

# Student-Parent Handbook 2020-21

## Middle School



# Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Middle School Staff - 2020</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Grading and Reporting</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Conferences</b>	<b>12</b>
Student Organized Events	12
<b>Student Code of Conduct</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Communication - Parental Enquiries &amp; Concerns</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>General Information</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Pastoral Care</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Counselling Services</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS) at ABA</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Home Learning</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Communication</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Middle School Procedures</b>	<b>25</b>
Books and Materials	25
Library	25
Lockers	25
Bag Tags	26
Recreational Breaks & Cafeterias	26
Extra-Curricular Activities	27
<b>Middle East South Asia Conference (MESAC)</b>	<b>28</b>
MESAC Events for the 2019/2020 school year	29
<b>Attendance Regulations</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Discipline</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Middle School Information</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Appendix 1 - Academic Honesty Policy</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Appendix 2 - Student Services</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Appendix 3 - Child Protection</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Appendix 4 - Assessment Policy</b>	<b>53</b>

<b>Appendix 5 - ABA Language Policy</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Appendix 6 - ABA Acceptable Use Agreement</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Appendix 7 - MS Explores!</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Appendix 8 - MS Student Athlete Agreement</b>	<b>63</b>

## The Middle School Team

<a href="#">Kathleen Bowin</a>	MS Principal
<a href="#">Megel Barker</a>	MS Asst. Principal/MYP Coordinator
<a href="#">Claire Anthony</a>	MS Counselor
<a href="#">Ann Carshult</a>	Director of Student Support Services
<a href="#">Paul Brace</a>	Athletic Director/Activities Coordinator
<a href="#">Miguel Vazquez</a>	Student Services
<a href="#">Courtney Park</a>	MS Librarian

### **Middle School Advisors**

<b><u>MYP 1</u></b>	<b><u>MYP 2</u></b>	<b><u>MYP 3</u></b>
John Pugh	Ammar Wishah	Sarah Jeyaram
Tahir Khanzadah	Tracy Van Harmelen	Julia Hall
Cesar Roldan	Andrea Zarate Pardo	Chris Downey
Isabel Shih	Jeff Cole	Clelia Salvati
Dana Schwarzkopf	Zita Gange	Celina Aggarwal
Valerie Ritchie	David Wood	Pete Lawton

### **Instructional Teams**

<b>Instructional Team 1 &amp; 2</b>	<b>Subject Groups</b>	<b>Instructional Team 3 &amp; 4</b>
<a href="#">Jeff Cole</a>	<a href="#">Language &amp; literature (L &amp; L)</a>	<a href="#">Isabel Shih</a>
<a href="#">Dana Schwarzkopf</a>	<a href="#">Design</a>	<a href="#">Chris Downey</a>
<a href="#">Tahir Khanzadah</a>	<a href="#">Mathematics</a>	<a href="#">Celina Aggarwal</a>
<a href="#">Pete Lawton</a>	<a href="#">Sciences</a>	<a href="#">Valerie Ritchie</a>
<a href="#">David Wood</a>	<a href="#">Physical &amp; health education (PHE)</a>	<a href="#">Julia Hall</a>
<a href="#">Sarah Jeyaram</a>	<a href="#">Individuals &amp; societies (I &amp; S)</a>	<a href="#">Tracy Van Harmelen</a>
<a href="#">John Pugh</a> Drama	<a href="#">Arts</a>	<a href="#">Andrea Zarate Pardo</a> <a href="#">Visual arts</a>
<a href="#">Zita Gange</a> Music		
<a href="#">Clelia Salvati</a>	<a href="#">Language acquisition</a>	<a href="#">Ammar Wishah</a>
		<a href="#">Cesar Roldan</a>

## Middle School Learning MYP 1 - 3 (Grades 6 - 8)

### Weekly Learning Schedules

Block Times		Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
7:30 - 7:40	0	Registration				
7:45 - 9:05	1	A Block	E Block	MS Connect!	C Block	H Block
9:10 - 10:30	2	B Block	F Block		A Block	G Block
11:05 - 12:25	3	C Block	G Block		D Block	E Block
12:55 - 2:15	4	D Block	H Block		B Block	F Block

In Middle School lessons are delivered in learning blocks of 80 minutes each. Our students experience two learning blocks per week in each MYP discipline studied. A full week in Middle School has 20 blocks of learning.

Apart from the academic blocks there are opportunities for students to engage in discussions with the MS leadership team, the librarian and the MYP coordinators as well as the MS Counselor.

MYP Discipline	MYP Subject/Course	Blocks per week
Language & literature	English language	2
Mathematics	Standard mathematics	2
Sciences	Science	2
Individuals and societies	Individuals & societies	2
Design	Design	2
Language acquisition	French, Spanish or Arabic	2
The arts	Music, Drama and Visual Arts	2
Physical and health education	Physical & Health Education	2
Advisory	Social and Emotional Wellbeing	2
Niqash	Library, MYP, Principal, Counselor	1
Ignite and/or Innovate!	Interdisciplinary Learning	1

# Feedback and Growth

## Feedback and growth

ABA Middle School publishes reports on your child's progress at the end of each marking period. Each individual report shares important information with you about your child's progress. As we are not only focused on the academic performance of students, our reports include information on their ATL skills development, MYP achievement level descriptors in each subject and teacher comments on their overall progress. There are four reporting periods equally spaced throughout the school year.

Reports are issued on the cycle below:

	Mid-Semester 1	Semester 1	Mid-Semester 2	Semester 2
<b>MYP 1 - 3</b>	Subject group target ATL Skills Advisory Comment	Subject group Comments Achievement Levels ATL skills Grade Summary	Achievement Levels Subject group Comments ATL Skills	Achievement Levels ATL skills Grade Summary

## Distance Learning Reports

As we embark on a Distance Learning Plan, our first Mid-Semester report will focus on the development of ATL skills with an individual subject assessment and advisor comments based on the social and emotional impact of Distance Learning. Students' will also contribute to this with their own reflections on their growth. The purpose of this report is to focus on the whole child as a learner in a challenging time. The mid-semester report will be published in November.

The Semester 1 and 2 reports are considered to be the complete report of students' progress. These reports are published at the end of the semester and are available on the Parent Portal for download. Normally, we invite parents to view the reports when they are published via SMS or email. This report is a comprehensive report with an emphasis on academic feedback from teachers. Teachers provide subject-specific comments and suggestions about how your child may improve their performances in school. Additionally, there is an ATL skills matrix and a summary of the MYP achievement grades based on MYP Grade Boundaries.

The MYP subject-specific grade descriptor is also shared so a broader understanding of MYP achievement is shared. Semester 1 report is akin to a progress report as at that time teachers may not have collected enough evidence of your child's learning to determine their accurate grades. So for the most comprehensive and accurate grade based on the teacher's professional judgment of all the data collected, the Semester 2 report is recommended.

Student's performances are reported using the MYP assessment framework that uses criterion - referenced marking to determine our students achievement level. Every MYP discipline has four criteria and the maximum score possible in each is 8. Students performance on each criterion is then collated and converted to an MYP Achievement

Grade which has a maximum of 7. MYP achievement grades describes the holistic assessment of student performances across, skills, concepts, contexts and content.

## MYP Approaches to Learning Levels

Beginning/Novice	Developing/Learner	Using/Practitioner	Sharing/Expert
I am introduced to the skill and can watch others performing it (observation)	I can copy others who use the skill and use the skill with scaffolding and guidance (emulation)	I employ the skill confidently and effectively (demonstration)	I can show others how to use the skill and accurately assess how effectively the skill is used (self-regulation)
<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is completely dependent on the teacher</li> <li>• is able to function in completely familiar situations</li> <li>• is able to listen to the questions asked by others</li> <li>• is unable to accurately self assess against ATL achievement levels and has little to no understanding of those levels</li> <li>• has limited success acquiring new skills after they are introduced</li> <li>• has limited success in applying the skills in class</li> </ul>	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• can follow directions from others in familiar situations</li> <li>• is able to copy the teacher or classmates in using the skills</li> <li>• has limited success when working in unfamiliar situations related to the skills</li> <li>• is able to ask clarifying questions related to the skill, however would need prompting or guidance from the teacher or classmates</li> <li>• Has some understanding of the ATL achievement</li> </ul>	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• can demonstrate skills in familiar and unfamiliar situations</li> <li>• can use identified skill in a largely independent manner</li> <li>• is able to ask specific clarifying questions relate to the skill with little to no guidance</li> <li>• understands ATL achievement levels and can effectively self assess</li> <li>• easily acquire new skills and can demonstrate them to others</li> <li>• can apply</li> </ul>	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• can demonstrate skills in familiar and unfamiliar situations with confidence</li> <li>• can use identified skill in a completely independent manner</li> <li>• is able to independently ask a series of clarifying questions relate to the skill</li> <li>• understands ATL achievement levels and can explain them to others and are highly effective self assessment</li> <li>• easily acquire new skills and</li> </ul>



activities.	<p>levels, but would need some support to effectively self assess</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• can acquire new skills with support</li> <li>• needs support systems in applying the skill in class activities.</li> </ul>	the skill in class activities in both familiar and unfamiliar situations.	<p>can model them to others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is highly effective in applying the skill in class activities in both familiar and unfamiliar situations.</li> <li>• can create new tools or perspectives that allow for demonstration of the skills in unique ways.</li> </ul>
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## MYP ASSESSMENT

