International School of Panama

Family Handbook

Revised on August 1, 2022

Purpose

The Family Handbook aims to provide ISP families with information and guidance regarding school procedures and policies. While division specific information is highlighted, the overarching purpose of the Handbook is to provide families with a single point of reference for critical information. Please note that those families seeking more detailed information will often find this linked throughout this document.

The purpose of this document is to summarize certain of the main items contained in each of the relevant School procedures and policies adopted by the Board of Directors from time to time, and has been prepared for convenience only. In case of discrepancies between this handbook and such procedures and policies, the procedures and policies shall prevail.

This handbook is not intended to create obligations on the part of the School. In all cases, the obligations of the School shall be those set forth in the applicable School Contract signed by the School. This handbook may be revised from time to time by the School, and such revised handbook will supersede its previous version for all applicable purposes.

Head of School's Welcome

Dear ISP Community,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the academic year 2022-2023 at the International School of Panama (ISP). This handbook is designed for you, as a guide to all the behavioral expectations at our school and all the policies and procedures that govern our daily operations.

Our goal at ISP is to encourage and foster lifelong learners who are free to explore their strengths without hindrance. The common agreements and guidelines within this handbook will help them get there.

Please make yourself as familiar as possible with the procedures and guidelines within this handbook. If you cannot find what you are looking for, please feel free to contact the relevant principal within the division your child attends: High School, dletiecq@isp.edu.pa, Middle School, kmartin@isp.edu.pa, Elementary School, svanderhoff@isp.edu.pa, Early Childhood agdp@isp.edu.pa. You are also free to reach out to me at amenard@isp.edu.pa.

At ISP we are passionate in our goal of being student-centered and in creating an individualized educational experience for all of our students. I look forward to getting to know you throughout the coming year. There is no place like ISP!

Wishing you all the best,

Dr. Audrey C. Menard
Head of School

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INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF PANAMA FAMILY HANDBOOK

1. Who We Are

1.1. The ISP Mission

To inspire and challenge every learner to reach their full potential and become curious, independent, and compassionate citizens of the world.

1.2. ISP Core Values

- *Commitment to Excellence* - We tackle challenges willingly and persevere in order to succeed.
- *Compassion and Integrity* - We care for, respect, and value one another. It's not about me, it's about us.
- *Strength in Diversity* - We embrace our differences, enrich our community, and make meaningful connections, ensuring our global mindedness.
- *Innovative Spirit* - We are creative and curious learners, empowered to adapt to a rapidly changing world.
- *Lasting Impact* - We contribute to a sustainable future by taking care of our planet and leaving our environment better than we found it.

1.3. Learning at ISP

The International School of Panama sets a high academic standard. A challenging curriculum and highly qualified teachers have made ISP a leading school in Latin America. Our curriculum is designed to meet the educational program needs of both the expatriate and host-country community. ISP works in conjunction with the authority of MEDUCA, the Panamanian Ministry of Education, COGNIA, our accreditation agency, and the *International Baccalaureate Organization Diploma Programme*, to ensure our students receive the finest education. The language of instruction is English, and students who do not speak English as their first language receive additional support through our Department of Student Services.

ISP is a fun, creative and inclusive place for young people to learn and explore. We empower educators to build safe, joyful, and engaging learning communities where all students can reach their potential. We believe that children are naturally curious and our teachers use multiple teaching and learning methods, including the inquiry process to put students at the center of their learning.

ISP prepares students to grapple with real world issues and concepts in order for them to be successful in today's world and the future. This means developing skills, building on interests, leveraging technology, and applying learning to a variety of contexts. Our

students are empowered to solve problems, question the world around them, and test their ideas in a collaborative, supportive environment. As our students learn to work together, they grow to understand different perspectives and strengthen their thinking and social skills.

Our Definition of Learning	
Learning is a journey of authentic discovery to develop understanding, character and skills	
Principles of Learning	
Learning is Iterative	We learn through our mistakes, providing us opportunities to be creative and find solutions.
Learning is Exciting	We learn when we are inspired, challenged and active.
Learning is Meaningful	We learn and grow when we apply our knowledge, skills, and understandings to real world situations.
Learning is Social	We learn through sharing, interacting and collaborating

At ISP we offer a curriculum based on our core beliefs and with the intention of meeting the needs of all our learners. We employ curriculum used Internationally and in the United States with adjustments to meet the unique situation of students overseas and our host nation, Panama. Our teaching and learning is based on rigorous standards in all major disciplines. These standards are in line with our educational values which support our learners' thinking skills, understanding, knowledge and skills.

1.4. History of ISP

ISP had its informal beginnings as a community school set up by a few interested parents to provide an educational alternative to schools already offered in the area.

In 1982, a group of Panamanian and expatriate families met to establish an elementary school for about three dozen students. By 1985, the parents, calling themselves *The International School of Panama Association*, applied for and were granted authority to establish an educational institution under Panamanian law. The

ambitious group of founding parents decided to begin with a school that would serve students from kindergarten through third grade. They hired a director and teachers, and together with them created a curriculum that would provide the best possible education program with an international perspective. It was arduous work. Their dream and vision held strong even during times of political and financial hardships in the Republic of Panama.

The commitment and dedication of parents who joined the school when it was just starting out served as the foundation for the inspired expansion ISP now enjoys.

We have expanded from three small residential buildings in La Cresta to our current campus facilities set on a beautiful 9.6 acres area in the open rolling hills of Cerro Viento. In 1990, with enormous pride, ISP graduated eight students—our first senior class.

ISP currently serves over 1,100 students, representing 48 nationalities, who engage every day in a new learning adventure.

1.5. Governance

We are proud to be a non-profit school, which means that all tuition and fees go directly to the education of our students. ISP is governed by a Board of Directors and carrying on the traditions of our founding families, our school board ensures that ISP perpetuates its goal to provide a world-class education to its students, preparing them for success in continued educational endeavors and positive roles in society. The Board of Directors serve as volunteers and receive no benefits from holding this position. All tuition and fees go directly to the education of our students.

ISP Board of Directors is composed of 5 elected members and 4 appointed members, each of them serving for a 3 year term. They serve as volunteers and receive no benefits from holding this position. All tuition and fees go directly to the education of our students.

1.6. Organizational Chart

For a link to ISP's current Organizational Chart please click here.

2. General Information

2.1. School Calendar

To access information regarding ISP's Calendar, please click here.

2.2. School Schedule

Regular Schedule Classes: We will start at 8:00am and end at 2:40 pm.

The school gates open at 7:30 am. If you choose to drop students off prior to 7:30 am, you must stay with your child until the supervising teacher arrives.

