THE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL

Student & Parent Handbook

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SECTION 1: WHO WE ARE

Our Mission

The Independent School provides a superior, independent college-preparatory education, serving a diverse student population in a safe, supportive community conducive to the intellectual, emotional, and physical growth of each Independent student.

Our Vision

A community where students are celebrated for their individuality, are known, valued, and supported, and are empowered to achieve academic excellence.

Our Values

These values are not aspirational posters on a wall. They are the standard we hold ourselves to every day, as educators, as families, and as students.

- **Family** We are a unified community that celebrates school spirit, respects each other's opinions, champions success, and embraces challenges together. When one of us struggles, we notice. When one of us succeeds, we celebrate.
- **Diversity** We prepare our students to live and lead in a complex world. That means encouraging individuality, recognizing our similarities, and respecting our differences in an inclusive, unbiased, and reflective educational environment.
- **Excellence** We believe in the pursuit of personal best, not a ranking, not a comparison, but each student's honest effort toward their own highest standard. Learning happens when students are engaged, curious, and empowered to impact the world around them.
- **Integrity** Honesty and integrity are the foundation of character and the foundation of our mission. We expect it in academic work. We expect it in how we treat each other. There are no exceptions.
- **Self-Efficacy** We believe in developing the whole person - autonomous thinkers, respectful citizens, and principled leaders who take ownership of their actions and their futures.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The Independent School admits students of any race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or family status to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, gender, disability, or family status in the administration of our educational policies, admission policies, financial aid programs, or athletic and other school-administered programs.

We are committed to building and sustaining a school community where every student belongs, every family is respected, and every person is treated with dignity. Our goal is not merely the absence of discrimination but the active cultivation of an inclusive environment where students from all backgrounds can learn and thrive. Questions about this policy or requests for accommodations should be directed to the Head of School.

SECTION 2: OUR COMMUNITY

Code of Conduct

The Independent School is built on relationships. Between students. Between families. Between students and the adults who know them, challenge them, and believe in them. What we ask of every member of this community isn't a rulebook - it's a standard. One we hold ourselves to because it reflects who we are, not because someone is watching.

Every student, faculty member, staff member, parent, and visitor is expected to live by the following:

Be honest. In your work, in your words, and in how you treat people. Dishonesty: lying, cheating, stealing, plagiarism, or any form of deceit is a violation of who we are as a community, not just a rule you broke.

Treat people with respect. There is no place at TIS for fighting, intimidation, threats, verbal abuse, hazing, or cruelty in any form. Rude or disrespectful behavior isn't a gray area here. We hold a high standard because our students deserve a high standard.

Show up. Be on time. Be prepared. Honor your commitments to your teachers, your teammates, and your classmates. How you show up for others matters.

Take care of this place. The campus belongs to all of us. Keep it clean. Treat it with respect. Vandalism, graffiti, and property damage have no place here.

Keep our community safe. Weapons, fireworks, explosives, and incendiary devices are never permitted on school property or at school events. Tobacco, nicotine, alcohol, drugs, and any other prohibited substance are not welcome here either, not for students, not for adults.

Represent TIS well. In the classroom, at an athletic event, online, or in the community; you carry this school with you. Good sportsmanship, appropriate dress, and basic courtesy aren't small things. They're how a community holds together.

Bullying Policy

The Independent School is committed to creating a safe, caring, and respectful learning environment for every student, faculty member, and staff member. Bullying has no place in our community. We take every report seriously and respond promptly.

What Is Bullying

Bullying is repeated, aggressive, intentional behavior directed at a specific person that causes harm or distress. It may be physical, verbal, social, or digital, and it may occur in person or online. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Physical aggression, hitting, pushing, or destruction of another person's property
- Verbal harassment, name-calling, threatening, or mocking
- Social or relational aggression - deliberate exclusion, spreading rumors, or manipulating relationships to harm another person
- Cyberbullying - using digital platforms, social media, messaging, or other online tools to harass, humiliate, threaten, or harm another person

Bullying differs from ordinary conflict in that it is repeated, intentional, and typically involves an imbalance of power. A single unkind act, while still addressed under our Code of Conduct, does not necessarily constitute bullying. A pattern of behavior targeting the same person does. Conduct that occurs off campus or online is subject to this policy when it materially disrupts the school environment or directly impacts a student's learning, safety, or participation in the school day.

Reporting Bullying

Students who experience or witness bullying should report it to a trusted adult at TIS - a teacher, counselor, advisor, or division head. Parents who become aware of a bullying situation are encouraged to contact the relevant division head promptly. Early communication allows the school to respond before a situation escalates. TIS treats retaliation against a student who reports bullying as seriously as the bullying itself.

Bystander Responsibility

Bystanders play a meaningful role in whether bullying continues. Watching without acting, laughing, or sharing content related to bullying extends the harm. Students are expected to avoid participating in or encouraging bullying behavior and are encouraged to report what they see to a trusted adult. TIS will protect students who report bullying in good faith.

How TIS Responds

TIS will respond to every report of bullying promptly and with care for the privacy and dignity of all students involved. Our response will typically include:

- Gathering information from the reporting student, the student whose behavior is in question, and any witnesses
- Assessing whether the behavior meets the definition of bullying and, if so, its severity and pattern
- Implementing supportive measures for the targeted student
- Determining appropriate consequences and next steps for the student whose behavior is in question
- Following up with the families of both students, consistent with student privacy obligations

Consequences range from restorative conversations and counseling referrals to suspension or expulsion for serious or repeated conduct. TIS reserves the right to address bullying that originates off campus or online when it affects students at school.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that occurs through digital means - social media, text messages, group chats, email, gaming platforms, or any other online channel. TIS treats cyberbullying with the same seriousness as in-person bullying. Students and families are encouraged to preserve evidence of cyberbullying - screenshots, records of messages, links to posts - before reporting. This documentation helps TIS respond effectively and, where appropriate, supports referrals to law enforcement.

Hazing Policy

The Independent School prohibits hazing in any form. Hazing is incompatible with our values, our Code of Conduct, and our commitment to a school community where every student is safe and respected.

What Is Hazing

Hazing is any action or situation, with or without the consent of the participants, that intentionally or recklessly endangers or humiliates a student as a condition of joining, being initiated into, being affiliated with, or maintaining membership in any group, team, organization, or activity. Consent is not a defense. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Requiring students to perform humiliating or degrading acts as a condition of group membership
- Physical acts that cause pain, discomfort, or exhaustion
- Forcing or pressuring students to consume food, drink, or substances
- Sleep deprivation, isolation, or exclusion as an initiation practice
- Verbal abuse, intimidation, or threats directed at students seeking group membership

This policy applies to conduct that occurs on campus, off campus, online, and at any school-sponsored event.

Hazing vs. Tradition

Traditions that are voluntary, inclusive, affirming, and free from humiliation or physical discomfort are not hazing. Traditions that involve pressure, embarrassment, physical discomfort, or the subordination of newer members are hazing, regardless of how long the tradition has existed. If you are unsure whether an activity crosses the line, bring it to your coach, advisor, or division head before it happens.

Reporting and Consequences

Students who experience or witness hazing should report it immediately to a teacher, coach, advisor, counselor, or division head. TIS will not retaliate against any student who reports hazing in good faith. Consequences may include suspension, removal from a team or group, or expulsion depending on severity. Coaches and advisors who are aware of hazing and fail to report it are also subject to disciplinary action.

Community Sexual Misconduct and Harassment Policy

The Independent School is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from sexual misconduct and harassment. Sexual misconduct or harassment in any form by students, faculty, staff, or other members of our community is contrary to our values, our Code of Conduct, and our commitment to the dignity of every person at TIS.

This policy applies to all students, employees, and members of the TIS community. It covers conduct on campus, at school-sponsored events, and in any other context connected to TIS where the behavior affects the school community.

What Is Sexual Misconduct and Harassment

Sexual misconduct and harassment include unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, sexual exploitation, or other sexualized behavior that violates a person's dignity, safety, privacy, or ability to participate fully in school. TIS may address conduct under this policy even when it does not meet the legal definition of sexual harassment under federal or state law because the School's community standards may be more protective than the minimum legal threshold. The School will consider the nature, severity, frequency, context, age and developmental stage of those involved, and the impact on the school community. Examples include:

- Unwanted sexual comments, jokes, or gestures
- Unwanted touching of a sexual nature
- Requests for sexual favors
- Sharing or displaying sexual images without consent, including creating, requesting, possessing, or distributing intimate or sexual images without consent or using such images to exploit, threaten, pressure, or humiliate another person. Students and families must not forward, download, save, print, or repeatedly screenshot suspected sexual images of anyone under 18. Individuals should preserve the original device or source and report the matter immediately.
- Sexual threats or coercion
- Repeated unwanted romantic advances after the person has indicated they are not welcome

Reporting

Any student, parent, or community member who believes that sexual misconduct or harassment has occurred should report it promptly to the Head of School, any division head, or the school counselor. If the concern involves the Head of School, contact the Board Chair directly. Anonymous reports may be submitted, though the school's ability to investigate may be limited.

Students and families must not forward, download, save, print, or make additional screenshots of suspected sexual images of anyone under 18. Doing so may further harm the student and create additional legal concerns. Preserve the device, message, link, account, or other original source without redistributing the image, and report it immediately to the Head of School, a division head, the school counselor, or law enforcement when appropriate. Do not ask a student to display or resend the image.

How TIS Responds

TIS will respond to every report promptly and equitably. Upon receiving a report, the Head of School will acknowledge receipt, determine whether immediate protective measures are needed, initiate a prompt and impartial investigation, and take corrective action if harassment is found. Retaliation against anyone who reports sexual harassment is strictly prohibited and is itself a violation of this policy.

Appropriate Boundaries Between Adults and Students

TIS is built on meaningful relationships between students and the adults who teach and support them. Those relationships, warm, encouraging, and grounded in trust, are central to who we are. And precisely because those relationships matter so much, we hold clear expectations for how they should look and what crosses a line.

What Appropriate Relationships Look Like

TIS faculty and staff are expected to maintain relationships with students that are warm and supportive but always professional, transparent, focused on the student's educational growth, and consistent with the student's age and developmental stage.

Behaviors That Cross the Line

The following behaviors are not appropriate between TIS adults and students, regardless of intent:

- Communicating with students via personal social media accounts, personal email, or personal text messages outside of school-sanctioned platforms
- Sharing personal matters, including romantic relationships, personal hardships, or other private information, inappropriately with students
- Giving gifts to individual students outside of school-sanctioned recognition
- Excessive favoritism of individual students in ways that isolate them from peers
- Any physical contact beyond what is age-appropriate and publicly observable
- Any sexual contact or sexualized communication of any kind

If Something Concerns You

If you observe behavior by any TIS adult that concerns you, please bring it to the Division Head or Head of School immediately. You do not need to be certain that something is wrong. If it concerns you, we want to know. If the concern involves the Head of School, contact the Board Chair directly. If you believe a student is in immediate danger, call 911. To report suspected child abuse or neglect, contact Kansas DCF at 1-800-922-5330.

SECTION 3: COMMUNICATION & CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Who to Contact and When

When questions or concerns arise, the following guide helps ensure they are addressed quickly and at the right level. We always appreciate hearing from families.