Achievement level	IB MYP Descriptor
1	Produces work of very limited quality. Conveys many significant misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts and contexts. Very rarely demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Very inflexible, rarely using knowledge or skills.
2	Produces work of limited quality. Expresses misunderstandings or significant gaps in understanding for many concepts and contexts. Infrequently demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Generally inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, infrequently applying knowledge and skills.
3	Produces work of an acceptable quality. Communicates basic understanding of many concepts and contexts, with occasionally significant misunderstandings or gaps. Begins to demonstrate some basic critical and creative thinking. Is often inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, requiring support even in familiar classroom situations.
4	Produces good-quality work. Communicates basic understanding of most concepts and contexts with few misunderstandings and minor gaps. Often demonstrates basic critical and creative thinking. Uses knowledge and skills with some flexibility in familiar classroom situations, but requires support in unfamiliar situations.
5	Produces generally high-quality work. Communicates secure



	understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, sometimes with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar classroom and real-world situations and, with support, some unfamiliar real-world situations.
6	Produces high-quality, occasionally innovative work. Communicates extensive understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, frequently with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar and unfamiliar classroom and real- world situations, often with independence.
7	Produces high-quality, frequently innovative work. Communicates comprehensive, nuanced understanding of concepts and contexts. Consistently demonstrates sophisticated critical and creative thinking. Frequently transfers knowledge and skills with independence and expertise in a variety of complex classroom and real-world situations.

## Parent/School Partnerships

**Meet the Teacher/MS Experience!** - At the start of school, parents will be invited to spend time in their child's shoes. This event is approximately 2 hours and parents will have the opportunity to visit and meet all of their child(ren)'s teachers as they follow their child(ren)'s daily schedule for a 10 minute meeting in which teachers introduce themselves and share classroom expectations.

**Conferences:** parent-teacher-student conferences are scheduled twice a year, one in November and the other in March/April. Students are expected to attend with parents.

**Parental Request Conferences:** If a parent wishes to speak with any teacher at any time, a conference time can be arranged. The teacher is the primary contact concerning students' progress. Subsequent to meeting with the teacher, parents may meet with their child's Advisor, or the Counselor, Claire Anthony or MYP Coordinator/Assistant Principal, Megel Barker. If an issue is unresolved, parents should schedule a meeting with the Middle School Principal, Kathleen Bowin

### Student Organized Events

Any student or group of students who wish to organize activities on campus may complete a 'Facility Request Form' available at the Reception Desk. Once the form is complete with all the details provided, students should then take the form to their Principal or Counsellor for approval.

If the event involves Elementary students, the form must also be presented also to the Elementary Principal so that she is informed of the details and can make the necessary arrangements.



# The ABA Way

## The ABA way - Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations

As members of the ABA community, we have a collective responsibility for promoting and maintaining a school climate of trust and respect. Through building a strong parent-school partnership, student achievement, success and well-being will be supported. Shared expectations of respective roles, responsibilities and expectations in line with our Mission, Vision and Values, will help ensure that the school culture continues to be one where all feel safe and valued.

Members of the ABA community (parents, staff and students) are expected to:

- Respect the laws of the Sultanate of Oman, the School's policies\*, protocols and procedures\*\*.
- Embrace the School's Mission, Vision and Values.
- Support the School's curriculum, programming, and pedagogy.
- Support the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and Booster Club in school activities and events to enhance our sense of community.
- Promote and support efforts to maintain safety and security by following procedures or directions given by the ABA security and traffic staff.
- Treat all ABA employees, parents and students with civility, honesty, and respect.
- Presume good intent in communications and take any personal questions, inquiries or concerns directly to the person who is responsible or closest to the issue, using the published communication guidelines\*\*.
- Work together with the school employees and other parents, as appropriate, to support the academic, social, and emotional plans for students.
- Attend appropriate meetings/conferences.

### Parents

- Provide a home environment that supports the development of positive learning attitudes and habits
- Stay informed about your child(ren)'s progress and experience.
- Attend appropriate school meetings/conferences.
- Keep up to date with school news through publications, emails, newsletters, and social media
- Encourage full attendance and punctuality; please avoid taking family holidays outside school holidays.
- Inform the school of any change of address, email details, or personal circumstances. If you will be out of town and your children will be cared for by another person, please provide up to date contact information for that person and the dates of your trip.

*(Adapted from the following Sources: National Association of Independent Schools, International School of Luxembourg, American International School Lusaka)*

\* The Policy Manual can be found in the library \*\* The Student and Parent Handbooks are kept on the website.

The ABA Way is not intended to be fully definitive or exclusive. Where specific issues are not addressed above, conduct will be judged on the basis of what is morally, legally, or socially acceptable within the context of our school.

In enrolling your child (ren) at ABA, parents should understand and agree to the ABA way. Not doing so may lead to the school taking action. In the event that a parent/guardian has engaged in significant or repeated violations of this understanding, the School reserves the right to discontinue enrollment or not to re-enroll a student.

## Student Code of Conduct

The immediate purpose of the **Student Code of Conduct** is to ensure our School Mission is supported in the classroom and in the community. Primarily, this is to ensure that the conditions for learning are agreed. The Code of Conduct also serves to teach students the value of individual responsibility and consideration for others.

The level of discipline in the school is directly related to the commitment of both staff and students to the ideals of the school. Rather than enforcing strict adherence to a detailed code of behavior, the school encourages students to demonstrate an understanding of the following key principles:

- Attendance and the relative freedom of students at ABA are privileges that should not be abused.
- The chief mission of the school is to provide learning opportunities and a caring environment for students from all over the world.
- Teachers and support staff deserve respect for the work they do on behalf of students.
- Students should, in turn, receive respect from teachers and the staff for their academic effort and concern for the welfare of the school community.
- ABA students support the Mission by affording respect to all others.

In addition to understanding the principles outlined above, students should be aware that bringing the school into disrepute through untoward behavior, both on and off campus, is considered grounds for disciplinary action. "Untoward behavior" includes (and is not limited to) public consumption of alcohol, illegal substance abuse, rowdiness, and consorting with undesirable persons.

The severity of the sanction imposed on the student will depend upon the degree of seriousness of the behavior. This will be judged solely by the administration in consultation with the member of staff concerned, if any, and when necessary, the Board of Directors. To protect the integrity of this process and the rights of the student, an appeals process is established. The administration wishes to emphasize that stern measures will be taken against individuals whose actions embarrass the reputation of ABA.



### **Threat/Bullying/Harassment (Including Cyber/Digital)**

Any type of threatening, bullying or harassment by ABA students or parents goes against the ABA Mission and will result in disciplinary action. This includes all forms of Social Media, physical and verbal incidents. Use of Social Media that brings the school into disrepute will also be treated as a disciplinary matter.

IT facilities are for educational use only. School and personal computers are not to be used for recreational use, including the playing of PC based games, downloading or participating in online games and recreational use of e-mail (See Acceptable Use Policy - Appendix). Use of the Internet and other electronic communication services is a privilege and not a right. Inappropriate use will result in termination of that privilege and will subject a student to school disciplinary consequences.

#### **Specifically prohibited unethical activities include:**

- a) Sending, saving or displaying offensive messages or pictures, or accessing, uploading, downloading or distributing pornographic, obscene, violent or sexually explicit material;
- b) Violating copyright laws (including copying and transmitting document, software, music and/or video files without a license; and plagiarizing - copying and presenting as one's own, the work of others found on the global internet or local intranet);
- c) Accessing, downloading or transmitting any material in violation of any law of the Sultanate of Oman; or distributing material protected by state or federal laws;
- d) Hacking or attempting to gain unauthorized access to the files or network services of any organization or individual, including the account of another student.

## Communication - Parental Enquiries & Concerns

Maintaining a supportive, triangular relationship among students, parents and faculty is vital to the success of your child. Clear, open and respectful communication is the foundation of this triangular relationship.

Every attempt will be made to communicate with parents regarding their child's academic and social progress through mid-semester and semester reports, notices of academic difficulty, iSAMs parent portal, ManageBac, email messages and other channels such as telephone conversations.

The cultural diversity of parents in our international community at ABA may lead to occasional special concerns to arise. Most can be dealt with effectively by following these few simple guidelines:

### **Academic / Teaching Concerns**

Please contact the teacher directly for a face-to-face meeting.

Parents and students often hesitate to openly discuss class concerns with teachers but approaching teachers directly has the most positive results. For routine matters relating to your child's academic progress and classroom activity, please bring your concerns to the attention of the classroom teacher involved.

All teachers make themselves available to deal with parent concerns. Since teachers are obviously busy in the classroom for most of the day, parents are asked to make an appointment for a time that will enable the problem to be discussed in an effective manner. This will usually be outside normal school hours and can be arranged by email. Teachers are required to respond to your request within a maximum of 48 hours.

### **Social / Emotional Concerns**

Should your child be experiencing any difficulties of this nature please inform Ms. Claire Anthony and/or Ms. Kathleen Bowin.

### **Daily /Curricular Concerns**

Please contact Kathleen Bowin, the Middle School Principal in one of the following circumstances:

- (a) the matter concerning your child has been discussed with the teacher concerned and satisfaction has not been obtained.

- (b) the matter concerning your child is judged by the parent to be of a serious enough nature to warrant immediate action by the administration (i.e. by-passing stage 1 above).
- (c) the concern is not related directly to the normal classroom learning situation but is of a general curricular, behavioral or daily school organization nature.
- (d) there is a sudden emergency situation.