School officially ends at 2:40 pm. There will be a teacher supervising the parent pick up area until 3:00 pm Students who are not picked up by 3:00 pm will be sent to the Elementary School Office to wait until a parent or authorized adult arrives. Buses depart by 2:50 pm.

2.2.1. Friday Schedule

Classes begin at 8:00am and end at 12:00pm

2.2.2. PK and Elementary School Schedule

Half Day Program Classes begin at 8:00am and end at 12:00pm on Monday, through Thursday. Classes end at 12:00pm on Friday. Students will have two snack breaks each day. Parents are responsible for sending healthy snacks.

2.2.3. Middle and High School Schedule

Middle School Schedule

The middle school follows a block schedule of four 70-minute classes each day. Classes will meet on alternating days. Over the course of the week, the classes will "cascade" to ensure that each class happens at different times in a given day (for example, math class is not the first block all the time). In addition to the four academic classes each day, students will also have advisory or What I Need (WIN) block each day.

Bell Schedules MS	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	DAY 8
BLOCK 1 8:00 - 9:10 (70 mins)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Advisory/WIN 9:15 - 10:00 (45 mins)	Advisory/WIN							
BREAK 10:00 - 10:20 (20 mins)	BREAK							
BLOCK 2 10:20 - 11:30 (70 mins)	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2
Lunch 11:30-12:15 (45 mins)	LUNCH							
BLOCK 3 12:15- 1:25 (70 mins)	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4
BLOCK 4 1:30-2:40 (70 mins)	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6

Please note that during hybrid learning, the lengths of these classes may vary slightly due to the adjusted school day.

High School Schedule

In our rotating block schedule, on Mondays, students attend Flag Ceremony (10 mins) and Advisory (40 mins) and five 50-minute classes. On Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, HS students start their day with a 15-minute advisory, and then have five 60-minute classes. Finally, on Fridays, students have five 40-minute classes (and no advisory.) Click here to view our schedule.

An IB Diploma or IEC Certificate junior or senior may only have a maximum of 3 Excel Blocks across 4 days. Non-IB students may have a maximum of 2, unless they are carrying 3 HL courses.

2.2.4.   Schedule of Athletics and After School Activities

We have one shift for Athletics and After School Activities at 3:00pm - 4:15 pm. After school buses are offered with a 4:30 pm departure time. There are some sports teams that practice on half day from 12.45pm - 2.45pm with a bus offered with a 3:00pm departure time. Parents who are picking up their child/ren are asked to respect this time and be sure to pick up their children 10

minutes prior to the bus departure time. If a student is not picked up by the bus departure time he/she will be sent to the Main Administrative Office to wait until a parent or authorized adult arrives.

2.3.   Closing of School

If the occasion arises that warrants the closing of school, official notice will be issued from the Head of School's Office. The decision to close school is made by the Head of School, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Board of Directors. The website will be the main line of communication for any school closures. Additionally, an email will be sent via ISP Communications, which is our official communication channel.

Please check for information regarding school closure prior to calling the school for information.

The following procedure will be employed:
- The Head of School will notify the teaching faculty and parents via the website and via email.
- It should be assumed that school will resume the following day, but look for additional information from the school regarding potential closures.
- Should the school remain closed, the school will as promptly as reasonably possible considering the circumstances activate the Heads Up E-learning procedures to ensure learning continues.

2.4.   Early Dismissal Policy and Procedures

Parents will pick up their child(ren) at the main entrance. Students will wait either in their divisional office or the main office until authorized pick up has been confirmed.

2.5.   Campus Access Guidelines and Visitors

Due to Child Protection Policies, Biosecurity Protocols and Law 81 Data Protection Regulation, visitor access to school grounds is restricted. This includes parents, prospective families, partners and service providers, among others. The objective of this policy is to safeguard the safety of our students, staff and community. All stakeholders of the ISP community are expected to follow and enforce our visitor and campus access policies.

Visitors and parents are permitted on campus based on previous appointment and notification to our Security team by an ISP staff member. Visitors must present a valid form of ID at the entrance and register with the Security guard. Visitors who do not wish to register will not be allowed on campus. Except where governed by law, ISP

retains the right to deny access to any visitor.

All visitors are required to wear a badge or band indicating they are a visitor or parent, visitors must be accompanied at all times when on school premises, and not allowed to take pictures or videos of students/staff on campus. Parents or members of the PTA that provide support to school activities will be allowed on specified areas of the campus for the preparation and duration of the activities. The division and faculty member in charge of the activity will need to provide a list of authorized parents on campus for that event to the Security team.

2.5.1.   Drop off & Pick up
Please take a few minutes to review this section and look at the videos for the instructions and locations for drop-off and pick-up of students. We ask for your support the first couple of weeks as students and parents get familiar with the protocol.

Buses Departure Time from school: 2:50 pm

Drop Off:

PK-1st Grade Drop Off: https://youtu.be/djUyNXEOKZE

2nd to 12th grade Drop Off: https://youtu.be/BooWLdKd-cI

Pick up:

PK-1st Grade Pick Up: https://youtu.be/XdSNn-6TYZE

2nd to 5th Pick Up: https://youtu.be/goKEjTLdD0c

6th to 12th Pick Up: https://youtu.be/3eFENpegJo8

2.5.2. Security Procedures
Under no circumstances are students allowed to leave school premises without authorization from the administration. Only people authorized in writing by parents/guardians have permission to pick up students. Parents or authorized adults must submit the "Permission to Leave the Building" form to the guard as they are leaving ISP. Students returning home with parents during ASA times must be picked up in front of the PAC.

Student visitors are not allowed on campus except through the admission department for prospective students.

2.6. Attendance
Attendance in school and participation in class are integral parts of the learning process. Regular attendance develops patterns of behavior essential to professional and personal success in life. A student must attend school **50 percent** of the school day in order to be counted present for the entire day.

2.6.1. Authorized Absences
When a student must miss school, a written authorization by a parent or guardian must be submitted before or on the day of the absence to be counted as an excused absence. If written authorization is not received the absence will be recorded as "unexcused." The school will record absences in accordance with the following guidelines, which provide that an absence may be recorded as authorized for the following reasons:
- Personal illness or injury which makes the student physically unable to attend school*
- Death in the immediate family
- Legal, medical or dental appointment*

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- Quarantine related to infectious disease*
- Observance of an event required or suggested by the religion of the student or the student's parent(s) with prior approval by the principal
- Participation in certain amateur or professional sport or entertainment events (with prior approval)

Notes: *Extended illnesses or health related absences may require a statement from a physician.

