



ACADEMIA INTERNACIONAL SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE

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PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

-- Revised August 2016

Thank you for carefully reading this Handbook.

Following these guidelines and understanding school policies ensures a smooth year for all of us, and a pleasant and safe environment for your child.

Have a great 2016-2017 school year!

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INTRODUCTION

We welcome your child, and your family to our school community. We feel privileged to be a part of your lives. This handbook will help foster the best possible communication between the school and the home.

This handbook provides important information on school policies and programs. Please read it carefully, keep it handy for reference, and call us if you have any further questions or concerns. Office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday. Our telephone number is (415) 152-3235. Our email is: info@academiasanmiguel.org

COMMITMENT

The Academia Internacional School was founded to be a world-class private school that emphasizes a holistic and humanistic approach to education. Our programs include rigorous academics, intensive dual language instruction in Spanish and English, and Project-Based learning; our environment is nurturing, respectful, challenging and inspiring. Our program is a cohesive and comprehensive program, and our environment is set up to foster respect for the individual student and a sense of community that brings out the best in individuals.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Vision Statement

The Academia Internacional focuses on preparing multicultural students who can develop successfully in a global setting. An international education based on academic rigor, creativity, digital abilities, individualized needs, and an integrated curriculum provide an educational environment, which serves the whole student – intellectually, physically, and emotionally. The Academia cultivates a life-long love of learning and inspires a passion for excellence.

Academia Internacional School believes in:

1. Excellence – the desire and commitment of doing ones best in every possible area of life.
2. Universal Values – habits and ways of thinking and acting which exhibit deeply held values including honesty, integrity, responsibility,

compassion, peacefulness, respect for self and others, and a love of community.

3. Global Perspective – understanding, extensive knowledge, and respect for our world and all those in it.
4. Service – a lifelong commitment to giving something back through service to others.

Essential Elements of an Educational Program that fosters Academic Excellence

- Our school is based on the principles of respect and autonomy.
- Our programs teach students to think and discover for themselves.
- Students and teachers work in a carefully prepared environment.
- Curriculum is organized into a spiral of integrated studies.
- Our materials are a road from the concrete to the abstract.
- Our school gives students the sense of belonging to a family and helps them live with other people.
- Our classrooms foster a sense of collaboration and mentoring among students. Older students are encouraged to be role models for younger ones.
- Our teachers incorporate a second language, music, movement and art into the curriculum.
- Our teachers have the ability to work with students of different learning styles.
- Our teachers strive to awaken the student's spirit and imagination, and encourage a normal desire for independence.
- Our teachers help the student learn how to observe, to question and to explore ideas independently.
- Our teachers help develop the kindness, courtesy, and respect that will help the student become a member of society.

- Our parents value an educational system that reaches the whole student.
- Our parents participate in the education of their student, and support the school community.
- Our parents enhance the school philosophy of respect for the student by using it in their home.

CURRICULUM

We offer students a carefully prepared environment with the internationally recognized program “American Society of Communications” that provides students with learning materials and resources that reinforce content learning and enhance critical thinking skills. The teacher is a facilitator in the learning process. Through careful observation and guidance, students are directed toward meaningful activities, which help them discover and develop their own interests and abilities.

Dual Language Program

We currently offer a dual language Spanish/English program for all students. This program allows students to receive lessons in Spanish and in English throughout the day.

Project Based Learning

At the Academia Internacional, we implement project based learning methods. This is a comprehensive approach to instruction. Our students participate in projects and practice an interdisciplinary array of skills from math, language arts, fine arts, geography, science, and technology. With this type of active and engaged learning, students are inspired to obtain a deeper knowledge of the subjects they are studying.

Preschool and Kindergarten Programs

The Preschool program is for students ages 3-4 and the Kindergarten Program is for 5 year olds. Students in preschool and kindergarten attend a full day of instruction.

In the morning, Preschool and Kindergarten students benefit from activities

that develop their readiness skills for reading, writing, and mathematics. In the afternoon, the students have the opportunity to develop their fine and gross motor skills through creative and fun lessons.

