

QSI International School of Astana

# Parent-Student Handbook

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*QSI International School of Astana is an inclusive community of learners who strive for genuine collaboration, deep connections, and inspired creativity seeking solutions to real problems. We care about each other and our world.*



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# Director's Message

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Welcome to QSI International School of Astana!

I am honored, as Director of QSI International School of Astana to welcome you. Our family-oriented community is a great place to learn. Our school is a non-profit, co-educational school for students from 3 years of age through Secondary IV. As a part of Quality Schools International, our students gain a top-quality international education with a rigorous, research-based curriculum.

We focus on student learning through a mastery, performance-based approach. Our program emphasizes knowledge, skills, and success orientations. Our students are given attention and support to reach high standards by certified teachers that are caring and adapt to the needs of students. We have small class sizes that are nurturing and enable personalized instruction. We believe that every student can succeed. We offer a range of classes to meet student needs

including the core classes of Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Cultural Studies, and Science. Additional classes and electives include Art, Music, Physical Education, Technology, and Languages Other than English. Our Secondary students can enroll in Advanced Placement courses and AP assessments. We endeavor to provide the conditions for success as students engage in higher order thinking skills and high interest activities.

The success orientations of kindness and politeness, independent endeavor, group interaction, aesthetic appreciation, trustworthiness, responsibility, and concern for others develop character and emotional intelligence in students throughout the school. These traits help students be successful as they reach their potential.

We encourage parents to work together with us to ensure that the whole child is being developed and challenged. We have activities that foster student growth and development and bring our community together. So, join us as we soar to new heights together. If you would like to find out more, please feel free to email me at: [susan-friend@qsi.org](mailto:susan-friend@qsi.org)

Sincerely,

***Susan Friend***

***Director***

# 2025-2026 School Calendar

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## **First Term**

<b>First Day</b>	21 August (Thursday – Full Day)
<b>Last Day</b>	12 December (Friday)
<b>Holidays</b>	1 September (Monday) Constitution Day 20 October - 24 October (Monday - Friday) Fall Break 27 October (Monday) Republic Day 15 December - 07 January Winter break
<b>Quintile 1</b>	21 August - 10 October
<b>Quintile 2</b>	13 October – 10 December
<b>Quintile 3</b>	11 December - 24 February

## **Second Term**

<b>First Day:</b>	08 January (Thursday)
<b>Last Day:</b>	20 March (Friday)
<b>Holidays:</b>	9 March (Monday) International Women’s Day 21 March- Nauryz 23 March-27 March (Monday–Friday) Spring Break
<b>Quintile 4:</b>	25 February - 23 April

## **Third Term**

<b>First Day:</b>	01 April (Wednesday)
<b>Last Day:</b>	18 June (Wednesday)
<b>Holidays:</b>	01 May (Thursday) Unity Day 07 May (Wednesday) Defenders’ Day 11 May (Monday) Victory Day 28 May (Thursday) Kurban Ait
<b>Quintile 5:</b>	24 April - 18 June

# 2025-2026 Daily Bell Schedule

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	<b>Pre-K/Elem</b>		<b>Middle/Sec</b>
<b>Period 1</b>	8:12-9:00	<b>Period 1</b>	8:12-9:00
<b>Period 2</b>	9:00-9:45	<b>Period 2</b>	9:00-9:45
<b>Recess</b>	9:45-10:02	<b>Recess</b>	9:45-10:02
<b>Period 3</b>	10:02-10:50	<b>Period 3</b>	10:02-10:50
<b>Period 4</b>	10:50-11:38	<b>Period 4</b>	10:50-11:38
<b>Period 5/Lunch</b>	11:38-12:26	<b>Period 5</b>	11:38-12:26
<b>Period 6</b>	12:26-1:14	<b>Period 6/Lunch</b>	12:26-1:14
<b>Period 7</b>	1:14-2:02	<b>Period 7</b>	1:14-2:02
<b>Advisory</b>	2:02-2:22	<b>Advisory</b>	2:02-2:22
<b>Period 8</b>	2:22-3:10	<b>Period 8</b>	2:22-3:10
<b>Period G</b>	ASA	<b>Period G</b>	3:10-3:55

# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

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QSI International School of Astana (QSI Astana) is officially accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. This organization is responsible for reviewing and assessing the proposed educational objectives; the professional qualifications of staff; the program of studies; and school governance, operations, policies, finances, and facilities.

QSI Astana is part of Quality Schools International (QSI), a non-profit organization. Additionally, the school is affiliated with the following educational organizations: Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) National Honor Society (NHS) College Board (Advanced Placement), Office of Overseas Schools, U.S. Department of State.

## 1.1 MISSION

Virtually every five-year old comes to school eager to learn. The mission of Quality Schools International is to keep this urge to learn alive in every child in QSI schools. Our schools are established to provide a quality English-language education for students in the cities we serve. Many of our students are children whose parents have come to a foreign country, usually for a limited stay, however some students are citizens or permanent residents of the host country.

Our schools follow a logical model of education, which measures success by the accomplishments and attitudes of our students. We believe that all our students can succeed, that their successes encourage them to continue in a pattern of success, and that it is the schools' responsibility to provide the conditions for success. These conditions include i) developing clear statements in measurable terms of what the student will do to demonstrate mastery of learning, ii) providing the time and resources needed for each student to attain mastery, and iii) ensuring that students engage in learning at a level which is challenging and yet a level for which each student has the prerequisite skills necessary for success.

We believe in providing an aesthetically pleasing physical surrounding under the charge of a caring staff who believes their students will be successful, and who use time with the students as a resource for learning rather than as a boundary condition to determine when a unit of learning begins and ends. We believe in providing resources such as books, learning materials, and educational technology.

Finally, we believe in working with parents to encourage our students to adopt qualities of living which lead to success long after formal schooling has ended. These include universally accepted "success orientations" of trustworthiness, kindness/politeness, responsibility, independent endeavor, concern for others, group interaction, and aesthetic appreciation.

## 1.2 VALUES & PHILOSOPHY

The schools of QSI have been founded in order to provide a quality education in the English language for expatriates living in the international community. Local citizens who want their children to be educated in English are also accepted. The schools recognize that most of the students are enrolled for only two or three years and have diverse educational backgrounds. The philosophy of QSI includes the following:

1. Attitudes Toward Learning - We believe that more learning will occur if the student has a desire to learn, has positive feelings concerning his school environment, and succeeds in his work. A comfortable atmosphere of caring and acceptance established by the school is considered important, so that each student is encouraged to strive for excellence and to be creative. This is enhanced by an aesthetically pleasing environment with a view to appreciation of beauty and order. Each student's possibility of success increases when he works at the appropriate level of difficulty and senses positive expectations from his teachers.
2. Areas of Learning - Mastery of basic skills is considered a vital part of education, essential for success in studies of other subjects as well as in most situations in life. A broad and varied program of physical education, fine arts, and other activities is also considered important to enhance the interest and education of the students.
3. Social Behavior - For a useful and meaningful life we encourage the development of personal qualities leading to acceptable values and harmonious relationships.

4. Cultural Awareness - An understanding and acceptance of the different cultures represented in the school are considered important. We believe emphasis should be placed on gaining an appreciation and knowledge of the region and the local country in The Republic of Kazakhstan.
5. Environmental Awareness - We believe it is essential to have an awareness of the value of protecting and improving our environment.

## SECTION 2: ADMISSIONS

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### 2.1 STUDENT ADMISSIONS POLICY

QSI schools have been founded in order to provide a quality English medium, North American, international education for expatriates. Local citizens who want their children to be educated in English are also accepted. Admissions to QSI schools are aligned to the QSI mission, vision and values.

### 2.2 QSI POLICY FOR CLASS PLACEMENT BY AGE

In all QSI schools, students are assigned to classes according to their birthdays. QSI classes do not use the traditional American terms of pre-school, kindergarten, first grade, fourth grade, sophomore, senior, etc. The terms used are four-year-old class, six-year-old class, nine-year-old class, Secondary II, Secondary IV, respectively. Normally a student is assigned to the eight-year-old class if he eight years of age before the first of November. Exceptions can only be made through a meeting of the school Director or Director of Instruction.