Grievance & Complaint Process

The Independent School is committed to addressing concerns from students, parents, and families promptly, fairly, and at the appropriate level.

Step 1: Start with the Person Closest to the Issue

Most concerns are best resolved by talking directly with the person most closely involved. If the concern is about a classroom decision, start with that teacher. If it is about a coach's decision, start with the coach. These conversations should happen respectfully and with a genuine intent to understand. If you are not sure who to contact first, call or email the division office and we will help you identify the right person.

Step 2: Contact the Division Head

If a concern is not resolved at Step 1, or if the concern involves a systemic issue, a division-level policy, or conduct that makes Step 1 inappropriate, contact the relevant division head. Division heads have authority and responsibility for the programs, staff, and policies within their division, and most concerns can be fully resolved at this level.

Step 3: Contact the Head of School

If a concern is not resolved at the division head level, or if the concern involves a division head directly, families may bring the matter to the Head of School, who has ultimate authority and responsibility for all school operations. The Head of School will acknowledge concerns promptly and provide a substantive response or timeline.

A Note on the Board of Trustees

Individual trustees are not the appropriate contact for resolving concerns about students, teachers, staff, or school decisions. If a family contacts a trustee with a concern, the trustee will direct that concern to the Head of School. The only exception is a concern about the Head of School, in that case, contact the Board Chair. This structure exists to make sure concerns reach the person with the authority and context to actually resolve them.

Written Concerns and Timeline

Families may submit concerns in writing by email or mail to the school office at any step of this process. TIS will acknowledge written concerns within two business days and provide a substantive response or update within ten business days. Complex matters may require more time; in those cases, we will communicate the expected timeline clearly.

School Closing & Emergency Communication

Should hazardous conditions necessitate the closing or delayed opening of school, an announcement will ordinarily be made between 6:00 AM and 8:00 AM on KFDI 101.3 radio and all local TV stations (KSN, KAKE, KWCH). TIS will also communicate through the school portal alert system, email, and text notification.

When school is closed because of hazardous conditions, extracurricular activities and meetings held at the school will also be canceled. Please ensure your contact information in the portal is current at all times.

Please review with your child your family plan for where to go in the event of an emergency closing during school hours.

Threat Assessment

The safety of our students and staff is our first responsibility. TIS has formal protocols for identifying, assessing, and responding to threats, whether those threats originate on campus, online, or off campus but are directed at our community.

Our Approach

TIS takes all threats seriously. When a threat is reported, by a student, a parent, a staff member, or through any other channel, our administration responds promptly. That response includes:

- Assessing the credibility and specificity of the threat
- Contacting law enforcement when appropriate, including in situations that may constitute criminal threatening under Kansas law
- Implementing protective measures for students and staff while an assessment is underway
- Communicating with families as quickly and clearly as the situation allows

Not every report results in a full emergency response. Our goal is to assess each situation accurately and respond proportionately.

What We Ask of Students and Families

If a student shares something with you, a concerning message, a threat made by another student, something seen online, please bring it to us immediately. Students who become aware of a threat or potential threat should report it to a teacher, counselor, or administrator right away. Anonymous concerns can be shared with any staff member. The school takes every report seriously and will protect the identity of the reporting party to the extent possible.

How We Communicate During an Incident

In the event of an active threat or emergency, TIS will communicate with families as quickly as possible through the school portal alert system, email, and text notification. Information will be provided as facts are confirmed, we will not speculate, but we will not leave families without information longer than necessary.

SECTION 4: STUDENT SAFETY & HEALTH

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse & Neglect

The safety and well-being of every student is the first priority of The Independent School. TIS is committed to creating an environment where children are safe, where concerns are taken seriously, and where every adult in our community understands their responsibility when abuse or neglect is suspected.

Kansas Law: Mandatory Reporting

Under Kansas law (K.S.A. 38-2223), all teachers, school administrators, and other employees of an educational institution are mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect. Any TIS employee who has reason to suspect that a child has been harmed as a result of physical, mental, or emotional abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse is required by law to make a report.

Mandatory reporting is an individual legal obligation. It is not a defense that another employee has already made a report, or that a supervisor has not yet given permission to report. If you have reason to suspect abuse or neglect, you are required to report.

What Must Be Reported

A report is required when any school employee has reason to suspect that a child has experienced physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional or mental abuse, or neglect. A report does not require certainty. Reason to suspect is the legal standard. If something concerns you, report it.

How to Make a Report

Reports should be made promptly. Contact the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) Protection Report Center at 1-800-922-5330. If DCF is unavailable, contact local law enforcement. In an emergency, call 911. Reports may also be submitted online at dcf.ks.gov.

If the suspected abuse involves a TIS employee or administrator, report directly to DCF or law enforcement and notify the Head of School.

Protection for Reporters

Kansas law provides immunity from civil and criminal liability for anyone who makes a report of suspected child abuse or neglect in good faith. TIS will not retaliate against any employee or community member who makes a good-faith report.

A Note to Families

If you observe behavior by any adult, at school or connected to school, that concerns you, please bring it to the Head of School immediately. If you believe a child is in danger, contact DCF at 1-800-922-5330 or call 911.

Immunizations

The Independent School requires a current Kansas Certificate of Immunization (KCI) form on record for each student. The KCI form should be documented by a physician or health department representative. Parents and guardians are not authorized to complete KCI forms.

In accordance with Kansas law, children who are unvaccinated may be excluded from school for the incubation period of certain vaccine-preventable diseases if the disease has been present at school.

Student Illness

Please keep your child home when they are sick. This protects your child and the entire community.

- Keep your child home at least 24 hours after they are fever-free without medication
- Do not send your child to school if they have vomited within the past 12 hours
- Students will be sent home if they have a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or above
- Students with strep throat or scarlet fever must be on medication for 24 hours before returning to school
- Students with pinkeye must remain home until there is no discharge from the eye
- Students with Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease should remain home until all lesions have dried and scabbed over and they are fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medication.

Parents are required to report to the office all cases of communicable diseases or conditions including, but not limited to, any vaccine-preventable disease, strep, flu, lice, and hand, foot and mouth disease. An exposure notice will be sent to all parents of students in the affected grade.

For the latest guidance, TIS follows current recommendations from the CDC and the Kansas State Department of Health.

Medication at School

When a student needs to take medication during school hours, the following requirements apply:

- All medication must be retained by the school office. The exception is inhalers and EpiPens, which may be kept in the classroom or with the student as needed.
- The school must have written permission from parents to administer any medication.
- All medication must be clearly labeled with the student's name and must be in the original bottle.
- All medications should be picked up on the last day of school.

Student Injury

In the event of a serious student accident or injury requiring immediate attention (stitches, broken bone, head injury), a parent or emergency contact will be reached. If a parent cannot be reached or undue delay would result, the school will follow the emergency contact information on file and make all necessary contacts. Please ensure your emergency contact information is current in the school portal at all times. If a doctor’s recommendation is to limit student activity in school activities (such as PE, recess, extracurriculars), parents should share the doctor’s note with the division office.

Counseling & Mental Health Services

The Independent School is committed to the whole-child development of every student, academically, socially, and emotionally. Our school counselor is an integral part of that commitment, available to support students across all divisions.

What the School Counselor Does

Our school counselor provides individual support related to:

- Social and emotional well-being
- Peer relationships, conflict, and belonging
- Academic stress and motivation
- Family transitions and personal challenges
- Mental health concerns, including anxiety, depression, and grief
- Crisis support and safety planning when needed
- Coordination of academic accommodations for students with documented learning differences
- Referrals to outside mental health professionals when additional support is warranted

The school counselor does not provide ongoing therapy or serve as a student's primary mental health provider. When students need support beyond what the school can provide, the counselor will work with families to connect them with appropriate outside resources.

How Students Access Support

Students can reach the school counselor by asking their teacher or division head for a referral, visiting the counselor's office directly during school hours, or having a parent contact the school office to request a meeting. Students are never required to explain why they want to see the counselor in order to access support.

Confidentiality

What students share with the school counselor is generally kept confidential. The counselor will not share the content of conversations with parents, teachers, or other students without the student's knowledge, except when the student or another person is at risk of serious harm, when required by law to report information, or when sharing information is necessary to keep the student or others safe. When the counselor needs to involve parents or other school staff, they will tell the student first whenever it is safe to do so.

A Note to Families

We encourage families to share context about what is going on in their child's life outside of school, a significant loss, a family change, a difficult social situation. That context helps us support your child more effectively.

If your child is experiencing a mental health crisis outside of school hours, please call the Comcare Crisis Line or the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (call or text 988). If there is immediate danger, call 911.

Students with Learning Differences

At The Independent School, we believe that students with learning differences are fully capable of success in a rigorous, college-preparatory environment. Learning differences do not define a student's potential, they shape how a student learns best.

TIS provides reasonable accommodations for students with learning differences, disabilities, or medical conditions that affect learning when the need is supported by appropriate information. A formal diagnosis is not required in every case. Our goal is equitable access to the curriculum, not lowered expectations. We do not reduce what we ask of students. We build the structures and support that allow them to rise to it. All requests and student needs will be evaluated individually and TIS will engage in a good-faith process with the family before determining that we cannot reasonably serve a student.

Our vision calls us to know, value, and challenge every student. That includes students with diverse learning profiles. When we are at our best, students with learning differences are not only supported here, they thrive.

What TIS Provides

Support at TIS is classroom-based. Accommodations may include:

- Extended time on assessments
- A controlled testing environment with limited distractions
- Assistive technology where appropriate
- Organizational support and check-ins
- Access to teacher help before and after school

TIS is not a therapeutic or specialized learning environment. We do not provide individualized remediation programs or one-on-one aides. Families whose students need those levels of support are best served by programs designed specifically for that purpose. We will always be honest with you about what we can and cannot provide.

How Accommodations Work

All formal accommodations must be documented in an official accommodation plan developed by the school counselor. Teachers implement accommodations consistently and as written. If a need changes, families should contact their division head or school counselor so the plan can be reviewed and updated through the right process.

Accommodations provide access to the curriculum. They do not modify academic standards or alter grading expectations. If there is ever a question about whether a requested accommodation crosses that line, we will work through it together.

Requesting Accommodations

To initiate or update an accommodation plan:

- Contact the school counselor or division head
- Provide current information that helps the school understand the student's needs and requested accommodations. A formal diagnosis or evaluation may be requested when reasonably necessary, but it is not required in every case. For Upper School students, updated documentation may be requested when needed to evaluate current needs or meet external testing requirements.
- The school counselor will review the information, consult with the Division Head where needed, and develop a formal plan
- Once a plan is in place, families will receive a copy and teachers will be notified

Outside evaluations and recommendations from specialists are welcomed and reviewed. They do not automatically determine what TIS provides; the school counselor works with all available information to develop a plan that fits our setting.

Outside Tutors and Specialists

Families are welcome to engage outside tutors or specialists. If coordination between an outside provider and the school is appropriate, it will be facilitated through the division head.

What We Ask of Students and Families

Students: Students are expected to be active participants in their own learning, using their accommodations, communicating with teachers when something isn't working, and building self-advocacy skills over time. The goal is not to remove challenges; it is to help each student navigate it.