The Preschool and Kindergarten programs consists of five main areas:

1. The Practical Life area helps students develop order, concentration, coordination, and independence in the care of self and the environment.
2. The Sensorial area offers students a chance to develop their sensory acuteness with materials relating to color, size, shape, sound, smell and touch.
3. Language Arts activities include pre-reading activities, vocabulary development and introduction to reading and writing.
4. The Math area provides concrete and manipulative materials through which the students discover the meaning of quantity, gain an overview of the number system and learn mathematical operations.
5. In Geography, History, and Science the students explore the physical, cultural, and natural worlds.

Also included are art, music, and movement. Communication, grace, courtesy, problem solving and other social skills are integrated throughout the curriculum.

Elementary Program

Through personalized instruction and planning, students are encouraged to pursue studies independently and take responsibility for their learning. They are encouraged to make choices and work cooperatively.

The elementary curriculum follows standards that are aligned to Secretaría de Educación (SEP) standards, which are learned and then presented at the critical thinking level. The subjects implemented include Math, Language Arts, Science, Geography, and History. The students are refining their ability to obtain knowledge through research. They develop an understanding of the relationship between all subjects. The students are also developing their capacities to move from concrete to abstract concepts.

Students develop important interpersonal skills, become responsible members of a community and establish a code of conduct.

Field trips, guest speakers, theatrical productions, community service and other special events enrich classroom learning.

Middle and High School Programs

The Middle School Program is based on developing critical thinking skills in students. The middle school teachers focus on students' mental, physical, social and emotional well-being. The students acquire life-long skills including communication, responsibility, decision-making, and goal setting. An extensive curriculum includes SEP (Secretaría de Educación), and Cambridge standards as well as an international philosophy and practices. The curriculum encompasses science, mathematics, literature, history, geography, social studies and establishes a permanent knowledge base. Complete mastery of subject matter is supported through peer and teacher study sessions, encouraging accountability, self-motivation and a strong work ethic. An emphasis is placed on community service and helping others. Field trips and guest speakers complement the curriculum.

COMPUTERS

Academia Internacional School provides technology resources and Internet access to students and has taken precautions to restrict access to objectionable material. Our policies are intended to promote the most effective, safe, productive, and instructionally sound uses of networked information and communication tools. However, we cannot guarantee that the network will be without error. We expect students to exercise appropriate personal responsibility in their use of these resources including the following:

□□ Students may not email, chat, instant message, text, play games, access music/videos, hack/prank, or visit social net-work sites i.e. MySpace, Facebook, YouTube, etc. during instructional time.

□□ Students may not download software or change network settings and passwords.

☐☐Students may not password protect files. Teachers may have access to student data at all times.

☐☐Students may only use computers and printers as related to the curriculum as assigned by our teachers and not for personal use.

☐☐AISMA has the right to look at any data, email, logs or files that exist on USB flash drives and hard drives without prior notice to users.

☐☐Students may not copy, save, or plagiarize material.

☐☐Students may not eat or drink while using technology equipment.

☐☐Students agree to notify a teacher immediately if they mistakenly access inappropriate information.

☐☐Parents will be held financially responsible for any intentional damage to AISMA laptops, computers, network, etc. including vandalism, downloading viruses/worms, etc.

Students may bring a personal laptop to school for their use. They are not to be shared with other students and must have appropriate firewall, parental controls, and active antivirus software. Personal laptop use on campus falls under the aforementioned policies and user guidelines. AISMA is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged personal property and is the sole responsibility of the student.

DAILY PROCEDURES

School Hours

<i>Programs</i>	<i>Begin</i>	<i>End</i>
Preschool/Kindergarten	8:00 AM	2:45 PM
Elementary Full Day (1st – 6th)	8:00 AM	3:00 PM
Middle School (7th – 9th)	8:00 AM	3:00 PM
High School (10th – 11th)	8:00 AM	3:00 PM

Arrival and Departure

Preschool students will be dropped off and picked up from the main school entrance door located at Stirling Dickinson #2.

Elementary students will enter through the main entrance door in the morning and will be dismissed from the Sports Court.