Secondary-age students are placed into the Secondary I class by age (14 years old by 1 November), however, if the student is not yet proficient in English, he or she may take elementary courses, which could impact the graduation year. Progress through the Secondary levels is determined at the beginning of each school year by the number of credits attained (a minimum of 50 for Secondary II, 100 for Secondary III, and 150 for Secondary IV).

### 2.3 EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

QSI Astana has Early Childhood programs for students aged 2 to 4. Students entering the 2-year-old program are required be toilet trained prior to admission into the program.

### 2.4 SPECIAL NEEDS

QSI admits students with limited learning needs, challenges, or disabilities once it has been determined that the student can succeed at the school.

For students with moderate to severe disabilities, the school will review additional information including evaluations, reports, IEPs, or school referrals required to help the school assess whether a program can be provided to meet the academic needs of the applicant. QSI schools sometimes accept special-needs students based on the family or sponsor providing the additional school fees to cover the cost of additional professional services.

Students identified with challenges the school is unable to effectively address can be denied admission to the school.

# SECTION 3: ACADEMICS

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## 3.1 CURRICULUM

Quality Schools International has a strong belief that all students can succeed. QSI departs from traditional schools in that it is not as much concerned about “time” being the “defining” factor of student learning. In most schools, students are given a certain amount of time to complete learning in a subject, and then students are assessed on their performance. In QSI, time is used as a resource, so the outcomes that are designed to develop students into well-educated and well-adjusted individuals are thoroughly mastered.

In the QSI model of learning, a student either masters the outcomes in each area, or the student is simply not finished. When a student achieves mastery level, he/she is immediately rewarded by receiving credit for the outcome. Therefore, QSI applies only mastery grades of “A” or “B,” or “P” (still in Progress). QSI recognizes that not everyone will master outcomes at the same rate. Many will be able to finish an outcome rather quickly—they will be allowed to work on a selective outcome and gain credit for doing so. Others will take longer to achieve mastery level—and they will be provided the time necessary to do so. In other words, students have more than one chance to be successful. The learned outcomes needed at mastery level are clearly defined and clearly stated.

### Exit Outcomes

QSI has designed Exit Outcomes that are the basis of the entire curriculum. These Exit Outcomes fall into three categories: Success Orientations, Competencies, and Knowledge. Although these categories are related, and are in many ways interdependent, the following three verbs give definition to the Exit Outcomes:

'to believe' Success Orientations

'to do' Competencies

'to know' Knowledge

### Success Orientations

It is important to learn more than the “academics.” QSI feels it is equally important that the often-hidden part of the curriculum, what QSI calls Success Orientations, be a vital part of the entire QSI school experience.

Success for All is the motto of Quality Schools International. This is more than just a slogan. Research indicates, and our experience confirms, that successful people have developed personal orientations that lead to success. Personal habits, the ability to interact successfully with others, reliability, responsibility, diligent work habits, promptness, keeping your word, kindness, and other factors in this realm are at least as important as the knowledge one learns and the competencies one gains. Success in these orientations rests first and foremost in the home; however, the success orientations are actively encouraged and taught in virtually all areas of the QSI school curriculum with the view of making them a vital part of one’s life pattern. The role of QSI is to reinforce these efforts of the home.

Success Orientation behaviors are evaluated independently from academic assessments. Academic assessments are given solely based on the student’s performance in the specified academic outcomes. Evaluations of the success orientations are based on situations within the jurisdiction of the school, and they are awarded through a consensus by the professional staff members. The seven Success Orientations are:

- Responsibility
- Trustworthiness
- Group Interaction
- Aesthetic Appreciation
- Kindness / Politeness
- Independent Endeavor
- Concern for Others

### Competencies

Quality Schools International considers mastery in each of the seven competencies listed below essential to personal success in life.

- Numeracy and Mathematical Skills
- Verbal and Written Communication Skills
- Thinking and Problem-solving Skills
- Decision-Making and Judgment Skills
- Commercial Skills
- Psychomotor Skills
- Fine Arts Skills

## **Knowledge**

In the modern world there has been a vast and continuous increase in knowledge. It is impossible to know everything. One must carefully choose the things considered essential for a person educated in modern society. QSI believes it is better to engage in the study of less information and gain mastery rather than cover large amounts of information superficially without mastery.

In order to develop competencies, one must have a firm foundation of facts and knowledge. Certain facts must be memorized and used as tools in gaining additional knowledge and in developing competencies. Additional knowledge is gained by building upon and combining fundamental facts and bits of knowledge. This happens by hearing, seeing, and experiencing in learning situations, followed by practice and repeated exposure. Some of the ways this happens are through dialogue, questioning, experimentation, risk-taking, and group activities.

In the realm of knowledge, QSI has identified seven areas. Mastery of these Exit Outcomes will lead to a successful school experience in Quality Schools International.

- Mathematics
- English / Literature
- Cultural Studies
- Science
- Creative and Applied Arts
- Languages Other Than English
- Personal Health and World Environmental Issues

## **Mastery Learning**

The academic program uses a Performance-Based/Mastery Learning approach to learning. This model ensures mastery of specific skills and knowledge involving both individual and group instruction. The educational philosophy is founded upon the premises that: 1) All students can succeed, 2) Success breeds success, and 3) It is the responsibility of QSI Astana to provide the conditions for success. This is a tested, highly successful academic program.

### **3.2 INTENSIVE ENGLISH (IE) SERVICES**

Students whose native language is not English will be given a placement test upon admission. A placement team, led by the IE Coordinator, will determine what level of support appears to be most appropriate for the new student. The goal for all IE students is to gain enough competency in English to be able to work independently in mainstream classes, without the regular support of the IE team. The timeline on this will be different for each student.

Students at the secondary level who apply for admission to the QSI Astana are expected to have a proficiency level in English which allows them to perform satisfactorily in regular classes. If a student lacks English fluency, a one or two-year delay in graduation from secondary school may be necessary as competency in the English language is obtained. Please note that for secondary students, no high school credit is given for IE classes.

All Intensive English students receive additional Intensive English Support during World Languages. If a student exits the Intensive English program mid-year, they will continue to attend IE Support for the rest of the year.

## **Exiting the Intensive English Program**

Students may transition from the IE program into the mainstream program once they have met the following criteria:

- The student scores independently on the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System within the range of their grade level.
- The student’s MAP scores are within grade level range of mainstream students.
- Scores at or near grade level on an age-appropriate writing prompt.
- Masters the IE curriculum independently (no more than one P open in the curriculum).
- Students consistently use English in the classroom.
- Parent communication by the IE Coordinator/Director of Instruction

It should be noted that it is possible for a Middle School or Secondary student that has transitioned out or is transitioning out of the Intensive English Program to be put back into the program at a later stage if it is proven that the student is not maintaining an adequate level of academic progress due to an inadequate level of English.

### 3.3 HOMEWORK POLICY

The purpose of homework is to reinforce skills taught in school, prepare students for future skills acquisition, and enrichment. Teachers may also assign homework as a formative assessment, prior to a student engaging a summative assessment.

For the younger students, homework will usually be supplementary reading. Students in the 11-year-old – Secondary IV classes can expect to have long term or project-based homework given throughout the year and these may require some homework.

Homework will:

- Be meaningful and compliment classroom learning
- Have immediate or timely feedback
- Incorporate available resources if research is assigned
- Include clear procedures and due dates for accomplishments
- Be communicated using our ed-tech platforms and various newsletters home

(Note-If students feel overburdened with homework assignments, parents are invited to share concerns and seek input from the child’s teacher(s).)