Families: Families are responsible for providing current documentation, keeping the school informed of changes in their child's needs, and partnering with us to support growth and accountability. The school counselor is your primary point of contact for all accommodation-related questions.

When a Student's Needs Exceed What TIS Can Provide

We are committed to being honest with families when a student’s needs may fall outside what TIS can reasonably support. TIS will evaluate each situation individually and engage in a good-faith, collaborative process with the family, considering the student’s needs, available supports, safety, the impact on the learning environment, and the nature of the School’s program. If, after that process, TIS determines that it cannot reasonably meet the student’s needs, the School may require additional outside support or recommend or require placement in another program. We will work in partnership with the family to determine the best path forward, with the student’s long-term well-being as the priority.

SECTION 5: ACADEMICS

Academic Integrity

The Independent School administration is committed to working with faculty and students to educate, maintain, and nurture an academically honest culture. TIS has established a community of high standards and expectations. Students must take ownership for their personal and academic integrity and are responsible for their personal conduct.

Standards and expectations of academic integrity include that each student:

- Maintains high standards and intellectual honesty with each classroom assignment, test, quiz, paper, lab report, project, or other assessable work
- Collaborates with others or utilizes technological devices for academic assistance only with teacher permission
- Avoids plagiarism through fully documenting ideas, words, media, music, data, art, or any work by others
- Respects fellow students' rights to achieve their own academic goals without interference
- Does not assist another student's academic dishonesty

Academic integrity violations may result in an educational restorative process, violation documentation on the student's school record, dismissal from leadership positions, a zero for the assignment or F for the course, or suspension or expulsion. All violations are documented. Repeat violations escalate.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

AI is not going away. Students at TIS will graduate into a world where AI tools are woven into virtually every field and profession. Our job is not to pretend otherwise, our job is to make sure students know how to use it well, think critically about it, and understand where it can help them and where it cannot replace the work of their own minds.

Six principles guide every decision we make about AI at TIS:

1. Learning requires genuine effort. The point of a TIS education is not the output. It is the thinking, the struggle, the revision, and the growth that happens along the way. We use AI when it enhances learning. We do not allow it when it replaces learning.

2. Honesty is not negotiable. Presenting AI-generated work as entirely your own is a form of dishonesty. Our academic integrity standards apply fully to AI. If you use it, you say so.

3. Teachers set the terms. There is no universal answer to whether AI is allowed. It depends on the assignment, the course, and what your teacher is trying to help you learn. Every teacher will specify the AI level for each assignment. If they have not, ask.

4. AI is a tool, not a co-author. The ideas, the judgment, and the intellectual ownership belong to you.

5. Some skills must stay human. Writing develops thinking. Struggle builds resilience. AI can support those skills. It cannot develop them for you.

6. We will revisit this. This policy reflects where AI and education stand right now. We will review and update it annually, and we welcome faculty and student input in that process.

AI Use Levels

Every assignment at TIS carries an AI level. Your teacher will communicate this level clearly. If no level is specified, the default is Level 0. Ask your teacher before assuming otherwise.

Level	What It Means	Examples
Level 0 - No AI	No AI tools at any stage. Work is entirely your own.	In-class essays, exams, lab reports, performance assessments, reflective journals.
Level 1 - AI for Research Only	AI may be used to understand concepts or find sources. All writing must be your own.	Using AI to explain a term, summarize a topic, or suggest reading directions. No AI-generated sentences in final work.
Level 2 - AI as Thinking Partner	AI may be used for brainstorming, outlining, or feedback on a draft. You must substantially revise and own the final product.	Asking AI to critique your thesis, suggest counterarguments, or check the logic of an outline.
Level 3 - AI as Tool with Disclosure	AI use is explicitly permitted and expected. Disclose how and where you used it.	Generating a first draft as a starting point, using AI to translate or format, producing visual content with AI tools.

How to Disclose AI Use

At Level 2 or Level 3, a brief disclosure note at the end of your submission is required. It does not need to be elaborate, it needs to be honest. Examples:

- "I used [tool] to help me brainstorm counterarguments. All writing is my own."
- "I generated an initial outline using AI, then revised substantially. All content is mine."
- "I used AI to produce a first draft of this summary, then rewrote it in my own words and checked it for accuracy."

What Is Always Prohibited

- Submitting AI-generated text as entirely your own original writing without disclosure
- Using AI tools during Level 0 assessments, including exams, in-class essays, or any work explicitly designated no-AI
- Using AI to impersonate another person, generate content designed to deceive, or produce material intended to harass or harm
- Using AI tools that collect or process student data in ways that violate FERPA or TIS privacy expectations

Consequences for AI Violations

Violation	Example	Consequence
Submitting AI-generated work as your own	Pasting ChatGPT output into an assignment without disclosure	Zero on assignment; academic integrity referral
Using AI beyond the permitted level	Using AI to write when Level 1 (research only) was assigned	Zero on assignment; parent notification
Failing to disclose AI use when required	Not noting AI use on a Level 3 assignment	Assignment returned; resubmit with disclosure
Using AI to impersonate or harass	Generating fake quotes attributed to a classmate or teacher	Disciplinary action; possible suspension
Using AI on a Level 0 assessment	Using any AI tool during an exam or in-class assessment	Zero on assignment; possible disciplinary action

Academic Calendar

The Lower and Middle School academic year is divided into two semesters of classes, with grades given each of the four quarters. Grades are reset each quarter. The Upper School academic year is divided into two semesters. At the conclusion of each semester is an exam period.

Grade Reporting Information

The Independent School uses PowerSchool as their student information system and Schoology as their learning management software. Grades can be expected to be updated by faculty on a weekly basis. Comments and grades are posted periodically throughout the year, and parents will be informed of those dates. Student grades can be accessed using Schoology from the link on the home page at www.theindependentschool.com. Attendance, grades, progress reports and report cards can be accessed from PowerSchool. If you are having problems accessing the program, please call the division’s Administrative Assistant.

Grading Scale

The following grading scale applies school-wide in all divisions for grades 2 and above.

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-
100-97	96-93	92-90	89-87	86-83	82-80
C+	**C**	**C-**	**D+**	**D**	**D-**
79-77	76-73	72-70	69-67	63-60	Below 60
F					
Below 60					

Note: In the primary years (JK through 1st grade), children are assessed and evaluated according to their individual progress. Letter grades are not used in the primary years. Quarterly, parents will receive a detailed progress report. See the Lower School Supplement for details.

Academic Recognition

Each division will conclude the school year with opportunities for student recognition. In the Lower and Middle School, students receiving grades of all Bs or above plus Meets Expectation or Exceeds Expectation in non-graded classes in a given quarter will receive Honor recognition. Students receiving all As plus Meets Expectation or Exceeds Expectation in non-graded classes will receive Academic Excellence recognition.

Homework Expectations

Homework is an extension of the learning experience beyond the classroom. Research supports the rule of thumb that ten minutes of homework per grade level is developmentally appropriate. For example, a 5th grader should have approximately 50 minutes of homework; a 9th grader approximately 90 minutes.

If your child is consistently spending excessive time on homework in any class, please open a dialog with that teacher. All students are expected to complete their own work. Academic honesty is essential to our mission.

Attendance & Tardy Policy

Regular attendance is essential, not just for the individual student but for the learning community as a whole. Each student's participation matters. TIS reserves the right to deny credit or re-enrollment to any student who accrues 18 non-school-related absences in a year-long course, or 9 in a semester course.

All absences should be reported by a parent to the division office before 8:00 AM. All absences are considered unexcused until information is received explaining the nature of the absence. TIS reserves the right to deny credit or re-enrollment to any student who accrues 18 non-school-related absences in a year or 9 in a semester, at the discretion of the Division Head.

Excused Absences

Planned excused absences, including surgery, religious observance, funerals, and school-related events, must be excused in advance. It is the responsibility of the student to inform every teacher of the planned absence and to negotiate when missed material is due.

For planned absences, students must:

- Have a parent call or send a note to the division office at least one week prior to the absence.
- Pick up a Planned Absence Form, if in the Middle or Upper Schools
    - Have all teachers fill in assignments and expected due dates. Attempt to turn in all assignments before departure unless the teacher directs otherwise.
    - Return the completed form to the office before departure so it can be signed by the Division Head.

Unplanned excused absences, such as sudden illness or family emergencies, must be excused as soon as possible, usually the day when the absence occurs. Any illness resulting in 3 consecutive days absent requires a physician note. For each day absent, students have one day upon return to complete and submit missed work.

Unexcused Absences

Students who miss class for avoidable or non-emergency purposes will receive an unexcused absence. Students are not entitled to faculty assistance reviewing missed material on the day of their return, and individual departments may assign appropriate grade penalties for all missed work.

Absences that may be considered non-emergency and avoidable include: family vacations during school days, entertainment events, social functions, hair appointments, and non-school related extracurricular activities. The final determination of excused and unexcused absences is at the discretion of the school.

Absences Around School Holidays

The TIS calendar provides ample time off at strategic points of the academic year. Absences from classes on days immediately preceding or following a school holiday are discouraged because they are disruptive to those who are present as required.

Tardies

Students should arrive at school on time each day and be on time to each scheduled class or school obligation. A student is considered tardy if arriving within ten minutes after the start of class in the Lower School or if the student arrives anytime after the general start of class in the Middle and Upper Schools. Unacceptable reasons for repeated tardies include oversleeping, fatigue, unspecified illness or general malaise, generic notes giving no reason, and non-emergency personal or family errands.

The Division Head reserves the right to schedule a meeting with parents when a student accumulates four tardies in a semester.

Medical Leave

When a student encounters a medical issue that interferes with their ability to function in the school setting, the student's family or the school administration may initiate a medical leave. The relevant Division Head will approve both the student's leave from and return to school. Terms for return will be clearly defined at the time of the leave.

Short-term leaves (fewer than 10 class days): Students will be encouraged to complete as much work as possible while absent. Long-term leaves (more than 10 class days): A student may be made inactive in Independent classes and required to withdraw for the remainder of the semester or year. In all cases, the school reserves the right to determine whether it can support a student returning from medical leave. Documentation from a medical professional may be required.

Academic Support

Teachers are available for extra support at least 30 minutes before and 30 minutes after school. In the Middle and Upper Schools, Student grades are evaluated at the beginning of every week by each division office. In the Middle School, students with a grade of 70% or below will receive an Academic Alert. Students failing one or more classes will be placed on Academic Warning.

If a student's grade does not show significant improvement within one week of Academic Warning, the student may be ineligible to participate in all extracurricular activities including athletics for the next five school days. Study halls, meetings with teachers for tutorial work, and additional conferences may be required at any point in a semester.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Conferences allow students, parents, and teachers to meet together. During conferences students, parents, and teachers review progress and cover major questions and topics during one group student/parent/teacher team conference.

Standardized Testing

As a college preparatory school, TIS utilizes the American College Testing (ACT) suite of assessments, the Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (PSAT), and College Board Advanced Placement (AP) exams. The Lower and Middle Schools utilize the nationally normed Renaissance STAR Tests in Reading and Math.

