

# AMERICAN YOUTH ACADEMY

## STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK

### PRE-K THRU 12TH GRADE

5905 E. 130th Ave., Tampa, FL. 33617

Tel: 813-987-9282 | Fax: 813-987-9262

[Ayatampa.org](http://Ayatampa.org)

Facebook: AyaTampaFL Instagram:

AyaTampaFL Twitter: AyaTampaFL



We are fully Accredited by FCIS and SACS-CASI.

American Youth Academy is an IB World School.  
IB World Schools share a common philosophy and a commitment to a high  
quality, challenging, international education that American Youth Academy  
believes are important for our students



## AMERICAN YOUTH ACADEMY

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful	7
Message from the Head of School	7
Vision & Mission	8
School of Thought	8
Philosophy	8
Core Values	9
Religious & Ethnic Tolerance	9
AYA's Board of Trustees	9
Standards of Ethical Conduct	10
Training Requirement	11
Reporting Child Abuse, Abandonment or Neglect	12
Liability Protections	12
Non-Discrimination Policy	13
FERPA	13
Parent School Agreement	15
Admissions Policies	15
Prospective Students	15
Age Requirements	16
Online Enrollment	16
Probation Period	16
Emergency Contact Information	16
Immunization Requirements	17
Allergies/Special Health Accommodations	17
Exceptional Student Education	18
Waiting List Policy	18
Tuition & Fees	18
Scholarships	19
The Voluntary Pre-kindergarten Program (VPK)	19
VPK Requirements and Enrollment	20
School Readiness Program	21
Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R)	21
Policies and Procedures	22
Drop-Off & Pick-Up	22
Arrival	22
Drop Off	22
Student Drivers	23
Parent Dismissal Expectations	23



## AMERICAN YOUTH ACADEMY

T	Student Dismissal Expectations	23
A	Emergency Dismissal	24
B	Attendance & Tardis	25
L	Unexcused Absence/Tardiness Policy	25
E	State Law Regarding Mandatory Attendance Required for Promotion	26
O	Withdrawal	26
F	School Health	26
C	Illness	27
O	Uniform & Dress Code General Expectations	27
N	Student ID	29
T	Forbidden Items & Special Use Policies	30
E	Breakfast & Lunch Program	30
N	Cafeteria Policies	31
T	School Visitors	32
S	General Definitions of and Requirements for School Visitors	33
	Special Circumstances	33
	Pet Policy	33
	Birthdays	33
	Gifts	33
	Student Conduct	34
	Intimidating, Threatening and/or Bullying	35
	Smoking, Drugs, Substance, Alcohol & Arms Free Campus	36
	Self- Referral	38
	Drug Education	38
	Drug Testing	39
	Zero Tolerance Policy	39
	Consequences	40
	Student Privacy & Search Policy	40
	Off-Campus Behavior	41
	Guidelines for Offenses	42
	Suspension	48
	Expulsion	48
	Detention Policy	49
	Area Rules	49
	Classroom Rules	49
	Lunchroom Rules	50
	Yard/Playground Rules	50
	Bathroom Rules	50



T		
A		
B		
L		
E		
O		
F		
C		
O		
N		
T		
E		
N		
T		
C		
	School Property Rules	50
	Field Rules	51
	Bus Rules	51
	Locker Area Rules	51
	Hallway & Stairway Rules	52
	Safety & Security	52
	Playground / Designated Play Areas	52
	Security Officer	52
	Fire Drills	53
	Electronics Policy	53
	Technology Policy	54
	Chrome book Policy	54
	Technology Use Agreement-Terms and Conditions	55
	Distribution of Written Materials on Campus	56
	Interaction with the Media	56
	Student Photographs and/or Videos	57
	Academics	57
	Gifted & Talented Education	58
	Programs for Gifted and Talented Students	59
	Procedures for Identification of Gifted and Talented Students	59
	Gifted and Talented Formal Identification Procedures	60
	Development of the IEP-Individual Education Plan (IEP)	61
	SST monitors student progress and reviews services	62
	Dual Enrollment at HCC	63
	Florida Virtual School (FLVS)	64
	Honors' Credit	65
	Advanced Placement (AP) Courses & Exams	65
	AYA Seniors Privileges	65
	Bright Futures Scholarship	66
	Class Rank	66
	Homework	66
	Assessment & Testing	67
	Academic Dishonesty/Cheating	68
	PSAT Testing	68
	Testing Accommodations for Students with an IEP	68



T	Grading System	68
A	Retention Policy	69
B	Qur'an Exemption for Students with at Least One Non-Muslim Parent	70
L	Grade forgiveness	70
E	PTO	71
O	Classroom opportunities/ Classroom parents	71
F	School wide opportunities	71
C	Volunteer opportunities	72
O	Student support organizations and activities	72
N	Parent-teacher conferences	76
T	Communication	76
E	Early Childhood Addendum	77
N	Disciplinary procedure policy	81
T	Hand washing policy and procedure	84
S	Health	85
	Library (Decentralized)	89
	Lunch and breakfast	89
	Nap/rest time	90
	Pest control	90
	Playground rules	90
	Potty training/ Potty training policy	91
	Recess	91
	Restrooms	91
	Safety and security	92
	Accidents/incidents	92
	Staff: Early childhood	93
	Teacher/child ratio	93
	Amendment and Addendum	94
	Agreement statement	94
	Useful resources	95



AMERICAN YOUTH ACADEMY

## **IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL**

Assalamu Alaikum,

We are delighted that you chose to enroll your child at the American Youth Academy. American Youth Academy is a second home for more than 1000 students in grades pre-school through 12th. It is one of the leading Muslim educational institutions Nationwide in the Tampa Bay area. We serve our community by providing an exceptional learning experience that supports our students spiritually, physically, emotionally, and socially. With a focus on academic excellence rooted in Islamic values and being the only Islamic International Baccalaureate (IB) school in the state of Florida., we are proud of a 100% graduation rate and our students' high achievements, such as International Baccalaureate Program, National Honor Society, and National Merit Finalists.

We are a scholarship-based school with the idea that you, as a parent, should choose where you send your child to school. Your child's education should be a rewarding experience that will enrich your child's life and your own. For this reason, the partnership between our parents and us is vital to the success of our school mission and vision. During the year, our administration team, staff, and faculty will strive to support our students and be available for our parents when needed. We appreciate your cooperation and look forward to a great school year.

Sincerely,

Dr. Samah Bkhaitan

Head of School



## **VISION**

To create a nationally and internationally known independent school that is highly regarded for its academic excellence and perseverance in providing quality teaching and learning; and for cultivating honesty, compassion, and respect for all people as espoused in the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him).

## **MISSION**

To provide academic excellence in a safe, nurturing, and Islamic environment to guide students to become successful, 21st-century global citizens.

## **SCHOOL OF THOUGHT**

At American Youth Academy, we follow the teachings and principles of Ahl-us-Sunnah wa-l-Jamaa'ah. We offer one of the finest Islamic studies programs in the nation. We have instructors who are well-qualified in the instruction of Islamic studies that include Qur'anic Studies, Aqeedah, Fiqh, Seerah, Hadith, Islamic Civilization, and the Arabic Language. A strong emphasis is placed on developing character and moral principles to help in building future Islamic leaders who will serve the Ummah.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

AYA's philosophy is rooted in the belief that every student has the right to the best quality of education available. Education is a process that encompasses all the experiences students encounter in their school. AYA's philosophy is also rooted in the belief that classroom instruction is only one small aspect of a student's educational experience. It is rooted in the belief that students' knowledge and pride in their religion and heritage are key to their well-being and success.





## CORE VALUES

### *Leading with Reflection*

Nurturing Islamic values through words, actions, and thoughts.

### *Striving for Excellence*

Working to continually exceed expectations.

### *Growing by Learning*

Continuously seeking knowledge.

### *Developing Global Citizenship*

Be engaged members of the community, society, and the world.

## RELIGIOUS & ETHNIC TOLERANCE

All members of AYA's administration, faculty, staff, and students are expected to respect the religious beliefs and ethnic backgrounds of all.

Members of AYA's administration, faculty, staff, parents, and/or students are not allowed to promote any religious beliefs and/or practices besides those that are accepted and/or taught by AYA while on AYA property, at AYA events or to AYA students and/or staff. Promotion refers to discussing or distributing information about these beliefs and/or on any published medium, including social media.

## AYA'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### *The role of the Board of Trustees is to:*

- Ensure the financial stability of the school.
- Review and approve the school's mission with input from the administration, faculty, staff and parents.
- Approve the school's policies based on recommendations of the Head of School.
- Support the Head of School in his/her management of the school.

The Board of Trustees meets regularly and welcomes input from the faculty and staff.



## STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

1. Our school values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, acquisition of knowledge, and the nurture of democratic citizenship. Essential to achieving these standards are the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all.
2. Our primary concern is the student and the development of the student's potential. Therefore, employees will strive for professional growth and seek to exercise the best professional judgment and integrity.
3. Concern for the student requires that our instructional personnel:
  - a. Shall make a reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the student's mental and/or physical health and/or safety.
  - b. Shall not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning.
  - c. Shall not unreasonably deny a student access to diverse points of view.
  - d. Shall not intentionally suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student's academic program.
  - e. Shall not intentionally expose a student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
  - f. Shall not intentionally violate or deny a student's legal rights.
  - g. Shall not harass or discriminate against any student based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or social and family background and shall make a reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination.
  - h. Shall not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.
  - i. Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.



## AMERICAN YOUTH ACADEMY

4. Aware of the importance of maintaining the respect and confidence of colleagues, students, parents, and the community, our school employees must display the highest degree of ethical conduct. This commitment requires that our employees:
  - a. Shall maintain honesty in all professional dealings.
  - b. Shall not be based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition if otherwise qualified, or social and family background deny a colleague professional benefits or advantages or participation in any professional organization.
  - c. Shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political or civil rights and responsibilities.
  - d. Shall not engage in harassment or discriminatory conduct which unreasonably interferes with an individual's performance of professional or work responsibilities or with the orderly processes of education or which creates a hostile, intimidating, abusive, offensive, or oppressive environment; and, further, shall make a reasonable effort to assure that everyone is protected from such harassment or discrimination.
  - e. Shall not make malicious or intentionally false statements about a colleague.

### **Training Requirement**

All instructional personnel and administrators are required as a condition of employment to complete training on these standards of ethical conduct.

### **Reporting Misconduct by Instructional Personnel and Administrators**

All employees and administrators have an obligation to report misconduct by instructional personnel and school administrators, which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student. Examples of misconduct include obscene language, drug and alcohol use, disparaging comments, prejudice or bigotry, sexual innuendo, cheating or testing violations, physical aggression, and accepting or offering favors. Reports of misconduct of employees should be made to the head of the school, Dr. Samah Bkhaitan.

Reports of misconduct committed by administrators should be made to the board of trustees.

Legally sufficient allegations of misconduct by Florida-certified educators will be reported to the Office of Professional Practices Services.



Policies and procedures for reporting misconduct by instructional personnel or school administrators which affects a student's health, safety, or welfare are posted in the staff break room, reception area, school handbook, and on our website at [ayatampa.org](http://ayatampa.org).

### **Reporting Child Abuse, Abandonment, or Neglect**

All employees and agents have an affirmative duty to report all actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect. Call **1-800-96-ABUSE** or report online at: <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/abuse/report/>.

### **Signs of Physical Abuse**

The child may have unexplained bruises, welts, cuts, or other injuries; broken bones; or burns. A child experiencing physical abuse may seem withdrawn or depressed, seem afraid to go home or may run away, shy away from physical contact, be aggressive, or wear inappropriate clothing to hide injuries.