### **Financial Matters**

Contact the Business Manager, Mr. Bahul Pillai for all financial matters.

### **Contact with the Head of School**

The Head of School will normally be aware of most serious concerns brought to the Principals through meetings with the administrative team. If it is felt that his involvement is required, even without a request from a parent, this will happen.

Other circumstances in which the Head of School may be involved in parental concerns are:

- the matter has already been brought to the attention of the Principals and, in the opinion of the parent, it has not been resolved satisfactorily or not been dealt with at all,
- the matter is not related to the routine operation of the academic program and social life of the school,
- the matter is financial or legal and passed on from the Business Office,
- the matter is of a truly very serious, dangerous, threatening or urgent nature requiring immediate, high-level administrative action,
- the matter requires an interpretation of school policy,
- the Parent-Teacher Association Committee requests action on a matter of general concern,
- the Board of Directors, through the Chair, are required to take action on a matter.

### **Contact with the Board of Directors**

Parental approaches to the Board are regarded as a last recourse. Consequently, the Board of Directors, acting collectively will deal with a parental concern only in the following circumstances:

- (a) the matter has been brought to the attention of the Head of School, and in the opinion of the Head of School, the matter requires the Board's intervention

and/or

- (b) the matter is presented to the Board Chair, whereby he determines whether the matter needs the full Board's attention. Procedurally the Chair will then consult with the Head of School with a view to resolving the issue. Should this not be possible or if the Chair feels that the full Board should be consulted, the matter will be placed on the agenda for the next Board meeting.



## General MS Information

### **School Week**

The school week runs from Sunday to Thursday. Students are expected to be in advisory at 7:30 am. Classes end at 2:15 pm, although After School Activities or ASAs may run up to 4 - 6 pm. (Most finish before 4:30 pm)

The school day begins with a 10-minute advisory session held each morning, each school day has four 80 minute blocks. Students usually have two supervised eating and recreation breaks during the day.

## Pastoral Care

### **Middle School Advisory Program**

The Advisory Program is designed to meet the pastoral care needs of students in MYP 1-3. The Principal oversees this program in consultation with the School Counselor. Advisors are responsible for oversight of the students in their Homerooms. Classroom teachers are responsible for contacting the Advisor, Counselor or a member of the Middle School Team regarding any students in their classes that are having social, emotional or academic difficulties.

### **Role of the Homeroom Advisor**

Advisors meet with their students at the start of every day. In addition, Advisors have an advisory session with their students once a week. Parents are advised to meet with Learning Mentors/Advisors at Parent-Teacher Conferences. Your child's Advisor is the key contact member of staff at school and should be informed of absences or other issues that may affect your child's learning.

# Counseling Services

## **What is the role of a School Counselor?**

ABA school counselors serve as student advocates. They work to promote and enhance student success by addressing students' academic, personal/social and career developmental needs. (The school counselor is not a disciplinarian, an administrator or a psychologist).

## **When should I see the school counselor?**

Anytime! The school counselor is here to assist you in a variety of areas. Some common topics include:

- General questions about school life
- Organizational, study and test-taking strategies
- Academic plans and course options
- Stress management
- Peer, teacher and family relationships
- Helping to understand self and others
- Problem-solving, decision-making, conflict resolution and, goal setting
- Making healthy choices
- Career awareness, planning and information
- University planning and application process

## **Will the school counselors tell others what I discuss with them?**

The school counselors provide a confidential setting and are bound by a strict code of ethics. However, there are three situations in which a school counselor is required to inform the school administration and parents. These include if a student reveals one of following:

1. They plan to or are hurting themselves.
2. They plan to hurt someone else.
3. Someone is hurting them.

## **How do you sign up to see the school counselor?**

If the school counselor is in her office, you are welcome to stop in and introduce yourself. Otherwise, email the Middle School counselor for an appointment.

## Service as Action and Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS) at ABA

Service as Action is an integral part of the MYP programme at ABA. It is initiated in classes and extends beyond, with students taking an active role in the communities in which they live. With a growing sense of citizenship, ABA Middle School students develop their sense of community responsibility and seek to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

IB learners strive to be caring members of the community who demonstrate a commitment to service making a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment (IBO). members of the community who demonstrate a commitment to service making a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment" (IBO).

### CAS

Enables students to enhance their personal and interpersonal development by learning through experience. It provides opportunities for self-determination and collaboration with others, fostering a sense of accomplishment and enjoyment from their work.

The three strands of CAS, which are often interwoven with particular activities, are characterized as follows:

<b>Creativity</b>	Arts and other experiences involve creative thinking.
<b>Activity</b>	Physical activity contributes to a healthy lifestyle.
<b>Service</b>	Unpaid and voluntary activities that have a learning benefit for the student.

The CAS Program aims to develop students who:

- Enjoy and find significance in a range of CAS experience
- Purposefully reflect upon their experiences
- Identify goals, develop strategies and determine further actions for personal growth
- Explore new possibilities, embrace new challenges and adapt to new roles
- Actively participate in planned, sustained and collaborative CAS projects
- Understand they are members of local and global communities with responsibilities towards each other and the environment

## Home Learning

Home learning provides a natural opportunity for parents, children and teachers to work cooperatively. It can be a two-way window that reflects how the school supports the child and, in turn, how the parents nourish the child at home. As we commence school using our Distance Learning Plan, home learning becomes “learning”. Students are expected to maintain the high standards of work and produce performance of understandings that align with our academic honesty expectations. The role of parents in this is critical. Ensure that you read the Distance Learning Plan document that has been shared to understand how you can make home learning meaningful for your child.

There are five types of home learning students may find themselves engaged in:

1. Practice – reinforcing familiar skills
2. Work completion – finishing work assigned in class
3. Preparation or study – reading and reviewing, organizing and memorizing material
4. Extension, creative learning, or enrichment – building on already successful learning, offering processes, ideas, and information in new ways
5. Online learning in lieu of face-to-face learning

It is important to have a functioning computer, printer and internet access at home for your child. Managing home learning is one of the major challenges facing many adolescents. Please contact your child’s advisor or teacher if they are having a difficult time managing their homework assignments.

### Home Learning Assignments

Teachers routinely assign home learning and expect students to complete and return assignments so they can be assessed. Students access their curricular documents on Managebac. Teachers will clearly inform students of their policies regarding late submissions. Missed assignments will be recorded in the school database, and the eventual completion of the work will be required.

Home learning assignments are utilized to assist the pupil to achieve satisfactory school progress and develop desirable work habits. Through these assignments, parents can also become more aware of the aims and objectives of the instructional programme. Assignments are an outgrowth of the work done in the classroom, and sufficient instruction is given by the teacher to ensure that the pupil can work independently. The type of assignment, and the time devoted to it are determined by the grade level and age of the pupil. Assignments vary in length. Some will be of a long-range variety. There may be some evenings when no homework has been assigned.

Teachers review home learning in order to provide feedback to the student on his or her progress.

If a student is feeling undue stress as a result of excessive homework assignments, parents are encouraged to contact the Counsellor and/or subject teacher immediately.

## Middle School Communication

### **Newsletter**

This is the main ABA instrument of communication to the ABA community. Notices are as factual and as succinct as possible. Parents are expected to read the Newsletter, which is posted on the ABA website, iSAMS Portal and sent via email to parents' preferred email address every Thursday.

### **Daily Bulletin**

Announcements concerning students are read from the Daily Bulletin each morning during advisory. In addition, the Daily Bulletin is posted in key locations around the school, is on the ABA website and available via the iSAMS portal.

### **SMS Messaging**

An SMS service to family GSM/mobile phone numbers is established to notify parents in case of emergency only. It is important that your current phone numbers are **kept** updated using the parent iSAMS portal.

### **Emails**

Emails of events, schedules and permissions are often sent to parents. Parents are asked to reply as requested.

### **Parent Contact Information**

It is imperative that parent contact details are current and accurate. It is expected that parents will keep contact information updated via the iSAMS parent portal and inform the Registrar if other official student/family details have changed.

## Middle School Procedures

### **Books and Materials**

All students will be issued with textbooks and materials for their various subjects at no additional cost.

Accountability for subject materials is considered an important responsibility for each student.

If a student loses a book, he/she will be billed for the replacement cost. Students may be charged for excessive damage to textbooks and library books. In the event that school text or library books are not returned, the school will withhold the student's report card until the book is returned or paid for.

All students are expected to provide their own pencils, pens, crayons, mathematical equipment, files and file paper as required. Items brought to school should be clearly marked with the student's name.

### **Library**

The ABA Libraries provide a calm and well-resourced space for students and staff to undertake research, do recreational reading, and work on projects with the support of a Teacher Librarian. Students can use and access resources and complete homework using internet connected PC's, with full Library catalogue functions. The Middle School Library has a wonderful selection of resources in a variety of formats: reference, non-fiction and fiction collections, English Language readers, a growing world languages collection, electronic books, teenage and curriculum-based magazines and video and DVD collection for staff classroom support. All students can borrow up to 6 items for 2 weeks, with a 2-week renewal period (except the AV and reference resources). Students have access to the Library during booked lessons to undertake recreational reading and research from 7.30am - 3.30pm Sunday to Thursday. Some students undertake community service in the Library during breaks and in the afternoon.