TIS school testing code: 173185

- Kindergarten - 8th grade: Renaissance STAR
- 8th grade: ACT 8/9
- 9th grade: PSAT and ACT 8/9
- 10th grade: PSAT and ACT
- 11th grade: PSAT, ACT, AP (optional)
- 12th grade: ACT, AP (optional)

Parents are asked not to schedule medical appointments or trips during testing dates.

Academic Separation from School

Failure of a course jeopardizes a student's return to The Independent School. Beyond grades, TIS considers other factors when inviting students to return for the following year: contributions to the school, attitude and manner, attendance, tolerance and regard for others, and willingness to work with the school. TIS is justified in inviting back, year by year, only those students who show an effort and desire to make Independent a safe, healthy, and cooperative community of scholars.

SECTION 6: TECHNOLOGY & DIGITAL LIFE

Cell Phone & Personal Device Policy

The Independent School has a unified device policy that applies to all students in all divisions: personal electronic communication devices are off and away for the entire school day, including class time, passing periods, lunch, recess, assemblies, and other structured or unstructured time.

- Personal electronic communication devices, including cell phones, smart watches, personal tablets or computers, wireless headphones, and earbuds, must be turned off and securely stored in a locker or other school-designated location that is inaccessible to the student from arrival through dismissal.
- Students may not carry personal electronic communication devices on their person or access them during the school day.
- School-issued or school-authorized educational devices may be used when explicitly directed by a teacher for a specific educational purpose.
- If a student needs to contact a parent during the school day, they may use the division office phone with permission.
- An exception may be approved when access is required by a formal TIS accommodation plan or is medically necessary and supported by appropriate documentation. TIS will determine the manner of access needed to meet the student's individual need while limiting unrelated device use.
- Other exceptions require approval from the Head of School or designee and will be limited to emergencies or specific school-sponsored circumstances.

If a student misuses their cell phone or personal device, the device will be submitted to the division office.

First offense: verbal warning; student may pick up the device at the end of day. Second offense: written warning; parent must retrieve the device from the office. Third offense: parental meeting; device not permitted at school. Further offenses may result in additional disciplinary action.

For safety reasons, the use of cell phones while driving on campus is not allowed.

Technology Use & Acceptable Use

Access to TIS technology is a privilege that carries responsibility. This policy applies to TIS devices, networks, and accounts, as well as student-owned devices used on campus or in connection with school programs.

The following are prohibited on all TIS technology and networks:

- Accessing or sharing pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit material
- Downloading or installing unauthorized software
- Accessing another person's accounts, files, or messages without permission
- Using the network for commercial, political, or non-school purposes
- Attempting to bypass security measures or gain unauthorized access to any system
- Creating, distributing, or introducing any malicious software or virus
- Violating any local, state (K.S.A. 21-3755), or federal statute

TIS monitors activity on its networks and devices. Students should have no expectation of privacy when using school technology or the school network. Violations may result in temporary or permanent loss of technology access and additional disciplinary action.

Prior to using TIS technology, each student and their parent or guardian must sign a Technology Waiver annually. This document is part of the student enrollment process.

Digital Citizenship & Social Media

Technology is a tool. Like any tool, it can build or it can harm. At TIS, we want students to develop the judgment to use technology wisely, in ways that reflect their own values and the values of this community.

Being a good digital citizen means treating others online with the same respect you would show them in person. It means thinking before you post, understanding that digital content is permanent in ways you may not intend, and taking responsibility for the impact of what you share.

TIS recognizes that social media is a part of students' lives. We are not asking students to stay off social media. We are asking students to use it with integrity. Specifically:

- Do not post or share content that harasses, bullies, threatens, or demeans any member of the TIS community
- Do not post content that sexualizes or exploits any person
- Do not impersonate another student, faculty member, or TIS account
- Do not share images, video, or audio of other people without their knowledge or consent, especially in private or sensitive settings
- Do not post content that falsely represents TIS or is designed to damage the school's reputation
- Do not share confidential school information, including disciplinary proceedings, health information, or financial information about others

TIS reserves the right to address off-campus social media behavior when that behavior affects the safety, dignity, or well-being of members of our school community.

Photo, Video & Media Consent

School Use of Student Images

TIS photographs and videos students throughout the school year for use in school communications, marketing materials, the website, social media, publications, and other school-related purposes. By enrolling at TIS, families grant the school permission to photograph, record, and use images and video of their student in these ways. Families wishing to opt out should do so on their enrollment forms or contact their divisional office. TIS will not sell or license student images to third parties.

Student Recording of Others

Students may not photograph, video record, or audio record other students, faculty, or staff on campus or at school-sponsored events without the consent of the person being recorded, except as part of a teacher-directed school activity such as a class project, journalism assignment, or yearbook photography.

Recording in spaces where people have a reasonable expectation of privacy, including restrooms, locker rooms, and changing areas, is strictly prohibited and may constitute a criminal offense under Kansas law.

Media and Press

Requests from media organizations, journalists, or outside parties to photograph, interview, or record TIS students must be directed to the Head of School. The school will not permit media access to students without prior administrative approval and, where appropriate, parent consent.

School Events

At school events, performances, and athletic contests, general photography and video recording by families for personal use is permitted. Some events may restrict photography or recording for specific reasons, these restrictions will be communicated in advance. Families who wish to share images from school events on personal social media are welcome to do so, with the expectation that they share content only of their own student (or with the clear consent of other students' families) and that content reflects the values of the TIS community.

SECTION 7: DAILY LIFE & OPERATIONS

Daily Schedule & Arrival/Dismissal

Students may arrive as early as 7:30 AM. We expect all students to be in their classrooms, ready to learn, by 8:00 AM.

Division	School Hours	Arrival Opens
Lower School (LS)	8:00 AM - 3:00 PM	7:30 AM
Middle School (MS)	8:00 AM - 3:15 PM	7:30 AM
Upper School (US)	8:00 AM - 3:15 PM	7:30 AM

Specific arrival and dismissal procedures vary by building. See your Division Supplement for car line details, pickup locations, and dismissal logistics specific to your student's division.

If you need to collect your child early, please arrive at least 15 minutes before dismissal to avoid the dismissal process. Sign your child out at the division office. Students will be released only to persons authorized by parents.

Absences & Tardies

All absences or tardies should be reported by a parent to the Division's office before 8:00 AM. Any student reporting after 8:00 AM must sign in at the office and will automatically receive an unexcused tardy unless communication from a parent or doctor clearly states that the tardy was unavoidable.

Students who did not attend school due to illness should not enter the building to pick up assignments, nor attend after-school activities or sports on the day of absence.

Dress Code

At TIS, students are always expected to dress in good taste and in compliance not only with the written code, but with the spirit of the code. Students should take pride in their appearance and dress neatly and appropriately every day. Students must be in dress code for the entire school day.

Appropriate means that student dress reflects the values of the school, respects the seriousness of our academic purpose, and does not distract others. Modern fashion does not always have a place at school.

Items considered inappropriate include but are not limited to:

- Tops and shirts without a full front and back, full sides, and straps that do not cover all undergarments (includes sheer or see-through material)
- Sagging clothing, pants hanging below the waist, or clothing that exposes excessive skin
- Shorts and skirts that are not at least fingertip length
- Excessive holes in clothing
- Apparel or accessories displaying tobacco, drug, alcohol, profanity, or weapons
- Head coverings such as hats, visors, or hoodies during the school day

Students will be asked to change if they are out of dress code. Students who repeatedly ignore the dress code will face disciplinary action, The final determination of dress code violations rests with the Division Head.

Lunch

The Independent School is committed to providing students with a healthy, balanced lunch. A hot lunch program is available for Lower School students on Monday through Thursday. The school uses an external lunch program for Fridays in the Lower School and everyday in the Middle and Upper Schools. Lunches are purchased and delivered to the school from this program. Questions, concerns, or financial problems regarding the lunch program should be directed to the Business Office at 316-686-0152 ext. 412.

Students are not required to purchase lunch. We encourage students to bring reusable containers to support reducing waste.

Due to the external lunch program, students are not allowed to have food delivered to the school. Parents may use lunch delivery services only if an imminent need arises, and should make the office aware of items being delivered. Soda and candy are discouraged.

If a parent chooses to take their child out to lunch, the parent is required to come to the office, sign the student out, and sign the student back in upon return. No student will be allowed to go to lunch with another student's parent unless a confirming message is received from that student's parent.

Library

Use of the library is available to all students at TIS. Students are expected to respect the internet policies while using library computers. Books are checked out for a two week loan period. If books are not returned on time, overdue notices are issued.

When books are lost or damaged, the replacement cost plus a processing fee is charged to the student. Checkout privileges are suspended until the book is returned or payment is received. If payment is made for a lost book and the book is later found in good condition, a full refund may be issued if the book has not been replaced. Guardians may also choose to purchase the book with guidance from the school to make sure the correct copy is ordered.

Textbooks & Fines

Textbooks are the responsibility of the student to whom they are assigned. At year-end, all books will be examined and fines assessed. The following schedule applies:

Book Age	Fine
New to 2 years old	Full replacement cost
3 years old	75% of replacement cost
4-5 years old	50% of replacement cost
Over 5 years old	25% of replacement cost

Panther Care & Extended Day

Panther Care offers safe and productive extended day services for families requiring supervision beyond the traditional school day. Panther Care enrollment is completed via the school portal.

Students enrolled in Panther Care are expected to be respectful of each other and of staff. Panther Care is an extension of the school day and all school expectations apply. See your Division Supplement for division-specific Panther Care hours, pickup procedures, and program details.

Visitors

Parents are always welcome at The Independent School, and we hope you will visit during the year. Parents should arrange visitation with the teacher in advance and check in at the division office before proceeding to any classroom. All visitors should go to the appropriate division office upon arrival. All school doors are locked; access is obtained through the main front entrance.

We ask parents to limit conversations with teachers on duty to two or three minutes, as their focus must be on students. Teachers are happy to set up calls or meetings during plan times or before or after school. Prospective families are welcome to visit after completing an application and initial conference. Contact the Director of Admissions at 316-686-0152 ext. 405 to schedule a tour.

Volunteers

Volunteering is a meaningful way for parents to help their child's school. The school depends on parent volunteers, and we encourage participation. All volunteers must complete a background check.

When volunteering in the classroom, on field trips, or for special activities, siblings and other children should be left at home. For activities that do not involve direct classroom contact, siblings may join their parents. It is understood that the parent has full and complete responsibility for any siblings present.

Field Trips, Coaches, & Drivers

Parents or guardians volunteering to drive for school field trips or to transport students to athletic events and coaches will be asked to undergo a background check and to provide the following:

- Driver name, address, and phone number
- A copy of current driver's license and insurance card
- Make and model of vehicle, as well as number of seatbelts in the vehicle

The legal responsibility while the vehicle is being used to transport students rests entirely upon the registered owner of the vehicle. The school's liability insurance does not cover personal vehicles or their occupants. Parents may not bring siblings or other children on TIS field trips.