### **Signs of Sexual Abuse**

The child may have torn, stained, or bloody underwear, trouble walking or sitting, pain or itching in genital area, or a sexually transmitted disease. A child experiencing sexual abuse may have unusual knowledge of sex or act seductively, fear a particular person, seem withdrawn or depressed, gain or lose weight suddenly, shy away from physical contact, or run away from home.

### **Signs of Neglect**

The child may have unattended medical needs, little or no supervision at home, poor hygiene, or appear underweight. A child experiencing neglect may be frequently tired or hungry, steal food, or appear overly needy for adult attention.

### **Patterns of Abuse**

Serious abuse usually involves a combination of factors. While a single sign may not be significant, a pattern of physical or behavioral signs is a serious indicator and should be reported.

### **Liability Protections**

Any person, official, or institution participating in good faith in any act authorized or required by law or reporting in good faith any instance of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to the department or any law enforcement agency shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise result by reason of such action. (F.S. 39.203)

An employer who discloses information about a former or current employee to a prospective employer of the former or current employee upon request of the prospective employer or of the former or current employee is



immune from civil liability for such disclosure or its consequences unless it is shown by clear and convincing evidence that the information disclosed by the former or current employer was knowingly false or violated any civil right of the former or current employee protected under F.S. Chapter 760. (F.S. 768.095).

To protect AYA staff, volunteers, children and program participants, at no time during an AYA program may a staff person or volunteer be alone with a single child where the staff person or volunteer cannot be observed by others.

Staff and volunteers will use appropriate touch including pats on the back or shoulder, side hugs, handshakes and high fives. Staff and volunteers will refrain from full frontal hugging, touching of personal areas or patting on the buttocks.

Staff and volunteers will not have private interactions through social media, computer or handheld devices with any child attending AYA.

Staff may not be alone with children they meet in AYA programs, classrooms, etc. outside of AYA. This includes babysitting, sleepovers and inviting children to their homes. Any exceptions require a written explanation before the fact and are subject to administrator approval.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

AYA is committed to admitting students of any race, color, religion, gender, national or ethnic origin and accords them all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, gender, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship programs, and athletic or other school-administered programs.

## **FERPA**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that they correct school records that they believe to be inaccurate or misleading.



If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- School officials with legitimate educational interest.
- Other schools to which a student is transferring.
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes.
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student.
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school.
- Accrediting organizations.
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies.
- State and local authorities within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school district.

For additional information:

Call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327)

Mail to the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, SW

Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

Visit the website at:

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>.



## **PARENT SCHOOL AGREEMENT**

Parents are expected to support and uphold the school's policies and procedures. The school recognizes that a strong partnership with parents is essential for student success. All suggestions and comments from the parents will be examined fully and are welcomed and encouraged for the overall strengthening of the school.

Parents are expected to attend Parent/Teacher Conferences and actively support other planned activities, knowing that parental participation is critical to the health and well-being of the school and the child.

## **ADMISSIONS POLICIES**

- American Youth Academy would like to welcome any interested parent and students to be part of our team.
- Students applying for admission must meet all age requirements.
- Students admitted must submit all required documentation, including academic records and discipline records, as well as a birth certificate, health records, immunization records, and any other documentation such as IEPs.
- Custody papers or similar legal documentation must be submitted if applicable.
- Students older than three years old enrolling in the American Youth Academy Early Childhood Program must be potty-trained.
- All new students in grades 9th -12th might be required to submit to a drug test clearance.
- Students over the age of 19 or older will not be admitted, without administrative approval.

## **PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS**

Students thinking of enrolling at AYA may request to visit the school and attend classes with their peers. Such visits must be scheduled by the parent in advance and must be approved by the administration at least one day prior to the scheduled visit. Student visitors are expected to abide by the same rules and regulations that all AYA students are expected to abide by. They may also accompany their peers to lunch and salaah and may purchase lunch from the cafeteria. Each student visitor will receive, in advance of his/her visit, a list of basic rules/policies to follow while on campus. This will include dress code requirements.



## AGE REQUIREMENTS

**Daycare:** Students entering daycare must be at least two years of age to enroll and be potty trained.

**PreK3:** Students entering PreK3 must be three years old by September 1st.

**PreK4:** Students entering PreK4 must be four years old by September 1st.

**VPK:** Students entering VPK must be four years old by September 1st.

**Kindergarten:** Students entering K5 must be five years old by September 1st.

**1st Grade:** Students entering 1st grade must be six years old by September 1st.

## ONLINE ENROLLMENT

To enroll students for the upcoming school year, visit our admissions page on our website and follow the instructions to enroll through our online portal.

To complete the enrollment process:

- Visit AYA's Enrollment web page.
- Create a new account or log in to an existing FACTS account (School Information System).
- Provide scholarship award letters.
- Provide previous school attendance verification and required documents.
- All prospective students must meet all the listed requirements to be admitted to AYA.

To schedule placement tests for grades K-12, please contact our registrar at

Tel: (813) 987-9282 Ext. 259

Fax: (813) 987-9262

Email: [registrar@ayatampa.com](mailto:registrar@ayatampa.com)

## PROBATION PERIOD

All new students accepted into AYA will be on a 9-week probationary period. If at any time during that period, the school feels that they are not a good fit at AYA, they may be asked to leave.

## EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Each student's emergency contact information must be always up to date on the school management system (FACTS) and any changes must be reported immediately.







## IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Florida law requires that every new student enrolling in Florida schools be properly immunized or have a signed waiver on file at the school on a Florida form. The Immunization Record must show that the following vaccines have been administered:

- Five doses of DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis)
- Tetanus
- Four doses of Polio
- One doses Measles
- One dose Rubella
- One dose of Mumps or two doses of MMR
- Children entering or attending the 7th grade will be required to have completed, in addition to the above:
- Hepatitis B vaccination series
- Second measles vaccination or MMR
- Tetanus-Diphtheria booster

Any student receiving the minimum doses must complete the series within the scheduled time span. If the immunization record or signed waiver is not on file, the student shall not be permitted to attend school in accordance with the law. Signed waivers will not be accepted from students in Daycare or entering Pre-kindergarten.

For further information, please visit:

<https://www.sdhc.k12.fl.us/doc/1497>

## ALLERGIES/SPECIAL HEALTH ACCOMMODATIONS

The office staff and teachers must be aware of any type of allergy or special accommodation a child may have/need. If a child is allergic to any substance, whether it be food, an insect, or medicine, it is crucial for us to be aware of and educated about this matter. Any child with a food allergy must also provide the school with a list of proper nutritional substitutes for the food item.

In the case of any allergy or special health accommodations, it is required that the parent obtain and submit to the Registrar a doctor's note stating the child's name, the allergy/condition, the accommodation recommendation/requirement, and procedures to follow in case of exposure.



## **WAITING LIST POLICY**

Given the fact that the number of seats available in a class may be less than the number of students applying for admission into that class, AYA will begin a waiting list for that class. If a seat becomes available, the parents will be notified of this and if they wish to enroll their child they may do so at that time. If they choose not to enroll their child, they may request for their child to remain on the waiting list to ensure admission for the following year.

## **TUITION & FEES**

Please refer to the website ([www.ayatampa.org](http://www.ayatampa.org)) for a detailed explanation of tuition and fees or request a print-out of the Tuition Matrix from the Registrar's office.

Fees are non-refundable. Tuition is due on the 1st of each month for each month or any portion thereof and a late fee of \$35 will be charged for payments received after the 5th of the month. When students enroll and attend school before the end of the 1st quarter, parents are responsible for the full annual tuition. If a student enrolls and attends school after the 1st Quarter ends, the annual tuition will be prorated accordingly.

Upon signing the tuition agreement, parents and/or guardians agree to pay the tuition, fees, and other charges in a prompt and timely manner. Parents and/or guardians understand that non-payment or late tuition, fees and other charges will result in the following consequences:

- Late Fees
- Exclusion from final exams and/or dismissal of the student from school
- Graduation penalties
- Withholding of transcript, report cards, and/or access to school management access



In the event of non-payment, parents and/or guardians agree to pay all penalty costs and all costs of collection, including reasonable attorney fees incurred by the school.

- Parents have the option of paying for tuition using cash, check, credit card or money order.
- Parents wishing to pay by credit card should provide the school with their credit card information along with signed authorization allowing the school to charge the card on the 1st of each month.
- Parents also have the option of paying tuition through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Payment may be made online at [www.ayatampa.org](http://www.ayatampa.org). In the case that a check is returned for non-payment, a \$35 Returned Check Fee will be assessed.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

AYA participates in two Florida scholarship programs: Step up for Students and McKay. Parents interested in determining if their children qualify for these scholarships should contact the Registrar's Office for information or follow the links:

Voluntary Prekindergarten | OEL ([floridaearlylearning.com](http://floridaearlylearning.com))- VPK

Scholarships For Students Pre-K-12 schoolchildren ([stepupforstudents.org](http://stepupforstudents.org))- SUFS

Family Empowerment Scholarship ([fldoe.org](http://fldoe.org))- FES

AAA Scholarship Foundation ([aaascholarships.org](http://aaascholarships.org))- Home

AAA McKay Scholarship ([fldoe.org](http://fldoe.org))- McKay

Family Empowerment Scholarship ([www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/k-12-scholarship-programs/fes/](http://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/k-12-scholarship-programs/fes/))

McKay Scholarship ([www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/k-12-scholarship-programs/mckay/](http://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/k-12-scholarship-programs/mckay/))

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that they renew their applications in a timely manner.

## THE VOLUNTARY PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM (VPK)

VPK is designed to prepare Florida's children for kindergarten and develop the skills they need to become good readers and successful students. VPK provides standards for literacy skills, strict accountability, appropriate curricula, substantial instruction periods, manageable class sizes, and qualified instructors. Parents have the option of enrolling children in a year-long program that consists of 540 instructional hours. The Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County administers the VPK Program at the local level, including registering childcare providers and providing information to parents.



AYA is a VPK participating school. Any student who is a Florida resident and has turned four by September 1st is eligible to apply for funding to cover his/her tuition and fees. The program is a half-day program (8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.), Mondays through Thursdays and does not include Arabic, Qur'an, or Islamic Studies. Program availability varies from year to year. Parents who want their 4-year-olds in the full-day program may pay tuition and fees to cover the day from 12:00 p.m.-3:15p.m. The full-day program includes Arabic, Qur'an and Islamic Studies.

Children may participate in the VPK program once. Once a child is eligible to enter kindergarten, they are no longer eligible to participate in VPK. If you aren't sure about your child's eligibility, please call the Hillsborough County VPK Office: (813) 740-4713.

## VPK REQUIREMENTS AND ENROLLMENT

**STEP 1** – Parents/Legal Guardians of eligible four-year-old children **MUST** complete the Child Application Form (AWI-VPK Form 01) **AND** provide the following items.

- Proof of child's age/date of birth any of the following:
  - Birth record or certificate
  - Passport
  - Certificate of arrival in the U.S. showing age
  - Valid military dependent ID card
- Shot/immunization record indicating the date of birth signed by a public health officer or licensed practicing physician.
- Proof of Florida Residency (any of the following):
  - Florida driver's license
  - Utility bill
  - Bank Statement
  - Pay Stub
  - Insurance policy
  - Lease or mortgage papers
- Parents/legal guardians must register their eligible child with the Early Learning Coalition in the county where they will attend the VPK program. For example, a child/parent may reside in Pasco County and attend VPK in Hillsborough County. The parent/legal guardian must register the eligible child with the Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County.



**STEP 2** - Parents/legal guardians must take the completed Child application (AWI-VPK Form 01), along with the proof of age and proof of Florida residency, to a VPK registration location and meet with a representative of ELCHC. Parents/legal guardians will meet with a VPK staff member who will verify the information. Upon verification of the eligible child's age and state residency, parents/legal guardians will receive a VPK Certificate of Eligibility.

**STEP 3** - Finally, parents/legal guardians must deliver the VPK Certificate of Eligibility (obtained in Step 2) to their chosen approved VPK provider. This will complete the registration process for parents.