### **MS Student Council (MS StuCo)**

Student Council provides leadership opportunities for ABA Middle School Students. MS StuCo has a faculty supervisor who advises the organization on its role and responsibilities. The councils assess the morale and social life and can communicate the needs of the student body to the faculty and administration. The Student Council, in conjunction with the faculty advisor, can plan events and programs that would be of interest to the students and the school community.

### **Lockers**

Students in MYP 1 - 3 are assigned lockers to store their materials. Students will be supplied with a combination lock by the school. If your child loses their assigned lock, they will need to check with the Business Office for the cost of a replacement.

**Bag Tags**

All students are required to have a clearly visible and appropriately marked 'bag tag' on any bag, including PE bags and lunch boxes. Special ABA bag tags are issued to all students at the start of the school year. Should replacements be required students can collect them from their Advisor or from the Administration Office.

**Recreational Breaks & Cafeterias**

Within the daily schedule there are two break periods for all students. Breaks are from 10:30 to 11:05 and 12:25 to 12:55 each day. Staff members are on duty at every recess period for supervision of all grade levels. Students may bring drinks and snacks with them from home for consumption during their recess or break periods. Microwaves are available in the cafeteria for heating food. Care should be exercised to avoid items that can be easily spoiled or broken in transit. There is one cafeteria where food can be purchased during break times. The cafeteria accepts cash and coupons (which are purchased from the cafeterias). Shaded areas on the campus are provided, where students can sit to eat.

ABA is working towards becoming an environmentally friendly campus. We have recycling in place for paper and card, plastic bottles, compostable food waste, aluminum cans and ring-pulls. Water dispensers are available all-around school and every ABA MS student is expected to have his/her own re-usable water bottle as a part of their school resources and tools. We therefore ask you to ensure your child has her/his own labelled non-disposable water bottle for use on campus.

Students are not allowed to leave campus during school hours to buy food from outside vendors.

Students who would like to order food for a school activity/event need to get written permission from their activity advisor.

**Lost and Found**

A lost and found box is on the side of the administration building. Please check with the Receptionist or in the Middle and High School Office for lost valuables. Unidentified items are turned into the lost and found box. Students are expected to have all personal items labelled with their name.

**Telephones and Cell Phones**

Students may use school telephones. ABA has a wireless internet facility for educational use. MS Students are prohibited from having cell phones during school hours unless permission has been granted by the class teacher. Students who use mobile phones during the school day will have the phone confiscated until a parent comes to school to collect it.

Students bring in mobile telephones at their own personal risk and the school cannot be held responsible for any damage or loss of telephones. They should be stored safely in their locker or in a students' bag the phone must be off.

Advisory time and the cafeterias are device free zones.



**Transportation**

The school does not provide school-sanctioned transport for students to and from school, nor does it coordinate private "car pools". Although the school is not directly responsible for such arrangements, ABA students travelling to and from the campus are expected to reflect the highest standard of behavior.

**Campus Access Passes**

All ABA parents are expected to apply for an ID card in order to enter the campus either on foot or in their vehicle. Vehicle access is permitted up to 7:40 am and then after 2:00 pm. ID's should be shown to Security Personnel at the school gate.

Unregistered vehicles and unlicensed drivers are not allowed to transport students to school. Students are expected to abide by all Omani laws.

**Visitors**

After first visiting security at the main gate, all visitors are asked to report to the Administration Office upon entering the campus. Students may bring a visitor to class for one day, but only if they have previously sought permission from the MS Principal who will sign a Guest form, after which the teachers concerned will sign the form to acknowledge their agreement. The completed form should be returned to the Registrar. Approval may be denied if circumstances are not appropriate. Generally, visitors should be family members or friends, in the same age range as their host, visiting from overseas. Guests may not attend school on the first and last days of a school term, before a published school break or during an exam week. Guests are required to dress neatly and abide by the ABA code of conduct. Guest forms are available in the Administration Office.

**Extra-Curricular Activities**

The school offers a wide range of activities outside school hours. These range from athletics to yearbook, badminton to volleyball, and many others. There are a wide range of activities to choose from during the school year. An updated list of activities will be provided with the weekly Newsletter and on the Parent and student portals activities section of the school website.

The program on offer varies seasonally, at the mercy of the weather, as well as from year to year depending on supply and demand. A few of the more specialized clubs may require a fee but most are provided within the school framework at no extra charge.

The success of each activity depends very much on the enthusiasm and commitment of the students and their parents. Students are encouraged to attend at least one activity per semester.

## Middle East South Asia Conference (MESAC)

### MIDDLE EAST SOUTH ASIA CONFERENCE (MESAC)

The school is a member of The Middle East South Asia Conference (MESAC) The MESAC philosophy is dedicated to coordinating a range of sporting and other activities through inter-school collaboration. Participants in MESAC tournaments benefit in many ways.



Students taking part in MESAC events, as with other extra-curricular activities, should realize that it is a commitment. The tournaments are scheduled a year in advance and, once committed; students must follow through with a demanding training program. This is usually over an eight-week period.

Experience has shown that MESAC events are very popular and enjoyable. The school has laid down eligibility criteria for students taking part in MESAC events as it is considered a privilege to be selected.

### Eligibility Requirements for Participation in MESAC Teams

All schools taking part in MESAC events recognize the value of high standards in sports and other activities. Participation involves commitment but not at the expense of academic standards in school. Participation in MESAC events must therefore be earned. Students are generally selected after try-out sessions about two months prior to the tournament. All players will be selected for Junior Varsity or Varsity teams to ensure the best chance of team success at the discretion of the Coaches and the Athletic Director. At this time, they should be aware that there are strict eligibility criteria, which must be met.

These are:

- Demonstrated academic progress and success.
- No significant disciplinary problems as determined by teachers, coaches and administration.
- Regular attendance at practices, even when participation is not possible due to injury. Students may be released to take part in other school events at the discretion of the coaches.
- Compliance with all MESAC rules as stated in the MESAC Handbook. Students and parents must sign a list of MESAC rules shortly after try-outs.

Below are the guidelines regulating student travel on school sponsored athletic/activity trips. These guidelines were adopted to ensure students are allowed ample opportunity to participate in activities that require them to be absent from school, while maintaining the continuity of their academic program.

### General guidelines for all ABA sponsored trips are:

A maximum of three trips per year

- 10 school days missed in total per school year

- Normally no more than one trip per quarter

Students are responsible for collecting assignments and classwork in advance of absences due to team travel. They are also responsible for submitting work as soon as possible on their return to classes.

### **POLICY ON RETURNING FROM OVERSEAS FIELD TRIPS**

Students are required to return to school from overseas trips **ten hours** after they land in Muscat or at the start of the next school day, whichever is sooner. **One hour** can be added to the expected return time for every full hour the flight is delayed. It is the responsibility of the accompanying faculty member to inform the Middle School Principal of any delays before 7:00 a.m. in the morning they are due to return.

Students are given a one-day grace period to hand in assignments.



# Attendance Regulations

## Student Attendance

The following attendance guidelines concerning student attendance are supported by:

### POLICY 7.3.1 STUDENT ATTENDANCE (Revision 18/01/2017)

*The School's instructional program is based on regular and consistent attendance of students to allow them to maximize their learning. Since irregular or insufficient attendance is regarded as seriously disruptive to the student's studies and the instructional program, the Head of School is authorized to take the necessary action.*

*The Head of School shall establish appropriate attendance Regulations. These Regulations shall be published in the Student-Parent Handbook and shall be followed by students.*

Parents should notify, in writing, permission for absence, one week prior to an intended absence. When considering the request, the Middle School Principal will consider academic performance, attendance and lateness record, reason for the request and the individual needs of the child before determining an absence as authorized or unauthorized.

- If cumulative unauthorized absences are more than 10% (approximately 18 days) by the end of an academic year this may result in repeating the grade level

## Absences

In the event of sudden illness or family emergency, student attendance may be excused. However, when a student is absent from school, it is the responsibility of the parent to inform the Middle School Office by phone on 24955853 or 24955800 or email the Middle School Office ([secondaryoffice@abaoman.org](mailto:secondaryoffice@abaoman.org)) and Advisor to report the absence. On the day the student returns to school he/she must have a letter signed by their parents or a doctor's certificate indicating the duration and reasons for the absence. This must be shown to the Advisor. If no notification is received the absence will be regarded as unexcused. Assignments handed in late due to excused absence will only be accepted by the teacher once the reason for the absence has been verified.

**If a student is habitually absent during the school year, a meeting with the parents and Counselor or Middle School Principal will be scheduled.**

## Planned Absences

Parents who intend to have their children miss school for a day or more should make a formal request for leave to the Middle School Principal at least one week in advance of the planned absence. If granted leave, the student concerned should arrange for make-up work with their teachers. Please note that all absences, excused or unexcused, count against the total allowable in any semester.

## Parents Out of Country Policy

If both parents are scheduled to be out of the country, the school must be notified and contact details of individuals responsible for their child's welfare must be provided. The school may contact parents and ask them to return to Muscat.

### **Make-Up Work**

It is the responsibility of the student to communicate with teachers to clearly note what make-up work is required after an absence and set deadlines for each make-up assignment.

### **Tardiness**

Students are expected to arrive to class on time. Lateness is extremely disruptive to class lessons and discourteous to both the teacher and fellow students. Repeated patterns of tardiness will be dealt with as a discipline problem by teachers and administration.