Middle School and High School students will arrive and depart from the gate located at Stirling Dickinson #4.

Other Important Tips

1. Since the teachers are greeting students and helping them to begin their day, it is not an appropriate time to converse extensively with your student's teacher.
2. If you wish to speak with a teacher for an extended period of time leave a message at the office or send a note asking for an appointment, but refrain from the practice of conversing for more than a few moments with the staff members while they are in contact with the students. Lengthy conversations distract the staff members who need to be giving 100% of their attention to the students.
3. When picking up your student, please do not encourage him/her to continue to play on the playground while you wait. This is confusing to the staff with regard to safety and supervision (i.e. "Who is watching the student?"). Students should be picked-up from school promptly.
4. Please watch your students carefully at all times when on campus.

Extracurricular activities

Students who attend the extracurricular programs will come together at the lunch tables after they have been dismissed from their classrooms. Picking your children up from extracurricular activities requires walking into the building, and picking up your children on time.

Procedure for Releasing Students

Frequently, relatives or friends will come to pick up students. We will not release a student to anyone without permission from the parent. A note to

this effect must be given to the office with a parent's signature, and identification must be shown. Only in an emergency situation can we take a notification of a change by telephone. Please note even if another person is authorized by a parent to pick up a student he/she will have to show identification the first time he/she picks up the student. It is also helpful if the parent who picks up the student would inform the teacher if there would be a change from the ordinary. This helps the pick-up process go more quickly and smoothly. If the student is in a car pool, please inform the office staff, and the teachers of this situation.

UNIFORM

The school uniform will be worn to school on a daily basis except on assigned physical education days when they will wear the sports uniform. There will be days where students will be required to wear the formal uniform due to participation in civic activities.

Footwear is especially important. We require all students to wear black shoes, or black, or white tennis shoes. It is difficult and unsafe for students to run, climb, or walk in flip-flops, clogs, backless shoes, and shoes with heels. Therefore, we ask that you refrain from sending your children in these types of shoes.

ATTENDANCE

All Academia Internacional students are expected to attend school on a daily basis, arriving before the start of the school day. Consistent attendance and prompt arrival are essential. Late arrival is disruptive and inconsiderate to the rest of the class, and nothing can be more disruptive to a student's education than irregular attendance. Three late arrivals (tardy slips) will be counted as the equivalent of 1 absence. Consistency and routine are important to every student's development. We depend on our families' full support in this area. Parents of students who arrive late on three occasions during one bimester will be required to attend a parent/administration conference.

ABSENCES

It is important for the school to know if your student is ill, if your student is taking a day off, or if you are taking a vacation. Frequent absences impede student's academic progress and cause them to miss important

experiences. Please call absences in to the office (415) 152-3235 by 9 a.m.

All students should bring a note upon returning to the school explaining the reason for the absence or a medical prescription from a doctor. If the absence is for longer than three days, then a medical prescription is required. If parents know of an absence in advance, such as a vacation or scheduled medical procedure, parents should prearrange the absence by sending a written note to the teacher. Any vacation taken outside of the 185 day calendar will be unapproved absences.

Approved absences are those that have followed the above procedure. AISMA students should not have more than 20 absences per academic school year 4 per bimester or 10 per semester for high school students. Unless otherwise approved by the Director, students who exceed these guidelines may be withdrawn from the Academia Internacional, lose preferred enrollment status and/or not advance to the next level. This policy allows us to do all we can to ensure that each student grows and learns to his/her potential. Absences and tardiness will be noted on all report cards.

HOMWORK

Homework at the Academia is assigned to help students develop a work ethic, organizational skills, and the value of responsibility. Homework reinforces concepts students have learned in the classroom. Parents can support the teachers by making certain their children complete and turn in homework assignments. Homework at the elementary level will be assigned on Monday and will be due on the following Friday. At the middle and high school levels one homework assignment per subject will be assigned weekly. Completing and turning in homework assignments is the students' responsibility. If a student is missing three homework assignments parents will be called in for a conference.