## **SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM**

AYA's Prekindergarten programs are licensed by Hillsborough County Childcare Licensing and are eligible for funding through the School Readiness Program. More information is available through the Registrar's Office.

## **CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL (CCR&R)**

CCR&R provides families with comprehensive information and customized referrals for all school readiness and early care and education programs. All referrals are unbiased, computer-generated, and based on individual family circumstances and preferences, without regard to the family income.

One of the most important and difficult decisions for families is choosing an arrangement that best meets their needs. CCR&R is committed to helping families find answers to their questions regarding how to locate, choose, and use quality services, access financial assistance, and other early childhood and education concerns.

Eligibility for financial assistance for the early childhood program can be determined by Child Care Resource and Referral. A sliding fee schedule is used to determine the parent's portion of payment based on income. Services are provided to children from infancy through age 10.

For more information, please see the AYA registrar.



## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Policies are rules in educational institutions that are created to help schools teach students efficiently, fairly, and safely as per the regulatory norms and the Institutions, the school is affiliated with. These terms determine how students are taught, what they are taught, and how schools manage students and their personnel. The collaboration between parents and the school is the key to students' success. Therefore, parents should be aware of all school policies and procedures.

### **Arrival And Dismissal**

#### **Rules of Arrival and Dismissal:**

- Please follow all rules for both drop-off and dismissal above.
- Please respect all staff and faculty who are helping with arrival and dismissal.
- Please respect the rules and regulations of our neighbors and staff at all times.
- Please refrain from using your cell phone and/or any other handheld devices in both the arrival and dismissal lines
- All students and parents need to use crosswalks at ALL TIMES when crossing the parking lot.
- DO NOT park in spots designated for VPK and Kindergarten parents; these are limited to just parents with students in those grades.
- Follow speed limits and other traffic laws at all times.
- Parents are expected to drop off and pick up their children promptly and in the proper area with full consideration of safety precautions.

#### **Early Arrival/Breakfast:**

- Early drop off for PK3 and VPK student(s) will be in Sr. Laila's class in Building A from 7:15 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. Breakfast will be served in the homeroom classrooms.
- Early drop off for students in Kindergarten through Grade 12 from 7:15 a.m. to 7:45 a.m in the Cafeteria. Breakfast will be provided until 7:40 a.m.
- Drop off will be in between the C & D building pathway only.



## STUDENT DRIVERS

- Students who are also driving must follow the arrival procedure, park in the designated parking for students, and report to class on time.
- Driving students must complete the required form and submit it to the school.
- Driving students must follow the school policy regarding key placement, speed, and using their cars during school hours.

## LATE ARRIVAL

All students arriving late will report to the reception areas to sign in on Raptor and get their tardy slip. Teachers will mark students unexcused for all tardies. Tardies will be excused for the following reasons ONLY:

- Weather (determined by the school)
- Accident-related traffic (determined by the school)
- Car accident (parent must provide police report)

## Arrival For PK3 & VPK

- Enter the school campus from **Gibson Street** and loop into the parking lot B next to building A.
- PK3 & VPK parents must park in the designated parking area labeled “Preschool Parking” and walk their student(s) to their classroom.
- After dropping off your student(s), take a left out of the Preschool Parking section and exit through **Gibson Street**.
- Please remember that student arrival begins at **7:40 a.m.** and students will be marked **tardy** after **7:50 a.m Monday - Friday**.



## Arrival For K5 Through 4th Grade

- Enter the school campus from **Gibson Street** and loop into the parking lot B next to building A.
- Arrival will be at parking lot **A**, the parking lot behind Building's A and B.
- After dropping off your student(s), take a right out of the parking lot and exit through **Gibson Street**.
- Please remember that student arrival begins at **7:40 a.m.** and students will be marked **tardy** after **7:50 a.m** **Monday - Friday**.
- **If you have students in both Elementary and Secondary, please drop off your Secondary student first, and remember to use the left lane (lane 1) between building C and D.**



## Arrival For 5th Grade Through 12th Grade

- Enter the campus from **130th Street** and make a left by the school gym parking lot.
- Loop around Building D (the gym) to drop off your student(s).
- Drop off in the pathway between building C and D.
- Exit to the right if you have finished dropping off your student(s) OR turn left if you have to drop off a K5 through 4th Grade student at building A.
- Use the right lane (lane 2) if you only have student(s) in secondary.
- **If you have students in both Elementary and Secondary, please drop off your Secondary student first, and remember to use the left lane (lane 1) between building C and D.**
- Please remember that student arrival begins at **7:40 a.m.** and students will be marked **tardy** after **7:50 a.m.** **Monday - Friday**





## Dismissal

In our ongoing efforts to enhance your children's safety, we are using the **PikMyKid** Dismissal Application. Throughout the country, it has been proven to simplify dismissal, reduce traffic congestion, and, most importantly, improve overall safety. The unique features of **PikMyKid** allow you, as parents, to easily change pick-up modes, quickly delegate to an alternate individual for pickup, change to an 'After School' program, and even schedule for future pickup mode, pickup individual, and after-school programs. This app allows you to be in full control of your child's dismissal, and it gives us, the school, complete information regarding dismissal and the ability to acknowledge every change and instantly check your child's dismissal status should you have a question. To learn a little more on your own, please check out the following links that will show you a few of the PikMyKid features and all additional information.

[PikMyKid features.](#)

[Pikmykid Parent App Registration Video](#)

[Parent App User Guide Video](#)

## STUDENT DISMISSAL EXPECTATIONS

### Rules of Arrival and Dismissal:

- Please follow all rules for both drop-off and dismissal above.
- Please respect all staff and faculty who are helping with arrival and dismissal.
- Please respect the rules and regulations of our neighbors and staff at all times.
- Please refrain from using your cellphone and/or any other handheld devices in both the arrival and dismissal lines
- All students and parents need to use crosswalks at ALL TIMES when crossing the parking lot.

- DO NOT park in spots designated for VPK and Kindergarten parents; these are limited to just parents with students in those grades.
- Follow speed limits and other traffic laws at all times.
- **Students who have not been picked up by the end of dismissal will be sent to aftercare. Charges for aftercare will begin after 4:00 p.m. Monday- Thursday and after 1:00pm on Friday.**

### **Dismissal For PK3 & VPK**

- Enter the school campus from **Gibson Street** and loop into the parking lot next to building A.
- VPK parents must park in the designated parking area labeled “Preschool Parking” and walk to pick up their student(s) from their classroom.
- After picking up your student(s), take a left out of the Preschool Parking section and exit through **Gibson Street**.
- **Dismissal will begin at 3:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday.**
- **Friday Dismissal will begin at 12:55 p.m.**

### **Dismissal For K5 Through 4th Grade:**

- Enter the school campus from Gibson Street and loop into the parking lot next to building A.
- Arrival will be at parking lot B, the parking lot behind Building’s A and B..
- After picking up your student(s), take a right out of the parking lot and exit through Gibson Street.
- **If you have students in both Elementary and Secondary, please drop off and pick up your Secondary student first, and remember to use the left lane (lane 1) between building C and D.**
- **Dismissal will begin at 3:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday.**
- **Friday Dismissal will begin at 12:55 p.m.**

### **Dismissal For 5th Grade Through 12th Grade:**

- Enter the school campus from 130th Street and make a left by the school gym parking lot.
- Loop around Building D (the gym) to pick up your student(s).
- Pick up in the pathway between building C and D.
- Exit to the right if you have finished picking up your student(s) OR turn left if you have to pick up a VPK through 4th Grade student at building A.
- Use the right lane (lane 2) if you only have student(s) in secondary.
- **If you have students in both Elementary and Secondary, please pick up your Secondary student first, and remember to use the left lane (lane 1) between building C and D.**
- **Dismissal will begin at 3:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday.**
- **Friday Dismissal will begin at 12:55 p.m.**

### **Early Pick-Up:**

- Students may not be checked out after 2:00 p.m. from Monday to Thursday
- Students may not be checked out after 11:30 a.m. on Friday
- Parents **MUST** be in the office before these times in order to pick up their student(s) early
- Parents **WILL NOT** be able to pick up your student(s) after these times for any reason

### **Walkers Dismissal:**

#### **Walkers Dismissal grades K5-4:**

- Walkers are permitted during dismissal only for students in
- Please submit the [Walker Form](#)

- Enter Parking lot **A** by building **A** and **B** from Gibson St and park your car in Parking Lot **A**.
- Parents will be required to walk to the designated zones to pick up their child.
- Students may not walk to the cars in the parking lot.
- Walker students in grades **K5-4th** will be located under the tent next to building **A** and **B**
- Please use the PikMyKid app to dismiss students then walk to the tent to retrieve your child.
- Please use the crosswalks.
- Make a left and exit the parking lot from Gibson Street.

### **Walkers Dismissal grades 5-12:**

- Walkers are permitted during dismissal only for students in
- Please submit the Walker Form
- Enter Parking lot **A** by building **A** and **B** from Gibson St and park your car in Parking Lot **A**.
- Parents will be required to walk to the designated zones to pick up their child.
- Students may not walk to the cars in the parking lot.
- Walker students in grades 5-12 will be located on the outside picnic tables next to the cafeteria.
- Please use the PikMyKid app to dismiss students then walk to the picnic tables to retrieve your child.
- Please use the crosswalks.
- Make a left and exit the parking lot from Gibson Street.



Under no circumstance should staff release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian (written parent authorization is on file with AYA).

To ensure a safe and smooth arrival and dismissal process, parents are required to follow directions from the staff at all times. Please follow all safety measures and precautions listed above at all times, and please buckle up.



## AMERICAN YOUTH ACADEMY



Occasionally, parents need to pick up their children before dismissal time. Parents must give prior notice to the receptionist for early pick-up. Please note that early pickup is not available after 1:30 p.m.

Late Pick-Up fees will be assessed to parents if their children are picked up more than 15 minutes after the published dismissal times. Fees will be \$5 for every half hour late or any increment thereof.

All violations will be entered into AYA Traffic Citation Form for record-keeping:

- 1st Offense: Written warning.
- 2nd Offense: \$25 fine billed into the account.
- 3rd Offense: \$50 Fine billed into the account.

AYA reserves the right to contact and escalate incidents to the authorities, as needed, at any point.

**Important:** Parents will not be allowed to pick up their children from the classrooms or any other area except the reception office.

## EMERGENCY DISMISSAL

In the case of an emergency, parents will be informed by telephone, text, and email. It is imperative that the school has updated contact information on file. All school announcements must be followed. Some students may have to use the bus for transportation. It should be noted that telephone systems can break down, parents on the list may not be home, and circuits may be busy. Although an attempt is made, it is impossible for the school administration to ensure all parents will be notified of early dismissal. The school will take all safety measures to protect students.

In the event of a fire, hurricane, or other disaster, an emergency response plan will be implemented.

It should be noted that AYA will decide to close or evacuate the school due to inclement weather based on the Hillsborough County School Board decisions.





## **ATTENDANCE & TARDIES**

The rights and privileges of attending a private school carry certain responsibilities on the part of parents and students. It is important that parents and students recognize the direct relationship between academic success and regular school attendance. Students should remain out of school only when necessary.

Even though assignments may be completed later, a student can never really make up a day missed at school. The interaction and instruction that take place in the classroom are valuable for students' social and emotional development as well as their academic performance. Students should only be absent from school in case of illness, unusual family difficulties, or emergencies. Other absences should be avoided and constitute truancy.

Students are expected to attend class regularly so that they reap the optimal benefits. In case of absence, the parents should report their child's absence by 9:00 a.m. and explain the reason for the child's absence. Otherwise, they will be marked as unexcused and will NOT be allowed to make up assignments and/or quizzes/tests.