### 3.4 GENERAL GRADING INFORMATION

Students are required to engage in essential curriculum units until they achieve mastery. Mastery is meant to indicate that a student has “mastered” the skills and competencies of the unit at a satisfactory/high level. A student may also attain a grade indicating ‘beyond/higher mastery’, i.e. noteworthy achievement particularly in higher-order thinking skills. Students who do not achieve mastery of all required courses during a school year are required to re-engage incomplete units in a subsequent school year. The following marks may be given:

**A (Beyond Mastery):** Within the Mastery Learning approach, an “A” indicates that a student has demonstrated higher-order thinking and performance skills such as problem -, analysis, creativity, and/or in-depth applications of the content of the unit. Students do not achieve A-Level mastery simply by doing more work or achieving a higher percentage grade on an exam. Rather, an “A” indicates that the student has demonstrated above mastery in the outcomes of a unit that engage higher-order thinking skills.

**B (Mastery):** A ‘B’ indicates that the student has demonstrated mastery in outcomes of the unit.

**P (In Progress):** A ‘P’ indicates that the teacher has begun to instruct the class on this unit and the student is, therefore, “in-progress” toward mastering the unit. At the start of each unit, the instructor opens a unit by entering ‘P’ for that unit of study. Therefore, a ‘P’ indicates that the student is receiving instruction on that unit. In some classes, one unit will be open for an extended period and more than one unit will be open at the same time.

**H (Hold):** An ‘H’ means the unit has been placed “on hold”. The teacher has determined that it is best for the student not to pursue this instructional outcome at the current time. For example, the student may need to develop pre-requisite background knowledge/skills or continuing study on this unit may be interfering with progress on

another unit that is currently under instruction. At the right time, the teacher will have the student re-engage in a unit that has been placed “on hold”.

**D (Deficient in Effort):** A ‘D’ is given when the student is deficient in effort and is thus not attaining mastery of the unit due to their own lack of effort. This grade is temporary and is changed to a ‘P’ when the student returns to an acceptable work pattern or to an ‘A’ or ‘B’ when mastery of the unit is demonstrated. When a ‘D’ is assigned, it is expected that parents and educators partner to help the student get back on the task of progressing towards mastery.

**E (Exposure):** The student is in class to be exposed to the language and the subject specific terminology, but no grade will be awarded. This can only be given in non-core courses up through the 13-year-old class.

**W (Withdrawn):** The student has withdrawn from the unit and will no longer work on it.

### 3.5 SECONDARY GRADING INFORMATION

In Secondary school, students are granted one credit for mastery of each unit outcome which is credentialed "A" or "B". Thus, ten credits correspond to one "Carnegie Unit" as used by many American secondary schools. In some courses, some students may not attain mastery in all ten essential unit outcomes, thus earning credits only for those outcomes mastered. This will be reflected on their status reports. On the other hand, some students may have demonstrated mastery of some selective unit outcomes for a course and may have more than the ten essential unit credits.

Because QSI encourages continued learning, if students receive an evaluation of "B" on a unit outcome, they may continue to work independently on that outcome and request another opportunity to demonstrate a higher level of mastery. Upgrade opportunities are not automatic, nor can work be submitted at any time. To upgrade, the student must make arrangements with the teacher to complete the necessary work in an agreed-upon time frame. If the student fails to meet the deadline, he or she may lose the opportunity for the upgrade. Prolonging deadlines increases the student’s chances of getting behind on current work, and the teacher or the Director of Instruction can determine that it is not in the student’s overall best interest to continue working on past units. It should be noted that “A”-level mastery will not be awarded for addressing basic corrections and teacher suggestions.

If students put off mastery assessments until very late in the year, it places undue pressure on teachers and office staff, as well as the students. Students who are late in completing an essential unit despite an extended deadline, are assigned H, D, or W on the status report. If the student has received a D, he or she will be assigned to Unit Recovery. This may prevent the student from participating in clubs or other extra-curricular activities.

- H is for students who are struggling with the work and are not progressing. The essential unit is put on hold, and students may reenter the essential unit later.
- D is for students who have demonstrated a “deficient” level of effort and are not progressing.
- W means a student is withdrawn and can only be readmitted with teacher approval.

### 3.6 UNIT COMPLETION

Students need to be sure they are completing units in a timely manner so that courses, particularly at the middle and Secondary level, can be completed in one year. Students and teachers should adhere to the unit completion guidelines listed below. AP courses may differ.

By Winter Break – 4 units complete

By Spring Break – 7 units complete

By the first week of June – 10 units complete

### 3.7 SAFETY-NETTING AND UNIT RECOVERY

Safety-netting is a class where students have an opportunity to complete work for various classes or do enrichment projects. Teachers also use this time to teach extra lessons or help students who are struggling or need more advanced work. Elementary students have this class with their homeroom teacher. This is also a time when older students can collaborate on curricular and extra-curricular projects.

In secondary, if a student has overdue assignments/units, they will be assigned to go to the teacher whose class they are behind in for Unit Recovery. Parents will be notified when their student enters Unit Recovery. Any questions

about the specific assignments should be directed to the teacher of that course. Students who have a “D” in any course will also be placed in Unit Recovery.

### 3.8 ADVANCED PLACEMENT

Advanced Placement (AP) courses challenge our Secondary students to think with the sophistication of college students. Depending on the enrollment, interest, and student capability, the school will offer a selection of Advanced Placement courses each year. These courses provide rigorous preparation for the AP exams, credentialed by the College Board in the United States. Colleges and universities worldwide give university credit for test scores of 3 or better (on a scale of 1 to 5). QSI International School of Astana is an AP Capstone School offering the opportunity for students to earn the AP Capstone Diploma.

### 3.9 QSI HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

#### QSI offers different types of diplomas:

For students graduating by June 2027:

- Academic Diploma
- General Diploma
- Academic Diploma with Honors

Details about each of these diplomas are found on the following pages.

For students graduating after June 2027:

- Diploma
- Diploma with Honors

Details about each of these diplomas are found on the following pages.

**(This is only for students graduating by June 2027.)**

**3.9.A1 THE ACADEMIC DIPLOMA** is a college or university preparatory course of study. Students who satisfactorily complete this program should expect admittance into an American college or university, or in some cases, universities in other countries. A total of 240 units is required for the diploma. The minimum requirements are listed below.

#### **English (80 units)**

- 20 - Literature (Literature I & II)
- 20 - Writing (I & II)
- 10 - American Literature
- 10 - British Literature
- 10 - Research Project
- 10 - Technology

#### **Mathematics (30 units)**

- 10 – Algebra 1
- 10 - Geometry
- 10 - Mathematics elective

#### **Cultural Studies (40 units)**

- 10 - World Geography
- 10 - Modern World History
- 10 - US-History
- 5 - World Governments
- 5 - Economics

#### **Science (30 units)**

- 10 - Biology
- 10 - Physical Science
- 10 - Science elective

#### **Personal Health (20 units)**

- 10 - Health & Fitness 1
- 10 - Physical Education

#### **Languages Other than English (20 units)**

- 20 in ONE language

#### **Creative and Applied Arts (10 units)**

- 10 credits from art, music, or photography

#### **Elective (10 units)**

- 10 credits of student’s choice

**3.9.A2 THE ACADEMIC DIPLOMA WITH HONORS** (This is only for students graduating by June 2027) requires 240 credits but must include 20 AP credits. In view of the similarity of some QSI secondary courses with some AP courses, it may be recommended to substitute certain AP courses for the usual Academic Diploma courses, as this may help a student complete the graduation requirements and include an AP course without duplication.

**3.9.A3 THE GENERAL DIPLOMA** (This is only for students graduating by June 2027) is typically available to students who experience English language difficulties, time constraints, or other challenges that make it impractical to pursue an Academic Diploma. Please note that students earning a General Diploma are also accepted at top universities around the world. Universities look for rigor in student course work not the name on the diploma earned at the school. Consultation with the school counselor or administration on Graduation Pathways is important to ensure that future needs and goals of the student are planned accordingly.