2.6.2. School-Related Activities
School-related activities will not be counted as absences from either class or school. Students are responsible for assignments missed for these reasons. The teacher will determine when work is to be made up. The student is responsible for finding out what assignments are due and completing them within the specified time period.

2.6.3. Attendance Expectations
Recognizing that regular school attendance is the foundation for learning, students are expected to be in attendance throughout the school year in order to receive academic credit. In the elementary school, a student absent more than **18 days** could be considered for retention. At the middle and high school, a student may be placed on Academic Probation or receive an Incomplete for the course depending on the number of absences. In cases of excessive absenteeism, the principal will meet with the parents to make a plan for improving attendance.

If the principal determines that academic credit will not be granted based on attendance, the parent or guardian will be notified in writing. The parent or guardian will have five days to appeal the principal's decision. Written documentation must be provided to the principal and must be based on appropriate reasons for the absences and completion of make-up work. A final decision will be made following the completion of the make-up work.

If there is an extenuating circumstance that requires a child to miss more than 18 days of school per year or more than five consecutive days, the parent must communicate with the principal and school office in writing to explain the reason for the absence and request an exemption. The school administration will review the request and determine eligibility for exemption and acceptable alternatives to the workload missed.

2.6.4.   Make-Up Work Opportunities
Students may be required to make up missed work regardless of whether the absence is authorized or unauthorized at the teacher's discretion. Teachers are not responsible for coordinating work for students going away for unexcused absences.

2.6.5.   Consequences for Excessive Absences or Tardies at the Middle and High Schools

Please refer to our [Secondary Behavior Policy](#) for complete details on excessive absences and tardies.

3.   Academics

3.1.   Academic Excellence

3.2.   Curriculum Information and Requirements

3.2.1.   Graduation Requirements
The majority of ISP students will graduate with between 28 and 32 credits. One credit is granted for each full year course, lab or field study. Participation in the graduation ceremony is a privilege earned for the completion of all graduation requirements. Only students fulfilling graduation requirements, including a 1.7 GPA, (prior to the ceremony) participate.

3.2.2.   Promotion
Grade placement and promotion to the next grade in high school is based upon the minimum total number of credits earned as follows:
- Promotion to grade **10**: earned 6 credits
- Promotion to grade **11:** earned 12 credits
- Promotion to grade **12**: earned 18 credits

To earn credit, students need to obtain a passing grade.

3.2.3.   Course Selection
High School Students must take a minimum of nine subjects in a ten block schedule, with the exception of full IB Diploma students. Full IB Diploma Candidates will have 6 Diploma Courses plus Theory of Knowledge. Non- IB underclass students may only take less than nine courses under extenuating circumstances, after parental request, with counselor support, and with special permission from the high school principal.

3.2.4.   Dropping and Adding Courses

At the end of each school year, when students receive their schedule, students are encouraged to make their changes prior to the start of the next Academic school year. Few changes will be honored in August except for new students and those who are switching programs.

At the beginning of each school year, there is a drop/add period lasting two weeks for that semester's non-IB courses. IB courses have a deadline of six weeks. During that time, a student may make changes to his/her schedule of classes – in consultation with the guidance counselor, and with the signed approval of the teachers involved. Provided the desired changes correspond to diploma and graduation requirements, they may be approved. All changes to the schedule are done by the counselor after the drop/add form is completed and submitted.

After the two-week drop/add period, changes may only be considered for:
- Inappropriate placement in level
- Duplication due to transfers
- Scheduling conflict/graduation requirements

3.2.5.   High School Diplomas and Certificates

The MEDUCA Diploma (formerly Panamanian Diploma)

Students are strongly encouraged to pursue the MEDUCA Diploma (along with the ISP Diploma) as this nationally recognized diploma is often required for admission to colleges and universities. The following requirements must be met in order to earn the MEDUCA Diploma, which are nearly the same as the requirements for the ISP Diploma.

Course requirements for the MEDUCA Diploma include the following:
- Early Panamanian History
- Modern Panamanian History
- Panamanian Civics
- Panamanian Geography
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Biology
- 4 years of mathematics
- Spanish for every year the student is at ISP

- Philosophy or TOK

Other requirements:
- Participation in the November 3rd march: In 9th grade, students participate in the Fiestas Patrias march. For this protocol, there are two practices in the week prior to November 3rd. Students who can't attend the march during their required year, due to unforeseen circumstances, will have to march the following year. Students who enter ISP after 9th grade will have to march during the year that they enter ISP.
- Parents/Guardians of students who obtained credits abroad must complete the convalidation process with the Ministry of Education. Please refer to records@isp.edu.pa if you have any questions about the process.
- Service hours: Students must complete 80 direct service hours.

Any questions regarding the MEDUCA Diploma should be addressed to: Alida Garcia de Paredes agdp@isp.edu.pa

International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme
Beginning in grade 11, students have the option of pursuing the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma. Designed as a comprehensive two-year curriculum that allows its graduates to fulfill requirements of various national education systems, the diploma model is not based on the curriculum of any individual country but incorporates the best elements of many. Students may register for individual IB courses or for the full IB Diploma.

Innovation and Entrepreneurship Certificate (IEC)
The Innovation and Entrepreneurship Course is open to all students who have a passion for technology, design and entrepreneurship. It is a two-year pathway that engages students in unique, personalized learning experiences. Students will understand how to gather and analyze data, refine research and reasoning skills, create innovative and creative solutions, communicate clearly, address complex and authentic problems, plan and track projects.

"Best Fit" Philosophy Statement
At the International School of Panama we counsel and strongly encourage families to select an academic program that is guided by the "Best Fit" philosophy. It is not expected, nor recommended, that all 11th and 12th grade students pursue the IB Diploma. Student should choose the program of study that emphasizes the following:
- Develops the student's strengths, interests, and passions

- Matches the student's learning style
- Challenges the student to grow and develop into a vibrant member of our learning community
- Prepares the student to pursue their preferred course of study in the country of their choosing

Learning what you like and what you're good at will better prepare you for college than agonizing over what will "look good" to admission officers. — **Cornell University**

We expect that you have taken a rigorous curriculum and chosen from among the most demanding courses available to you. It isn't necessary to have loaded your schedule with every advanced course offered at your school. But if such courses are available to you, we expect that you have taken advantage of many of them. — **Stanford University**

3.3.   Counseling
Each division within the school has school counselors who are responsible for the social and emotional welfare of the students and their families. They also support students academically and in high school act as college counselors.