Any student arriving at school after the registration period (7:40 am) **must sign in** at the Middle and High School Office **before going to class**.

If a student is chronically tardy, a meeting will be scheduled with parents and the student.

### **After School Hours**

#### **Punctuality of Departure**

It is equally important that children be collected from school on time.

Students are requested to vacate the school grounds at the end of the day dismissal time unless they are accompanied by a teacher or are taking part in school-related activities. After 2:30 pm there is no scheduled supervision on ABA's campus, except for school-related activities. Students who are not signed up for one of these activities or who are not under the direct supervision of a teacher are expected to depart campus.

#### **Closed Campus Policy**

ABA runs a Closed Campus Policy. Once students arrive on campus they must remain at school for the duration of the school day unless they receive administrative permission to leave.

Should parents wish to take their children out of school during the school day they must notify the Middle School Principal in writing. Students given permission to leave campus **must sign out** at the Middle School Office. When the student returns to school on the same day, he/she must check in with the Middle School Office to receive a pass to be admitted to class. Students participating in after school activities must also remain on campus.

#### **After School Events and Student Socials**

Students are encouraged to participate in events and socials throughout the year. Only ABA students are permitted to attend, no guests are permitted. Social functions are established for the enjoyment of students.

These events are usually organized by the Middle School Student Council. Punctual collection of students at the end of school-sponsored events is especially requested. Chaperones are severely inconvenienced by late pick-ups.

**Guidelines:**

1. Students absent during the day of the social event are **not** permitted to attend the event.
2. Students should be collected promptly.
3. In the event of an emergency, parents will be contacted at home.
4. Any behavioral concerns will be reported to the Middle School Principal and will jeopardize further participation in social events.

**Absence from Physical and health education (PHE)**

If a student is unable to participate in PHE for a genuine medical reason, an explanatory letter is required. A medical certificate should support this if the exemption is for an extended period. Letters should be given to the Physical and health education teacher.

**Physical and health education during Ramadan**

Consideration is given to all students who are fasting during Ramadan. Those students will be allowed to participate in an alternative PHE program arranged by the PHE staff. Parents please provide written notification to PHE staff if your son or daughter will be fasting.

# Discipline

## Disciplinary Procedures

The table below, outlines the agreed procedures our teachers will follow when addressing disciplinary issues arising in their classes. The expectation is that any discipline issues be resolved with those directly involved. If this is not successful, the following steps should be taken:

<b>Step 1</b>	The issue should be addressed individually with the student in a meeting outside of class.
<b>Step 2</b>	If it continues, the Counselor or Middle School Principal will be informed of the situation and parents are notified. The teacher, Counselor or Middle School Principal or Assistant Principal will meet with the student.
<b>Step 3</b>	If the situation persists, a resolution meeting will be scheduled with the student, parents, the teacher involved, and the Middle School Principal or Assistant Principal.

These steps have been established to provide some general guidelines for dealing with discipline in the classroom. Teachers will use their professional discretion in working with students to help them be successful at ABA.

Any member of staff who observes inappropriate student behavior will first attempt to restore order and, if necessary, bring the matter to the attention of the Middle School Principal. The Principal will determine the nature and severity of subsequent disciplinary action.

Teachers will report excessive tardiness and concerning absences to the Assistant Principal who, in turn, will consult with the Principal and/or the student's Advisor to resolve, depending on the specific case.

## Suspension (In school & Out of School Suspension)

A student may be suspended from all School activities immediately and without prior notice to parents. Parents must be informed immediately of suspension by the Principal and confirmation of the sanction given in writing with reasons for the action (copied to the Head of School). An initial suspension may not exceed 5 days. A student suspended from School must be collected by a parent or guardian. During the period of absence from the School a student is not permitted to attend any classes, participate in any school-related activity or return to the School premises for any reason. On returning to the School at the end of a suspension period a student will be readmitted only after discussion between the Administration, parent and student concerned.

While on in-school suspension a student must:

- Arrive on time
- Meet with the Administration
- Complete assigned work



## Expulsion

Expulsion is for the most serious offences or for repeated infractions of school regulations. This action must be proposed by the Head of School and ratified by the Board. Expulsion forms part of the permanent record of the dismissed student.

## Harassment

ABA will not tolerate any form of harassment. If a student is being harassed, the student's Advisor, relevant Counselor or Principal should be informed immediately. Harassment includes both personal and online activities.

## FORBIDDEN ITEMS

The following items are forbidden at school and will be confiscated:

- weapons
- matches and lighters
- chewing gum
- any other item the administration deems unacceptable or inappropriate

**The possession of tobacco products, alcohol, noxious or illegal substances incurs an automatic out of school suspension.**

## Dress Code Violations

**It is the responsibility of the student to adhere to the ABA dress code.** Parents will be notified and requested to bring the appropriate apparel to school or to students will be given alternate appropriate clothing for the remainder of the day. Repeat violation of our dress code will be dealt according to our Student Code of Conduct.

## Physical and health education - Dress Code

PHE uniform consists of:

- Vipers ABA PE Shirt,
- ABA logo shorts – knee length,
- Sports shoes with non-marking soles,
- A reusable water bottle,
- Sunhat and sunscreen for classes outside,
- One-piece swimwear suitable for active participation, swimming cap, goggles and towel in swimming classes. In addition, Gr 7 students will need to purchase a mask and a snorkel which will also be used for the Gr 7 Adventure Oman trip.

All jewelry is required to be completely removed for class and students with long hair must ensure that it is tied back for classes. **Students are not to bring valuables, watches or money to PHE.** Lockers are provided outside their homeroom to store valuables.

If students are unable to participate in PHE, an explanatory note from home and/or the doctor must be provided to the PHE teacher. Wherever possible a modified program will be agreed for the duration of the restriction. Students are required to help with equipment and be involved in roles of leadership as the lesson develops. It is therefore

imperative that students still bring their PHE kit to every class. Opportunities to shower will be provided at the end of each lesson. Therefore, students must remember to include soap and towel in their PHE kit.

### **Mufti Day**

Approximately one day a month the dress code is relaxed to enable the student council to raise funds. A contributory fee (200 baizas) is collected from each student who chooses to wear "mufti". All students are expected to dress in an appropriate manner; collarless T-shirts and the like are acceptable provided any printed logos/designs respect local standards of decency. No excessive jewelry is to be worn.

Dress code guidelines still apply.

### **Public Show of Affection**

Following Omani law, public shows of affection such as hand-holding, walking arm-in-arm, and walking with arms around waists is unacceptable between boys and girls. Parents will be contacted and expected to support the school's position.

## **MS Explores! – Offsite Experiential Learning Program**

Our Offsite Experiential Learning Program includes **MS Explores!** MS Explores! provides our students with the unique opportunity to explore Oman's rich geographical treasures. Students are immersed in diverse landscapes and enchanting environments as they traverse our Middle School. Each year group is exposed to a different learning experience to ensure that the learning develops necessary independence as well as individual and collective responsibility. Each MS Explores! camp represents an increased responsibility for your child, providing the conditions for the organised development of essential skills needed later in life. The camps are staffed by their subject teachers, along with expert and certified trainers. MS Explores! is fun and exciting, with activities clearly focused on students enjoying themselves, thus fostering a love of the outdoors. Additionally, our camps are focused on encouraging service, respect for the history of Oman, and respect for the local environmental issues. Finally, MS Explores! is about bonding and friendship. The experience of looking at stars in the desert sky, or listening to the waves under the moonlight or hiking through the picturesque Hajar mountains, is not one to be missed.

MS Explores! is an integral part of our holistic academic programme with **all Middle Students required to participate**. During MS Explores! all students and Middle School teachers will be offsite and out of Muscat. Each camp provides the opportunity for your child to form lasting bonds with other students in and out their advisory and to interact with other teachers in our school. Specific details about the process of paying the Outdoor Experiential Learning Programme (OELP) fee will be shared by the end of September each school year. This OELP fee will cover the cost of other curriculum experiences that require students to be off site for other activities.

These curriculum-based trips aim to link classroom learning to real life experience and develop teamwork and holistic characteristics in our students. Throughout each camp, students will engage in activities that infuse IB philosophy, our Mission and Vision, team building and fun.

### **MS Explores! Date will be announced soon.**

MYP Year 1 (Grade 6) - Desert

MYP Year 2 (Grade 7) -Ras Al Hadd

MYP Year 3 (Grade 8) - Jebel Shams

Each year group will be informed about the different requirements for each camp and the preparation that is expected. This information will be specific for each camp, so if you have children in more than one camp be mindful of the specific details about the individual camps.

All camps are scheduled to be run simultaneously.

# Appendix 1 - Academic Honesty Policy

## Introduction

In accordance with the IB Learner Profile and ABA's Mission, Vision and Value statements, we expect students to be principled and act with academic integrity. We ask each member of the school community -- students, teachers and parents -- to familiarize themselves with what constitutes academic honesty outlined in this policy.

Its purpose is to ensure that ABA's procedures for academic honesty are transparent, fair and consistent. The policy describes the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community so that everyone understands what constitutes good practice, and misconduct, and what actions are to be taken if there are transgressions. The policy should be dynamic and ensure that students are taught good practice in all aspects of their work.

## Definitions

**Academic honesty** is seen by the IB as "a set of values and skills that promote personal integrity and good practice in teaching, learning and assessment" (IBO 2014, pg. 12).