**English (50 units)**

20 - Literature (Literature I & II)

20 - Writing (I & II)

10 - Technology

**Mathematics (20 units)**

10 – Algebra 1

10 - Mathematics elective

**Science (20 units)**

10 - Biology or Environmental Science

10 - Physical Science or Science Applications

**Cultural Studies (30 units)**

10 - World Geography

10 - Modern World History

10 - Cultural Studies Electives

**Personal Health (20 units)**

10 – Health & Fitness 1

10 - Physical Education elective

**Languages Other than English (20 units)**

20 in ONE language

**Creative and Applied Arts (10 units)**

10 credits from art, music, or photography

**Electives (50 units)**

50 credits of student's choice

### **3.9.A4 The ADVANCED PLACEMENT CAPSTONE DIPLOMA**

What Is AP Capstone?

AP Capstone™ is a College Board program that equips students with the independent research, collaborative teamwork, and communication skills that are increasingly valued by colleges. It cultivates curious, independent, and collaborative scholars and prepares them to make logical, evidence-based decisions.

AP Capstone is comprised of two AP courses — AP Seminar and AP Research — and is designed to complement and enhance the discipline-specific study in other AP courses. Participating schools can use the AP Capstone program to provide unique research opportunities for current AP students, or to expand access to AP by encouraging students to master the argument-based writing skills that the AP Capstone program develops.

Benefits of AP Capstone for Students

- Fosters the research, argumentation, and communication skills that are at the core of college readiness and essential for lifelong learning
- Provides a setting to build on the knowledge and rigorous course work of AP in an interdisciplinary format
- Offers students a unique opportunity to distinguish themselves to colleges and universities

(adapted from <https://advancesinap.collegeboard.org/ap-capstone>)

**3.9.B1 Diploma (This is only for students graduating after June 2027.)**

This diploma is earned with a minimum completion of 220 QSI units in the following units of concentration: English - 40 units, Mathematics - 20 units, Science - 20 units, Cultural Studies - 30 units, Personal Health - 20 units, Languages other than English - 20 units , Creative and Applied Arts - 10 units, Technology - 10 units, and 50 elective units.

<b>ENGLISH</b> (40 credits)	Literature 1 Writing 1	Literature 2 Writing 2	
<b>MATHEMATICS</b> (20 credits)	Algebra 1	Mathematics Elective	
<b>SCIENCE</b> (20 credits)	Biology	Science Elective	
<b>CULTURAL STUDIES</b> (30 credits)	World Geography	Modern World History	Cultural Studies Elective
<b>PERSONAL HEALTH</b> (20 credits)	Health and Fitness 1	Personal Health Elective	
<b>LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH</b> (20 credits)	L.O.E. Elective	L.O.E. Elective	
<b>CREATIVE &amp; APPLIED ARTS</b> (10 credits)	Arts Elective		
<b>TECHNOLOGY</b> (10 credits)	Technology Elective		

### 3.9.B2 Diploma with Honors (This is only for students graduating after June 2027.)

This diploma is earned with a minimum completion of 240 QSI units in the following areas of concentration: English - 70 units, Mathematics - 30 units, Science - 30 units, Cultural Studies - 40 units, Personal and Health - 20 units, Languages other than English - 20 units, Creative and Applied Arts - 10 units, Technology - 10 units, and 10 elective units.

*Diploma with Honors diploma requires 4 Advanced Placement (AP) or 2 Higher Level IB courses.*

<b>ENGLISH</b> (70 credits)	Literature 1 Writing 1	Literature 2 Writing 2	English Elective	English Elective Research
<b>MATHEMATICS</b> (30 credits)	Algebra 1	Geometry	Mathematics Elective	
<b>SCIENCE</b> (30 credits)	Biology	Chemistry or Physics or AP Science	Science Elective	
<b>CULTURAL STUDIES</b> (40 credits)	World Geography	Modern World History	Cultural Studies Elective	Economics World Governments
<b>PERSONAL HEALTH</b> (20 credits)	Health and Fitness 1	Personal Health Elective		
<b>LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH</b> (20 credits)	L.O.E. Elective	L.O.E. Elective		
<b>CREATIVE &amp; APPLIED ARTS</b> (10 credits)	Arts Elective			
<b>TECHNOLOGY</b> (10 credits)	Technology Elective			

### 3.10 CONFERENCES AND REPORTING

We believe that success is a shared responsibility, and the school must create the conditions for success. Timely feedback on student progress is an essential part of these conditions. Parents may contact the teachers through their QSI Astana emails at any time to discuss areas of concern.

#### Status Reports

Student “Status Reports” are sent home five (5) times a year and indicate the current status of the students in the assigned courses. A parent may request a current status report at any time.

#### Conferences

Parent conferences are held twice a year, with the fall conference being led by the teacher and the spring conference being led by the student. The purposes of the conference are:

- To assist the parents in understanding the educational program.
- To inform the parents of their child's performance.
- To gain insight from parents regarding learning and social behaviors of the child.
- To discuss future expectations of the child.
- To develop positive relationships between parents and the school.

- To formulate an action plan toward the student’s future success.
- To have the student take responsibility for their learning.

We encourage parents to make it a priority to attend. If a parent needs translation, assistants are available. Students are encouraged to be present with their parents during conferences.

Parents may also request a conference at other times during the year if the need arises. Parents should contact the Office to schedule an appointment for general concerns. If a parent has a concern about a specific subject, he or she should contact the teacher directly. If the meeting does not resolve the issue, the parent may then contact the counselor or Director of Instruction. If concerns still exist, parents may request a formal meeting with the Director.

### 3.11 ACADEMIC HONESTY

Teaching students to attribute the sources of information they use in their research and writings is an important step in developing academic integrity, as well as creating a sense of rightful ownership of material produced by personal effort.

#### **Homework**

Homework assignments are learning experiences, used to prepare students for classroom activities, expand classroom learning and to practice skills learned in class. Consequently, it may be appropriate to receive help from others to complete your homework. However, wholesale copying of another person’s assignments and passing it as one’s own work is considered “cheating.” In addition, use of AI generated work without disclosing it, is also considered academically unacceptable.

#### **Tests and Quizzes**

Obtaining unfair help with tests and/or quizzes is a violation of the QSI Astana guidelines of academic integrity.

#### **Use of AI**

We want to make sure that any content created or produced by AI applications is used in the same manner as copyrighted material. If it is not the student’s original work, the student must properly cite sources to give proper credit to the original author(s).

#### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is defined in Webster’s New World Dictionary as “to steal or pass off as one’s own, the ideas, writings, etc. of another.”

Examples of plagiarism are, but are not limited to:

- Copying specific ideas of an individual author or source; or copying exact words from any source without both giving proper citation and using quotation marks.
- Paraphrasing (re-writing using different words) or summarizing (completely re-writing a passage or section) another person’s unique and non-common-knowledge ideas found in any source, without giving proper citation;
- Downloading or purchasing papers, copying and pasting information from the Internet or electronic sources;
- Cutting and pasting from any source without citation;
- Intentionally making other people’s ideas appear to be your own by any means.
- Use of AI generated work without disclosing it, is also considered academically unacceptable.

#### **Consequences for Academic Dishonesty**

Violations of Academic Integrity strike at the very core of the nature of the school, and therefore, the response to plagiarism and cheating is significant. Meetings may be required with teachers, parents, and a

member of the administration team. Repeated cases have the possibility of escalating the issue to the school's advisory board to determine discipline.

## SECTION 4: SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

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### 4.1 ATTENDANCE POLICY

Powerful learning experiences occur in our classrooms. This is where the magic happens, through interaction with peers and teachers. These experiences cannot be duplicated through make-up assignments. School attendance is vital for successful learning. Students are expected to be in school except for sickness or extenuating circumstances. Teachers take attendance at the beginning of the day, and the attendance is recorded in the office. The office publishes a list of all students who are absent by the end of first period. In addition, an email notification is sent to parents. Please note that the school does not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences. If a student is not at school or not engaged in a school activity, they are marked absent.

### 4.2 ABSENCES

An email should be sent or a telephone call must be made to the school office before 9AM on the day of return, explaining the student's absence. When an absence from school is anticipated, it is the student's responsibility to obtain the class work in advance and turn in the completed work when the student returns to class.