3.4.   Grading and Reporting

3.4.1.   Elementary School
Assessment in Elementary School is used as a powerful educational tool for improving student learning and the quality of our instructional programs.

Assessment helps students:

- Understand the level, depth and breadth of learning, and their ability to interpret and apply knowledge
- Identify their strengths, areas that need strengthening and their learning needs
- Identify the need to improve specific skills
- Set future goals for themselves

In keeping with the principle of differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all learners, teachers provide a variety of assessment tasks. In providing this variety, teachers ensure a cross-section of experiences that cater to the different learning styles and strengths of students. Assessment tasks might

differ in format (visual, oral, written, dramatic); level of complexity (multi-step tasks or single, simple tasks); presentation requirements (spoken, written, constructed, role-play) and groupings (group, individual or paired tasks).

For more information on how this is supported at home, please also see the Elementary School ES Home Learning Policy.

3.4.2. Middle School
Students in the middle school receive an achievement level for each of the report card outcomes listed above using the following scale: Beginning, Progressing, Achieving, and Extending.

In middle school, achievement levels are determined based on course standards and outcomes and are communicated via end of semester reports.

3.4.3. High School
The school year is divided into two semesters – each about 18-19 weeks in duration. See the annual calendar for specific dates. Progress reports will be published halfway through each semester.

Final semester grades/achievement levels in each course are based on class work, assignments, and assessments over the course of the semester.

Teachers may choose to assign alternative assessments that exhibit the student's understanding of the subject through a comprehensive cumulative project or presentation. IB courses should follow grading procedures as outlined by the International Baccalaureate Organization. A report form with grades of "A" through "F" is used. On the ISP students' official transcripts, final grades from each semester of grades 9-12 are shown. Exam grades are not seen on the official transcript – nor are mid-semester progress reports.

Final semester exams take place at the end of the first semester in December, and at the end of the second semester in June. The exam counts for 20% of the student's final grade for the semester. Non Core classes may opt to do a project instead of an exam which will be due before the end of the term. Absences will only be considered excused during the exam period in the event of a documented emergency, medical or otherwise. In the event of such emergencies, make-up exams may be scheduled through the divisional office. The school will not reschedule examinations to accommodate early departures

for vacation. Students and parents are expected to plan according to the school's published calendar and exam dates.

Complete High School Assessment Policies can be accessed [here](#).

3.5.   English as an Additional Language Program (EAL)

Our English as an Additional Language program supports students, both through small group instruction and through language acquisition experts integrating into classes to ensure that all students - including English language learners - have access to the curriculum. Our EAL program is based on internationally recognized WIDA standards and supported by collaborations between language acquisition specialists and classroom teachers.

3.6.   Learning Support

At ISP we celebrate the diversity of our learning community. Our Learning Support Team works in partnership with classroom teachers to differentiate instructional and assessment practices. Through small group and or individual interventions, education specialists assist teachers to ensure students acquire skills and knowledge needed to access the curriculum.

Our support:
- Communicate with parents, teachers, administrators, and students on the progress of each student.
- Share best practices that honor individual learning needs.
- Use a variety of data sources to inform instructional decisions.
- Develop individualized student learning plans.
- Provide a safe learning environment.

3.7.   Excel Block Policy

In the timetable, Excel blocks are always tied to HL classes and their HL teachers. During Excel blocks, all students and their HL subject teacher are available at the same time, which is why it is an excellent time for those teachers to meet with their students. Teachers can use Excel blocks and require students to come in, but this should preferably be a mutual agreement between teachers and students, and if it will benefit students. Teachers should talk to their students about Excel block use and plan it at least 1 week in advance. For example, the following things are all acceptable:
- Mandating that all students come in for an Excel block in order to continue regular teaching/lessons if the teacher feels that they are running behind schedule

- Mandating that students who have missed their deadlines and/or a test come in to work on their work and/or finish the test
- Mandating that students who are struggling come in for additional help
- Mandating that students who need 1:1 conferences come to Excel Block on a 10-min rotation
- Offering that students who wish to extend their learning come to Excel block for the first half to learn more from teachers
- Offering additional help to students who are struggling

On the student side, part of the reason for Excel blocks is to help students manage their time. Students should be using them for meetings with teachers, conferencing with each other, doing homework, college/university preparation, EE/CAS work, etc. So this time should generally be preserved for them to do those things. As a rule, approximately 1/3 of Excel blocks can be taken and used by teachers if they deem it valuable.

For students who are academically at-risk or on Academic Probation, there will be stricter guidelines about their Excel block usage. They may be limited in the areas they can go to during Excel Blocks. Teachers may require such students to come in for additional support or to work on academics more frequently than just 1/3 of your Excel blocks.

3.8. Standardized Testing Program
The International School of Panama offers the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Assessment twice per year. This assessment is given to students in grades 2-10 in Mathematics and Reading. Results are sent home for parents to review.

In addition, progress in the Spanish as an Additional Language (SAL) program is monitored through various assessments, English as an Additional Language (EAL) progress is monitored via the WIDA assessment, and high school students are prepared to take a variety of university placement exams on site include the TOEFL, PSAT, SAT and the ACT among others.

3.9. Library Media Centers
It is the mission of the ISP Library Media Centers to educate and inspire our students to reach their full potential and contribute to the world. We do so by providing instruction and a collection of materials to implement, enrich, and support the curriculum and to meet the individual educational, emotional, and recreational needs of students, faculty, and all ISP community members.

ISP houses an [Elementary Library](#) and a [Middle and High School Library Media Center](#) with a collection that includes thousands of books (physical, electronic, and audio), periodicals, and audiovisual materials, including DVDs and laptops. To support the needs of our young researchers, the library media center also offers access to leading academic research databases.

ISP Librarians collaborate with teachers, student services, and learning coaches to integrate critical literacy skills into the curriculum, including reading, digital citizenship, research, media, and information literacies. Our librarians are also certified teachers who practice their own continuous learning through active participation with library associations including American Association of School Libraries, Future Ready Librarians, International Society of Technology in Education, and the Association of American Schools in South America.

3.10.   Visual and Performing Arts Program
Through the study of visual and performing arts, we foster creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking skills, while enriching the overall human experience for every student, creating a vibrant nexus between our school and the global community.

It is our commitment to give the students and community of ISP a platform for expression and learning through the arts. Our Visual and Performing Arts Center offers our community a center to gather and explore the richness of the arts being created by our students, faculty, and our families. For more information on the Visual and Performing Arts at ISP see the VAPA Webpage.

In addition to the above mentioned activities, ISP participates in ongoing learning through its memberships in the Association for Music in International Schools (AMIS) and the International School Theatre Association (ISTA).