## **EXTENDED LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

If students need to take an extended leave of absence, two weeks' notice should be given to the school to allow the teachers to prepare work for the students to complete during their absence. Please note that parents will be charged regular tuition during this absence. Please also note that if the absence is an extended one and the student does not keep up with missed work, the school cannot guarantee the student's promotion at the end of the school year. Not all extended leaves will be approved as Excused Absences except for medical reasons.

## **UNEXCUSED ABSENCE/TARDINESS POLICY**

- Morning tardies are defined as a late arrival to class or Homeroom/Assembly.
- Tardies between classes are unexcused.
- Please note that 5 unexcused tardies = 1 unexcused absence.
- Students who receive seven tardies between classes in a quarter will receive school detention.
- Students who have 3 unexcused absences per quarter will be disqualified from special recognition awards.



## **STATE LAW REGARDING MANDATORY ATTENDANCE REQUIRED FOR PROMOTION**

According to state law, for a student to be promoted to the next grade level, he/she must attend at least 80% of the school days each year. Any student missing 20% or more days will be retained. Exceptions will be made for home-bound students for medical reasons. In these cases, students will be responsible for all work and all assessments that are assigned.

Grades 6-12: Attendance will be taken for each class/period. If your child is marked absent during his/her Homeroom period, the school information system will automatically call and/or text home at 9 a.m. to inform you that your child is not present. School field trips are mandatory for all; students wishing to NOT participate should stay home and will receive an Unexcused Absence unless they are missing the field trip for an excused reason.

## **WITHDRAWAL**

Parents of students withdrawing from the school must notify the office two weeks prior to moving/withdrawing and provide the school with the new address, the date of the move, and the name of the new school. Students must return all school-issued resources and collect all their personal items before their last day of school. Parents must take care of any outstanding obligations. Academic records will not be released unless all accounts are cleared through the business office, and the withdrawal form must be signed and processed by an administrator.

## **SCHOOL HEALTH**

AYA students' safety and health are a priority. All teachers and staff members have current first aid and CPR training and will administer them in case of an emergency. In order to maintain the good health of AYA students and staff, we request all students who are unwell stay home. AYA provides basic infirmity services through our health aid office. Students will be sent to the nurse's office for first aid needs when necessary. If medication is to be administered on campus, proper documentation and medication in its original bottle must be submitted to the infirmity. Ensure the school is aware of any allergies your child may have.



## ILLNESS

In the case of an accident or illness at school, only minimum first aid can be rendered by school personnel. Parents will be notified if it is determined a child appears ill enough to go home. If a parent cannot be contacted, the designated emergency person will be contacted. If the illness or accident is serious, and the parent and/or emergency contact cannot be reached, AYA staff will make the decision to contact Emergency Medical Services and, if necessary, have the child transported to the nearest hospital for care. It is essential for the school to have insurance information, as well as information related to existing health problems.

In the event of an outbreak of a communicable illness or condition such as chickenpox or head lice, AYA staff and teachers will use standard procedures to assess the situation, and every effort will be made to inform the parents as soon as possible.

## UNIFORM & DRESS CODE GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

Neatness, cleanliness, and modesty in dress are essential in our Islamic school environment. All students are expected to wear the AYA uniform and school ID on the school campus.

### *Personal Grooming*

- Nails should be cut or filed and kept short. No nail polishes.
- Makeup - No excessive makeup, including but not limited to the foundation, eye shadow, lipstick, mascara, and eyeliner.
- Jewelry and accessories (Girls' and boys' grades 1-12) – Girls may not wear exaggerated jewelry including but not limited to large chains, rings, bracelets, and hair/hijab accessories. Boys are not allowed to wear hats, caps, headgear, makeup, or jewelry.
- Body markings - No body art or piercings, temporary or otherwise, are allowed.
- Hair (girls grades 1-5) - Students should have hair that is neat, clean, and natural in color. No use of excessive gels and hairsprays. Hair should not be in the child's eyes and must be neat and clean. No exaggerated hairstyles or extensions.
- Hair (girls' grades 6-12) – Students must properly always wear hijab. (Covered hair & neck)
- Hair (boys' grades 1-12) - Hair should be neat, clean, natural in color, and moderately cut (above the collar in the back and above the eyebrows in front, and above the middle of the earlobes on the sides.) No use of excessive gels and hairsprays. Hair must be neat and clean. No exaggerated hairstyles or extensions.
- Boys' Facial Hair - No goatees, exaggerated or inappropriate beard or sideburn styles.





### ***Uniform Grades K 3 - 5 Boys***

- Solid black dress pants with a waistband and belt loops - Pants should be straight legs hemmed or cuffed to the proper length purchased from [Verona Uniforms](#).
- Polo shirts with AYA logo purchased from [Verona Uniforms](#).
- Black shoes must be purchased from [Verona Uniforms](#).
- Black shoes must be purchased from [Verona Uniforms](#).

**Note:** Hip-hugger, skinny/tight, baggy, cargo, carpenter, or parachute pants, denim or nylon-like material, gray color, stripes, background, or lettering are NOT permitted.

### ***Grades 6-12 Boys***

- Solid black dress pants with a waistband and belt loops. Pants should be straight legs hemmed or cuffed to the proper length purchased from [Verona Uniforms](#).
- Polo shirts with AYA logo purchased from [Verona Uniforms](#).
- Navy Blue ties may be added to the dress shirt Purchased from [Verona Uniforms](#).
- Black shoes must be purchased from [Verona Uniforms](#).
- Black socks must be purchased from [Verona Uniforms](#).

### ***Grades 1-5 Girls***

- Solid black dress pants - Pants should be straight-leg, hemmed, or cuffed to the proper length purchased from [Verona Uniforms](#).
- Light Blue polo shirts/ dress with AYA logo purchased from [Verona Uniforms](#).
- Black shoes must be purchased from any vendor.
- Black socks must be purchased from any vendor.
- Hair accessories
- White prayer scarf - A white prayer scarf must be brought to school and purchased from [Verona Uniforms](#).
- Hip-hugger, skinny/tight, baggy, cargo, carpenter, or parachute pants, denim or nylon-like material, gray color, stripes, background, or lettering are NOT permitted.

### ***Grades 6-12 Girls***

- The following options are available: 1. Solid black dress pants (straight legs, hemmed, or cuffed to the proper length) purchased from [Verona Uniforms](#) with the mid-thigh length Oxford shirt with AYA logo purchased from [Verona Uniforms](#). 2. Abaya with AYA logo purchased from [Verona Uniforms](#).
- Hijab purchased from [Verona Uniforms](#) (all hair and the neck area must be covered).
- Black shoes with black socks.
- Physical Education (PE attire): black yoga pants during PE class and PE shirt purchased from [Verona Uniforms](#)





### *Cold Weather*

Below are the uniform guidelines during cold weather:

- Cold weather: solid black jackets - Worn over their uniform. Jackets with hoodies need to be worn with the hood down on campus at all times purchased from [Verona Uniforms](#).
- Name Labels - Please write your child's name on a label in the jacket to avoid unclaimed jackets being sent to lost and found.

### **STUDENT ID**

All students are required to wear their student ID if they are on campus at all times. The IDs are used for

- Identification on campus.
- Use in the Library for checking out and returning books.
- Use in the Cafeteria for purchasing meals, drinks, and/or snacks.



## **FORBIDDEN ITEMS & SPECIAL USE POLICIES**

School is a place where students come to get an education. We believe that there are certain items that disrupt the educational process, and therefore are not permitted. The following is a representative list including, but not limited to, items that are not allowed for students to carry on themselves or in their backpack at school:

- Cameras
- Bluetooth headphones
- Laser pointers or similar devices
- Pets/Animals
- Skateboards/roller-skates/in-line skates
- Water guns/aerosol cans
- Pocket knives
- Large dollar bills, (\$20 is the highest denomination allowed only during field trips)
- Medications and all kinds of medicine. Any medication must be given to the Infirmary to be administered by the School Nurse.
- Portable electronics and personal devices such as video games.
- Anything deemed inappropriate for the learning environment.

## **BREAKFAST & LUNCH PROGRAM**

AYA is approved for the National Free and Reduced-Price Breakfast and Lunch Program for all students. Students wishing to enjoy breakfast at school must arrive in the cafeteria BEFORE 7:30 am. Breakfast will NOT be served after 7:40 am. This is to ensure that students arrive at class and/or Assembly on time.

- Reduced-Price breakfast is \$0.30.
- Students qualifying for Reduced Price Lunch: \$0.40
- Students qualifying for Free Lunch: \$0.00
- Items such as water, juice, and crackers: \$0.50 - \$2.00.

Note: Menus are sent home each month on the monthly calendar. All meats served in the cafeteria are Certified Halal.



## CAFETERIA POLICIES

Pre-Payment will be encouraged for all AYA parents, as the best method of paying for lunch and/or snacks. For parents using the Pre-Payment method, there needs to be a mechanism for them to specify that prepayment funds can be used ONLY for lunch and NOT for snacks, or for Lunch and Snacks.

Students will not be allowed to purchase any snack items in the cafeteria on credit, unless the parents have authorized the school, in writing, to allow a certain amount of money per month to be on credit specifically for snacks.

Any unpaid credit at the end of each month will be forwarded to the Business Office to be added to the parents' monthly invoice.

Students whose parents have not paid off in full the previous month's credit by the 15th of the current month will not be allowed to purchase anything on credit until the balance is paid off in full. Parents who wish to avoid such an incident from occurring should either pre-pay or keep a credit card number on file in the Business Office that can be debited for the amount at hand. On the 5th and 10th of the month, parents with such outstanding balances will receive reminder emails AND texts from the Food Service Supervisor alerting them of the outstanding balance.

Parents may give the cafeteria staff-written notice of any food items their children are NOT allowed to purchase, and a note will be added to the student's account to that effect.

Students will not be allowed to purchase any items on credit after the end of the first full week of May of each school year.

Parents will not be allowed to re-register their children for the following school year until all money owed to the cafeteria has been paid off in full.



## STUDENT DRIVERS

Driving is a privilege for AYA that should not be abused. It is a privilege that can be revoked if a student driver does not adhere to the school's policies. AYA expects its students to drive safely and carefully while on and off campus.

Each student driver must be responsible to read and adhere to the following directions and regulations. Each student driver must:

- Register vehicle with the office.
- Provide proof of insurance and a valid FL driver's license.
- Follow school speed regulations of the 5-mph limit on the AYA campus.
- Do NOT dig out, burn off, spin tires, or engage in any similar activities.
- Do NOT "cruise" while on campus.
- Park your vehicle in the designated parking area
- Do NOT sit on or loiter near a vehicle or any other vehicle on campus.
- Note that the parking area is monitored by on-campus security.
- Note that any car parked in an unauthorized parking area will be towed.
- Observe all directional signs.
- Practice safe and courteous driving habits.
- Do NOT possess in his/her car alcohol, tobacco, or drugs of any form, opened or unopened, at any time.
- Keep the car always locked.
- Note that any vehicle on school property is NOT the responsibility of the school and that the school is NOT liable for any damage and/or theft.
- Note that the school reserves the right to search any vehicle if reasonable suspicion exists to do so.
- Note that students cannot go to his/her car during the school day.
- Turn in his/her keys daily to the office.
- Sign an acknowledgment form agreeing to abide by these policies.

## SCHOOL VISITORS

AYA encourages parents and other community members to visit the school and believes there are many potential benefits that can result from increased interaction with the community. At the same time, AYA has a legitimate interest in avoiding disruption to the educational process, protecting the safety and welfare of the students and staff, and protecting AYA facilities from misuse and/or vandalism. Therefore, limitations may be placed on visitors to avoid these disruptions. Administrators will have the authority to consider the purpose of the visit and the impact the visitor's presence will have on the staff and students before approving such a visit.