### 4.3 SCHOOL HOURS

Students need to report to their first period class by 8:12 am. If students arrive at any other point after that, they need to report to the reception office to sign in and receive a tardy pass.

If at any point during the school day a parent needs to pick up his/her son/daughter, the office must be informed **before** a student is released. Students will then wait for their pickup and **MUST** sign out with an office staff person.

School ends at 3:10 for Pre-K/Elementary students and at 3:55 pm for all Middle and Secondary students. Students who are bus riders must quickly gather their things and meet in the Great Hall after the final bell of the day. Elementary students who are in After School Activities (ASAs) should be picked up by parents or drivers **no later than 4:00** as teaching staff leave at this time. Students who have not been picked up by parents must stay in the Great Hall where they can safely read or study until their car arrives.

Students may stay after school if they have arranged to do so with a teacher or coach. Bus riders must inform our transportation supervisor that they will ride the late bus by 1:00. Late buses are not guaranteed every day and departure times do vary.

### 4.4 TARDY POLICY

Being on time for school and for all classes is a foundation value at QSI Astana. We demonstrate our respect for each other by showing up at agreed times for our peers and teachers. Parents and students should plan their morning schedules to allow ample time to arrive at school on time. Repeat tardies will result with a meeting with a member of the administration team and possible "N" for Responsibility.

## SECTION 5: GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR

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Students at QSI Astana are widely recognized for their good behavior and positive attitude. For this reason, students are expected to act in a way that demonstrates respect and responsibility towards themselves and others, exhibiting the Success Orientations at all times, by:

- Arriving on time to school and to all classes.
- Attending class daily prepared with all necessary materials and having fulfilled all responsibilities for the class.
- Demonstrating respect for classmates, teachers and staff.
- Demonstrating respect for all school rules as outlined in this handbook.
- Undertaking all assignments, assessments, and projects to the best of their ability, with honesty, integrity, and a commitment to reaching their potential as a student.
- Participating actively in class in an attentive and engaged manner.

All behavioral expectations documented in this section apply also on school-sponsored trips and all activities on campus.

## **5.1 GENERAL CAMPUS BEHAVIOR**

- Students are always expected to use respectful and appropriate language on the QSI Astana campus. Derogatory words, swear words, or “put downs” directed at anyone should not be used on the school premises at any time.
- All students are to walk in the hallways and corridors and keep voices low. Running on the stairs and in the hallways is not allowed.
- Bullying – QSI Astana is a school that promotes a safe place for everyone to learn. Behavior that intimidates or makes others feel unsafe will not be tolerated. All incidents of bullying will be treated as serious infractions.
- Students are expected to maintain appropriate physical contact that is neither overly affectionate nor overly aggressive. Pushing, shoving, kicking, wrestling and public displays of affection are considered inappropriate, regardless of the student’s intent.
- Students should use the waste receptacles for disposing of litter and recyclable waste.
- Graffiti and other types of vandalism will be treated very seriously and could be grounds for suspension or expulsion.

### **Tobacco Products, Drugs and Alcohol**

The QSI Astana campus is a non-smoking, drug-free campus; therefore, students are not allowed to bring tobacco, vaping/e-cigarettes or restricted drugs on campus or use them in the immediate vicinity of the school at any time.

No student shall possess, use, transmit, or attempt to possess, use or transmit, or be under the influence of any of the following substances on school premises or off school premises at a school-sponsored, or school-related activity, function, or event:

- any controlled substance or dangerous drug as defined by either international or local law, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, anabolic steroid, or barbiturate;
- any pharmaceutical drug without knowledge and permission of parents;
- any abusive glue, aerosol paint, or any other chemical substance for inhalation;
- any intoxicant, or mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior-altering drugs;

- any alcohol beverage.

The possession, use or transmittal of paraphernalia related to these prohibited substances is also prohibited under this policy.

While it is up to the administration to determine the severity of the infraction, violation of this rule will usually result in suspension. Repeated violations could result in expulsion.

## **5.2 GENERAL CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS**

Elementary teachers will set classroom rules with their students. These typically fall within our Success Orientations and include such expectations as:

- Being Kind & Polite
- Being responsible for self and for materials
- Being Trustworthy
- Helping Each Other
- Working Together

Students in the 12YO – Secondary classes are reminded to:

- Be prepared for class by having materials ready, studied, and assignments completed
- Actively participate in class by engaging in discussion and assignments
- Show respect to others by listening in class
- Honor private and school property/equipment
- Use respectful language

## **5.3 PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Students are responsible for their own property and always must ensure their safekeeping. This includes all personal electronic devices. QSI Astana bears no responsibility for any such personal device that is brought onto campus.

Students must store bags and other property in their lockers, cubbies, or other designated places. Larger items may be held at the discretion of the school office staff.

## **5.4 USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

QSI Astana provides students with access to a wide range of information technology for educational purposes. The use of these technologies is a privilege, not a right. Students are responsible for using them legally, appropriately, responsibly, and respectfully, and only for school-related tasks. Students should have no expectation of privacy or anonymity while on the school network or while using equipment or software provided or established by the school. Before using any technology at QSI Astana, students are required to read and agree to the User Agreement.

### **5.4.1 Use of Personal Electronic Devices**

QSI Astana is a no cell phone school environment. Cell phones must be turned in to the school administration office, if parents have given permission to bring them to school. If students are seen with their cell phones, they will be asked to turn them in to the administrative office immediately.

Other electronic devices may be used responsibly during breaks and at lunch, however, use during classes is for academic purposes at the teacher's discretion. A student should comply with a teacher or staff member's request to put away any electronic device if they are being misused. Repeated misuse of electronic devices will be addressed by the Director of Instruction.

## 5.4.2 Acceptable Use of School Technology

Computers, the Internet, and related technologies are valuable resources for students, and serve as the world's largest library and information database. QSI Astana is dedicated to producing students capable of succeeding in today's technology-pervasive society. Students receive technology training including QSI Astana's Essential Units on Digital Citizenship. This unit, required for every student from age 5 through secondary, provides a strong background in the proficiencies and ethical competencies for safe computer use, and to succeed in modern society. Students are expected to conduct themselves according to these outcomes, even when not at school. Issues brought to the attention of the staff that negatively affect other students or disrupt the school day will be dealt with by the school. These guidelines are available online at: <http://www.qsi.org>. Students may be asked to create email or other online accounts required to accomplish these essential outcomes.

### Acceptable Use

Technology is to be used in a responsible, ethical and legal manner. Some information and activities are not appropriate for school. All technology use must support QSI Astana's educational objectives, meet the objectives of our Digital Citizenship Outcomes, and be in accordance with the school's Success Orientations. The Director or Director of Instruction may suspend or permanently end technology access for any student who violates QSI Astana's Acceptable Use Policy (see Appendix). The use of technology is a privilege, not a right. The cost, if incurred, of willful damage to physical technology or software will be billed to the parent or guardian of the abusing student.

### Unacceptable Use Includes But is Not Limited To:

- a) Downloading, copying or adding any unauthorized software, applications or files to or from the System.
- b) Plagiarizing others' work. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were original to the student. This includes direct copying as well as paraphrasing ideas without giving credit to the author.
- c) Participating in illegal activities. Activities on Internet accessible computers may be governed by the laws of several countries and jurisdictions.
- d) Using harmful, threatening, abusive or obscene language or imagery at any time, in or out of school.
- e) Vandalizing computers, the school network, technology, equipment, drives, files, software, or Internet resources. Vandalizing includes, but is not limited to any attempt to modify, erase, or destroy another person's documents or files, or to defame or vandalize someone's digital profiles.
- f) Using technology that is explicitly prohibited. This may include social networking sites, chat functions and non-educational games.
- g) Engaging in any activity that might imperil the student or others. Students should promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employee any message they receive that is inappropriate.
- h) Violating the posted policies for any lab, library, or computer room.
- i) Cyberbullying in any form is unacceptable. Any student generated texts, videos, chats, social networking sites, gaming sites, or other electronic communication should adhere to the Success Orientations of QSI Astana. Students who create material that is offensive to a certain race, nationality, language group, or individual are guilty of cyberbullying, even if the offense happened outside of school hours. Cyberbullying might also include playing tricks or pranks on other people.