LUNCH

The school provides the option for students to purchase food from the school cafeteria or to bring a lunch to school. We strongly encourage nutritional lunches. Things to avoid are artificial flavoring, excessive amounts of salt and fat, preservatives (BHA, BHT), and excessive amounts of refined sugar. Please do not send snack items that list sugar as one of the first few ingredients. No candy bars or sodas will be allowed. Please don't send items in glass containers for the safety of the students. It is best

to pack items in reusable plastic containers.

ILLNESSES AND EMERGENCIES

If an illness or emergency arises we will attempt to contact a responsible party. We will follow these procedures:

- a. Your student will be taken to an area away from the other students.
- b. A parent or responsible party will be contacted to pick up the student within 45 minutes.
- c. We require three telephone numbers to be listed on our registration form in case your student gets sick or there is an emergency. Usually the numbers are for their parents and a relative or a friend. Some parents have occupations where it is difficult to be contacted and/or leave on short notice. If you have such a job, please provide the names of individuals who have the flexibility to pick up your student.
- d. If a serious illness or emergency occurs and we are unable to reach a responsible party, we will contact your personal physician, or if necessary, call an ambulance or other emergency service. It is absolutely imperative that you keep the school up to date on any changes in telephone numbers, emergency numbers, and other pertinent information.

If your student has any of the following indications, he/she is not healthy enough to attend school.

- Fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Deep coughing
- Yellow or green nasal or eye discharge
- Upset stomach
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Unidentified rash

If your child has one or more of these symptoms, please keep him/her home. If a student exhibits any of these symptoms at school, a parent will

be notified to make arrangements to pick up the student from school. The student may return to school after he/she is symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours. We are aware that this can be a real burden. However, it not only makes the student comfortable, but also prevents exposure to the rest of the students and staff.

Given the nature of students, accidents will happen. Hopefully, they will always be minor bumps and bruises. In the event of an accidental injury, the staff member present will care for the student and notify the administration. In the event of a serious accident, the family of the student is notified and arrangements are made for the student to be taken from the school. In an extreme emergency, we will call 066. For all accidents an injury report will be completed and signed by the attending staff member and the parent. The report will be kept in the student's file and parents will be given a copy. The school provides insurance coverage for accidents. The insurance covers up to \$30,000 pesos in medical costs. The parents will be responsible for covering any additional costs beyond \$30,000 pesos.

EMERGENCY PLAN

AISMA School has developed appropriate plans to respond in emergency situations as outlined in our Civil Protection Manual. Fire Drills are conducted twice every school year.

No Smoking and No Alcohol Policy

Smoking and the use of alcohol or any chemical substances, and drugs are strictly prohibited at all times in the classrooms, on the campus/parking lot, and on field trips.

Personal Property

AISMA assumes no responsibility for any items brought from home. We ask that you leave fragile and valuable materials at home so that they will be better protected. There is a lost and found box at the front of the Administration Office. Please check it for any items you may be missing.

Students will hand in cell phones at the beginning of the school day which will be stored in the Academic Director's office. At the end of the school day the students will pick up their phones from the office to take home.

BIRTHDAYS

Often students will like to share a food on their birthday during the lunch period. An item to be shared for snack is welcome, but we ask that it be nutritious. Examples might be bagels, special bread, a baked item like muffins, or a food that represents a cultural or national origin of the student or someone he/she knows. Please check with the student's teacher before sending any food items to share. Please no gifts, sweets, or goodie bags.

Difficulties and hurt feelings can occur when birthday invitations are passed out at school. Unless every student in the class is being invited, please distribute birthday invitations outside of school property. Please do not ask the student's teacher to pass out invitations or put them in the cubbies if all students are not invited.

PARENT / SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

ALSMA strives to be in partnership with parents in the education of their students. We will strive to keep communication lines open between the parent and the school.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Conferences are held in the fall and spring. It is essential that parents; preferably both mother and father attend conferences.

Newsletter

You will receive the school's newsletter periodically during the school year. These newsletters include information on upcoming school events such as parent education meetings, school festivals, holidays, and field trips; as well as, other relevant school information.