Safe Driving on Campus

All student, volunteer, and employee drivers on campus must:

- Observe the posted campus speed limit of 10 MPH
- Follow the proper direction of traffic
- Wear a seat belt at all times and ensure all passengers do so as well
- Refrain from using a cell phone or other electronic device while the vehicle is in motion
- Not operate a vehicle under the influence of alcohol or any substance that may cause impairment

Lost and Found

Lost clothing items are placed in the designated lost and found area in each building. Valuable items are turned in to the division office. Periodically, unclaimed items are donated to a local charitable organization. The school is not responsible for personal items that are lost, stolen, damaged, or misplaced.

Special Events & Invitations

If you are planning a private event or party, please distribute invitations outside of school. Students planning an event that invites the entire grade level may distribute invitations at school with Division Head approval. Students planning private, restricted events may not distribute invitations at school.

SECTION 8: ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES

Program Philosophy

The Independent School believes in participatory athletics. By experiencing individual and team competition, our students come to a deeper understanding not only of the value of seeking excellence in themselves, but also in the value of that pursuit to the benefit of the team. Participation in athletics and activities teaches discipline, teamwork, and commitment.

Being part of a team does not guarantee playing time during varsity games. Playing time in varsity athletics is at the discretion of the coach.

Athletic & Co-Curricular Eligibility

For students to be considered eligible to participate in any school-sponsored event according to the Kansas State High School Activities Association (KSHSAA), they must pass at least five half-credit (.5) courses each semester. Students must also maintain good standing with the school through high standards of behavior.

In order to participate in KSHSAA-sanctioned extracurricular activities and school performance events, the student must attend each class on the day of the event, have a doctor's written excuse for an appointment, or have a pre-approved absence that day.

In the event a student is participating in multiple activities, academics, or athletics, the following priority policy applies:

- The student always participates with the team or group that has the greatest need.
- If one group has far fewer events, that should be considered.
- If one group has a playoff or other advanced competition, that should be considered.
- In the event that greatest need is in dispute, the Division Head will be the deciding factor.

Sports Physicals

KSHSAA physical and concussion forms are required for all students participating in Middle School and Upper School athletics. All students who participate in any sport at TIS must be examined by a physician each school year and present to the school a KSHSAA Medical Form along with a signed parent consent form, a certified birth certificate, and proof of health insurance.

Concussion Policy

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that can change the way the brain normally works. TIS takes concussions seriously. If a student exhibits concussion-like symptoms, they shall not return to athletic participation that day and will undergo concussion management and monitoring.

A student athlete may only return to participation when they have completed the return-to-play protocol administered by TIS training staff, been cleared by a licensed healthcare professional familiar with the evaluation and management of concussions, and received final approval from TIS administration.

Sportsmanship

Athletes will conduct themselves appropriately and assume a leadership role in exemplifying good sportsmanship. Unsportsmanlike conduct will result in disciplinary action. Penalties may range from benching to expulsion from school. Parents are also expected to model good sportsmanship at all times.

TIS and all of its athletes, students, and spectators abide by KSHSAA Rule 52: All actions are to be FOR, not AGAINST; POSITIVE, not negative or disrespectful.

- Be courteous to all, participants, coaches, officials, staff, and fans
- Know the rules, abide by and respect official decisions
- Win with character and lose with dignity
- Display appreciation for a good performance regardless of the team
- Exercise self-control and reflect positively on yourself, your team, and your school

Spectators unable to follow this code will be removed from the event.

Spectator Conduct

Students and their families are encouraged to attend school activities and contests as positive spectators. Students are required to comply with all school rules regardless of the location of the activity. Parents, not TIS, are responsible for their own children during extracurricular activities. If student behavior is inappropriate, the student will be asked to leave the event.

Team Trips

Students traveling on team trips continue to be under the jurisdiction of TIS. All school rules remain in effect. Athletes are directly accountable to the coach who is responsible for them. All students making trips on a bus or school vehicle will be expected to return with the team on the bus or in the school vehicle. If a student's parent speaks directly to the coach to request permission for the student to return home with them, this privilege will usually be granted.

Activities Fees

In order to participate in an activity or on a team, students are assessed an activity fee. This activity fee does not guarantee playing time. The fee varies by activity and is published in advance of the first day of practice or meeting.

Gym & Weight Room

Unsupervised access to the gym and weight room is not allowed at any time. A coach or faculty member must be present for a student to use these spaces. Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated.

SECTION 9: STUDENT CONDUCT & DISCIPLINE

Discipline Philosophy

The Independent School is a safe and positive place for students to learn and be uniquely themselves. We value our students, our families, and our Independent culture. Our intent is that students learn to take responsibility for their behavior and make necessary changes.

We address behavioral and disciplinary concerns through a continuum of consequences that allow for student growth while keeping the privacy and dignity of students intact. Teachers are encouraged to privately guide students through a process of reviewing expectations, clarifying the value of those expectations, and helping the student resolve the issue and move forward.

Consequences are determined using individualized judgment and may consider the nature, severity, frequency, and context of the behavior; the student's age and developmental level; prior related conduct; safety needs; the impact on others and the school environment; disability-related obligations; and other relevant circumstances. The discipline guides and matrices in this Handbook are guidelines rather than mandatory or guaranteed outcomes. Consequences may range from a conversation and restorative response to suspension or expulsion. TIS may choose to dismiss a student when individualized behavioral plans, interventions, and family partnership have not been successful. Any such decision must be based on an individualized assessment rather than an automatic consequence.

TIS seeks consistency across divisions while retaining discretion to determine the response appropriate to each student and situation. Consideration of the student's age and developmental level, the circumstances and severity of the conduct, prior behavior, safety needs, disability-related obligations, and consistency across divisions will all be taken into account. See your Division Supplement for division-specific conduct guidelines.

Substance Policy

The Independent School campus is tobacco-, alcohol-, and drug-free for students and adults. This policy includes parking lots, vehicles, all school facilities and buildings, and both indoor and outdoor school-sponsored events.

Possession, use, purchase, distribution, or sale of alcohol, tobacco, nicotine-dispensing devices, other drugs, or their paraphernalia is strictly prohibited on campus and at any school-sponsored activity. The following consequences are guidelines and may be adjusted based on the individualized factors described in the Discipline Philosophy:

Substance	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
Tobacco / Nicotine devices	In-school suspension	Out-of-school suspension; tobacco cessation program required	Expulsion
Alcohol / Drugs	Out-of-school suspension; clinical evaluation required at parent's expense	Expulsion	
Providing, selling, or distributing any substance	Suspension; possible expulsion	Expulsion	

To ensure a drug-free environment, TIS may periodically consult with local law enforcement and will, on occasion, bring contraband-detecting canines to campus.

Communication to Families Regarding Suspected Use

If faculty, coaches, advisors, or administrators become suspicious regarding a student's possible use of alcohol or other drugs, parents can expect to be contacted by the school to schedule a conference and develop a plan of action. Recommendations may include referral to a family physician, professional counseling, or a school-approved chemical dependency assessment.

Substance Assistance

Students who come forward voluntarily to a teacher, coach, or administrator to seek help for chemical dependence will not be subject to disciplinary action for that request. Instead, TIS will make every reasonable effort to facilitate the student's continued enrollment while they work with health professionals. If a student requests assistance but then does not actively participate in the accepted plan, TIS reserves the right to revoke the student's contract.

Search & Seizure Policy

To maintain order and discipline and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, TIS has the right to perform unannounced inspections and searches and to seize contraband. The Head of School or authorized staff members may search a student's pockets, purse, backpack, book bag, gym bag, or other personal property, as well as student vehicles, lockers, desks, or other school property.

Contraband includes all substances or materials prohibited by school policy or state or federal law, including controlled substances, drugs, alcohol, tobacco products or other nicotine-dispensing devices, guns, knives, weapons, or incendiary devices. All items deemed illegal, illicit, disruptive, or a general nuisance to the mission of TIS will be seized. Lockers remain the property of the school and may be searched by members of the administration.

Off-Campus Illegal Activity

If the school receives information that a student has been charged with illegal activities for off-campus behavior, the student may be subject to suspension or separation from TIS based on the severity of the charges and the impact of their actions on the image of the school.

If the school receives information that a student participated in illegal activity while off-campus and has not been charged, the school will investigate the implications and notify the parents of the students involved. The school reserves the right to take disciplinary action and, in serious cases, to notify the proper authorities.

Disciplinary Actions

Common disciplinary responses include, but are not limited to:

Verbal Warning and/or Instructive Activity Used for minor first offenses. The teacher or administrator addresses the behavior directly with the student.

Loss of Privilege May occur when a student demonstrates an inability to handle the responsibility associated with a specific privilege.

Detention Assigned for missed obligations or behaviors requiring a disciplinary response. Lunch or after-school, as determined by the Division Head.

In-School Suspension The student reports to the division office by 8:00 AM and spends the entire school day separated from the student body. Students may not participate in extracurricular activities on

the day of in-school suspension. All school work is due at the end of the day and eligible to receive full credit.

Out-of-School Suspension Occurs only for serious offenses. Students may not come on campus or participate in extracurricular activities during an out-of-school suspension. Assignments are due upon return.

Conduct Probation A period during which the student must demonstrate cooperative behavior and a positive attitude. Any additional offense while on Conduct Probation could result in separation from the school. TIS may report Conduct Probation on college applications that request this information.

Separation from School An immediate removal from the school. The student may apply for readmission after a specified period of good behavior.

Expulsion A permanent removal from TIS for a major violation or recurring unacceptable behavior. Expelled students will not be considered for readmission.

Any student who is separated or expelled may not be on the TIS campus or attend any TIS-sponsored function without the express permission of administration. Families should be aware that disciplinary action may be disclosed to third parties, such as colleges, when necessary.

SECTION 10: BUSINESS OFFICE & RECORDS

Fees & Consumables

A consumable fee is charged for each student and is included in the first tuition payment. This fee includes consumable workbooks, textbook rental, science lab, and other supplies used in the classroom. Extra-curricular fees, such as sports participation and arts productions, are determined annually and charged for each student who participates.

Tuition Assistance

Any enrolled student is eligible to apply for need-based tuition assistance. Since tuition assistance is based on family need, the appropriate forms must be completed to be considered. Applications are available January 1 for the next school year and are completed online using FACTS. To be eligible for tuition assistance, all financial accounts with the school must be current. Contact the Business Office for further information.

Insurance

Medical costs for students are not covered for accidental injury at school or during school activities except in the event of negligence. Injuries resulting at a KSHSAA-sponsored event are covered in the following order: parents' insurance first, school insurance second, and catastrophic insurance third.

Student Records & Privacy

The Independent School takes the privacy of student records seriously. We are committed to maintaining accurate, confidential student records and to giving families meaningful access to information about their own children.

The Independent School is subject to and complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA protects the confidentiality of student education records and gives parents and eligible students rights to inspect and review education records, request amendment of records believed to be inaccurate or misleading, consent to certain disclosures of personally identifiable information, and file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures to comply. Because The Independent School receives federal Title II funding, it is subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Accordingly, the school's student records policies and procedures comply with FERPA requirements.

What Records TIS Maintains

TIS maintains records for each enrolled student that may include academic records (grades, transcripts, standardized test scores), attendance records, health and immunization records, disciplinary records, financial aid records, accommodation plans, and any other records created in connection with enrollment.