These values help foster an academic environment that is expressed in students' submission of work which is conscientiously produced, with the work and ideas of others properly credited. ABA students and staff use American Psychological Association (APA) formatting for all bibliographies and in-text citations. NoodleTools, an online research management tool, is used for instruction and practice of these formatting conventions.

**Malpractice** is considered to be "the behaviour that results in, or may result in, the student or any other student, gaining an unfair advantage in one or more assessment components" (Garza 2014, pg. 3). Incidents of academic malpractice include:

- A. **Plagiarism:** presenting others' ideas, statistics or images that are not your own, or clearly not common knowledge, without acknowledging the source. *Common knowledge* is defined as factual information that is widely accepted as reliable without having to look it up. Much depends on your audience, however -- when in doubt, however, cite your source.
- B. **Collusion:** allowing individual work to be copied by another student or any form of malpractice by another student. This should be distinguished from *collaboration*, which implies "working together on a common aim with shared information".
- C. **Duplication of work:** the presentation of the same piece of work for different assessment requirements.
- D. **Disclosing information** to another student or receiving information about the content of any assessment.

- E. **Unethical behaviour** that gains an unfair advantage to the student or that affects the results of another student (e.g., taking unauthorised material into an exam room, improper use of online translators, falsifying a CAS record).

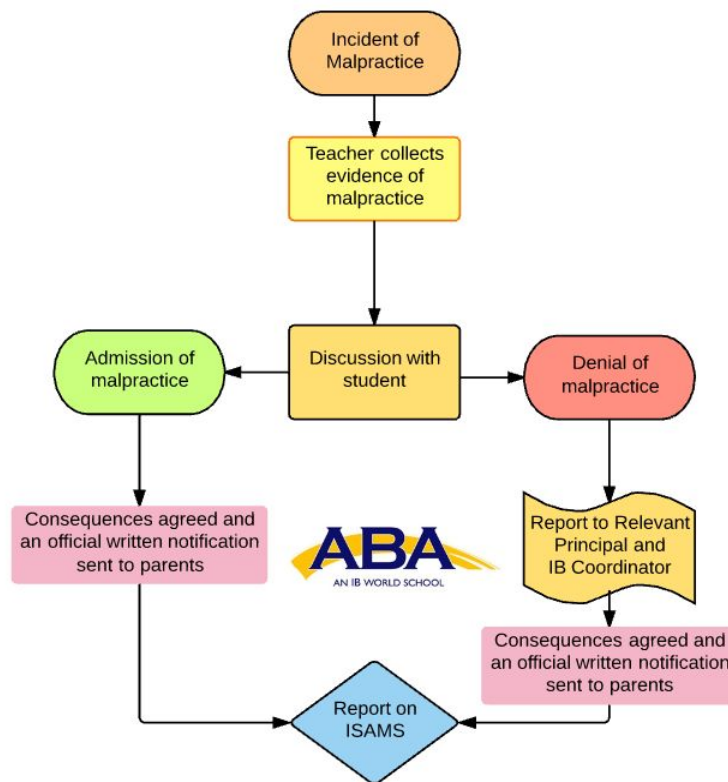
To ensure consistency and fairness when mistakes are made, it is important that ABA keep a record of each situation and the consequences. This will highlight general trends or problems with particular students for the coordinators to investigate.

In all cases of proven malpractice, students are still required to complete the original task within ABA's expectations.

**Internal:** When teachers (who may use web-detection programs such as Turnitin.com) suspect that a student has committed academic malpractice, the most effective first response is to address the situation on the teacher-student level.

Teachers will follow the following steps:

1. When a student is suspected of malpractice, collect evidence documenting the incident (often the Turnitin report or comparisons with the student's other work or drafts).
2. Discuss the facts of the incident with the student. Ask about the specific content of the assignment ("*What do you mean here by the phrase .... ?*") and about their sources ("*Tell me how you researched this paper*").
  - a. If the student *admits* to wrongdoing, discuss ABA's student expectations to be principled and act with academic integrity. During this conference, the teacher will also set guidelines for appropriate completion of the assignment. A note should then be sent to the student's parents
  - b. If the student *denies* academic malpractice, refer the incident to the relevant Principal/IB Coordinator. The Principal will investigate and make a determination as to whether there is sufficient evidence to take action.
2. Report the incident and its resolution on the academic honesty report feature in iSAMS. This is accessible in iSAMS -> Rewards & Conduct in the right-hand sidebar -> Sec Student Monitoring and in the drop-down menu, select "Academic Honesty".



If there is sufficient evidence to take action, the Principal will record the incident in the student's academic record and check in iSAMS if recurrent (if malpractice is external, the principal reports the incident to the Head of School). After investigation, the Principal has the authority to deny credit and/or impose a period of reflection after school, i.e., detention. A meeting with parents will be arranged to review the academic honesty policy.

**External:** The school adheres to the rules of the relevant examination body or External Providers. Any incident that occurs in an external examination must be reported to the Examination Officer using the relevant form. This could result in a student's loss of credit.

*Academic Honesty in the IB Educational Context.* (2014). Retrieved from International Baccalaureate Organization website: <http://www.ibo.org/globalassets/digital-toolkit/brochures/academic-honesty-ib-en.pdf>

Garza, C., Dr. (Presenter). (2014, October 17). *Academic Honesty - Principles to Practice*. Lecture presented at IB Africa, Europe & Middle East Regional Conference 2014, Rome. Retrieved from International Baccalaureate Organization website: <http://www.ibo.org/contentassets/71f2f66b529f48a8a61223070887373a/academichonesty.-principles-into-practice---celina-garza.pdf>

## Appendix 2 - Student Services

The Learning Support , EAL and Counseling programs are under the umbrella of the Student Support Services department. The programs provide support to students, teachers and parents. Learning support teachers are available as resources to support in-class interventions, to help identify areas of need and to provide specialized support, including early literacy intervention. EAL teachers provide support to students in Grades 1-10 who have English as an additional language. Our mission is to help students develop English language skills, cultural awareness and learning strategies which will enable them to become successful learners and positive contributors to the wider community in which they live.

ABA is an IB World School, and as such, values and models inclusion. Our collaborative approach to support uses an evidence, data and strengths-based model with a focus on growth, progress and learning. We aim to increase independent access and success for students at ABA.

### **ABA Student Support Services Mission statement**

The Student Support Services department is committed to proactively supporting our students and community. We achieve this through an inclusive, collaborative approach grounded in current evidence-based practice.

### **ABA Statement on Inclusion**

ABA recognizes that all learners benefit from a safe and supportive environment; that understanding and nurturing each child's academic, social, physical and personal growth is imperative to their success. We are committed to supporting, including, and celebrating diversity in our community.

As an IB World School, we believe that "Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. This can only be successfully achieved in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem solving. Inclusion is the learner profile in action, an outcome of dynamic learning communities." *Learning diversity in the International Baccalaureate programmes (2010)*.

Inclusion at ABA applies to all our students, parents, faculty and community. Admission is open to students for whom we can provide a program that is accessible and from which they can benefit. ABA is equipped to provide support for a managed number of students representing a range of learning needs, as well as English language learners, based on the school's enrollment policy and resources. ABA does not discriminate on the basis of religion, ethnic or national origin, or gender.



We understand that inclusion involves change, it is a journey that requires us to review and evaluate regularly in order to respond to the diversity of our students and community. ABA recognizes that inclusion in education is one aspect of inclusion in society. Equity of access, holistic, strengths-based instruction and assessment, and data based decision making are the foundation of our practice. ABA faculty is committed to working collaboratively, flexibly and with an inclusive mindset to ensure that all students are able to overcome barriers to learning and achieve success within the curriculum. We use the language of inclusion (learning support, barriers to learning, participation and support for diversity) to drive our practice.

**Admissions and Learning Support capacity:**

ABA admits students with learning needs who are able to access and benefit from the educational program in a mainstream environment. To ensure optimum student-teacher ratios and service to a high standard, enrollment in Learning Support shall not normally exceed 10% of the enrolment at any grade level. ABA is equipped to provide moderate support for a managed number of students normally not exceeding 5% of the total school enrollment and not more than four moderate students per grade level.

## Appendix 3 - Child Protection

### **Child Protection Policy 7.6.3**

ABA seeks to be a safe haven for all our students. Child Protection procedures derived from this policy will be stated in an ABA Child Protection Handbook. This handbook will be communicated to all who work with ABA students.

All staff employed at ABA must report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect whenever the staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse or neglect. Reporting and follow up of all suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect will be in accordance with Omani Law and the child protection procedures resulting from this policy statement. The ABA administration shall be responsible for ensuring that screening and criminal background checks for staff are provided.

### **Child Protection Parent Commitment**

Parents are asked to read carefully the Child Protection Handbook, which can be viewed on the parent portal, before reading and signing a copy of the following Child Protection Parent Commitment.