3.11.   Athletics Department
The International School of Panama operates an educational-based athletics program. We create sport participation experiences that are progressive, welcoming, developmentally appropriate, safe, and inclusive. We believe that quality sport means active and healthy students holistically developed that can make positive contributions to society. We encourage and want students to embrace and be part of as many different experiences as possible throughout their time here at ISP. We are fortunate enough to be able to provide a wide range of opportunities to accomplish this.

At ISP, we inspire our students to learn and develop through sport. Our enduring hope is that the lessons learned in the sporting arena will remain with our students for a lifetime. We strongly believe that athletics is not separate from the educational process, but rather an integral part of it.

Student participation in education-based athletics:
- Is a privilege.
- Enriches the educational experience.
- Encourages academic achievement.
- Promotes respect, integrity, and sportsmanship.
- Prepares for the future in a global community.
- Develops leadership and life skills.
- Fosters the inclusion of diverse populations.
- Promotes healthy lifestyles and safe competition.
- Encourages positive school/community culture.
- Should be fun.

The value of education-based athletics is taking educational principles back to the athletic field and empowering student-athletes to become better, to become motivated, and to achieve higher levels of performance both in the classroom, field, and life.

We follow a sportsmanship ideal built on the idea that athletics both demonstrates and encourages character development, which then influences the moral character of the broader community. How we each participate and compete in athletics can have an effect on our personal moral and ethical behavior outside of sports. Under a sportsmanship model, healthy competition is seen as a means of cultivating personal honor, virtue, and character. It contributes to a community of respect and trust between student-athletes and in society.

The goal in sportsmanship is to pursue victory with honor by giving one's best effort. Ethics in athletics and life requires four key virtues that we emphasize in all our practices and competitions: fairness, integrity, responsibility, and respect.

The ISP Athletics department firmly believes that parent support is essential for the success of students at all ages. To achieve that goal, a full family effort is required, and we expect parents to play an active role in helping children handle the maturity of competition, balancing high expectations and time commitment with academics, and learning from both successes and failures.

The Association of American Schools of Central America (AASCA) is our biggest priority for international competitions and includes an annual U19 tournament in Volleyball, Basketball, Soccer, and U14/U19 tournaments in the individual sports of Tennis, Track & Field, and swimming.

AAACA is a group of 28 international schools spanning six countries (Guatemala, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, and Panama).

The [Athletics Handbook](#) helps guide students, parents, and coaches. Please take the time to read the Athletics Handbook and to discuss as a family the various components included there.

For more information on the department, please see the [Athletics Website](#).

4. Services

4.1. Afterschool Activities (ASA) and Athletics
A skilled and experienced staff of instructors, some from our own faculty and others from the greater community, have created quality programs that we are happy to provide on our campus exclusively for ISP students. For more details on the ASA and Athletics programs see the respective pages of the ISP website and the Athletics Handbook published on the ISP website.

4.2. Requests to Change Transportation
Parents/guardians are required to follow the Request of Change Transportation Procedure described herein.

- If the student is using the bus service, parents are required to contact the transportation company directly to request any changes for their child's regular transportation.
- Parents **must also** complete and submit the "[Transportation Changes Request Form](#)" located in the transportation section on the parent portal before 11:00 am on the day of the change at the latest.
- If the request form is submitted after 11:00 am, parents/guardians are required to confirm by phone call to the division office administrative assistant (PK/ES/MS/HS).

Flex busing (guest passenger on a different bus than his own) will not be permitted for the 2022-23 school year. The "[Transportation Changes Request Form"](#) is located in the transportation section on Veracross Parent Portal.

4.3. Tutor Policy

Tutoring is not hosted on ISP's campus. This includes external tutors as well as ISP teachers, who are not to tutor students on campus for pay. Peer tutoring and unpaid study/support sessions are permitted.

Violations of the tutoring policy may be considered issues of academic integrity. ISP teachers cannot tutor their own students.

4.4. Fundraising

In accordance with the Fundraising Policy, students must get approval from the MS/HS Office and the Marketing and Communication Office (MARCO) and must meet the requirements of ISP GIVES BACK, which are:

- Fundraising should be linked to a long-term (+2 year) commitment and should not compete against other fundraising efforts already launched by the School.
- All money raised must be reported to the Office for accounting purposes.
- All student and staff fundraising must be driven by an educational purpose. Fundraising for parties and travel expenses are not approved by this policy.
- Emergency fundraising, request for cash donations, supply drives or coordination of volunteers will be approved by MARCO, School Director, and division principal and assistant principal. The approver will designate a coordination team, establish goals, coordinate communications and evaluate or approve a strategic partner to work with for managing donations.

4.5. Nutrition

Research shows that students should consume nutrient-dense foods at school in order to foster growth, development, and a healthy lifestyle. Natural foods aid in concentration and maximize brain function while foods high in artificial sugar and chemicals impede learning. Therefore, students should bring healthy foods such as those listed below. For this reason, we have articulated the following on healthy foods, which guides our cafeteria services and supports the type of food we recommend be brought from home by ISP students.

Foods that complement learning
- Fresh Fruits and vegetables or dried fruits (raisins, apricots, prunes)
- Seeds (sunflower, pumpkin)
- Nuts (unless specified by teachers because of allergies in the classroom)

- Dairy (cheese, yogurt, milk)
- Popcorn (light or air-popped)
- Whole-grain and nut granola bars
- Muffins and breads (low-sugar varieties including banana, bran, zucchini, carrot)
- Sandwiches - peanut butter and jelly, meat and/or cheese, etc.
- Sandwich meat - alone or rolled up with cheese and a toothpick
- Hummus
- Water

Foods that impede children's ability to learn

- High-sugar baked items - Cookies, packaged muffins, cupcakes, brownies, etc.
- Candy and other refined sugars (sweetened nut spreads, lollipops, chocolate, chocolate milk)
- Yogurt with cookie or candy toppings
- Cereal bars high in sugar or chocolate
- Soft drinks, sugary teas, and most juice boxes
- Food and drinks with high levels of artificial colors and flavors

4.6. Student Birthdays - Pre-K and Elementary

Student birthdays will be celebrated in coordination with the homeroom teacher, typically the last 15 minutes of the school day. Please avoid treats with artificial colors and candy, and only water may be provided as a beverage. Goodie bags, pinatas, party professionals, and gifts for everyone are not allowed. *Birthday party invitations may be handed out at school only if the entire class is invited, or if all boys or all girls are invited.*

5. Behavior Expectations

5.1. Educational Technology and Responsible Use Guidelines

ISP has an educational technology-rich learning environment that promotes active learning and future ready skills. To support students, teachers, and families with digital learning tools, the Tech Center as ISP is dedicated to maintaining a robust technology infrastructure and providing troubleshooting assistance.