Parent and Student Access to Records

Parents and legal guardians have the right to inspect and review their child's school records. Students who are 18 or older may request access to their own records directly. To request a records review, contact your division head. If a parent believes that a record contains inaccurate or misleading information, they may submit a written request asking that the record be corrected. TIS will review the request and respond in writing.

Disclosure to Third Parties

Subject to FERPA, TIS may disclose education records without prior consent when permitted by law, including to school officials and contractors with legitimate educational interests, to a school to which the student seeks or intends to enroll, to accrediting organizations, in connection with financial aid, in a health or safety emergency, and in response to a lawfully issued subpoena or court order. TIS may also disclose directory information after providing the required annual notice and opportunity to opt out. Except as permitted by FERPA or other applicable law, TIS will not release personally identifiable information from a student's education records without written consent from a parent or eligible student.

Records Holds

TIS reserves the right to withhold grade reports, transcripts, and other records until all tuition, fees, and outstanding financial obligations are current. Families with questions about a hold should contact the Business Office.

Custody & Separated Families

The Independent School serves many families navigating separation, divorce, and co-parenting arrangements. We handle these situations with care, consistency, and respect for every adult involved, while keeping the student's safety and well-being as our first priority.

Our Default Position

In the absence of a court order or other legal documentation restricting a parent's rights, TIS treats both parents as having equal standing to receive information about their student, pick up their student during school hours, be listed on emergency contacts, and attend school events. We do not take sides in custody disputes, and we cannot enforce informal agreements between parents that have not been formalized in a court order on file with the school.

Providing Documentation

If a court order restricts one parent's access to a student or to school information, TIS must have a copy of that document on file before we can honor the restrictions. Verbal instructions from one parent about another parent's access are not sufficient. Faculty and staff will continue to follow previous documented expectations until updated documentation is provided.

Authorized Pickup

Students will only be released to adults listed as authorized to pick them up. Parents may update authorized pickup contacts through the school portal or by contacting the division office. All adults picking up students during the school day must present valid photo identification and sign the student out at the division office.

School Communications

Unless a court order states otherwise, TIS will provide both parents with equal access to school communications. Parents not in the primary household who wish to receive communications should contact the division office to ensure their contact information is on file.

Restraining Orders and Safety Concerns

If a restraining order or protective order restricts an adult from being on campus or near a student, TIS must have a copy of that order on file. If you have safety concerns about a custody situation that may affect your student at school, contact the Head of School directly so appropriate measures can be put in place.

Facilities Request

A facility request form must be completed and submitted to the Business Office for use of campus facilities. Forms for athletic facilities can be obtained from the Athletic Department; forms for the auditorium can be obtained from the Fine Arts Director. All requests must be approved prior to use of facilities.

Asbestos

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) plan and report is available in the Business Office. Questions about the management plan should be directed to the Business Office.

Handbook Amendment

The Independent School reserves the right to interpret, revise, suspend, or amend this Handbook from time to time, including during a current enrollment period, when the School determines that circumstances warrant. Material changes will be communicated to families and will become effective upon adoption or on the date stated by the School. This Handbook summarizes current School policies, procedures, and expectations. It is not a contract and does not modify the Enrollment Agreement. If a conflict exists between this Handbook and the Enrollment Agreement, the Enrollment Agreement controls. Circumstances may arise for which no specific policy exists. In those situations, TIS administration may make decisions consistent with the School's mission, values, safety responsibilities, and applicable law.

SECTION 11: GOVERNANCE

Board of Trustees

The role of the Board of Trustees is governance. The Board and Head of School work in collaboration to advance the mission of The Independent School. Each has a distinct and important function critical to the success of the school. Governance areas where the Board exercises oversight and responsibility include:

- **Mission** Establishing the mission of the school, reviewing it periodically, and revising when necessary.
- **Strategic Direction** Periodically engaging in a formal strategic planning process, setting goals for what the school will seek to accomplish.
- **Programs and Services** Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness and quality of programs to ensure that they support the mission.
- **Financial Resources** Actively participating in fundraising strategy and implementation, approving the annual operating budget, and requiring a yearly audit by an independent accountant.
- **Risk Management** Ensuring proper kinds and levels of insurance are secured and that adequate crisis management plans and policies are in place.
- **Head of School** Selecting, supporting, and evaluating the Head of School, who is the Board's sole employee.
- **Public Image** Together with the Head of School, acting as ambassadors for the school in the greater community.

The Board's Role in Conflict Resolution

Given its role of governance, the Board of Trustees does not play the role of final arbiter in conflict resolution for faculty, staff, students, or parents. If a member of the school community seeks the aid of a particular trustee, the trustee will state either that the individual should share the concern directly with the appropriate administrator or Head of School, or that the trustee will share the matter with the Board Chair, but will not take up the individual's cause.

Parents are worthy of the utmost respect and are critical supporters of the school's mission. Nevertheless, it is not the role of the Board or individual trustees to become involved in the issues or concerns of individual parents or students.

Head of School

The primary responsibility of the Head of School is to carry out the school's stated mission. The Head of School serves as the school's first and most respected voice and notable presence with the school community and the community at large. The Head of School has accountability and responsibility for all operations of the school and, in virtually all instances, has the ultimate authority regarding resolution of issues. The Head of School is also responsible for:

- **Vision and Strategy** Working with the Board to develop a shared vision for the future of the school and appropriate strategies to advance the mission.
- **Program Management** Demonstrating oversight of academic curriculum, co-curricular programs, admissions, financial aid, student code of conduct, discipline, and grading systems.
- **Personnel** Overseeing the selection, development, and evaluation of school personnel.
- **Fiscal Management** Ensuring that solid planning and budgeting systems are in place and that qualified staff accurately monitor and manage the financial health of the school.

- **Operations Management** Responsible for day-to-day management of the school, working with staff to develop and maintain the systems and resources that facilitate effective operation.
- **Constituent Relations** Working with the Board to establish and maintain positive relationships with the many constituencies that support the school. The Head of School serves as the school's chief spokesperson and public ambassador.

Head of School - Board Partnership

The Head of School and the Board work together as partners in a collaborative relationship. Each arm of leadership draws on its own unique strengths and abilities. The Head of School and the Board have joint responsibility for developing and maintaining a strong and open working relationship and a system for sharing information.

TIS may revise this Handbook at any time, and revisions do not require an additional signature or acknowledgment from students or families to take effect.

LOWER SCHOOL SUPPLEMENT

8301 East Douglas | Wichita, KS 67207 | 316-686-0152 ext. 100 | lsoffice@theindependentschool.com

Arrival & Dismissal

Children may arrive as early as 7:30 AM. We expect all children to be in their classrooms, ready to learn, by 8:00 AM. Lower School dismissal is from 3:00-3:30 PM.

We ask all parents to utilize the car line, which begins promptly at 3:00 PM. If you need to collect your child early, please arrive prior to 2:45 PM to avoid the dismissal process. Sign your child out at the Lower School office. Any children remaining after 3:30 PM will be escorted to Panther Care and a charge will be incurred.

All school doors are locked. Access is obtained through the main front entrance. Please check in at the office before proceeding to any classroom. Any adult in the building should check in at the office prior to moving to any other part of the building. Students may not walk to other buildings unattended. Parents should contact the Lower School office if there is any reason a student needs to leave school early.

Grading in the Primary Years (JK - 1st Grade)

In the primary years, children are assessed and evaluated according to their individual progress. It is normal for young children to acquire skills at differing rates and times, which is typically dictated by their stage of development. Letter grades are not used in the primary years. Quarterly, parents will receive a detailed report regarding their child's progress.

Beginning in 2nd grade, students are graded using three weighted categories:

- Projects and tests: scored out of 300 points
- Daily work and quizzes: scored out of 200 points
- Homework: scored out of 100 points

If an assignment does not earn a 70% or above, the student is asked to correct the work, and may raise their grade up to 70% through corrections.

Late Homework - Lower School

Late homework in the Lower School is subject to the following reduction schedule:

- 1 day late: 5% deduction
- 2 days late: 10% deduction
- 3 days late: 15% deduction
- 4 days late: 20% deduction
- 5 or more days late: 0 points

Generally, no late papers are accepted after Unit or Chapter tests. Extenuating circumstances are taken into consideration by each teacher on a case-by-case basis.

Academic Support - Lower School

Teachers are available by appointment before and after school (7:30 AM - 3:45 PM) and are more than willing to provide extra help. On occasion, students may need the additional support of a tutor. These concerns will be discussed with parents by teachers, the school counselor, or the Head of Lower School.

Panther Care & Panther Enrichment - Lower School

The goal of Panther Care is to offer safe and relaxed extended day services for Lower School families with children in JK through 4th grade requiring supervision beyond the traditional school day. Panther Care enrollment is completed through Homeroom online.

Panther Care and Panther Enrichment are an extension of the school day. Students enrolled in any after-school program are accountable for their behavior and are expected to be respectful of each other and of staff.

Attire - Lower School

Simplicity, neatness, and comfort are the criteria for Lower School dress, consistent with the all school dress code. Flip-flop style sandals, Crocs, slides, and complicated or fragile clothing are discouraged. Washable clothing is advised for outdoor play and projects. All children should wear tennis shoes on P.E. days. All clothing should be marked with the child's name.

Student Placement

Each spring, grade level teams meet with the Head of Lower School to place students in classes for the next academic year. This allows current teachers to find a placement that provides the most optimal learning environment for each student. Parents are encouraged to respect the sensitive nature of this process. Once class lists are emailed to parents in August, no changes to class composition are permitted.

Snacks & Birthdays

Parents are encouraged to provide healthy and nutritious snacks for their child to eat during the day.

On a child's birthday, parents are welcome to bring treats to share with classmates and teachers. The child's teacher should be notified of any planned refreshments in advance. To commemorate a birthday, some families choose to donate a book to the Lower School Library collection with a special bookplate in the child's honor. Please contact the librarian for details.

If you are planning a private party, please distribute invitations outside of school.

Items from Home

Please leave chewing gum, candy, trading cards, and toys at home. Faculty and staff may restrict any item if they feel it impedes the learning process. The school is not responsible for misplaced, lost, or damaged items. Please arrange any classroom pet visits with the teacher in advance. Toys that look like weapons are not to be brought to school.

Student Agendas

The school provides students with an agenda for the academic year. If a student loses or misplaces their agenda, it is their responsibility to replace it. Replacements may be purchased at the division office.

Toilet Training

Children admitted to TIS are required to be toilet trained and independent in their toileting needs.

Lower School Discipline Guide

Our school is a safe and positive place for students to learn and for students to be uniquely themselves. We value our students, we value our families, and we value our Independent culture. To ensure that culture remains throughout our building and to instill that culture within each of our students, we address behavioral and disciplinary concerns through a continuum of consequences. These consequences allow for student growth, while keeping the privacy and dignity of our students intact and confidential.