## **GENERAL DEFINITIONS OF AND REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL VISITORS**

- A visitor is defined as any person seeking to enter the school premises who is not an employee of the school, or a student NOT currently enrolled at the school.
- All visitors must report to the front office when arriving and/or leaving the school premises.
- All visitors are required to wear an appropriate form of identification while on the school premises.
- All visitors must obtain authorization from an administrator in advance of his/her visit.
- All visitors must comply with AYA policies, administrative rules, and regulations always.
- All school visitors are asked to dress modestly.

## **SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

AYA administrators have the authority to exclude from the school premises any person who disrupts or appears likely to disrupt AYA's educational processes. Any such individuals will be directed to leave the school premises immediately and law enforcement officers may be called if deemed necessary.

## **PET POLICY**

No student is allowed to bring any animals and/or pets to school at any time without first receiving written permission from an administrator.

## **BIRTHDAY**

Birthday cakes, cookies, treats, etc. cannot be brought to school to commemorate student birthdays.



## STUDENT CONDUCT

### *General Rules*

AYA believes that all students have the right to obtain an education in an atmosphere that nurtures growth and a positive self-image. Every school needs to have rules and needs to make sure that these rules are followed if children are to be safe and have good opportunities for learning. Teachers will work hard to help ensure that children can plan and organize themselves and their work. It is expected that all students will be honest and courteous and will know and follow the rules of the school and cooperate with the school staff.

Providing children, the opportunity to manage their behavior and supporting them while they learn how to manage it is our aim in developing self-discipline in children.

To help students develop responsibility for their actions, the school must have expectations of acceptable conduct. In addition, every child is required to follow AYA's expectations on the bus [if the service is used], throughout the school day, and during any AYA-sponsored activity or event. Students will be notified and reminded about

all appropriate rules throughout the year from the office, in their classrooms, in the lunchroom, in the Masjid, and on the playground. The staff of the AYA respects each individual child's right to a safe and orderly environment. Those few students who choose to endanger themselves or someone else will have to accept the consequences. Positive communication between home and school is necessary. When students understand that parents and school are working together, most problems are eliminated. Every student is expected to read and follow the behavior policies set by AYA. Any violations of the rules will be strictly and immediately met with the proper consequences.

The six basic principles of our Discipline System are

- Every student shall act as a responsible Muslim.
- Every student has the right to learn.
- Every teacher has a right to teach.
- A student cannot in any way prevent a teacher from teaching and/or conducting his/her duty as a teacher as required by these rules and Islamic Guidelines.
- A student cannot in any way prevent another student from learning and/or conducting his/her duty as a student in accordance with these rules and Islamic Guidelines.
- Corporal punishment or physical punishment of any kind will not be allowed and/or used at any time by any staff member. AYA establishes regulations governing the conduct of students in school and school events. Students are expected to comply with these rules and regulations and to obey instructions given by any member of the faculty related to school activities.





Students at AYA and at school events will not engage in

- Any conduct intended to obstruct, disrupt, or interfere with teaching, administrative, or disciplinary functions or any activities organized by AYA.
- Physical abuse or threat to harm any person(s) on campus, at school activities, and at events.
- Damage or threat of damage to AYA property.
- Forceful or unauthorized entry to AYA grounds and facilities.
- Unlawful use, possession, distribution, or sale of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or other illegal contraband on AYA property or at school-sponsored events.
- Conduct or speech that violates Islamically accepted standards and has no redeeming social value.
- Failure to comply with lawful direction of AYA Administration and staff while performing their duties.
- Knowingly violating AYA rules and regulations. Students' enrollment in the school, whether signatures are on the Parent-Student handbook, will be considered as knowingly committing violations.

In addition to the general rules set forth above, students will be expected to obey all policies and regulations for student conduct adopted by AYA administration and staff. Any student who violates these policies and regulations may be subject to disciplinary action, which may range from a formal conference to suspension or expulsion from the school, depending on the severity of the violation, in addition to other civil and/or criminal prosecution.

## **INTIMIDATING, THREATENING, AND/OR BULLYING**

We strive to provide a learning environment for students that are free from intimidation, threats, and/or bullying. Therefore, intimidating, threatening, and/or bullying students is prohibited on school property, or at school-sponsored events and activities. AYA will take appropriate and effective action to achieve this goal.

Intimidating, threatening, and/or bullying behaviors are defined as follows:

- Intimidating: The use of language or conduct to frighten, attempt to frighten, or coerce another person into submission or obedience.
- Threatening: The use of language or conduct to make or attempt to make another person fearful of physical injury.
- Bullying: The use of language or conduct that is threatening and/or intimidating, that involves an imbalance of power or strength, and that is repeated over time.



The above-mentioned behaviors may also include

- Hitting or punching (physical).
- Demeaning teasing, name-calling, taunting, derogatory nicknames, innuendos, and/or remarks (verbal.)
- Gestures or social exclusion (nonverbal and emotional.)
- Sending insulting, threatening, taunting messages electronically (cyber.)

Students involved in intimidating, threatening, and/or bullying activities will be subject to disciplinary consequences that may range from an informal conference, suspension, or expulsion from the school, depending on the severity of each case. Students who knowingly submit false complaints will be subjected to the same disciplinary consequences as described above.

Any AYA staff member who has reasonable grounds to believe, either through personal observation or receipt of the complaint, that certain conduct by a student constitutes intimidating, threatening, and/or bullying activities has a responsibility to report the behavior or complaint and any action taken to the department lead. The staff member might be subject to disciplinary measures for failure to report such activities.

Students may confidentially report within two weeks the incidents of intimidation, threats, and/or bullying by reporting to the principal indicating that the student is making a “confidential” report. The report will be kept confidential to the extent possible under the circumstances. If a student believes that they have been subject to intimidation, threats, and/or bullying, the student must report the behavior to a teacher, counselor, or school administrator within two weeks.

## **SMOKING, DRUGS, SUBSTANCE, ALCOHOL & ARMS FREE CAMPUS**

### ***Definitions:***

#### ***Drugs:***

Any controlled substance considered a dangerous drug as defined under the FL State Law.

#### ***Paraphernalia:***

All equipment, products, and materials of any kind which are used, intended for use, or designed for use in planting, propagating, cultivating, growing, harvesting, manufacturing, compounding, converting, producing, processing, preparing, testing, analyzing, packaging, repackaging, storing, containing, concealing, injecting, ingesting, inhaling or otherwise introducing into the human body a drug as defined above or tobacco.



### ***Vaping Paraphernalia:***

All equipment, products, and materials of any kind which are used, intended for use, or designed for use ingesting, inhaling, or otherwise introducing into the human body a liquid that is used in a vaporizer, or a liquid made of propylene glycol or vegetable glycerin or a combination thereof.

To protect students, employees, and the integrity of our institution, AYA has a zero-tolerance policy towards tobacco, drugs, illegal substances, and weapons. AYA's zero-tolerance policy towards tobacco, drugs, illegal substances, and weapons includes, but is not limited to, the following conduct:

- Smoking, vaping, or inhaling of any substance
- The use or possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia
- The use or possession of any prescription drug without the requisite medical prescription
- The misuse of any over-the-counter medication
- The use or possession of tobacco products or tobacco paraphernalia
- The use or possession of vaping paraphernalia
- The use or possession electronic smoking devices
- The use or possession of alcohol/liquor

The use or possession of firearms and/or weapons on campus or within 1000 feet from AYA's perimeter (except for law enforcement and contracted security personnel) In addition to the application of the policy on AYA campus, AYA's zero-tolerance policy towards tobacco, drugs, illegal substances, and weapons applies to all off-campus school activities. The administration reserves the right to take appropriate action which includes, but is not limited to, contacting law enforcement and/or conducting an immediate drug test of any employee or student suspected of a violation of AYA's zero-tolerance policy towards tobacco, drugs, illegal substances, and weapons.

The administration reserves the right to take appropriate action at its discretion including, but not limited to:

- Contacting authorities or conducting an immediate drug test of any employee or student without notice.
- Any student found to be in violation of this policy will be expelled and dismissed from AYA until further notice.
- Any student who chooses to remain in the presence of someone engaging in prohibited activities may also be subject to disciplinary action.
- Distribution or attempt to distribute illegal drugs or any paraphernalia will automatically render the student liable for expulsion.



## SELF-REFERRAL

It is important to encourage students who believe they need help with alcohol, tobacco, or other drug use to seek assistance from the school. A student who has developed a substance abuse problem needs professional help. A student who seeks help from a school counselor, administrator, or teacher should not be disciplined if the referral occurs prior to a drug or alcohol violation. Any student who takes the responsibility to seek help for his/ her or another's use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs will be supported by the administration, faculty, and staff. AYA encourages all students and family members to seek appropriate help for the student's use, abuse, and/or dependence on alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs. The school has the contact information of substance abuse professionals. AYA will observe strict confidentiality and do all that is possible to enable the student and families to get the help that they need and are seeking.

In the case of self-referral, the policy below will apply:

- The student must have a professional evaluation related to substance abuse issues and dependency by an agency or a person acceptable to the school.
- The cost of the evaluation and counseling will be paid by the parent(s). A written confidential report must be prepared by the agency and given to the school and the parent(s).
- The student must participate in alcohol/drug education and counseling sessions.
- Students and guardians must meet with the Head of the School and the Dean before the student is allowed to re-enter the school. Students will be required to undergo monthly drug testing at the expense of the student's parent(s).

## DRUG EDUCATION

### ***Ethos:***

Drug education at AYA aims to enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing their knowledge, exploring a range of attitudes towards drug use, and developing and practicing decision-making skills. AYA will follow national and local guidelines.

### ***Context:***

We will provide all pupils with drug education as an integral part of our Character Education and Health Education programs.



***Content and delivery:***

Teaching will be based on the understanding that a variety of approaches should be used to meet the differing needs and learning styles of pupils. Active or participatory learning styles can be helpful in developing skills, knowledge, and values.

***Screening of public speakers/visitors:***

Guest speaker visitors support our plan and help our school to educate our students and parents. We are careful and selective in the process of inviting visitors, to ensure that their contribution fits our needs and that they are clear on how their input fits into our school environment. The administration and/or faculty will always be present when visitors are working with our pupils.

## **DRUG TESTING**

AYA reserves the right to drug and alcohol test students randomly, at any time, for any reason, and via different practices (school administrators or a third party). All parents or legal guardians of students will be required to sign the Chemical Screening Consent Form prior to any drug or alcohol test as a condition of enrollment and as part of the contract with the school. Signing the Chemical Screening Consent Form deems the parent or legal guardian's consent valid for the entire school year. All students will be given an opportunity to self-refer, as stated above in the self-referral policy, prior to a drug test. In the event of a self-referral, the self-referral policy will be adhered to.

In the event of a positive drug test, a Medical Review Officer (MRO) will review all positive results. The student and/or legal guardian will receive written notice of a positive test result within five days of AYA's receipt of the results. The student and/or legal guardian have five days to contest or explain the positive test result to the MRO from the date that they receive the test results. If the explanation to the MRO is unsatisfactory, the school policy will apply.

## **ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY**

AYA's Zero Tolerance Policy regarding tobacco, drugs, illegal substances, weapons, endangerment, or any prohibited behavior at the administration's discretion from AYA's respect for the law and AYA's concern for the physical, psychological, and emotional well-being of its students. The following rules will be used by the AYA administration if a student has violated the above policy. Students violating the above policy will be immediately suspended or dismissed from the school until further notice. Any student in the presence of another person engaging in prohibited activities may also be subject to disciplinary action. Distribution or any attempt to distribute tobacco, drugs, illegal substances, or weapons will result in the student's automatic expulsion and reporting to law enforcement.

The AYA administration is fully authorized to carry out the school discipline policy, including the decision to



expel students who violate the school's Zero Tolerance Policy. The administration will follow due process by interviewing the accused and other witnesses, weighing the evidence, and allowing the accused to defend and explain their behavior before reaching a decision.