*We acknowledge that by enrolling our children at ABA, we understand the commitment to upholding the rights and protecting all children. We also recognize the importance of these values in the education of our children and agree to reinforce these values at home.*

*I / We undertake to:*

- *Support the ABA Child Protection Policy and procedures included in the Child Protection Handbook which is located within the Parent Portal Handbook tab on the ABA website.*

- *Be present in Muscat, and if we must leave, arrange a caretaker for our child/children, and inform the school of those arrangements, including emergency contact information, to the Middle and High School School or Elementary School Main Office. This caretaker must be able to serve in the capacity of in loco parentis, with full authority to make parental decisions to ensure appropriate supervision and to respond to a medical emergency.*

- *Share in the responsibility to bring forth information that supports the ABA Child Protection Policy with respect to the "Child Protection Disclosure Flowchart" found in the Child Protection Handbook.*

*The ABA Child Protection policy works for the child, for the family, and for our community. Research indicates that international communities are as prone to child abuse as communities in their home country. Child abuse is a multi-faceted issue that involves dynamics of the child, the family, and the community. The ABA Child Protection Policy works to respond at all three levels.*

Parents will receive a copy of this form to sign and return at the start of each school year. A copy of the form is at the back of this handbook for your reference.

## Appendix 4 - Assessment Policy

### A. Philosophy

ABA believes that the purpose of assessment is to determine the level of understanding that students currently possess, with the sole intention of designing learning experiences to improve their work. Assessment is underpinned by the central belief that all students can be successful, so the process is inquisitive, active and reflective. For this reason, assessment takes many different forms and acknowledges the diverse learning environment present at ABA.

### B. Assessment Criteria & Expectations

Assessment in ABA follows the requirements of the IB and the specificities of ABA supported by guidance seen in the publications "From Principles into Practice, IB Standards & Practices, and the relevant subject guides.

### C. Practices & Procedures

- **Feedback on Student Work** - Teachers will check and provide regular feedback on student work. Feedback can take many forms, some of which may include:
  - Verbal comments from teachers and/or peers
  - Written comments on the piece of work and/or comments noted on Managebac or using digital platforms such as Google docs, blogs etc.
  - Targets for development
- **Self and Peer Evaluation** - Teachers are required to provide opportunities for students to self-evaluate their work and peer evaluate their peers' work using MYP 1 - 3 criteria. Evidence should be curated in students' individual portfolio.
- **Varying assessment** - Teachers are required to use a variety of assessment tasks within their subject to recognize the diversity in learning styles.
- **Standardization** - Teachers are required to collaborate and set summative assessment tasks to ensure consistency of application of the MYP 1 - 3 Achievement Levels. Standardization meetings should be documented and the reflections recorded in the Reflection Tab in the Managebac Unit Planner or in the minutes from collaborative and/or curriculum team meetings.
- **Summative Assessment** - It is required that:
  - Criterion levels attained are recorded on Managebac
  - The students are supervised by a teacher to ensure authenticity
  - MYP1 - 3 criteria are provided as part of the assessment
  - The assessment date(s) are shared on Managebac Calendar
- **Missed Summative Assessment** - Apply the following guidelines:
  - Provide an opportunity to complete missed Summative Assessment

- Report regular absence from Summative Assessments to the Middle School Principal for follow-up
  - Mark the work as normal with no sanction on levels obtained.
- **Reporting** – It is required that reports are completed on iSAMS, demonstrating the assessment data collated from students' work in the reporting period. The reporting cycle is based on the semester system, two per year.
  - **Academic Honesty** - See Academic Honesty Policy.
  - **Sharing Assessment with the Community** -After each summative assessment, the final level must be recorded on Managebac Gradebook. The data on Managebac must correspond with the data on iSAMS that is used for reporting.
  - **Use of data to inform teaching and learning** - External assessments such as MYP eAssessment data, AVANT Language Proficiency data and ISA test data will be analyzed by departments and action plans developed and implemented to address any issues identified.
  - **Interdisciplinary Units** – Teachers are required to contribute to the planning and delivery of at least one interdisciplinary Unit per year. Interdisciplinary Units must be assessed using the IB MYP 1 - 3 objectives and then reported on within the reporting cycle.

## Terminology and Application

a) **Assessment** - All assessments inform planning and differentiation, giving students the opportunity to understand the skills and knowledge that is required in different modes of assessment. Students should receive feedback on all types of assessment.

- **Summative Assessments** - culminating assessments which provide evidence of student attainment and understanding of the statement of inquiry using MYP 1 - 3 criteria.
- **Formative Assessments** - Provide teachers and learners with further information about understanding and informing the teacher's professional judgement.

b) **Best-fit** is applied when an assessment level is required on a summative task. This is needed to address the bands. The decision on whether a task is 3 or 4 is the applying of a **best-fit** process. Professional Judgement may be applied when using the Best Fit in awarding criterion levels.

f) **Learning Diversity** - See SLN Policy in the Faculty Handbook.

g) **MYP Grades** - These are automatically calculated in iSAMS. This is determined by adding the Best-fit over the 4 criteria for your discipline and then using the MYP prescribed grade boundaries.

**Professional Judgement (PJ)** - In some cases where students have not completed enough assessments, a teacher should apply professional judgement. This may arise from a variety of scenarios including prolonged absences, late start, illnesses etc. These cases are normally ones where enough data is not available to correctly apply either a Best-Fit

**Action words in this Policy:**

- **Required** – Steps that are defined as “required” meet IB requirements for the respective program, therefore the guidance is a mandatory procedure.
- **Should** – Steps that are defined as “should”, means that the guidance is *recommended*, allowing some flexibility if valid reasons exist to ignore the procedure but the implications must be weighed.
- **May** - This is guidance that is truly optional.

## Appendix 5 - ABA Language Policy

### Philosophy

**ABA – An IB World School** “recognizes that language, our major means of thinking and communicating, is fundamental to learning, underpinning and permeating the whole curriculum.” (IBO 2007). ABA students learn language through language authentic contexts, literature, friendships, and cultural exposures. The four communication strands of listening, speaking, writing and reading are learned and reinforced across and throughout all subject areas. In this context all teachers at ABA are language teachers. Most students at ABA are multilingual and it is our belief that language learning is built on the foundation of prior knowledge and understanding we have of our Mother Language. In learning an additional language, literacy (reading and writing) as well as active oral participation are central to language proficiency.

ABA's Vision affirms the school's commitment to providing opportunities for students to achieve their maximum potential in an environment of intercultural understanding and respect. To achieve our Vision, ABA students are provided opportunities to learn Arabic from grades 1 – 12; French from grades 6–12; and Spanish from grades 8–12. In addition, a Mother Language Program, coordinated by the parent community, is offered as an extracurricular activity. At present we have 6 languages on offer.

### Overview of language programs at ABA

Teachers use a range of learner appropriate, learning and teaching strategies, resources and assessment. We aim to develop students' confidence and competence in a range of language skills and to foster the attitudes and values which underpin cultural awareness and respect.

English is the language of instruction within the school and English language competency is seen as the key to student success in all subject areas. Therefore, at ABA, all teachers K-12 are language teachers and play an important role in teaching and reinforcing language skills needed in each specific area of study. Subject teachers are encouraged to correct mistakes in English as well as content of written work, and to teach subject specific vocabulary explicitly to students who are not native speakers of English.

Students are encouraged to use their Mother Language to access prior learning when needed. All classes are taught in English except the Arabic, French and Spanish language classes.

Teachers at ABA represent over 45 different nationalities and 25 languages. However, teachers of English, Arabic, Spanish and French must be native or near native speakers of the language they teach.

### Current Language Courses

- **MYP 1 - 3**

- ❑ In MYP 1 students are offered the option of either beginning French, Spanish or continuing their study of Arabic.
- ❑ Students in MYP 2 & 3 continue in their language choice.
- ❑ Students are not allowed to transfer between languages until they have attained a satisfactory proficiency in phase 4 of the language they intend to change.

### **Mother Language**

ABA encourages all students who have English as a second or additional language to maintain their mother/native/first language and not to replace it with English. The school promotes internationalism and by facilitating mother language classes, the cultural identity of the students is preserved, the connection to the family and the home country is strengthened. Mother language is part of a students' cultural heritage. As such ABA supports a parent run tutored mother language program that runs as an extracurricular activity for students K2 to Grade 10.

### **Forms of English**

Many students at ABA are multilingual, with varying levels of skill proficiency (reading, writing, listening, speaking) in their languages. As such, English is the lingua franca, or common shared language, and is part of the developing multilingual profile of every student at ABA. Students learn to appreciate the different forms of the English language, for example British, Australian or American and teachers point out the differences in expression or spelling where appropriate. The expectation is that students are consistent in their English usage.

### **English as an Additional Language Program**

At ABA, students in Grades 1-10 who have English as a second (or additional) language receive support from the EAL program in addition to the language support they receive from their classroom teachers. Language learning should meet the needs of the student so EAL lessons are, as much as possible, related directly to the language/vocabulary the student requires to access curriculum-content in the regular classroom.

The Mission of this program is to help students develop English language skills, cultural awareness and learning strategies which will enable them to become successful learners and positive contributors to the wider community in which they live.

It is the Vision that every EAL student fulfills their potential through the medium of English.

Support for students who have English as an additional language is primarily through immersion in the regular classroom although students identified with the highest need are supported by the EAL teacher through in-class support, pull-out support or, for older students, self-supported study.

### **Admissions**

Students for whom English is not their first language are identified either at the time of admission or by class teachers. Subsequent support from the EAL department is determined by individual need and the capacity of the program. There is no EAL support for students in grades 11 and 12. Students applying to the older grades must

therefore demonstrate their proficiency in English in order to be enrolled in the school.



## Appendix 6 - ABA Acceptable Use Agreement

ABA teachers and administration believe that providing network access for users' personal electronic devices will enhance the educational experience for ABA students. For this reason, ABA has set up a wireless network.