## 5.5 LUNCH/RECESS EXPECTATIONS

Students will have outside morning and lunch recess unless it is colder than -20 C or the air quality is at a dangerous level. Throughout lunch and break, students should follow the expectations below:

- Student behavior must be respectful of peers, kitchen staff, teachers, and surroundings at all times.

- Students are expected to clean up the area where they are sitting and the surrounding area after they have finished eating.
- When the bell rings on the playground, students will stop playing and line up quickly and quietly.
- Students should not enter the gym when there is not adult supervisor present.
- The piano is available to be played unless locked.
- Students are not allowed to throw snowballs.

## 5.6 SCHOOL BUSES

QSI Astana has monitors on all buses to ensure safe rides. Riders are expected to follow monitors' instructions. Students that are reported to the administration for minor infractions will meet with the Director of Instruction to discuss the behavior. If the behavior continues the parents will be notified and the student may be suspended from riding the bus. Parents will be notified immediately regarding behaviors that seriously affect the safe operation of the school bus. Removal from the bus may be necessary for serious incidents.

### **Bus Rules**

- Students must be at the arranged pick up point at the appointed times. The driver will not wait for latecomers.
- Students are under the authority of the bus monitor who may assign a seat.
- Students should seat themselves as quickly as possible and remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- Students may not behave in an unruly manner or create disturbances on the bus. Only in extreme situations will the monitor use physical restraint if deemed necessary for the safety of other students or the operation of the bus. The monitor will inform the Director of Instruction if this becomes necessary.
- Students are not allowed to drink or eat on the bus unless given permission by the monitor.
- Improper language or behavior will not be tolerated.
- Students may not lean out of windows or throw items from the bus.
- Students are expected to help keep the bus clean.
- Any damages to the bus will be the responsibility of the student and price for replacement or repair will be charged to that student.

Only students who have paid for bus service may ride the late bus.

## 5.7 DRESS CODE

A student's dress, personal appearance and cleanliness should be appropriate to a PreK-12 international, professional/educational setting. In view of the cultural diversity of our students, a few guidelines are in order. QSI Astana hopes these are taken in the spirit of cultural sensitivity, common sense, and respect for others. All students are expected to wear appropriate clothing while attending school, on field trips, or at any other school function.

We represent ourselves and QSI Astana to our community; therefore, all students dress in a manner conducive to learning in a community. Wrinkled, ripped, stained, or overly casual attire should be avoided during school hours. Clothing must cover areas from one armpit across to the other armpit, down to mid-thigh with opaque fabric. We do not want to see each other's underwear or too much of each other's bodies. Clothing/backpacks/accessories with wording that refers directly or indirectly to drugs, sex, alcohol, tobacco, violence, or profanity should not be worn at school. We want to dress in a way that benefits our learning and the learning of others around us. Final determination for appropriate dress rests with the QSI Astana faculty or administration.

Appropriate dress for Physical Education classes will be discussed by P.E. instructors. After physical education classes or sports activities, students should change back into school clothing. Students must have another pair of PE shoes for use in the gym. The soles of these shoes should not leave marks on the gym floor.

When students do not meet community standards of our dress code, they can change their clothing or borrow loaner clothing from the office for the rest of the day. The administration may contact parents for understanding to be reached if community standards are disregarded.

## **5.8 CONSEQUENCES OF INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT**

In general, QSI International School of Astana takes a counseling approach with students to help them understand why they behave the way they and how they can overcome inappropriate, impulsive, or anti-social behavior. We want our students to embody the Success Orientations. However, sometimes it is necessary for specific consequences to discourage and prevent continued poor choices. Consequences for inappropriate behavior vary widely, depending on the nature and severity of the incident. Whenever possible, the focus should be on student reflection and encouraging appropriate choices. The following are common consequences for minor incidents:

- Classroom/duty teacher consequences
- Student reflection/redirection activities
- Meeting with parents, counselor, and/or administration
- Community service
- Daily or weekly check-in with a teacher or administrator
- Temporary confiscation of a distracting device
- Special behavior plans

### **5.8.1 Suspension**

Suspension is a serious consequence for serious offenses and/or the repetition of offenses. The Director or Director of Instruction may need to take immediate measures to remove (suspend) a student temporarily from the school environment. Suspensions are normally given for one to three school days, but in serious situations that may lead to expulsion, the length of suspension can be extended to five school days and renewed, if needed, while the case is being reviewed and due process is being followed. Parents will be informed immediately if a child is suspended and a record of the suspension will be kept in the student's file. Conduct which may be cause for suspension includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Continued and willful disobedience or open defiance of a teacher or staff member
- Conduct that endangers the well-being of other students
- Physical assault upon any person/ fighting
- Persistent aggressive behavior
- Bullying
- Theft - taking or attempting to take another person's property
- Willfully causing or attempting to cause damage to private or school property
- Vandalism or destruction of school property or another person's property
- Possession or use of fireworks, smoke bombs, or stink bombs
- Possession of a weapon (or facsimile of a weapon) on campus
- Unauthorized entry to a locked classroom or locked area on campus
- Extreme or repeated acts of academic dishonesty
- Smoking/vaping on campus or its immediate vicinity
- Possession or use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs on campus, just outside campus, or on school-sponsored activities
- Attending school under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Harassing, cursing, or verbally abusing/intimidating any person, including remarks intended to demean a person's race, religion, sex, national origin, condition, or intellectual ability

- Inappropriate use of technology resources
- An accumulation of several offenses over a period of a quintile or semester

For every suspension there will be a meeting between an Administrator, the student, and a parent. A teacher may also be present. The emphasis of the meeting is on recognizing the behavior and making an improvement plan.

### 5.8.2 Expulsion

Expelling a student from QSI Astana is a serious matter that requires ‘due process’. Expulsion is defined as a permanent removal of the student from school and the school’s academic programs. In order to ensure due process is being followed, a comprehensive process that involves QSI headquarters and the local advisory board will be followed. This policy is available for review by any family at any time. It is always given to the student and parents involved in a possible expulsion and explained to them.

## SECTION 6: STUDENT SERVICES

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### 6.1 HEALTH SERVICES

QSI Astana has a qualified nurse on duty during school hours. In case of injury, students should notify the school nurse or the office. The office will notify parents as soon as possible if the injury takes place at school. If a student has a chronic illness or some physical disability, this information should be given to the school office and the nurse. Students with communicable illnesses, severe colds, or fevers, who are sent to school, will be sent to the nurse’s office. Parents will be notified and requested to come and collect their child to prevent infections from spreading.

It is essential that we have the following information on file in case of an illness or emergency:

1. Telephone/cell phone numbers where parents can be reached
2. Names and (local) telephone numbers of relatives or friends who should be contacted when parents are not available.
3. Immunization information, recommended doctor or medical services.

**Illness** If your child has symptoms associated with illness before he/she leaves for school, it is advisable to keep him/her home. If your child improves during the day, bring him/her to school. Please check students in and out of school through the main office.

**Dispensing of Medication** QSI Astana does not permit school employees to dispense prescription or non-prescription medication including: Tylenol, cough syrup, throat spray, throat lozenges, cough drops, etc., without directions and written/verbal consent from the parents. If medication must be given during school hours, a signed consent letter MUST be on file in the school’s doctor’s office. Medications must be brought to school by the parent - not sent to school with your student. Medication needs to be in the original prescription or non-prescription bottle/container. If medications need to be taken home, they need to be picked up by the parent. Medications cannot be given to your child to take home.

### 6.2 GUIDANCE SERVICES

QSI Astana’s Counseling Program is developmental by design, comprehensive in scope, and systematic in its implementation. This program is designed to maximize each student’s academic, social, and career development potential. The major functions of the counselor are as follows:

#### Academic

- Assist in the evaluation of incoming school records for admissions and placement decisions.
- Assist in creating a comprehensive schedule and academic plan for the students' time at QSI Astana.
- Monitor student progress throughout the year and develop an academic plan for students experiencing difficulties.
- Guide students and parents through the college application and admissions process.
- Support students and families with special learning needs and make referrals to outside support services when necessary.