## **CONSEQUENCES**

AYA's Zero Tolerance Policy towards tobacco, drugs, illegal substances, and weapons devices from AYA's respect for the law and from AYA's concern for the physical, psychological, and emotional well-being of its students. The following rules shall be used by the AYA administration if a student has violated the above policy. Students found in violation of the above policy will be immediately suspended or dismissed from the school until further notice. Any student found to be in the presence of another person engaging in any prohibited activities may also be subject to disciplinary action. Distribution or any attempt to distribute tobacco, drugs, illegal substances, or weapons will result in the student's automatic expulsion and reporting to law enforcement.

## **STUDENT PRIVACY & SEARCH POLICY**

Searches of students and personal property are a fundamental aspect of individual liberty. All students possess the constitutional right to be secure in their persons, papers, and effects against unreasonable searches. A search is required when there are reasonable grounds to suspect a student has any harmful or prohibited items on school property, transportation, or at school events. This includes but is not limited to materials, or substances the possession of which is prohibited by law or school policy, such as drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, or any object that can reasonably be considered a firearm or a dangerous weapon.

In the event of a suspected case, the policy will apply as follows:

- Staff will take particular care to respect students' privacy.
- School officials have the authority to maintain order and discipline in the schools and to protect students from exposure to illegal drugs, weapons, and contraband.
- School officials reserve the right to search students and require them to remove all items from pockets or other personal belongings.

If the student refuses to consent to a search, school officials may proceed to search the student, the student's personal belongings, and the student's locker.

School officials may consult with local law enforcement officials regarding a search of school premises by a law enforcement officer if there is evidence of criminal activity.



## OFF-CAMPUS BEHAVIOR

Regardless of whether a student is on campus or involved in a school-sponsored activity, students enrolled in AYA are not to engage in the use, possession, or distribution of drugs or alcohol and are not to abuse over-the-counter or prescription drugs. Regardless of age, students are not allowed to use any form of tobacco on school grounds or at any school function.





## GUIDELINES FOR REFERRALS

Listed in the table below are the referrals and consequences that will be taken by the school administration.

REFERRAL	DEFINITION	MINIMUM CONSEQUENCE/ 1ST OFFENSE	MAXIMUM CONSEQUENCE/ OR REPEATED OFFENSE
<b>BULLYING/ INTIMIDATING/ THREATENING</b>	Repeated acts over time that involves a real or perceived imbalance of power with the more powerful child or group attacking those who are less powerful. Bullying can be physical in form, verbal, or psychological. Cyberbullying includes bullying through the misuse of technology.	Short Term Suspension	Long Term Suspension  Expulsion
<b>CHEATING OR PLAGIARISM</b>	Knowingly using the information or other property of another or knowingly sharing academic information to gain an unfair advantage	Loss of Credit and After School Detention	Short Term Suspension Long Terms suspension
<b>DEFAMATION</b>	Wrongfully injuring another person's reputation through a written, spoken, or electronic communication that is not otherwise privileged under the law	Short Term Suspension	Long Term Suspension





REFERRAL	DEFINITION	MINIMUM CONSEQUENCE/ 1ST OFFENSE	MAXIMUM CONSEQUENCE/ OR REPEATED OFFENSE
<b>DISRESPECT/ DEFIANCE/NO/ COMPLIANCE, INCLUDING:</b>	Treating personnel or any others with contempt or rudeness. Intentionally resisting or disregarding the authority of school personnel.	Short-Term Suspension	Long-Term Suspension
<b>UNIFORM INFRACTION S</b>	Uniform infractions will consist of a series of warnings and then a series of consequences.	Detention and Contact Parent  Loss of privileges	Short term suspension Long Term Suspension
<b>DISRUPTION</b>	Creating disturbances in class, on campus or at school-sponsored events. Continual or repeated disruptions may warrant more severe consequences	Short Term Suspension	Long-Term Suspension
<b>DITCHING/ TRUANCY</b>	The failure of a student to attend his/her scheduled class at the prescribed time and place or leaving class/campus before the prescribed ending time without authorization.	Short-Term Suspension	Suspension  Expulsion *Report to the proper authority
<b>ELECTRONIC DEVICES</b>	Having cell phones, pagers, media players, or other electronic items, whether operational or non-operational in the	Confiscation	Short Term Suspension  Parents must pick up devices





REFERRAL	DEFINITION	MINIMUM CONSEQUENCE/ 1ST OFFENSE	MAXIMUM CONSEQUENCE/ OR REPEATED OFFENSE
<b>FIGHTING</b>	When two or more persons engage in any violence toward each other in an angry or quarrelsome manner.	Grade 1-4: 1 Day Suspension Grade 5-6: 2 Day Suspension Grade 7-12: 3 Day Suspension  Peer Mediation	Long Term Suspension Expulsion
<b>FIRE ALARM MISUSE AND TAMPERING WITH CAMERAS</b>	Intentionally ringing a fire alarm when there is no fire or touching safety cameras.	Short-Term Suspension	Long-Term Suspension Expulsion in certain cases.
<b>FORGERY/ FALSIFICATION</b>	The act of falsely or fraudulently altering a document or a verbal, written or electronic communication, any verbal or written communication that is knowingly false or fraudulent (dishonesty or lying.)	Short-Term Suspension	Long-Term Suspension
<b>PHYSICAL AGGRESSION</b>	TUSSLES, MINOR CONFRONTATIONS, PUSHING, AND/OR SHOVING.	RECESS DETENTION	SUSPENSION



REFERRAL	DEFINITION	MINIMUM CONSEQUENCE/ 1ST OFFENSE	MAXIMUM CONSEQUENCE/ OR REPEATED OFFENSE
<b>THEFT</b>	Taking or attempting to take any property from a person against their will. Such person threatens or uses force against any person with intent either to coerce the surrender of property or to prevent resistance to such person taking or retaining property.	Grade 1-4: 2-day Out of school detention Grade 5-6: Short-term suspension Grade 7-12: Long Term Suspension	Long Term Suspension Expulsion
<b>TECHNOLOGY MISUSE/COMPUTER TAMPERING</b>	Failure to use hardware, software, electronic devices, web pages and networks for the intended educational use or in a manner that causes disruption at a campus. This includes the unauthorized access of any computer, computer system or network, including cameras.	After School  School Detention Short Term Suspension	Long Term Suspension



REFERRAL	DEFINITION	MINIMUM CONSEQUENCE/ 1ST OFFENSE	MAXIMUM CONSEQUENCE/ OR REPEATED OFFENSE
<b>VERBAL ABUSE/ PROFANITY/RACIAL SLUR</b>	The use of profanity or any derogatory language stated publicly.	Grade 1-4: 1detention Grade 5-6: 2 detention Grade 7-12: Short Term Suspension	Short Term Suspension Long Term Suspension
<b>VERBAL ABUSE/ PROFANITY TO ADULT</b>	The use of profanity or any derogatory language stated publicly to an adult staff member.	Short-Term Suspension	Long Term Suspension Expulsion
<b>VANDALISM/ UNAUTHORIZED ENTRY</b>	Willful destruction or defacement of school or personal property, or breaking into any area of the school unauthorized.	Short Term Suspension	Long Term Suspension Expulsion
<b>ENERGY DRINKS</b>	Bringing to school any drink with a high level of caffeine	Confiscation of the drink Detention	Short Term Suspension



REFERRAL	DEFINITION	MINIMUM CONSEQUENCE/ 1ST OFFENSE	MAXIMUM CONSEQUENCE/ OR REPEATED OFFENSE
<b>ENDANGERMENT I</b>	Recklessly or intentionally creating a risk of injury to another. Consequence depends on the potential severity of harm. This includes provoking or antagonizing a fight, or potential severity of harm.	Short-Term Suspension	Long-Term Suspension Expulsion
<b>ENDANGERMENT II</b>	Intentionally creating a risk of injury to another.	Zero Tolerance	Zero Tolerance
<b>ALCOHOL (USE, POSSESSION, UNDER THE INFLUENCE)</b>	The possession or use of intoxicating alcoholic beverages or substances represented as alcohol. This includes being intoxicated at school, school-sponsored events, and on school-sponsored transportation.	Zero Tolerance	Zero Tolerance
<b>WEAPONS</b>	Possession of weapons or anything intended to be. Including, but not limited to, pocketknife, iron bars, chains...	Zero Tolerance	Zero Tolerance





## SUSPENSION

Out-of-school suspensions are considered unexcused absences, and missed work will result in zero grades.

*A short-term suspension (STS):* Student suspended for up to 3 school days.

*A long-term suspension (LTS):* Student suspended for 4-10 school days.

**If a short-term suspension is imposed on a student, the following steps shall be taken:**

*Step 1:* Any major misconduct will be reported to the Administration team.

*Step 2:* The Administration team will investigate and evaluate the case. A decision will be made on the appropriate consequences based on the discipline code or procedure stated in the handbook.

*Step 3:* Due process will be in place. The involved student and their parents will be informed via email

**If a long-term suspension is imposed on a student, the following steps shall be taken:**

*Step 1:* Any major misconduct will be reported to the Department Lead and the Dean of Students.

*Step 2:* The Dean of Students will investigate and evaluate the case. A decision will be made on the appropriate consequences based on the discipline code or procedure stated in the handbook.

*Step 3:* Due process will be in place. The involved student and their parents will be informed, and parents can request a meeting to discuss the incident.

With the support of the Head of the School, the Dean of Students may immediately suspend a student when the student's presence threatens any student or school personnel. As soon as the threat subsides, due process will take place, and suspension will be initiated.

## EXPULSION

An expulsion is the permanent withdrawal of the privilege of attending AYA. The student and the parents/guardians will be informed when a student is subject to expulsion from school. A formal letter will be sent to parents/guardians, and a copy will be kept in the student's conduct file. Expelled students may not return to AYA under any circumstances.

**Due Process:** Each student is entitled to due process, as outlined above. A parent/guardian has the right to appeal a decision of permanent suspension (expulsion) to the School Board of Directors; due process includes that:

- The administration will verify that the student has committed the infraction.
- The administration will allow the student to defend him/herself with ample chance to provide an explanation for their action/behavior and defend the charges against them.



by the administration.



## DETENTION POLICY

The purpose of the Detention Policy is to encourage appropriate behavior. It is devised to address issues that are disruptive to the teaching and learning environment. It provides an alternative measure for corrective behavior and emphasizes the understanding of the effects of one's actions and how the behavior impacts the entire AYA community. It aims to guide students to set goals for behavioral improvement.

## AREA RULES

### *Masjid Rules*

- Sit properly in the Masjid.
- Keep quiet and respect the Masjid and salaah.
- Be prompt for prayers.

## CLASSROOM RULES

- Arrive to class on time (before the 2nd bell.)
- Bring a Tardy Slip if arriving after the 2nd bell.
- Be seated and prepared to learn when the 2nd bell rings, this includes having sharpened pencils, having homework, books, and notebooks ready, etc.
- Always show respect for everyone in the class (teacher and students.) Treat people the way you want to be treated.
- Listen to the teacher and/or other students without interruption. Wait your turn before speaking.
- When in doubt, always ask questions.
- No food or drink in the classroom, including gum, candy, and sugary drinks. (Except K3-K5).
- All electronic devices are forbidden unless approved by AYA. All electronic watches which emit noise or sounds must be turned off.
- Use the restroom and go to the locker between classes or during lunch. Please do not ask to leave the class unless it is an emergency (6-12 grade).
- Have a positive attitude.
- Hats and hoodies will not be worn during class.
- Follow directions the first time they are given.
- Stay on task.
- Participate in-class activities/discussions.
- Keep hands and feet to yourself and keep feet off school furniture.
- Sit upright and do not slouch.
- Leave class only with permission from the teacher and with a pass.



