



## AMSE Parent/Student High School Handbook 2024-25 School Year

### Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians:

Welcome to the Applied Math, Science, and Engineering (AMSE) Institute! AMSE programs offer VCS students an extraordinary opportunity to build on their classroom experiences, expand their horizons, and have fun.

This handbook is designed to give students, parents, and guardians helpful insights into AMSE programs. It includes detailed information about program activities, procedures, and policies. Please read this Handbook carefully and use it for reference during the school year.

The mission of AMSE is “**to prepare the next generation of Christian STEM Innovators.**” The staff welcomes your suggestions and feedback that will help us make your student’s time in AMSE beneficial and rewarding. We encourage you to share your thoughts and ideas directly with us by emailing us at <mailto:amse@vcs.net>.

### AMSE Policies

These policies remain in effect regardless of program delivery – virtual, hybrid, or on-campus instruction.

#### Attendance and Punctuality

Students are expected to actively participate in AMSE program meetings and events and attend **90%** of all program sessions. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of program meetings. Attendance includes fulfilling participation requirements, punctual arrival, and active contribution at sessions, practices, events, and other program activities. In order to maximize program participation, students are to schedule other activities and appointments to conflict minimally with program activities.

Students should notify the program manager in advance, if they know they are going to be absent. **Please note that excessive absence is cause for removal from the program.**

## Cell Phone Policy

AMSE has instituted a cell phone policy for the protection of each student's privacy and safety, as well as to maintain a peaceful environment for all to enjoy. Students will be asked to keep their cell phones in their backpacks or in another classroom space provided by the program manager. We do not want students to use personal cell phones or any electronic devices during program hours, except for emergency purposes.

## Days of Operation

AMSE Programs follow the VCS master school calendar. There will be no after school programs on school holidays, in-service days, or days when school is dismissed due to emergencies. During peak season of competition, some program managers may require extra practices or travel days that may include school breaks.

## Dismissal of a Student

We are committed to a partnership with all students and parents whose goal is to help make this a rewarding educational experience. If a parent or teacher brings a concern to our attention regarding too much time spent on out of school activities related to AMSE which are negatively affecting grades or behavior, suspension or removal from an AMSE program may result. Dismissal of a student from a program may also occur for the following reasons:

- A student's behavior is determined to be detrimental to his/her own well-being or the well-being of others
- The student and/or parent/guardian willfully and/or persistently violates the policies set forth by VCS, AMSE and/or the program manager
- The student and/or the parent/s guardian/s exhibit inappropriate behavior toward the faculty, staff and or administrators and/or or a student and/or another parent
- Excessive absences or failure to participate
- Failure to comply with VCS payment policies

## Payment Policy

- **Program fees are non-refundable after the program session has run for one (1) session.** This is true whether the student has or has not attended a session.
- If your student wishes to withdraw from the program, you must notify the AMSE office, in writing, at [amse@vcs.net](mailto:amse@vcs.net). The deadline for withdrawing is 24 hours after the first program session concludes in order to receive a refund.
- **There will be a \$100 processing fee deducted from the refund of pre-paid fees for any student who withdraws from a program. Please carefully consider registering for a program if you are not sure you can attend.**
- Fees are charged and due regardless of absence due to illness or vacation.

- Failure to pay fees in a timely manner is grounds for dismissal from the program and may result in ineligibility to register for future programs and other VCS academic and non-academic related activities. All VCS Finance department policies related to non-payment of fees apply.
- Program fees vary depending on the program and the duration.

## **Travel Policies**

For all overnight trips, families will receive an “Intent to Travel” form with estimated student expenses. Submitting this form constitutes a formal commitment, and all fees are binding. Actual travel costs may vary, will be communicated once reservations are confirmed, and are payable via the VCS PayFees or Finals site registration system.

The AMSE office will organize group travel arrangements. All students must travel to and from the destination with the group; individualized travel requests or modifications to existing reservations are not permitted.

Families are responsible for travel fees regardless of the student’s attendance.

AMSE adheres to Valley Christian High School’s discipline policies and behavioral expectations during student travel.