PARENT EDUCATION

Parent Education meetings will be held throughout the year. Issues such as discussing the learning philosophy and parenting materials will be presented. This is an excellent chance to expand your knowledge of how your student learns and how you can carry this philosophy into your home. Parents are expected to support school events and attend parent education meetings.

Parent Involvement

All parents enrolling their students at AISMA agree to involve themselves in their student's education by attending all Parent/Teacher conferences and by attending Parent Education Night and school events. Parents are expected to enforce all school and homework policies, and to make certain required assignments are completed and handed in.

Parent Volunteers

We strongly encourage every parent to volunteer in one way or another so that all feel like a part of our school community. We will do our best to come up with creative and broad opportunities for involvement so there will be "something for everyone". Involvement does not need to be extensive or time consuming to be meaningful to you and your student. Often just the sharing of an experience, cultural information, travel experiences, or career expertise can enrich the student's learning. This allows parents to add so much to our school. We also have a Parent/Teacher Association that parents can participate in. The PTA always encourages involvement and offers a wide variety of opportunities.

Participation/volunteering in any AISMA activities, and the use of any recreational facilities involves a risk of accidental injury despite all safety precautions. Volunteers assume all risks and hazards incidental to the activities, and release from responsibility and agree to indemnify and hold harmless AISMA, its staff members, independent contractors, and all employees for any illness or injury incurred during voluntary participation in any activities, trips, or use of recreational facilities conducted by AISMA.

Visitors

All adult visitors to the school, including parents of enrolled students, must come to the reception area in the Administration Office and sign in. Visitors will be given a badge to wear which lets all staff know they have checked in at the office. Visitors who are not wearing a badge will be asked to go to the office to sign in.

On occasion friends, relatives, and former students ask to visit the school during school hours. Although we strive to have a warm and welcoming campus, this can be very distracting to the learning environment. All visits must receive prior approval from the administration, and, except under rare

circumstances, will only be approved for the end of the school day. No drop in visitors will be allowed.

Field Trips

Your student will have the opportunity to go on field trips. The parents' written parental permission slip, signed during registration, is used for the entire year. Parents will be advised about trips involving transportation off premises usually provided by chartered buses, but on rare occasion by parent owned vehicles. The notice will give complete details. Parent owned vehicles must be covered by private liability insurance and parents must have a current driver's license and proof of insurance in their car or possession. Each driver will have a list of the students being transported in their car with the names and phone numbers of parents and or guardians. The driver of the privately owned vehicle and all passengers must wear seat belts or be in car seats if required by law. In addition, parent chaperones must sign up at least one day in advance of the field trip with their student's teacher, as space is typically limited.

In the event you do not want your student to participate in any field trip, it will be necessary to keep your student home. There is no reduction of tuition for this absence.

Networking

Students and parents using social network sites at any time and in any place are not to mention classmates, families, teachers, staff or the administration of AISMA in a negative manner or to talk in a derogatory way about the school and/or its' families. Sites include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.

Please also refrain from being critical, judgmental, and infringing on others privacy. Doing so may result in suspension or withdrawal from the school, and legal recourse may be taken as defamation is against the law in Mexico.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE

Admission

ALSMA accepts students' age 3 years through 17 years. We admit students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to all students at the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of our educational policies, admission policies, and other school administered programs. However, the school reserves the right to admit students who have demonstrated misconduct in their past school history.

Tuition

Tuition fees are based on eleven months of the school year beginning in August until June. No refunds will be given if a student is absent due to illness or lost days due to vacations. If a financial agreement is reached, it must be signed before registering your child, and shall be accompanied by a non-refundable deposit of \$ 400.00 pesos. Tuition fees can be paid annually at a discount of 5%. No refunds will be given on tuition that is paid annually. Please make payments at BanBajío. If payments are made at the administrative office by credit card there will be a charge of an additional 3% to cover the cost of using the card. If a tuition payment is made after the 10th of each month a late fee of 10% will apply.