For tech support contact the Tech Center at **techhelp@isp.edu.pa**.

ISP promotes the balanced use of technology by developing positive digital citizenship

habits not only within student schoolwork, but also as an important life skill in their personal lives. Students are equipped to use technology in an ethical manner and to responsibly integrate these skills with other essentials, such as critical thinking, literacy, numeracy and citizenship. Essential to the use of technology is ethical responsibility.

All students in PreK-5th grade will be provided an ISP-issued iPad to use in their classrooms. The devices may be taken home with parent permission.

ISP recognizes the importance of using information technology in today's world and strives to ensure every student has access to information technology to enhance their learning. Please see the [ISP Responsible Use and Commitment and User Agreement](#) for more details.

5.1.1. Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)
BYOD provides a 1-to-1 device learning environment for **Middle and High School (Grade 6-12)** students and promotes blended learning and mobility. BYOD support is available within established parameters from Tech Center.

Each elementary school student will be assigned an ISP-issued iPad to use in their classrooms.

5.1.2. Social Media
"Social media" is a category of online broadcasting that supports people talking, participating, sharing, networking, and bookmarking online. Common social media platforms include, but are not limited to, online networks such as CANVAS, SeeSaw, Twitter, WhatsApp, Facebook, AskFM, blogs, podcasts, discussion forums, and content sharing sites such as Instagram and YouTube. *Because technology is constantly evolving, any list of social media sites or programs will never be definitive.*

Social media content can easily become available to the public, including the school, its staff, prospective colleges and universities, and the media.

Inappropriate use of social media at ISP or ISP sponsored events can result in disciplinary action.

5.2. Personal Items
Students may not sell anything at school for personal profit. Students may bring money to purchase lunch or special items related to ISP initiatives communicated in

advance.

Elementary students may not purchase anything from another student or the MS/HS cafeteria.

Similar to our elementary school electronic equipment policy, personal items such as toys, cards, or stuffed animals may not be used at school except with special permission from a teacher. Students who choose to bring personal items may leave them in their backpacks until they board their buses after school.

5.3.   Uniforms

Uniforms are required for all students at ISP. They are in keeping with public and private Panamanian school culture and reflect pride in our school community. Additionally, they are an expression of preparedness and a form of professionalism desired in ISP students. Although the ISP uniform is designed to be comfortable, it is a uniform and must be worn according to the regulations. Wearing the uniform neatly and appropriately is important and expected. Students not in compliance with the uniform policy may be asked to change clothes, and may be subject to disciplinary action.

5.3.1.   ISP Uniform Requirements

Students are required to attend school according to the following dress code:

For PK through 5 all items must be labeled with the student's name and classroom

PK students:

Students should wear navy blue athletic shorts with ISP logo and PE uniform shirt in POD color everyday. (Note: For more information on school PODS see Section 7 *School Traditions*). We recommend shoes with rubber/slip-proof soles for safety reasons. No open backs, sandals, lights, wheels, or Crocs are allowed.

K-12 students:

- **Shirts:** Polo shirts with the official ISP school logo are required. Shirts are available at the uniform store in blue or white. Grade 11 and 12 students may wear the upper class shirt sold at the uniform store.
- **Shorts:** Students may wear solid navy blue dress shorts that are casual and neat in appearance and should be worn to the knee. No jeans, no

cargo pants etc. Recommended shorts for ISP are available at the uniform store.

- **Skort:** Solid navy blue uniform skorts are available at the uniform store. The skort should be worn to knee length.
- **Pants:** Navy blue chinos and dress pants are available at the uniform store. No sweatpants, warm-up pants, jeans, capri or leggings/tights.
- **Skirt:** ISP plaid uniform skirts must approach the knee and are available from the uniform store.
- **Shoes:** We recommend rubber/slip-proof soles for safety reasons. No open backs, sandals, lights, wheels, or Crocs are allowed.
- **PE:** PE uniform is required for PE classes: ISP athletic T-shirts in POD colors and navy blue ISP athletic shorts. Students from grades K-5 wear their PE uniforms all day when having PE. This includes athletic shoes. Students from 6 to 12 grade bring their regular uniform and change to PE uniform at school. They may wear appropriate footwear in any color when in their PE class. Students in grades 6-8 may choose to wear their PE uniform all day if they would like, but also may change if they prefer to do so.
- **PE Aquatics:** Girls are required to wear a full one-piece swimsuit. Boys must use swimming trunks/shorts. Both boys and girls must wear a rash guard or UV shirt, swim cap, goggles, and sandals (for the pool area only) and bring a towel. Students are also advised to bring sunblock and a water bottle. All items must be clearly labeled with the student's full name and class.
- **Sweatshirts, Hoodies and Sweaters:** Only blue ISP approved sweatshirts are permitted. High school students are allowed to wear their approved prom sweatshirts.
- **Caps and Visors:** Caps and visors are only allowed during outdoor activities.

General Notes about special dress and grooming:
- Students may be requested to wear T-shirts or sport shirts for certain activity days, such as Pink Shirt Day, Blue-Out Days, and POD Days. *Students must wear regular uniform bottoms on these days.*
- On some field trips, students may be requested to wear long pants. Torn and over or under-sized jeans are not permitted.
- Hair must be clean and well kept. Hair styles deemed to be distracting within the school environment will not be allowed.
- For safety, students should wear a minimum amount of jewelry. Some

jewelry, including dangling earrings, must be removed for PE. Jewelry deemed to be distracting or unsafe within the school environment will not be allowed.

5.4. Behavior Expectations

This handbook covers student behavior at school, in transit to or from school, at school sponsored events, on field trips, and while wearing the ISP uniform. Panamanian Law defines the school grounds extending 25 meters past the gate.