## **Positive Program Support**

We are committed to a partnership with all students and parents whose goal is to help make this a rewarding educational experience. In order for students to have a positive experience, parents, students, and AMSE staff need to work collaboratively together. All policies and procedures have been established to create a safe and engaging environment for students, and to maintain the standards set forth by Valley Christian Schools and legal guidelines. Questions and concerns about the program, and information about student behavior, are expected to be handled in a professional and courteous manner and should be directed to the program manager, the director of operations for AMSE and/or the vice president of AMSE. Inappropriate conduct and/or negative conversation do not demonstrate positive problem-solving strategies for students and may result in the student’s removal from the program.

## **Reporting Abuse and Neglect**

All program staff members are mandated reporters and as such, are required by California state law to report all suspected instances of abuse or neglect to the Department of Child Protective Services. All allegations of abuse/neglect shall be reported within the required time frames. If there is an allegation or indication of a physical injury, sexual assault or any situation where a student’s health is in question, medical attention will immediately be sought in accordance with state law.

## **Student Behavior**

AMSE Programs are an extension of the school day and therefore, all students will be expected to adhere to the same rules and dress code as during the school day, including all health and safety requirements as outlined in the Valley Christian Junior High and High Student Handbooks. AMSE follows the same discipline policies and procedures as Valley Christian Junior High and High School. All discipline matters will be conducted in compliance with the Code of Conduct as set forth in the Valley Christian Junior High and High School Student Handbooks.

**Any violation, depending on it's severity, can result in not only dismissal from an AMSE program, but also higher consequences, up to and including expulsion from Valley Christian School.**

## **Student's Illness / Accident / Emergencies**

**If a student is absent from school, s/he may not come to the program that day.** A student must have attended school during the school day to attend the program.

Students will follow all health and safety protocols and procedures. If a student becomes ill or is injured during the program or exhibits any of the following conditions, his/her parent/guardian or emergency contact person will be contacted and asked to pick up the student within one hour of notification:

- contagious disease
- fever over 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- vomiting or diarrhea
- accident requiring medical attention
- head lice

If a student is in need of urgent medical attention, staff will call 911, the student may be transported to the hospital by ambulance, and the student's parent/guardian will be held responsible for all costs incurred.

Please report any changes of emergency contact information, employment, telephone numbers, or addresses in writing to [amse@vcs.net](mailto:amse@vcs.net) as soon as they become available. Although this information will be kept confidential, it will be shared with appropriate staff members to facilitate communication with parents or guardians in emergency situations.

## **Student Participation**

AMSE programs require a significant time commitment from the students (estimated at an average of 1-10 hours per week, depending on the program.) Students are encouraged to enroll in only one AMSE program per school year/trimester/semester.

If a student chooses to apply/enroll for more than one AMSE program, he/she may only hold a leadership position in one of the two programs. High school students may not enroll in more than two AMSE programs in a single trimester/semester/year. Junior high students may not enroll in more than one AMSE program in a single trimester/semester/year.

Students may only enroll in programs open to their campus or specific grade levels; ie: junior high students will not be allowed to register or attend high school programs unless their grade level is specifically included at the time of registration.

*(Students may enroll in as many clubs as he/she wishes without impacting program enrollment.)*

### **Supervision**

While participating in VCS AMSE program activities, students are subject to VCS faculty, staff, and program leadership supervision. Students must inform VCS staff and/or adult mentors of departure when at a VCS AMSE program activity both on or off campus.

### **Visitor Policy**

Visitors are welcome with prior approval (subject to campus restrictions.) If a parent or guardian wishes to visit/observe a program session, prior notification must be obtained from the program manager. All visitors must first check in at the VCHS office to sign in and out of the visitor log and obtain a VCS visitor badge.

**The consequence for violation of any of Valley Christian Schools and/or AMSE policies, including those specified above, may include any of the following: a verbal warning, a documented violation notice, suspension, dismissal from the program, up to and including expulsion from Valley Christian Schools. Under such circumstances, no monies will be refunded. Serious violations may include further action from the VCS school administration.**

***We reserve the right to amend these policies at any time, without prior notice.***

If you have any questions regarding the AMSE program, contact the AMSE Office at 408.513.2584 or by email at [amse@vcs.net](mailto:amse@vcs.net).