## **LUNCHROOM RULES**

- Walk slowly and in an orderly fashion into and out of the cafeteria.
- Line up in an orderly and quiet fashion in the serving line.
- Eat only in the cafeteria or assigned area.
- Keep food off the floor.
- Stay at one table until you are finished eating.
- Talk quietly and only with those students at your table.
- Keep the cafeteria clean.
- Return to class only when dismissed by your teacher or the teacher on duty.
- Students must have IDs before entering the cafeteria.

## **YARD/PLAYGROUND RULES**

- Be prompt in leaving the yard/playground to get to assembly or class.
- Always stay within the school property.
- Speak to others politely and without raising your voice.
- Stay off of trees and fences.
- Stay out of classrooms before and after school, unless you have permission.
- Stay out of parking areas.
- Observe and obey safety rules.
- Listen to and obey teachers and/or other adults on duty.
- Keep school grounds clean and clear of all personal belongings and/or garbage.
- Remain in the dismissal area until pick-up or guided inside by the teacher on duty.
- Refrain from bringing gum to school and/or chewing gum on campus before, during, and after school hours.
- Treat everyone with respect.
- Walk only on the sidewalks.

## **BATHROOM RULES**

- Clean toilet seat after use.
- Boys are to sit, not stand when using the bathroom.
- Clean yourself with water, as per the Sunnah.
- Wash your hands with soap when you are finished.
- Finish your business in the bathroom quickly without socializing and playing.
- Make sure your garbage finds its way into the trash can.



## **SCHOOL PROPERTY RULES**

- Keep all school furniture and property free of damage.
- Show responsibility and respect for all school equipment.
- Follow allowed access rules for computers.
- Do not write on the desks, doors, walls, and all property belonging to American Youth Academy.

## **FIELD RULES**

- The field cannot be used when gates are locked. Trespassers will be fully prosecuted of the law.
- Verbal altercations, cursing, and fighting are strictly prohibited.
- Any damage occurring on the field beyond normal wear must be reimbursed by the perpetrator, who may be expelled indefinitely (assuming it is an AYA student.)
- Proper athletic clothing must be always worn while using the fields.
- Only playing members are to be admitted to the field.
- Spectators must use the outside seating area.

## **BUS RULES**

- Arrive on time to the bus before and after school.
- No eating or drinking on the bus.
- Respect and listen to the bus driver.
- Remain seated on the bus for the entire trip.
- Sit in the assigned seat.
- Keep the seats free from damage and/or graffiti.
- Do not open bus windows.
- Keep your head, hands, and arms inside the bus at all times.
- Do not throw trash on the floor.
- Keep the bus clean.
- All school policies and procedures in the handbook apply to the bus.
- At school discretions, students who violate school policies will be disqualified from the bus service.

## **LOCKER AREA RULES**

- Lockers are to be used to store books, school supplies and personal items deemed necessary for use at school only.
- Lockers shall not be used to store items that cause, or can reasonably be foreseen to cause, interference with school purposes or an educational function.
- Students will be expected to keep their lockers in a clean and orderly manner.



## **HALLWAY & STAIRWAY RULES**

- Always follow directions.
- Show respect for others.
- Walk quietly in the hallways and stairways and keep your hands and feet to yourself.
- Keep to the right of the hallway or stairway and walk behind the person in front of you.
- Go directly to your next class.
- Speak in a normal tone of voice.
- Keep hallways and stairways clean.
- If during class time, keep your pass visible.

## **SAFETY & SECURITY**

### ***School Driveways and Parking Areas***

Parents and visitors are asked to use extreme care in the school driveway and parking areas. Parents who drive students to and from school should permit walkers the right of way. Students should never cross between parked buses or cars. Parents are asked to observe the “NO PARKING” areas on the school ground. There is to be no parking in the drop-off and pick-up areas; there is to be no parking on the grass; parking must be in one of the designated parking spots. The speed limit on 130th Avenue should not exceed 5 miles per hour for the safety of our children.

## **PLAYGROUND / DESIGNATED PLAY AREAS**

Students will be encouraged to play outdoors when the weather permits. If a child needs to remain indoors for serious health reasons, the parents must send a detailed note to the teacher (pre-k-grade 5) or administration (grades 6-12) explaining why the child needs to remain indoors. If the request extends three (3) days in length, a letter from the child’s doctor will be required.

Any behavior deemed to be a deviation from proper playground/play area etiquette will result in the student being removed from the area and disciplined in accordance with the AYA Discipline Policy.



## SECURITY OFFICER

The security officer will be based at the gate at AYA's entrance and will be responsible for monitoring traffic into and out of school property. The officer has the right to stop any car or person he does not recognize and require identification. He also has the right to not allow an unknown person/car to enter the property. At this point, he will contact the school office and inquire as to his next action. If he feels it is an emergency, he will call 911 immediately. The security officer will also collect passes from students and/or staff as they leave campus and will turn passes in to the administration at the end of each day.

## FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills will be conducted twice during the first two weeks of the school year and regularly thereafter: Once per month in the K Building; once per semester in all other classrooms/buildings. Fire escape routes will be posted in all classrooms and/or buildings.

Tornado and Emergency Evacuation Drills (Hurricane, Bomb Threat, and Lockdown) will be conducted at least once yearly.

## ELECTRONICS POLICY

### *Games, Electronics, and Other Non-Instructional Devices/Materials*

To maintain a proper and safe learning environment for our students, some electronic devices are not permitted for use on campus during school hours. CD players, iPods, iPads and/or other tablets, e-Readers, laptops, cameras, headphones, toys, wheelie shoes, etc. should not be brought to school unless given permission by AYA, otherwise, they will be confiscated.

***Clothing*** - All students' outerwear, such as coats, hats, boots, and gloves should be labeled. Parents are encouraged not to allow students to carry too much money, which can be lost or misplaced.

### *Cellular Phones & Smart Watches*

Taking into consideration the student's privacy and liability issues, students are permitted to possess their cell phones; however, the following guidelines must be followed:

- Phones cannot be used and must be turned off and always concealed during school hours between 7:40 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- Phones are permitted to be used during arrival before 7:40 am and dismissal after 3:30pm.
- Phones are not permitted to be used in the building at any time. In any emergency, students will need to go to the front desk to use the office phone.
- Students are required to place their cell phones in the cell phone organizers placed in their homeroom classroom upon

arrival. Cell phones will remain in the homeroom for the remainder of the day and devices will be picked up at the end of the day during dismissal from the organizers.

- American Youth Academy will not be held responsible or liable for any lost, misplaced, stolen or damaged devices.
- Any non-permitted use or possession of a cell phone will result in confiscation of the phone and disciplinary action.
- Only parents or legal guardians may retrieve confiscated phones and must do so during school hours from the main office.



Disciplinary action:

**1st offense** - Phone will be confiscated for 3 school days (weekends do not count).

**2nd offense** - 1-day Out-of-school suspension with loss of grades.

**3rd offense** - 3-day Out-of-school suspension with loss of grades.

Testing areas are cell phone-free zones. Any student found with a cell phone during an exam will be given an automatic 0 on the exam, no exceptions and given a 1 day out of school out suspension. The cell phone will be confiscated.

In addition to the implementation of the cell phone policy, students may face other consequences that might be associated with cell phone use on campuses such as technology misuse or cheating.

## TECHNOLOGY POLICY

We are pleased to be able to provide access to technology on campus. The goal of providing technology services to students and staff is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication using the available technological resources. As technology becomes more accessible, so does certain content that may not have educational value. AYA takes reasonable precautions to restrict access to controversial materials, however, it is nearly impossible to control all materials on a global network. Hence, industrious users may discover information that may be deemed controversial or inappropriate in our school setting.

We firmly believe that valuable information and interaction available on the Internet far outweigh the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with our education goals, school ideologies and community values.

## CHROMEBOOK POLICY

AYA assigns Chromebooks to each student through our Chromebook program. The purpose of this program is to provide students with technology equipment to do research, complete assignments, and participate in class activities. Students are responsible for the assigned Chromebook and must sign the agreement below and go through training to be allowed to use the Chromebooks.

[Click here to view the Chrome book Policy](#)





## TECHNOLOGY USE AGREEMENT-TERMS AND CONDITIONS

**Acceptable Use of Technology:** The role of technology at AYA is to support research and education. User access to technology resources in AYA must support education and research and be consistent with the educational objectives of our school. Transmission of any material in violation of any Islamic, U.S., or state regulation is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to copyrighted, threatening, or obscene material or material protected by trade secrets.

**Copyright Issues:** Copyright is the protection the law provides to the authors of “original works of authorship” for their intellectual works that are “fixed in any tangible medium of expression,” both published and unpublished (Title 17, United States Code). It is illegal to violate any of the rights provided by the law to the owner of the copyright. AYA respects the ownership of intellectual material governed by copyright laws. All AYA students and staff must comply with the copyright laws and the provisions of licensing agreements that apply to software, printed, and electronic materials, including documentation, graphics, photographs, multimedia, musical works, video productions, sound recordings, and dramatic works. All other technological resources purchased/licensed by AYA.

**Appropriate Use of Equipment:** The use of technology at AYA is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the revocation of those privileges. Administrators at AYA will deem what is considered inappropriate use according to current policy. Additionally, administrators may close an account at any time as required.

**Technology Etiquette:** Students and staff at AYA are expected to abide by the generally accepted roles of technology etiquette. These include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Be polite and use appropriate language.
- Do not reveal personal information about yourself and others in your electronic communication.
- Electronic mail and storage of data on AYA computers are not guaranteed to be private. AYA is obligated to report illegal activities to the authorities.
- Do not use technology in a way that would disrupt the use of technology by other users.
- All communication and information accessible via the Internet are considered private property and should be treated as copyrighted material unless specifically stated otherwise.



***Inappropriate use of Internet and Technology:*** All activity deemed unacceptable, inappropriate, or illegal by AYA is prohibited. This may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Intentionally downloading, displaying, or sending pornographic, racist, or otherwise offensive material to AYA students or faculty.
- Using obscene or profane language.
- Harassing, insulting, attacking others, or cyberbullying.
- Damaging computers, computer systems, or networks.
- Modifying single workstation Control Panel settings, spell-checking dictionaries, or other utilities.
- Installing or attempting to install software without permission from appropriate authorities.
- Changing hardware configuration settings for computers or printers.
- Using another user's passwords to access network resources.
- Visiting, using, and viewing websites and social media without any academic reason and permission from the appropriate authorities.

## **APPROPRIATE USE OF THE INTERNET IN COMPLETING ACADEMIC ASSIGNMENTS**

Each student has an obligation to act with honesty and integrity when using the internet to complete academic assignments. Such assignments include, but are not limited to, an academic project, paper, performance, quizzes, exams, or other assignments to be evaluated for a grade or credit. In utilizing the internet to complete assigned work, students should honor the expectations of teachers regarding internet use. Violations may result in disciplinary action.

All parents are expected to sign and submit the Technology Use Permission form before their children are allowed to use the computers.

## **DISTRIBUTION OF WRITTEN MATERIALS ON CAMPUS**

- Any materials (business cards, flyers, etc.) must be approved by the administration before distribution.

## **INTERACTION WITH THE MEDIA**

- Any requests made by the media for interviews should be forwarded to the Head of School.
- AYA personnel, parents and/or students will only answer questions with prior approval from the Head of School.
- If students are to be interviewed, written consent from the parents must be on file.



## STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS AND/OR VIDEOS

Students are photographed/videotaped throughout the year for promotional materials and for use on the website. Any parent who does NOT want their children's pictures used for such purposes needs to submit a letter to the administration.

## ACADEMICS

### *Curricula*

AYA is committed to providing the most challenging possible curricula. The curricula must fulfill, at minimum, the standards set in the Florida Sunshine State Standards for each grade level. Students are instructed in the following academic subjects: Language Arts/English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Arabic, Qur'an, Islamic Studies, Physical Education, and various electives.