Teachers use many techniques to assist children in resolving conflicts. Although methods vary depending on children's ages and the severity of the situation, all teach problem-solving skills and instill an intrinsically motivated sense of right and wrong. Some of the techniques teachers use when dealing with situations of conflict include:

- Limit setting: Children are given basic, clear, and concise rules to guide their behavior. Boundaries and expectations expand as children develop.
- Consistency: Children know what to expect, limits and expectations are consistent throughout the classes and all adults respond in a similar way to conflict situations.
- Tone: A kind yet serious tone delivered by intervening adults reinforces children's sense of security and lets them know the situation is under control.
- Modeling: Adults clearly demonstrate compassionate, caring behaviors that set examples for children to follow.
- Passive intervention: Teachers give children time to work through their own problems but are there to help if things escalate to destructive or aggressive behavior.
- Physical intervention: Children are physically separated if they begin to hurt each other or property
- Identifying/ interpreting: Teachers clarify problems, diffuse tension, and facilitate problem solving.
- Validating feelings: Acknowledging one's own emotions and those of other children to facilitate learning.
- Generating options/solutions: Children are given the tools to settle conflicts (negotiate, make retribution, collaborate, etc.).
- Redirection: A request to stop a negative behavior is accompanied by a suggestion for an appropriate behavior to replace it.
- Natural consequences: Teachers point out and reinforce natural consequences as they occur. Children see the results of their own behavior and begin to modify it accordingly.

Dismissal of a Child - Behavior

It is part of our responsibility to teach your children to participate, cooperate and be a responsible member of the group. On occasion, a child's behavior may place the child and/or other children in danger or interfere with the focus of the Lower School. In the event of such behaviors, our policy is as follows:

1. Teachers will document/keep a record of behaviors.
2. Teachers will inform and discuss with parents/guardians any behavior by their child which becomes persistently disruptive and is not alleviated significantly by individualized behavior guidance techniques.
3. If the behavior persists, the teachers will seek administrative support and guidance from the Head of Lower School
4. If parents do not choose or are unable to provide reasonable support for the school, or if, even with parent support and individualized interventions, the plan does not sufficiently improve the behavior, TIS will conduct an individualized assessment and engage in a good-faith process with the family. If the School determines that it cannot reasonably and safely serve the child within its program, TIS reserves the right to terminate enrollment.

There are times when children will exhibit severe behaviors that cannot be managed within the classroom setting. Severe behavior is defined as:

- Endangering the health, safety, and/or welfare of self or others
- Disruptive or disrespectful behavior that creates chronic interference to classroom activities
- Physical altercations with faculty or another student
- Harassing or bullying behaviors

When these situations occur, consequences may be:

- One on one reminders of appropriate behavior
- Warning that repeated behavior can lead to further consequences
- Loss of privileges
- Apology (verbal or written, depending on age)
- Parent contact
- Time away from class in the office/in school suspension for older students
- Out of school suspension for repeated offenses of severe behaviors

MIDDLE SCHOOL SUPPLEMENT

8333 East Douglas | Wichita, KS 67207 | 316-686-0152 ext. 200 | msoffice@theindependentschool.com

Arrival & Dismissal

Students may arrive as early as 7:30 AM. Middle School dismissal is at 3:15 PM. Students should be dropped off and picked up at the back of the building (Commons entrance) along the sidewalk side of the drive. Pull as close to the Panther sculpture as possible. Do not double-park along the south drive. Do not drop off or pick up on the driveway between the Swim Club and the Middle School.

Students must be in classrooms ready to learn by 8:00 AM. Any student reporting late must sign in at the Middle School office.

All school doors are locked. Access is obtained through the main front entrance. Please check in at the office before proceeding to any classroom. Any adult in the building should check in at the office prior to moving to any other part of the building. Students may not walk to other buildings unattended. Parents should contact the Middle School office if there is any reason a student needs to leave school early.

Course Requirements

Each Middle School student is enrolled in a section of English, Social Studies, Math, and Science for the year. In addition, all students choose daily elective courses. Placing students at the appropriate academic level may warrant fulfilling Middle School requirements while enrolled in an Upper School class, where a student may receive high school credit.

Advisory Grading

Advisory courses use the following scale: EE = Exceeds Expectations, ME = Meets Expectations, ED = Emerging/Developing, NO = Not Observed.

Academic Support - Middle School

Teachers are available by appointment before and after school (7:30 AM - 3:45 PM) and are more than willing to provide extra help. On occasion, students may need the additional support of a tutor. These concerns will be discussed with parents by teachers, school counselor, or the Head of Middle School.

Academic Eligibility - Middle School

Student grades are evaluated at the beginning of every week by the Middle School office. Academic Alerts go out every Monday to students with a 70% or below. Students failing one or more classes will be placed on Academic Warning for one week. If, by the end of that week, the grade is still failing or has not shown significant improvement, the student may be ineligible for all extracurricular activities including athletics for the next five school days.

Panther Care - Middle School

After-school tutoring and support from all teachers is available from 3:15 PM to 3:45 PM daily. If your child has not been picked up by 3:45 PM, they will need to participate in Middle School Panther Care. Students may not roam the campus while waiting to be picked up.

Middle School Panther Care offers a structured and productive environment where students are welcome to join others for homework time, active movement, and relaxation. Pickup is at the back of the building through the Commons door. Please call the Panther Care phone number (316-686-0152 ext. 204) when you arrive.

Late Work Policy

Students are expected to complete and submit all assignments on time. The following policy applies when assignments are submitted late:

Days Late	Penalty	Notes
1 day late	10% deduction	
2 days late	20% deduction	
3 days late	30% deduction	
4 days late	40% deduction	
5+ days late (within unit)	Up to 50% credit	Must be submitted before end of instructional unit
After unit closes	0%	No credit

Lockers

Each Middle School student will be assigned an individual locker. These lockers remain the property of the school and may be searched by members of the administration. Only magnets may be used to affix items to the inside of lockers. Students are responsible for the condition of their lockers and are expected to keep them clean and orderly. Students who damage lockers will pay the repair cost. Students should keep their locker combination private.

Gym lockers are available to all Middle School students. Locks are recommended. Sports equipment and bags that do not fit in a sports locker should be stored in the student's hall locker. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, damaged, or misplaced items.

Student Organizations - Middle School

The Middle School offers a variety of student organizations. Students must meet all criteria of the Middle School (as well as the national organization) and must be in good standing. A student may only be president of one organization per school year.

National Junior Honor Society During the fall of each year, 7th and 8th grade students who qualify in the areas of academics, service, character, leadership, and citizenship are invited to apply. Students with a B+ average or above during the previous school year are invited to apply to the National Junior Honor Society. To maintain membership, students must continue to hold academic average, attend meetings, and meet the required community service hours per year.

English Language Arts Honor Society During the fall of each year, 7th and 8th grade students who qualify in the area of English Language Arts are invited to apply.Students with a B+ average or above during the previous school year are invited to apply to the English Language Arts Honor Society. To maintain membership, students must continue to hold academic average, attend meetings, and meet the required expectations of the society.

Dances - Middle School

Dances are held twice per year. There is a fee to attend. Guests must be pre-approved by the Head of Middle School prior to the dance. Students who do not attend school for the full day of a dance may not attend the evening event except in extraordinary circumstances. Students are expected to follow dress code guidelines and spectator policies at all school events.

P.E. Clothing

P.E. necessities: non-marking athletic shoes, deodorant, water bottle, shorts, t-shirt, and clean daily undergarments. Students may store their P.E. clothing in an assigned locker. Clothing must be taken home each Friday.

Tardies - Middle School

The following consequences apply for MS tardies:

Tardies (per semester)	Consequence
4 tardies	Lunch detention
8 tardies	Office visit with Division Head; lunch detention
12 tardies	Meeting with Division Head and parents/guardians; lunch detention
16 tardies	After-school detention
20+ tardies	Meeting with Division Head and parents/guardians; after-school detention

MS/US Student Conduct Guidelines

The Independent School is a safe and positive place for students to learn. We value our students, our families, and our Independent culture. Faculty, staff, parents, and students all help to instill that culture through their words and actions. TIS maintains high expectations for all students academically and behaviorally. The following chart provides general guidelines, not mandatory or guaranteed outcomes. TIS retains discretion to determine appropriate consequences using individualized judgment, including the student's age and developmental level, the nature, severity, frequency, and context of the conduct, prior related conduct, safety needs, the impact on others and the school environment, disability-related obligations, and other relevant circumstances. The School seeks consistency across divisions while recognizing that appropriate responses may differ by student and situation.

Guideline Consequences for Serious Conduct:

Violation	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense	4th Offense	5th Offense
Endangering the health, safety, and/or welfare of self or others	Out of School Suspension (1-3 Days), Parental Meeting	Separation from School/Expulsion, Parental Meeting			
Physical Altercation	Out of School Suspension (1-3 Days), Parent Meeting	Separation from School/Expulsion, Parental Meeting			
Misuse of Technology	Loss of Technology Privileges, Parental Meeting	In School Suspension (1-3 Days), Parental Meeting	Out of School Suspension (1-3 Days), Parental Meeting	Separation from School/Expulsion, Parental Meeting	
Harassing or Bullying Behaviors	Conference with clear communication of issue, communication to parents	In School Suspension (1-3 Days), Parental Meeting	Out of School Suspension (1-3 Days), Parental Meeting	Separation from School/Expulsion, Parental Meeting	
Unexcused Tardies, given per class (Tallied per semester)	4 Unexcused Tardies- Lunch Detention	8 Unexcused Tardies- Office Visit with Head of Middle School, Lunch Detention	12 Unexcused Tardies- Meeting with Head of Middle School and Parents/Guardians, Lunch Detention	16 Unexcused Tardies- Office Visit with Head of Middle School, After School Detention	20+ Unexcused Tardies- Meeting with Head of Middle School and Parents/ Guardians, After School Detention

Guideline Consequences for General Conduct:

Violation	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense	4th Offense	5th Offense	6th Offense
Vandalism	Conference with restorative assignment	Detention, Parental Meeting	In School Suspension	Out of School Suspension	Separation from School/Expulsion	
Theft	Detention	Detention, Parental Meeting	In School Suspension	Out of School Suspension	Separation from School/Expulsion	
Inappropriate/Profane Language or Gesture	Office Visit, Written warning	Detention	Detention, Parental Meeting	In School Suspension	Out of School Suspension	Separation from School/Expulsion
Dishonesty	Office Visit, Written warning	Detention, Parental Meeting	In School Suspension	Out of School Suspension	Separation from School/Expulsion	
Inappropriate Behavior	Office Visit, Written warning	Detention	Detention, Parental Meeting	In School Suspension	Out of School Suspension	Separation from School/Expulsion
Disruptive Behavior	Office Visit, Written warning	Detention	Detention, Parental Meeting	In School Suspension	Out of School Suspension	Separation from School/Expulsion
Disrespectful Behavior	Office Visit, Written warning	Detention	Detention, Parental Meeting	In School Suspension	Out of School Suspension	Separation from School/Expulsion
Dress Code Violation	Office Visit, Verbal Warning	Office Visit, Written warning	Detention, Student must Change	Detention, Student must Change	Detention, Parental Meeting	In School Suspension
Cell Phone/ SmartWatch Violation	Verbal warning, student pick up device at end of day	Written Warning, parent pickup device	Parental Meeting, device not allowed in school			
School-Sponsored Event/ Transportation Incident	Office Visit, Written warning	Loss of Privileges	Detention	In School Suspension	Out of School Suspension	Separation from School/Expulsion

UPPER SCHOOL SUPPLEMENT

8313 East Douglas | Wichita, KS 67207 | 316-686-0152 ext. 300 | usoffice@theindependentschool.com

Arrival & Dismissal

Students may arrive as early as 7:30 AM, the US Lobby will not open until that time. Upper School dismissal is at 3:15 PM. Students must be in classrooms ready to learn by 8:00 AM. Any student reporting late must sign in at the Upper School office and will automatically receive an unexcused tardy unless a note from a parent or doctor clearly states that the tardy was unavoidable.

