*

Suspicion or belief may be based on factors including, but not limited to, observations, allegations, facts, or statements by a child, a victim, or a third party. Such suspicion does not require certainty or probable cause. The responsibility to report rests both on the School and also on all School employees.

All employees have undergone national and local criminal background checks prior to being hired by the School and have undergone school training pertaining to prevention and identification of student protection.

## CONTACT GUIDE



### CONTACT GUIDE 2023 - 2024

Please refer to this guide prior to communicating with School Faculty and Staff.

This will ensure you receive timely, relevant, and accurate responsiveness for your questions and concerns.

**Call us at 512-351-3403**

<b>Attendance, Pickup &amp; Drop-off</b>	PYP at Hudson Bend   Laura Woolsey MYP at Bee Cave   Deana Barajas	<a href="mailto:attendance@istexas.org">attendance@istexas.org</a>
<b>School work, Behavior, &amp; Student Development</b>	<b>Contact your child's Teacher first! If you are unable to get what you need, then contact your respective Deputy Head of School.</b>  <b>Chad Hyatt</b>   MYP Coordinator & Deputy Head of School <b>Ashley Swindle</b>   PYP Coordinator & Deputy Head of School	<a href="mailto:c.hyatt@istexas.org">c.hyatt@istexas.org</a> <a href="mailto:a.swindle@istexas.org">a.swindle@istexas.org</a>
<b>Social-Emotional Wellbeing</b>	<b>Francesca Bracho</b>   School Counselor	<a href="mailto:f.bracho@istexas.org">f.bracho@istexas.org</a>
<b>Learning Differences</b>	<b>Gené Racinkas</b>   Learning Specialist	<a href="mailto:g.racinkas@istexas.org">g.racinkas@istexas.org</a>
<b>Balanced Nutrition Program</b>	<b>Laura Woolsey</b>   Front Desk Coordinator	<a href="mailto:l.woolsey@istexas.org">l.woolsey@istexas.org</a>
<b>Activities &amp; Teams</b>	<b>Deana Barajas</b>   Club & Activities Coordinator	<a href="mailto:d.barajas@istexas.org">d.barajas@istexas.org</a>
<b>Enrollment &amp; Records</b>	<b>Charissa Bates</b>   Director of Admissions & Registrar	<a href="mailto:c.bates@istexas.org">c.bates@istexas.org</a>
<b>Medical Records &amp; Health</b>	<b>Bethany Reed</b>   Nurse & Wellness Coordinator	<a href="mailto:b.reed@istexas.org">b.reed@istexas.org</a>
<b>Uniforms</b>	<b>Charissa Bates</b>   Director of Admissions & Registrar	<a href="mailto:c.bates@istexas.org">c.bates@istexas.org</a>
<b>Tuition, Fees, &amp; Finances, Fundraising &amp; Development</b>	<b>Brandy Hoopaugh</b>   Chief Business Officer	<a href="mailto:b.hoopagh@istexas.org">b.hoopagh@istexas.org</a>
<b>Communications &amp; Media Inquiries</b>	<b>Corey Gayheart</b>   Community Relations Coordinator	<a href="mailto:c.gayheart@istexas.org">c.gayheart@istexas.org</a>