### **Career**

- Help students acquire the skills to investigate the world of work in relation to knowledge of self and to make informed career decisions.
- Give students strategies to achieve future career success and satisfaction.
- Help students understand the relationship between personal qualities, education, training and the world of work.

### **Social/Emotional**

- Facilitate problem solving and communication among all members of the school community including students, teachers, parents and administrators.
- Support students and families with immediate social-emotional needs and make referrals to outside support services when necessary.
- Students may see the counselor during their free time in the school day, before and after school, or during class with consent form the classroom teacher or at the request of the counselor. Parents may set appointments by calling the school.

## **6.3 LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES COORDINATOR**

The Learning Support Services Coordinator ensures that students with unique learning needs receive the individual services needed to help them be successful at QSI Astana. The coordinator is available to meet with students, parents, and staff to advise and support students with unique needs.

## **6.4 WITHDRAWAL**

Notice of early withdrawal of a student from school should be provided to the school office in writing by parents. When transferring to another school, students must request an official withdrawal form from the office and complete it. Before records will be released, this form must be completed in full. No status reports or transcripts will be made for students who have not officially withdrawn. If withdrawal is expected close to the end of a quintile, parents are asked to notify the school as soon as possible, so that the school can work with the student toward completing work and entering evaluations on the status report. Credit will be granted only for work completed, turned in, evaluated, and recorded.

## **6.5 TESTING**

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP): QSI Astana provides periodic and rigorous testing for students ages 5 to 18 utilizing the Northwest Education Association (NWEA) MAP test. This assessment instrument allows teachers the opportunity to compare the success of each student with students from the U.S., QSI schools worldwide (37), and 1,400 other international schools who utilize this instrument. The goal of MAP testing is to provide the teacher with a roadmap for each student to ensure comprehensive and expansive exposure to our curriculum. For more information about NWEA and MAP testing, please go to [www.nwea.org](http://www.nwea.org).

The PSAT for Sec. 1, Sec. 2, and Sec. 3 students is an excellent diagnostic tool that can provide a tremendous amount of data to help students prepare for the rigors of the SAT. It is offered in October and the results are shared with the students upon return. Tips and areas of strength and weakness are shared in order to assist the students in determining where they need to focus to improve their SAT scores for university.

QSI Astana is an SAT testing site, offering exams six times per year. For more information about SAT and registration please see the College Board website at <https://www.collegeboard.org/>

## **SECTION 7: STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

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### **7.1 ELEMENTARY AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES (ASA)**

After School Activities (ASAs) are provided for 5yo – 10yo students each day from 3:10-3:55. Activities usually change each quintile and options, and sign-up information is announced via email from the Activities Coordinator. Parents and members of the community who have skills that can be shared with students are encouraged to become involved in the activity program.

### **7.2 MIDDLE AND SECONDARY ACTIVITIES**

QSI International School of Astana believes that extracurricular activities are an important part of a student’s educational experience. Middle School and Secondary students are offered a variety of sports and clubs that may include:

Cross Country	Basketball
Volleyball	Soccer
Track and Field	Futsal
Badminton	
Band	Drama /Musicals
Student Council	Model United Nations (MUN)
World Scholar’s Cup	National Honor Society (NHS)
Spelling Bee	(Other Clubs of Student Interest)

Many of these activities have associated travel for the regional championships. Students are responsible for paying all travel expenses for these sporting and cultural exchanges.

### **7.3 ATHLETICS**

Participation in sports teams and other activities is a privilege. Participation is not a requirement for graduation, and those who participate must give extra effort and time. Because interscholastic activities are voluntary, and because those participating represent the school, it is mandatory that academic, citizenship, and sportsmanship standards be uncompromised. It is expected that each participant will be a good student and school citizen. He/she has the privilege of participating in a well-organized program that is of special interest to him/her and for which the school provides coaching, equipment, and facilities. Therefore, the selection process is not based solely on performance, but includes scholarship, attitude, conduct, and cooperation. Each participant has an obligation to himself/herself, his/her school, his/her coach, and his/her team. Therefore, the selection process will deny participation to those who fail to meet the established standards. The privilege of participation should be extended to those who have earned it in the classroom as well as on the playing field, court, track, or stage.

#### **Academic Eligibility**

QSI Astana students should establish a balanced and well-rounded educational plan that includes academics, activities, athletics, the arts and community service. However, when time constraints result in failure to achieve mastery, academics become the first priority. Students are eligible to participate on school teams and/or school events, including trips, if they meet the eligibility standards established by the school. The eligibility guidelines will be given to all students at the beginning of the school year.

- All students must be making adequate progress in all classes.

- All participants must attend school the full day on the day of a game or the day before if the event is on a weekend.
- Success orientations and behavioral problems may impact decisions by the administration in consultation with teachers, coaches, and/or activity sponsors, regarding selection for QSI Astana teams or allowing those already selected to continue participation.

#### **7.4 FIELD TRIPS AND SCHOOL-SPONSORED EVENTS**

QSI Astana believes strongly in the value of field trips to enhance the educational experience of our students. All field trips have educational goals and objectives, and students may be expected to complete an assignment during or after the field trip. Thus, it is important that whenever possible, students attend these trips as part of their educational experiences.

Elementary student field trips are in the city, within the school day, and in most cases are free, unless there is a charge for admission to an event. Field trips for older students may occur outside the city and sometimes extend outside of the school day.

It is very important that students keep to the deadlines given by the trip organizers in order to be able to attend. Students who hand in permission slips and other documentation late may not be able to attend the trips. Students who miss other classes to participate in a field trip must make up all work in the time specified by the teacher. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the teacher to find out what make-up work is required. All behavioral expectations documented in this Handbook apply on school-sponsored trips, in addition to all activities on campus.

#### **7.4 FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES**

The Administration must approve fund raising activities in advance. All posters to be mounted must also be approved by an administrator and may only be placed on approved/designated places around the school.

- Class monies raised through activities must be deposited in a special account through the school's Business Office.
- Any monies to be withdrawn must be approved in writing by the overseeing staff member.
- Funds accumulated through school-sponsored activities must be utilized for activities and programs that are clearly beneficial to the school, the students, or the community.
- Fund-raising for personal gain is not allowed.

## **SECTION 8: GENERAL INFORMATION**

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### **8.1 ENGLISH LANGUAGE POLICY**

QSI Astana is a multicultural, multilingual, and incredibly diverse community. The one educational, academic, and linguistic bond shared by all is the use of the English language. Therefore, it is encouraged that all students and teachers engage in the English language whenever they are on the QSI Astana campus. We believe that using a common language, we can promote an atmosphere of open and clear communication and understanding, while supporting our English-medium academic program.

### **8.2 CLOSED CAMPUS**

QSI Astana is a closed campus, which means that students may not leave the campus without permission from the office. In order to sign out, a student must either be picked up by parents or a verbal confirmation via telephone or email is needed. Students will then wait at reception until a driver can meet them.

### **8.3 VISITORS**

All visitors must enter through the main gate and proceed to reception. Visitors must present their family badge or other volunteers will be given an identification badge. Anyone who is in the building without this

badge will be asked to return to the office. Students are not allowed to bring other school-age visitors to school without permission from the Director of Instruction or Director.

We encourage parents to visit and volunteer, but arrangements must be made in advance by calling the Office.

#### **8.4 GUIDELINES FOR CONTACTING THE SCHOOL OFFICE**

Parents should contact the school regarding special requests only in an emergency. Messages regarding after school arrangements should be left at least three hours before the end of the school day. We ask for your cooperation in keeping messages to a minimum.