5.4.1. Students
- Follow classroom agreements
- Follow agreements for specific areas on campus and the bus, including field trips
- Take responsibility for their actions
- Are proactive about problem solving, using strategies on their own and seeking support from adults when necessary
- Are *upstanders,* standing up for peers when needed (as opposed to being *bystanders* and ignoring inappropriate or hurtful behavior)
- Conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on the school and all ISP students

5.4.2. Teachers and Learning Assistants
- Guide student ownership of classroom behavior expectations that align with the ISP character profile
- Educate students on how to follow expectations and practice self-regulation (i.e. Interactive Modeling)
- Provide interventions to support students who cannot independently meet expectations
- Communicate with parents regarding student behavior
- Collaborate with others (i.e. students, peers, administrators, parents) to seek solutions
- Seek support from administration or counselor as necessary for student behavior issues

5.4.3. Administration
- Take the lead on the schoolwide behavior support process
- Assist in education and communication of appropriate behavior and schoolwide agreements
- Support teachers with students who are not responding to typical

classroom management or intervention

- Collaborate to develop *Behavior Plans* (working with the teachers, counselor, and LS)
- Provide additional behavior recommendations and support for students who are also on Learning Support Plans
- Provide PD to staff (i.e. bus monitoras, ASA instructors) on behavior management strategies

5.4.4.   Counselors

Follow up with students whose behaviors are rooted in emotional needs. This may include:

- Students who demonstrate difficulty managing emotions (i.e. anger, frustration)
- Students whose behavior is developmentally inappropriate (i.e. immature or overtly sexual behavior)
- Students whose behavior is rooted in family or specific life events (i.e. moving, abuse, divorce, etc.)
- Students whose behavior is associated with identified or possible social/emotional difficulties (i.e. sensory integration disorder, autism spectrum, etc.)
- Deliver classroom instruction related to social/emotional topics, including Steps to Respect curriculum
- Provide guidance to parents with Conscious Discipline and other positive behavior supports

5.4.5.   Parents

- Work cooperatively with the school and teachers to support their child's progress at school
- Read school communications in order to be aware of events, initiatives, and workshops for parents
- Share information and seek guidance from the school in regard to their child's behavior at home
- Familiarize themselves with the school's approach to behavior support
- Support Staff - ASA Instructors, Bus Monitoras, Maintenance Staff, and Cafeteria Staff
- Hold children responsible for their actions according to expectations in their areas, with support from supervisor as needed
- Report behavior issues to supervisor
- Use behavior management strategies learned from admin/counselors, and seek support when needed

Link to [full Elementary School Behavior Policy](#)

Link to [full Middle School and High School Behavior Policy](#) to see information on behavior, attendance, academic integrity, substance abuse, harassment, and searches.

5.5.   Bullying Prevention at ISP
Most children face bullying at some point in their lives whether it is as a bystander, the person who bullies, or the person who is being bullied. Our goal is to empower students with the traits and knowledge to prevent and manage hurtful behavior.

ISP counselors deliver instruction on bullying prevention including through programs such as *Steps to Respect* and *Breaking Down the Walls*. Students are learning skills in their classrooms like how to make friends, join in, manage conflicts, and recognize, refuse, and report bullying whether it happens to them or someone else. By recognizing, students learn the definition of bullying.

By refusing, students learn to stand up to bullying if the situation is safe enough. By reporting, students learn that talking to a trusted adult is not tattling and is done to keep someone safe. The ISP community must work together to combat bullying as we are all responsible for ensuring a safe and respectful environment!

Everyone at the International School of Panama is committed to making our school a safe and caring place for all students. We will treat one another with respect, and we refuse to tolerate bullying in any form at our school.

Our school defines bullying as follows: *Bullying is unfair and one-sided. It happens when someone consistently and continually hurts, frightens, threatens, or leaves someone out on purpose.*

Students will:
- Treat each other respectfully
- Follow the ISP character profile
- Be an upstander; refuse to let others be bullied or to watch, laugh, or join in
- Include everyone
- Report bullying to an adult
- Use social media and technology respectfully (see *cyberbullying* in Behavior Policy)

Staff will:

- Closely supervise students in all areas of the school
- Encourage use of the ISP character profile
- Watch for signs of bullying and stop it when it happens
- Respond quickly and sensitively to bullying reports
- Take seriously families' concerns about bullying
- Assign consequences for bullying based on the Behavior Policy

5.6.   Academic Integrity

Academic integrity means being honest about doing your own work at home and at school. This includes:

- Ensuring your work is in your own words
- Giving credit to others for their words or ideas
- Citing sources versus copying and pasting material
- Asking for support instead of receiving answers
- Keeping test questions and answers to yourself.

ISP maintains a school wide Academic Integrity Policy which defines academic misconduct as "a behavior (whether deliberate or inadvertent) that results in or may result in the student or other student gaining an unfair advantage (or that disadvantages other students) in one or more assessment components."

Failure to comply with academic integrity expectations will result in:

- Verbal warning and clarification of expectations and consequences.
- Parent Conference or contact from Teacher and Advisor/Counselor Office referral and assignment to detention.
- Suspension for serious or repeated offense.
- Per Ministry of Education requirements, students must be offered a mandatory make up assignment which will be graded and entered. Until then the grade is counted as an incomplete which will be converted to a 20% if the student does not complete the mandatory make up or alternate assignment.

For more information on high school specific practices and procedures please see High School [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

6.   Communication

6.1.   School Communications

ISP recognizes the need for effective communication within the school community and strives to ensure alignment, accuracy, and proper frequency.
- The Head of Communication is responsible for school-wide communication

that is shared with our parents and on occasions faculty and staff through official communication channels which include: RenWeb, ISP website, The Dolphin Dispatch bi-weekly newsletter, and ISP Panama Social media channels on Facebook, Instagram, Linkedin, YouTube, and Twitter.

- The Board of Trustees may occasionally address the ISP community, with matters that affect our school at a strategic or higher level.
- We encourage effective communication throughout the school and keep an open-door policy, do your best to address the appropriate person to answer your inquiries this could be a teacher, assistant principal, Head of School or finance team representative, whenever in doubt contact hello@isp.edu.pa

The school operates official channels to ensure effortless communication. These are some of them.

6.1.1. VERACROSS

Veracross serves as ISP's Student Information System. It includes all family demographic information, provides school information about school services and processes as well as the updated calendars. This will be the platform to use for enrollment and re-enrollment purposes.

6.1.2. SEQTA

Elementary School, Middle and High School teachers and students use a learning management system called SEQTA Teach to communicate information about curriculum, course syllabi, class work, projects, and assessments, as well as ongoing feedback and student progress.

6.2. Communication with Teachers

All ISP teachers have school email addresses where students and parents may reach them. Addresses can be accessed on the ISP web page. SEQTA also allows direct messaging between parents and school personnel.

6.3. Dolphin Dispatch

Is a bi-weekly newsletter that includes updates, news, events calendar, and general information about what is happening at ISP. To receive ISP mail to your inbox add noreply@ispedupa.myenotice.com to your contact list. *This avoids ISP emails from falling into SPAM.*

6.4. Google Account

All faculty and students (Kindergarten and up) are assigned a Google account and password, which allows them to access digital learning tools and communicate with

teachers. The email address is activated for students in Middle School and High School only. Students are expected to check their account regularly.