All school doors are locked. Access is obtained through the main front entrance. Please check in at the office before proceeding to any classroom. Any adult in the building should check in at the office prior to moving to any other part of the building.

Students may not walk to other buildings unattended unless they have scheduled classes in these locations. Parents should contact the Upper School office if there is any reason a student needs to leave school early.

Semester Exams

The academic year is divided into two semesters, each concluding with an exam period. The school will attempt to minimize extracurricular activities the week before exams. Teachers are asked not to assign major projects, papers, or tests during the three school days immediately preceding the first exam day.

If a student will not be present for a scheduled semester exam, the student's parent must contact the Upper School office prior to the exam. Students and families should plan accordingly, absences during semester exams can create serious academic problems.

Awarding of Credit

- Students receive .5 credits per course for each semester they pass.
- To receive credit in a course, a student must earn at least a D-. However, The Independent School reserves the right to require that any student earning a grade in the D range have tutorial summer work or repeat the course with a higher grade before he/she advances to a higher level course in the subject area. Any course taken at another high school must be pre-approved by the Head of Upper School if The Independent School credit is desired.
- Students who drop a course any time after the drop/add period, but before the end of the semester, will receive a WP (Withdraw Passing) or WF (Withdraw Failing).
- Students who complete and pass a semester of a year-long course will still earn .5 credits even if they drop it at the conclusion of the first semester. This .5 will be considered “elective” credit and may not count toward completion of a graduation requirement (for instance, a student may not count 1 semester of Physics and 1 semester of Anatomy & Physiology as fulfilling one science credit toward graduation).
- Students who complete and pass the first semester of a year-long course, but who drop it for the second semester, will not have a WP on their transcript.

- Students may be eligible for a study hall, quad, or independent study. Guidelines are available in the Upper School course catalog and conversations regarding these options should be discussed with the Upper School Division Head.
- Students who complete, but fail, a semester of a year-long course will receive an F on their transcript and will not receive credit for that semester. If a student fails a required course, the student may be asked to retake the entire course or the failed semester depending on department recommendation and course requirements. Each department in the Upper School has established best practices in its requirements for repeating courses. If the course is retaken, the new grade received will be reflected on their transcript, and the previous grade will be deleted. Credit will only be granted for the class once.

Academic Ranking

The Independent School does not academically rank its students.

Course Load

Every Upper School student must be enrolled in seven courses each semester, at least six of which must count for credit. Please refer to the Course Catalog for details.

GPA Calculation

A student's cumulative GPA is calculated at the end of each semester: A = 4 points, B = 3 points, C = 2 points, D = 1 point, F = 0 points. Students in GES and Advanced Placement sections receive an additional .5 grade point on their semester grades in those courses.

Course Changes

The Add/Drop period concludes on the eighth day of class for the fall semester and the fifth day of class for the spring semester. Students may obtain a Schedule Change Form from the Upper School office, complete with teacher and parent signatures. No schedule change takes effect until the student receives a new schedule.

Transfer Credit

When a student transfers to TIS, their current transcript will be evaluated and they will be exempted from equivalent course requirements, but transfer courses will not appear on their TIS transcript or count toward their Independent GPA.

Students may take classes at other institutions while attending TIS. If those classes are pre-approved by the Head of Upper School, they will transfer in and appear on the student's TIS transcript with grades counting toward their Independent GPA.

Graduation Requirements

To graduate from TIS, a student must accumulate a minimum of 25 credits in grades 9-12, while meeting the specific graduation requirements stipulated in the Course Catalog. Students are also responsible for completing at least 50 hours of administration-approved community service (12.5 hours per academic year at TIS).

If a student cannot earn the required 25 academic credits in four years, the administration may ask the student to withdraw. TIS considers the following factors when inviting students to return: positive contributions to school culture, personal responsibility, cooperation with others, and constructive relationships with peers, faculty, and staff.

National Honor Society

Students with a cumulative GPA of 3.50 or above are invited to apply to the National Honor Society at the end of their sophomore year. To maintain membership, students must continue to hold their cumulative GPA at or above 3.5, attend monthly meetings, and meet the required 50 community service hours per year (in addition to the standard TIS community service requirement).

Community Service

Upper School students must accrue a minimum of 12.5 hours of community service per year, totaling 50 hours by graduation if enrolled for four years. All community service hours must be submitted to the Upper School office on the community service form by the last day of the school year. Community service hours are subject to approval by the Upper School office.

Academic Support - Upper School

Teachers are available by appointment before and after school (7:30 AM - 3:45 PM) and are more than willing to provide extra help. On occasion, students may need the additional support of a tutor. These concerns will be discussed with parents by teachers, school counselor, or the Head of Upper School.

Academic Eligibility - Upper School

Student grades are evaluated at the beginning of every week by the Upper School office. Students failing one or more classes will be placed on Academic Warning for one week. If the grade does not show significant improvement by the end of that week, the student may be ineligible for all extracurricular activities including athletics for the next five school days.

Open Lunch Privilege

Only Juniors and Seniors who have signed permission forms on file in the Upper School office are permitted to leave campus for trips to local food establishments without signing out at lunch. Signing out is required if Juniors and Seniors are leaving school and not returning. Open Lunch Privilege may be revoked by a parent or Upper School Administration at any time.

Student Drivers & Parking

Driving and parking on campus is a privilege, not a right. Student drivers must have a completed Student Driver/Vehicle Information Form on file. The speed limit on all campus roads is 10 MPH. Students may park only in the student parking area. Cars on campus are subject to the Search and Seizure Policy. During school hours, students may not be in the parking lot without permission from the Upper School office or a faculty member.

Juniors and Seniors have privileges to leave campus during lunch with a signed Parent Permission Form on file. Students may not use their cars during the school day unless they have an authorized excuse from a parent or guardian.

College Counseling

TIS provides dedicated college counseling support for Upper School students. The College Counselor is available to assist with college selection and timeline, the application process, and course planning for college readiness. Students should initiate conversations with the College Counselor early in their Upper School experience.

Incompletes

The Head of Upper School must approve any incomplete grades given at the conclusion of a semester. Should a student receive an incomplete, the teacher and Head of Upper School will approve the timeline in which the work must be completed.

Student Sign-In / Out

Students who must leave school for any reason other than school-sponsored events must sign out with the Upper School office and present a note from a parent. Otherwise, the Upper School Administrative Assistant or the Head of Upper School must speak with a parent before allowing the student to leave before the end of the school day. Failure to sign out properly could result in an unexcused absence.

Dance Regulations - Upper School

Students must arrive within 30 minutes of the start time. Any student arriving 30 or more minutes late may not be admitted. Guests must complete a guest form and be approved by the Head of Upper School prior to the dance; guests must be current high school students. Students must remain until 30 minutes before the scheduled end of the dance.

TIS reserves the right to administer a breathalyzer test for admission and exit. Any student under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drug will be detained and a parent or guardian will be called. Appropriate disciplinary action will follow.

MS/US Student Conduct Guidelines

The Independent School is a safe and positive place for students to learn. We value our students, our families, and our Independent culture. Faculty, staff, parents, and students all help to instill that culture through their words and actions. TIS maintains high expectations for all students academically and behaviorally. The following chart provides general guidelines, not mandatory or guaranteed outcomes. TIS retains discretion to determine appropriate consequences using individualized judgment, including the student's age and developmental level, the nature, severity, frequency, and context of the conduct, prior related conduct, safety needs, the impact on others and the school environment, disability-related obligations, and other relevant circumstances. The School seeks consistency across divisions while recognizing that appropriate responses may differ by student and situation.

Guideline Consequences for Serious Conduct:

Violation	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense	4th Offense	5th Offense
Endangering the health, safety, and/or welfare of self or others	Out of School Suspension (1-3 Days), Parental Meeting	Separation from School/Expulsion, Parental Meeting			
Physical Altercation	Out of School Suspension (1-3 Days), Parent Meeting	Separation from School/Expulsion, Parental Meeting			
Misuse of Technology	Loss of Technology Privileges, Parental Meeting	In School Suspension (1-3 Days), Parental Meeting	Out of School Suspension (1-3 Days), Parental Meeting	Separation from School/Expulsion, Parental Meeting	
Harassing or Bullying Behaviors	Conference with clear communication of issue, communication to parents	In School Suspension (1-3 Days), Parental Meeting	Out of School Suspension (1-3 Days), Parental Meeting	Separation from School/Expulsion, Parental Meeting	
Unexcused Tardies, given per class (Tallied per semester)	4 Unexcused Tardies- Lunch Detention	8 Unexcused Tardies- Office Visit with Head of Middle School, Lunch Detention	12 Unexcused Tardies- Meeting with Head of Middle School and Parents/Guardians, Lunch Detention	16 Unexcused Tardies- Office Visit with Head of Middle School, After School Detention	20+ Unexcused Tardies- Meeting with Head of Middle School and Parents/ Guardians, After School Detention

Guideline Consequences for General Conduct:

Violation	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense	4th Offense	5th Offense	6th Offense
Vandalism	Conference with restorative assignment	Detention, Parental Meeting	In School Suspension	Out of School Suspension	Separation from School/Expulsion	
Theft	Detention	Detention, Parental Meeting	In School Suspension	Out of School Suspension	Separation from School/Expulsion	
Inappropriate/Profane Language or Gesture	Office Visit, Written warning	Detention	Detention, Parental Meeting	In School Suspension	Out of School Suspension	Separation from School/Expulsion
Dishonesty	Office Visit, Written warning	Detention, Parental Meeting	In School Suspension	Out of School Suspension	Separation from School/Expulsion	
Inappropriate Behavior	Office Visit, Written warning	Detention	Detention, Parental Meeting	In School Suspension	Out of School Suspension	Separation from School/Expulsion
Disruptive Behavior	Office Visit, Written warning	Detention	Detention, Parental Meeting	In School Suspension	Out of School Suspension	Separation from School/Expulsion
Disrespectful Behavior	Office Visit, Written warning	Detention	Detention, Parental Meeting	In School Suspension	Out of School Suspension	Separation from School/Expulsion
Dress Code Violation	Office Visit, Verbal Warning	Office Visit, Written warning	Detention, Student must Change	Detention, Student must Change	Detention, Parental Meeting	In School Suspension
Cell Phone/SmartWatch Violation	Verbal warning, student pick up device at end of day	Written Warning, parent pickup device	Parental Meeting, device not allowed in school			
School-Sponsored Event/ Transportation Incident	Office Visit, Written warning	Loss of Privileges	Detention	In School Suspension	Out of School Suspension	Separation from School/Expulsion