Required documents for admission

Students will be admitted to the Academia by filling out the school application and bringing an original birth certificate, a CURP, a current proof of address, and a report card from the previous school. These documents will be placed in the student's record file. If a student does not have all the legal documentation that is required by the system of Ministry of Public Education (SEP) he/ she will have 30 days to revalidate their studies. After 30 days the school will be responsible for this revalidation at a cost of \$ 1,200 pesos per elementary school level, and \$2,000 pesos per subject at the secondary level.

Official documents

Official documents with the seal of the school will cost \$ 150.00 pesos. An academic record or transcript will cost \$ 250.00 pesos.

Inscription Procedures

Inscription takes place in February. Students already enrolled in the program are given the opportunity to re-enroll before new students are admitted. Siblings of students already in the school are given priority. Inscriptions of new students are accepted after re-enrollment is made available to currently enrolled families.

Costs and expenses of legal collection

If after following the normal means of collection we are forced to apply for 3rd party intervention in the collection, you must pay its costs, including attorney's fees.

Withdrawal of Student from the Academia

Parents must notify the school a month in advance of withdrawing a student from the Academia. If the school does not receive a month's notice, the parents will be responsible for full payment of the students' last month at the Academia. Please note that a withdrawal forfeits new family, inscription, program and technology fees, and annual tuition payments.

Termination of Educational Service

We, as a school, are committed to providing every opportunity for students to feel comfortable and make a positive adjustment to the classroom environment. At times this might include making a transfer to another classroom. However, there are times and circumstances when a student may be asked to leave. These situations may include:

1. A student is not making the adjustment to the classroom environment.
2. It is determined that the needs of the student or the parent would be better served in another environment.

3. A student is not making appropriate academic progress.
4. A student is not doing assigned classroom work, homework, or fulfilling other requirements.
5. A student or parent's behavior is inappropriate.
6. A student is habitually late or absent.
7. A student repeatedly violates the dress code.
8. Tuition is not paid on a timely basis.

The Director, in counsel with parent, faculty, and at times appropriate professionals, will determine the course of action in these cases.

AISMA reserves the right to terminate any students' enrollment at any time for any reason, not prohibited by law, if in AISMA's sole judgment the student is not meeting the programs goals or standards or if we do not have adequate expertise or resources for the student's educational, medical, or other needs (subject to applicable regulatory requirements). AISMA further reserves the right to decline enrollment/services to students who, in AISMA's sole judgment, are uncooperative, abusive to school staff, or to fellow students, and who do not abide by the General Rules of the Academia. AISMA also reserves the right to decline access to the school building to parents who demonstrate a lack of respect or display aggression towards any school staff member.

CONDITIONAL ATTENDANCE AND LETTER OF COMMITMENT

Please refer to the Discipline Policy

EXPULSION

The Academia Internacional reserves the right to require withdrawal of any student if the teachers and Director determine the AISMA school environment is not a good placement or does not meet the needs of a particular student. The Academia Internacional also reserves the right to require withdrawal in situations involving repeated violations of school rules. Any student who repeatedly breaks the ground rules, or who on even one occasion endangers the health and safety of others, may be asked to

leave the school by the Directors.

Mandatory Withdrawal for Lack Of Academic Progress or Failure to Meet Program Standards

A lack of academic progress may occur for a variety of reasons and is usually characterized by a student progressing at a rate that is more than a semester behind standard traditional expectations for a grade level. A student may fail to meet program standards by habitually not turning in assigned work or repeatedly not meeting minimum expectations for work. Each situation is treated individually. In serious cases, determination on a course of action is made by a team of teachers, which includes the classroom teachers, the Director and the student's parents. If a special need is suspected, every effort must be made by the parents to assist in the identification of the special need. AISMA reserves the right to require additional tutoring for a student whose progress is of concern as part of an overall remedial plan. Although we strive to help each student reach his/her potential, withdrawal may be required for lack of academic progress or failure to meet program goals at any time at AISMA's sole discretion.

Disclaimer: All policies and procedures may be subject to change at the sole discretion of the Administration of AISMA without written or advance notice. This flexibility is necessary to respond to the needs of our students and staff and serve their best interests while preserving the integrity of our programs.