#### **8.5 EMAIL EXPECTATIONS AND PROCEDURES (PARENTS)**

QSI Astana thanks parents for noting the following points when emailing teachers:

- Parents are invited to contact teachers regarding their child's progress, present progress, future assignments, course content, and their child's conduct.
- Parents should not write teachers daily unless it has been arranged with the teacher.
- Parents can expect the teacher to respond within two school days after the email was received.
- Teachers will normally respond to parent messages in English, unless a translation is needed.
- Discussion with teachers about other students or other teachers is not appropriate and will not be entertained. Students and parents should follow the appropriate chain of command when providing feedback or expressing concerns about the school.
- If there is a question about an individual student or classroom procedure, a parent should meet with the teacher first and attempt to solve the issue. If the issue is not resolved after an initial meeting, please schedule a meeting with the Director of Instruction.

#### **8.6 RECORDS AND TRANSCRIPTS**

No information will be released by the school to outside organization, i.e. universities, without written/verbal (in limited cases) permission from the Parents/Guardians of a student.

Requests for official transcripts should be made through the counseling office or the registrar. The transcript is official only when it has been signed and sealed by a school administrator.

#### **8.7 LICE POLICY**

While lice do not pose any serious health threats to students or adults, they can be very uncomfortable, prove difficult to get rid of, and can spread quickly through direct contact with individuals or objects such as rugs and pillows that recently encountered lice. Since we want to ensure that children do not come to school and become infected through contact with peers, we will be sending all students discovered to have active lice/nits home immediately. In order to return to school, the nurse will recheck to provide clearance. The school does periodic checks for lice. We also ask that you look at your child's hair for lice and nits. If lice or nits are found, please contact the school to help us know which groups of students are at the highest risk for contracting lice.

#### **8.8 LOCKERS**

All students in 11YO+ will be provided with a locker which becomes their responsibility for the year. Students may not change or exchange lockers. Damage beyond normal wear and tear will be charged to the individual student. If such damage indicates neglect or malicious intent, loss of locker privileges may be the consequence. Students are cautioned not to bring valuable items to school. The school cannot assume responsibility for lost or stolen items. Please note that the administration reserves the right to check the contents of student lockers at any time.

#### **8.9 TEXTBOOKS AND EQUIPMENT**

Each classroom teacher will assign textbooks to individual students, who are responsible for maintaining books in good condition throughout the year. If a textbook is lost or damaged beyond repair, the students will be required to pay for a new one at the current list price plus cover costs of shipping and import duties. This policy also applies to all lab, art and technology equipment on temporary loan to students.

#### **8.10 LOST AND FOUND ITEMS**

All lost and found items will be placed in a designated place on campus. Items left longer than 30 days will be discarded.

#### **8.11 YEARBOOK & SCHOOL PHOTOS**

School photos and the school yearbook are a history of the school year. Official school photos are taken in the fall, including individual portraits and a class photo. Once the photos are developed, they are sent home digitally to the parents who are invited to purchase the package or not. The yearbook publication, containing pictures of students, staff, and various school activities, is an optional purchase by families at the end of the year.

# SECTION 9: CHILD PROTECTION

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## 9.1 HARRASSMENT POLICY

### Harassment Policy

The international school environment is one of great ethnic, racial and religious diversity, where students learn to respect the differences that unite us. Because tolerance and acceptance are such hallmarks of QSI International School of Astana, harassment or bullying by any member of our community is not acceptable. This rule is in effect both on and off campus, and after school hours. This includes cyberbullying on the Internet.

The following are examples of conduct or prohibited by this policy:

- Persistent and unwelcome requests for a personal or physical relationship, including a dating relationship;
- Unwelcome and offensive jokes, remarks or epithets based on race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, physical appearance, national origin or disability;
- Speech or the display of materials that is intended to be demeaning or degrading or reasonably could be considered so;
- Unwelcome physical contact including, but not limited to, violence, patting, pinching, hugging or kissing that is either persistent or intentional.

### What should be done by those who believe they have been harassed?

A member of the school community who believes she or he has been subjected to harassment should first consider telling the other person(s) that the conduct is offensive and request that it stop. If it is difficult for the student or adult to speak directly to the person or if the offensive conduct does not stop after a request to cease, a student should report it to any faculty member or to the Director of Instruction, Counselor, or Director, or may ask a parent or guardian to do so. A faculty member affected should report the conduct to the Director of Instruction or the Director. A prompt and thorough investigation will follow.

### Confidentiality

Reports of harassment will be treated confidentially as far as possible and will be reported to others within the school community only on a need-to-know basis. However, in almost every circumstance, the alleged offender will have to be informed so that the relevant facts can be gathered. The school reserves the right to bring any complaint to the attention of parents and guardians of the students involved at any stage.

### Consequences

The Director will promptly investigate all complaints regarding harassment. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances. The behavior need not be intended to be harassment to constitute harassment. It is harassment if one knows or ought reasonably to know that the behavior is offensive or unwelcome. If the complaint is determined to have merit, the school will place a record of it in a student's or employee's file and take appropriate action such as counseling, detention, suspension, probation or expulsion.

No member of the community should be afraid to make a complaint for fear of reprisal or getting another person in trouble. Retaliation or threats of retaliation against anyone who makes a complaint of harassment is itself a violation of this policy. A person who knowingly makes false reports of harassment also may be considered to have violated this policy. If harassment has taken place and the harasser has not left the school, there will be a follow-up to ensure that the behavior has ceased.

## 9.2 EMERGENCY EVACUATION

In the case of such an event, we may need to evacuate the building. The decision to send students home is made by the Director. Only those adults whose names appear on our “emergency” slips will be allowed to pick up students.

# SECTION 10: APPENDICES

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## 10.1 APPENDIX A: QSI STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY AND PARENT CONSENT

### QSI STUDENT AUP (ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY)

Computers, the Internet, and related technologies are valuable resources for students, and serve as the world's largest library and information database. QSI is dedicated to producing students capable of succeeding in today's technology-pervasive society. Students receive technology training including QSI's Essential Unit on Digital Citizenship. This unit, required for every QSI student from age 5 through secondary, provides a strong background in the proficiencies and ethical competencies for safe computer use, and to succeed in modern society. Students are expected to conduct themselves according to these outcomes, even when not at school. Issues brought to the attention of the staff that negatively affect other students or disrupt the school day will be dealt with by the school. These guidelines are available from your school or online at: <http://www.qsi.org>

**Your student may be asked to create the email or other online accounts required to accomplish these essential outcomes. Photographs of your student may appear in QSI publications and documents, or media reports about QSI.**

Please contact your school director if you have concerns about this or any other requirement below.

#### A. Acceptable Use

1. Technology is to be used in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner. Some information and activities are not appropriate for school.
2. All technology use must support QSI's educational objectives, meet the objectives of QSI's Digital Citizenship Outcomes, and be in accordance with QSI's Success Orientations.
3. Use for student self-discovery may be allowed, but the Director will decide what usage is acceptable.
4. The Director may suspend or permanently end technology access for any student who violates QSI's AUP.
5. The use of QSI technology is a privilege, not a right.
6. The cost of willful damage will be billed to the parent or guardian of the abusing student.

#### B. Unacceptable Use Includes:

1. Downloading, copying or adding any unauthorized software, applications or files to or from the System.
2. Plagiarizing others' work. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were original to the student. This includes direct copying as well as paraphrasing ideas without giving credit to the author.
3. Violating copyright, trade or service marks, or intellectual property rights. This includes peer to peer file sharing of copyrighted files. If the student is unsure whether or they can use a work, they should not use it without permission from the owner.
4. Using any username, password, or resource (within or beyond QSI) that a student is not authorized to use.
5. Participating in illegal activities. Activities on Internet accessible computers may be governed by the laws of several countries and jurisdictions.
6. Using harmful, threatening, abusive, or obscene language or imagery at any time.
7. Vandalizing computers, the school network, technology, equipment, drives, files, software, or Internet resources. Vandalizing includes, but is not limited to any attempt to modify, erase, or destroy another person's documents or files, or to defame or vandalize someone's digital profiles.
8. Using technology that is explicitly prohibited.