6.5. Newsletters

At elementary, middle, and high school, teachers regularly write homeroom/grade-level newsletters in order to communicate classroom events with parents.

6.6. ISP Website

The school web-page is found at www.isp.edu.pa. The site is a resource and communication tool for parents and students.

6.7. Open House and Back to School Night

Open House occurs a few weeks after school has opened. Its purpose is to inform parents about the different courses and subjects, and to discuss general expectations for the school program.

6.8. Parent-Principal Coffees

The Head of School, divisional principals, counselors and other school leaders will host virtual parent coffees, to accommodate all parents. These provide open forums for updates as well as for collaborative exploration of current affairs.

6.9. Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

The International School of Panama's Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) joyfully works throughout the year to build and strengthen connections within our community. Through collaborative events, community celebrations, and fundraisers, we work to use our respective time and talents for the betterment of our community. They also manage personal Whatsapp groups per division, to join them send an email to pta@isp.edu.pa

6.9.1. We Need You

To support the activities of the PTA, we really need your help – the more the merrier! Working together we model the ISP character profile and feel we can truly make a difference at the school and in the lives of our children. Our membership is made up of a true dissection of our diverse international community with officers from all parts of the world, speaking multiple languages, with different backgrounds, experiences, and skill sets.

We have men and women, members with businesses, full time jobs, and ´trailing expat spouses´ all are welcome and different roles have different time

commitments so if you want to be involved please do not hesitate to reach out.

6.9.2. PTA Monthly Meetings
We invite all community members to our monthly meetings, generally held virtually on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm. These meetings are a great way to learn what is going on and find opportunities to get involved and support the school. We start by covering PTA business and then invite various community members to share information and updates.

6.9.3. Parent Advisory Council
Each division has its own group of parents who work together as an advisory council. These groups are voluntary and work with the division administrators to give feedback and share ideas on school initiatives. In addition, the advisory councils can bring ideas and information to the school; in this way, they act as a conduit for information from the community. If you are interested in joining, please contact your PTA representative or your school administrator.

6.10. Student Learning Conferences
Days are devoted to Student Learning Conferences (meetings between students, parents and teachers) each year at the midpoint of the first semester in October and at the midpoint of the second semester in March. Parents should feel free to contact the school whenever there are questions concerning progress or changes. Conferences may be requested by parents, teachers, counselors, or administration. Conferences requested by parents may be arranged by calling the divisional office to schedule an appointment.

6.11. Student Image Use Policy
Based on image rights and data privacy best practices, as well as our child protection policy, Parents/Guardians must select their image use preference every year on our Parent Portal, Veracross.

By selecting YES, you are authorizing the school to use images or photos of your child(ren) in whole or part. Your authorization expressly allows the disclosure and use of your child(ren)'s images and, if applicable, his/her voice in any digital or printed media, including but not limited to promotional material, internet sites, social networks, magazines, yearbooks, publications, press, films, as well as pop material (internal and external banners, mail inserts, posters, ISP advertising panels).

By this means you authorize the dissemination and publication at national or international level of the image and voice of your child(ren) through photographs, recordings and/or films obtained during school or events organized by ISP in Panama

City during the academic year august 2022 – September 2023, by ISP's administrative personnel or the person hired by ISP to make films or take photographs in their favor for the above-mentioned purposes.

You also accept and recognize that no further authorization will be necessary for the use and reproduction by any of the above-mentioned means of your child(ren)'s images and/or voice for an indefinite period -after obtained during the mentioned academic year- because of this authorization that is granted in the terms indicated herein in favor of the school.

You agree that no royalty, fee, or economic compensation shall become payable to you or your child(ren) by reason of such use by the school in the terms indicated herein.

7.   School Spirit and Traditions

7.1.   Flag Ceremonies and Assemblies
Every Monday morning we hold a Panamanian Flag Ceremony where Elementary, Middle and High School pledge allegiance to the Panamanian Flag and sing along to the National Anthem. Students and staff who are not Panamanian nationals are not required to say the pledge or to sing the National Anthem, but are required to stand respectfully during the ceremony.

7.2.   ISP Celebrations
ISP prizes the many opportunities to come together as a school to celebrate our unique and enriching learning environment. Two central structures for these celebrations, Dolphin Pods and Dolphin Days, are detailed here.

7.3.   Dolphin Pods
Students in the School are divided into four groups called Dolphin Pods. Each student belongs to one of these four Pods. The purpose of the ISP Dolphin Pods is to build community and a sense of belonging within the School.

7.4.   Dolphin Days
It is a day when students, teachers and parents wear their Pod color and T-shirts and celebrate their membership in one of the Pods. It is a day to demonstrate and celebrate your ISP spirit!

7.5.   Student Leadership
Student leadership is a core component of our programming at each division, with

Student Representative Council (SRC) at the elementary school, Leadership Club at the middle school and Student Council at the high school.

Each year students are encouraged to get involved as student representatives. These students help plan activities for Spirit Week, share new ideas for school improvement with the school principals, help organize assemblies, share announcements with the rest of the school, and act as positive role models for the student body.

All leaders will be expected to:
- Show exemplary behavior and attitude
- Lead through positive behavior and academic achievement all of the time
- Act as ambassadors for the school
- Act as guides for visitors
- Be responsible for the safe and smooth running of the playground for all those using it
- Help younger children to play and sort out minor arguments
- Be a buddy to lonely children

7.6. Special Occasions
Each year there are a number of days where classes are scheduled differently. A prime example of this is Mes de La Patria. When other adjustments to the class schedule are made, parents are notified well in advance.

DISCLAIMER: The policies and procedures in this handbook are not a right or part of the enrollment contract. They do not confer any contractual rights on any students. This document is meant to provide school families with guidance for decision making.

No set of rules or guidelines can cover every conceivable situation that might occur at school. The rules, policies and procedures in this handbook are intended to apply under normal circumstances. From time to time, there may be situations that require immediate or non standard responses. This handbook does not limit the authority of The International School of Panama, ISP , to deviate from the normal rules and procedures set forth in this handbook, and to deal with individual circumstances as needed, in the matter deemed appropriate by the school, taking into consideration the best interest of the school, its students, faculty, employees and overall community. (Adapted from American School Foundation's Family Handbook)

These guidelines may also be revised or updated periodically even during the school year. Should a change occur families will be informed of the changes.

Handbook feedback or comments?

Please contact: hello@isp.edu.pa