1. **Acceptable Devices.** Users may access the wireless network with any approved device. Users may only access the network with devices that are their own personal property or school-owned.
2. **Personal Responsibility.** The school assumes no responsibility for the loss of, theft of or damage to any personal device that a user brings to ABA or any information on that device.
3. **Security.** Users shall not impair the security of the network. This expectation includes but is not limited to:
  - a. Users are expected to maintain up to date antivirus and antispyware protection on all devices that are connected to the wireless network. Devices without up to date security programs may be denied access to the network.
  - b. Users are expected to safeguard all network passwords. Users should not share network passwords with others and should change passwords frequently. Users are expected to notify an administrator immediately if they believe their account has been compromised. Users are expected to log onto the wireless network only with their account and not to allow others to use their account or to use the accounts of others.
4. **Limited IT Support.** Users are responsible for setting up and maintaining personal devices that they connect to the network. IT support for user owned devices may be sought to deal with wireless connectivity issues.
5. **Authorized Use.** Students may use the wireless network when they are not in class. Students may not use the wireless network in class unless authorized by the teacher of that class.
6. **Inappropriate Use.** The wireless network is a shared and limited resource and all users have an obligation to use that resource responsibly. Users are provided access to the wireless network for educational purposes. Incidental personal use of the network is acceptable outside class, but users should not use the network for personal activities that consume significant network bandwidth or for activities that violate school policy or local or international law. These include but are not limited to:
  - a. Online gaming unless approved by a teacher.
  - b. Downloading software, music, movies or other content in violation of licensing requirements, copyright or other intellectual property rights.
  - c. Downloading, viewing or sharing inappropriate content, including pornographic, defamatory or otherwise offensive material.
  - d. Conducting any activity that is in violation of school policy or local, or international law.
  - e. Participating in political activities.
  - f. Conducting for-profit business unless authorized by school administration.
  - g. Using hacking tools on the network or intentionally introducing malicious code into the School's network.
  - h. Using any software or proxy service to obscure either the student's IP address or the sites that the student visits.

- i. Using peer-to-peer/torrent programs.
  - j. Disabling, bypassing, or attempting to disable or bypass any system monitoring, filtering or other security measures.
  - k. Accessing or attempting to access material or systems on the network that the student is not authorized to access.
7. **No Expectations of Privacy.** The School can and does monitor internet access and activity on the School's network, including but not limited to sites visited, content viewed and email sent and received. The School may examine a student's personal device and search its contents if there is a reason to believe that school policies, regulations, or guidelines regarding access to the network or use of the device have been violated.
8. **Disruptive Activity.** Users should not intentionally interfere with the performance of the School's wireless and wired network.
9. **Unauthorized Networks.** Users may not create unauthorized wireless networks to access ABA's wireless network. This includes establishing of wireless access points, wireless routers and open networks on personal devices.
10. **No Use of Wired Networks.** Students may use only the ABA student wireless network for personal devices. They may not attach personal devices to the wired network.
11. **Consequences of Inappropriate Use.** Students who misuse ABA's student wireless network will be subject to disciplinary action which may include loss of access to student wireless or all internet access and/or other appropriate disciplinary or legal action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct
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## Appendix 7 - MS Explores!

### General

The MS Explores! programme at ABA enables students to gain a greater understanding of the country in which they are living. They interact with Omanis and learn about their culture and the environment in which they live. They experience adventure and have the chance to try activities where they develop many of the characteristics of the IB Learner Profile: risk-taking, open-minded, reflective, knowledgeable and caring.

**MYP Year 1 (Grade 6)** students spend time in the desert. For many students, this will be their first time away from their families. They interact with their peers in an environment where many step outside their social 'norms'. They take part in learning experiences that leave them with a heightened awareness of the diverse nature of their surroundings, the nature of desertification and the changing lives of the people who live in it.

**MYP Year 2 (Grade 7)** students go to the coast of Oman. It builds on the previous year's programme and stretches the students a little further. Removed from their everyday classroom surroundings, they learn of the rich, seafaring history of Oman and are immersed in first-hand-experiences of Oman's diverse marine life. They experience the City of Sur and visit the National Turtle sanctuary to observe the life cycle of Green Turtles.

**MYP Year 3 (Grade 8)** students camp inside a traditional Omani mountain camp based in the Hajar Mountains. The camp is at the top of the famous Jebel Shams and is surrounded by mountains and wadis. This camp has challenging hikes over mountainous but safe terrain, where students have to carry everything they need with them. This camp leaves students with a rich experience of how to be safe in the mountains and the need to be organised. Students in this camp are also required to bring their own tents and help with the cleaning up routines on the campsite. The camp will culminate with a visit to the Al Hamra village located near the foot of the mountains.

MS Explores! allows students to develop on both a social and personal level, while having fun at the same time. Our goal is that every child finds success at these camps, whether personally or collaboratively.

This year all camps will be convened at the same time. If you have more than one child in Middle School, be mindful that the requirements will be different for each camp. Additionally, the camp is a required experience in our academic programme.

**Arrangements to pay the OELP fee will be shared by September each school year.** This fee covers the cost of other outdoor experiences that may arise through other MYP subjects in the school year.

## Appendix 8 - Athletic Agreement

# MS Student Athlete Requirements For Participation in ABA Athletics



2020-2021



**Dear Parents,**

ABA Athletics strives to create balanced, disciplined athletes who represent the school as leaders and role models to other students. In keeping with ABA's belief that excellence is a triangular responsibility we ask parents to support their son/daughter by attending their games and modeling our mission. Please take the time to read the requirements for participation with your son/daughter and discuss any issues or questions you might have. The student agreement and parent permission page must be returned to your child's advisor.

Extra-curricular activities are a crucial component of developing well-rounded young adults. In our continuing efforts to challenge our students and develop lifelong skills, ABA competes in a local league. The Muscat Middle School Sports League (MSSL) provides an opportunity to compete in a range of competitions from weekly matches to a tournament towards the end of the season.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to support your child. We look forward to seeing you at our games.

**Dear Athlete,**

We are happy you have expressed a desire to participate in the athletic program at ABA – An IB World School. As a member of one of our athletic teams you will have a unique opportunity to make lasting friendships, develop your athletic skills, understand the value and importance of commitment and cooperation, and compete against student athletes from other schools. Every effort will be made to ensure that this experience is educationally worthwhile and enjoyable.

ABA is proud of its athletic program and the many contributions our student athletes and coaches have made in building a strong sense of community. We expect that all student athletes will embrace the school's tradition of outstanding sportsmanship, citizenship, pride and fair play. We believe the opportunity to participate in athletics is a *privilege* and comes with the responsibility that each student maintain a high standard of behavior as well as achieve academically to their highest potential. In order to remain in good standing, a student must meet the requirements and fulfill the responsibilities outlined in this Student Athlete Agreement.

We want your experience with the Viper's program to be one that you will never forget and one that you will always hold in high regard. We ask you to take on any task put before you and to do it to the best of your ability. We also hope that you will develop strength derived from sharing challenging situations with your fellow athletes and become a true team.

We wish you a fulfilling and successful year in whatever sport you choose. Thank you for being part of our sports program and for serving as an ABA Ambassador.

Sincerely,

Two handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature, on the left, is 'P. Brace'. The second signature, on the right, is 'K. Bowin'.

Paul Brace and Kathleen Bowin

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN ABA ATHLETICS**

### **Attendance and Class Requirements**

- A. All student athletes should take responsibility for their studies and homework.
- B. Any student who is not feeling well enough to participate in any class or is absent on the day of an event will not be allowed to participate in the after school sports program. It will be the responsibility of the student athlete to inform the coach if this may occur.
- C. Students waiting on campus for their practice to begin must remain on campus.

### **Standard of Behavior**

- A. All athletes are expected to display maturity and self-discipline that positively reflects ABA's mission at all times.
- B. Any player who displays poor sportsmanship will be dealt with on an individual basis and the coach and Athletic Director will review their future participation with the team.

#### **Sportsmanship demands that athletes:**

- 1. Play hard at all times in spite of hardships; good teams never give up, quit, complain or argue with teammates, coaches, officials or spectators.
  - 2. Support and encourage their team members on the playing field, around school, in the classroom and in the community.
  - 3. Give opponents full credit when they win and congratulate them on their success, regardless of their own disappointment.
  - 4. Recognize and applaud honestly and whole-heartedly the efforts of their team or opponents.
- C. Take the responsibility and privilege of representing ABA seriously and be a positive role model in and out of the classroom.
- D. Commit themselves to hard and dedicated practice, to the team and to their coach.

### **Practice, Games and Tournament**

- A. Every player must attend practice (or game) properly dressed with appropriate kit or equipment required by the coach (e.g. uniform, water bottle, knee pads for volleyball or shin guards for soccer).
- B. If the athlete is unable to attend a practice, game or tournament they will take responsibility to communicate this to their coach before the activity.
- C. Athletes are expected to show up on time and be prepared for all practices and games as determined by the coach.
- D. Be fair, honest and sportsmanlike at all times; no matter what the cost.
- E. Accept the decision of the official without question.

### **Equipment**

- A. The athlete assumes all responsibility for the proper care of the uniform issued to him/her.
- B. Athletes will be billed for uniforms that are lost, damaged or stolen.
- A. **All spirit wear / training gear / hoodies /playing kit etc is to be arranged/approved via the Athletic Director and/or the Vipers Booster Club.**