Parents should expect to receive a Quarterly Syllabus for each subject by the end of the second week of each quarter. These syllabi will include but are not limited to the topics to be covered per week, scheduled tests and/or projects, teacher expectations, and the grade distribution for the class.

Textbooks/programs used in Language Arts/English, Math, Science, and Social Studies are approved by the Florida Department of Education.

AYA encourages students to develop a sense of responsibility in the care and handling of their books and materials as well as other school equipment and supplies. A charge will be assessed if these books are lost or damaged beyond usual wear and tear.

### *Honor Roll*

Students meeting the necessary grade requirements will be chosen to receive Honor Roll recognition at the end of each semester.

<b><i>Principal's Honor Roll:</i></b>	All A's
<b><i>High Honor Roll:</i></b>	All A's and up to two B's
<b><i>Honor Roll:</i></b>	No grade below a B- on Report Card



## **GIFTED & TALENTED EDUCATION**

### ***Philosophy and Aims of Gifted & Talented Program***

The education of gifted children at American Youth Academy is a recent educational initiative that works to provide a quality education for all our identified gifted students. The school recognizes the importance of differentiated learning experiences for gifted learners and acknowledges the value of integration within the regular program. The heart of Gifted Education is seen in challenging classroom-based instruction, characterized by differentiated instruction, flexible skill-based groupings, complex integrated problem-solving challenges focused on future fluencies, and individually designed inquiry-based research projects designed to fit the academic rate and level of each student. The classroom program for gifted children is enhanced with additional activities and enrichment opportunities.

### ***Gifted Education and Florida Law***

Since 1979, the provision of special education programs and services has evolved and expanded to recognize a wider variety of categories of special education, to promote inclusive education and to ensure equal access to educational opportunities. Categories of special education now include Gifted and Talented individuals whose abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment are so exceptional or advanced that special education and support services are needed for the student to meet educational objectives and goals in the general education classroom.

### ***Florida defines Gifted and Talented as follows***

“Gifted and Talented refers to having the outstanding ability, or a great deal of willingness in one or more areas of intelligence, or creativity, academic achievements, special talents, abilities such as oratory, poetry, drawing, handicrafts, sports, drama, and leadership. More often the performance of the talented or gifted student is so exceptional or advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational needs in the general education classrooms with support from special education teachers and resource room teachers.”

### ***Guiding Principles for Educating Gifted Children***

American Youth Academy works to identify gifted learners and meet the academic needs of each learner. In addition, education for gifted children is designed to encourage self-direction, promote social-emotional growth, and facilitate the development of the individual child's potential.



### ***Belief Statement***

- We believe that a gifted learner's needs are best met through experiences that are differentiated in pace and depth. We will design instruction with a challenging level and pace for each gifted learner.
- We believe that collaboration is essential to the success of a learner. We will work as a team to facilitate the learning of each gifted learner.
- We acknowledge the importance of participation and inclusion in the regular classroom program to assure regular scholarly interaction with others. We will educate individual children in a community of mutually respectful learners.
- We believe that students, parents, and teachers are integral partners in designing educational programs for gifted learners. We will invite a productive partnership for planning and learning.

## **PROGRAMS FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS**

The students identified as Gifted and Talented have an exceptionally high level of capability in one or more subjects, or in areas of personal interest such as Performing Arts or Qur'an Memorization. Gifted and Talented students require advanced educational programs to supplement the general education curriculum and provide them with a high level of enrichment activities. Enriched activities may include an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) which is developed by a specialized team to meet the needs, interests, and creativity of Gifted and Talented students.

## **PROCEDURES FOR IDENTIFICATION OF GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS**

All children have talents and gifts in various areas. For formal identification as a gifted learner, American Youth Academy recognizes the following areas of giftedness:

- Intellectually Gifted
- Academic Talented in Reading and/ or Math
- Qur'an Memorization
- Visual/ Performing Arts



A teacher, parent or specialist may refer a child for identification at any time. With the referral, a case study begins. Students are identified after consideration of data reflecting a variety of factors. Such data may include, but is limited to, test scores, teacher referrals, parent referrals, teacher checklists and examples of student work. No single test, measure or score shall be the sole criteria for identification. The identification process may take as few as six weeks or up to several years to complete.

Though gifted identification may occur at any time and the process may be tailored to meet the needs and situation of a specific child, American Youth Academy has a system in place that allows for a periodic evaluation of students for identification.

## **GIFTED AND TALENTED FORMAL IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES**

### ***Step 1- Referral to Student Support Team (SST)***

- Each division has an SST, which consists of deans, teachers, and counselors. Homeroom/classroom teachers are included on the SST on a case-by-case basis.
- The SST will meet regularly to discuss the academic performance of students whose performance varies widely from the norm and who have been referred to the SST.
- When students demonstrate performance or potential that is so exceptional or advanced that they may require special provisions to meet their educational needs, he/she may be referred by parents, counselors, department leads, or teachers to the SST. This referral should be made as the department lead, which will represent the case on the SST.
- Students in grades 3-9 who perform at or above the determined percentile on standardized tests will be referred to the SST for review.
- Review of MAP tests for students scoring at or above the determined SAS mean.
- One member of the SST will be the designated Case Manager. He/she will be the person primarily responsible for communicating with parents and coordinating conversations with other members of the SST.
- When it receives a student referral, the SST conducts a review of a student's academic and performance history, and (if appropriate) the department lead or learning support teacher conducts a classroom observation.
- SST members make recommendations for pre-referral interventions to enhance the student's academic experience. The SST also begins to monitor the student's progress and collect data for regular discussion.
- Once students reach third grade, standardized testing becomes a part of their general academic evaluation. The MAP test will be used as a screening tool for the identification of academic giftedness.
- The MAP assessment scores from two out of three testing cycles in reading and/or math will be reviewed to determine if any student meets the criteria to necessitate further consideration from the SST.
- A checklist will be given to the classroom teacher to complete and return to the SST.



- Members of the SST review and collect data from standardized assessments, teacher's checklists, academic performance, teacher interviews, and classroom observations if appropriate.
- The SST meets to evaluate the student's eligibility and determine his or her level of the special education program and related services.
- Members of the SST meet with the student's parents to share the results of the data review and to explain the services they are recommending.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF THE IEP-INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP)**

An IEP is a written record of gifted and talented programming, utilized with each identified gifted and talented child, documenting educational planning and decision-making. The IEP describes the classroom and school-wide enrichment strategies, and curricular and extracurricular activities that may be selected based on the student's performance on tests, observations, and classroom performance.

This IEP will help students, parents, teachers, counselors, and administration identify

- Student and parent information, including the background information.
- Performance background for the student, including strengths and areas of concern.
- Classroom accommodations and enrichments.
- Student goals, strategies assessment, and progress. The IEP will record only that which is different from or additional to the normal curriculum and will concentrate on several targets that closely match the student's needs. The IEP will be discussed with the parent and the student, if appropriate.
- IEPs will be reviewed during the academic year as needed. The school will endeavor to hold the reviews in a formal manner and parents' views on their child's progress will be actively sought. Wherever possible or appropriate, the school will involve students in this process.

### ***Implementation of the IEP***

- Special education services is provided to students in accordance with the recommendations of the IEP.
- An IEP should be implemented immediately following written parental approval but within a two-week period.



## SST MONITORS STUDENT PROGRESS AND REVIEWS SERVICES

- The IEP should be reviewed, and the student's progress monitored by the SST.
- During the first three months, SST members and teachers may be reconvened to review the plan.
- The SST schedules an annual review report of all ILP services and makes recommendations for the next school year.

### *How does American Youth Academy Educate Gifted and Talented Children?*

American Youth Academy educated gifted and talented children as individual learners in a classroom-inclusive program. This model constitutes best educational practices. Gifted children are gifted all the time, not just once a week for gifted class. Students who are identified as gifted or talented need instruction designed for depth and complexity. An appropriate instructional program is best designed and accomplished by classroom teachers in partnership with the child, the family, and with the support of colleagues. For those identified as gifted, appropriate classroom assessment helps teachers adjust the program to the student's level and rates of learning. Continuous classroom assessment is an integral part of an appropriate educational program.

Teachers use many strategies to assess and meet the needs of gifted learners in the classroom. Some gifted children already have a bank of knowledge from which they can build new understandings, and some gifted children need less practice to master skills. Many gifted students approach learning with the confidence that grows from success. For these children, it is important that the learning draws them into complex, integrated problem-solving challenges and challenging inquiry-based research projects.

### *Class Selection*

In middle school and high school, identified gifted students again have the benefit of differentiated instruction to address their individual rate and level of learning. In addition, at the high school level, academically advanced students may be placed in accelerated or higher-level classes in mathematics and foreign languages. In other disciplines, the high school offers IB classes, whereas the HL classes are an international standard for a program rigor.

Students in grades 9-12 select a program of studies that meets their individual level, interests, and abilities. Advanced sections are provided in some subjects to accommodate different ability levels. American Youth Academy provides multiple options for high school students. Options include the following:

- Higher level classes
- IB High Level (HL) classes and examinations
- Planned independent study opportunities
- Internship opportunities
- A robust activities and athletics program



### ***Considerations for Gifted and Talented Students***

- Design activities and use a variety of assessment methods and techniques to determine the cognitive and emotional levels of functioning, learning styles and interests of students with gifts and talents.
- Develop educational goals and objectives to enhance the development of students' critical thinking skills.
- Design and implement in-class and extracurricular enrichment activities to enhance the development of students' strengths.
- Develop educational activities and implement teaching strategies that maximize learning opportunities for students that promote the development of independent learners.
- Integrate the use of technology in the process of teaching and learning, which contributes to the acquisition of knowledge and synthesis of information with prior learning experiences.
- Encourage students to preview information to determine critical concepts covered in a variety of subjects and question assumptions, and key conclusions.
- Provide students with opportunities to consider problems and solutions from multiple perspectives.
- Motivate students to reflect on and identify their unique educational and personal experiences that have influenced their present understanding of information and to consider ideas and solutions that extend beyond their present levels of understanding.
- Encourage students to express their opinions and feelings to others with diverse perspectives and to anticipate and respond to their questions in a culturally sensitive and respectful manner.
- Use a variety of teaching and learning strategies such as problem-solving, exploration, survey, brainstorming, individual learning, competitive learning, and cooperative learning to meet the needs of students with different ways of learning.

## **DUAL ENROLLMENT AT HCC**

American Youth Academy provides students with the opportunity to take college classes as they complete their High School graduation requirements. American Youth Academy is affiliated with Hillsborough Community College. Our qualified staff will be teaching high school students dual enrollment courses on campus. Dual Enrollment is reserved as a privilege for students who are performing at a high level in their AYA courses and can take additional courses at the college level while maintaining their academic level at AYA.

- Dual enrollment is when enrolled high school students take college classes that can count as both high school and college credits. To earn the college credit, students must pass the dual enrollment course with a grade of at least a C.
- Students must pass at least one section of the PERT before taking any Dual Enrollment courses, including College Success.
- All dual enrollment courses are taken on American Youth Academy's campus and are taught by HCC-certified instructors with master's Degrees.



- Students taking Dual enrollment courses must adhere to HCC's grading policies. Students are responsible for the cost of materials associated with each DE course
- HCC tuition for Dual Enrollment courses is waived for AYA students based on their performance.
- An official transcript showing the completion of College Success must be submitted for students to register for classes in subsequent semesters.
- For all subsequent semesters, students must submit an Official Transcript of courses completed each semester.
- American Youth Academy will cover the cost of a student's initial Dual Enrollment course.
- If the student receives a grade of an "A," AYA will pay for the next course, and so forth.
- If a student receives a "B" in the initial course, AYA will cover half the cost of the preceding course, and so forth.
- Students who have received a "C" or lower in their initial dual enrollment course will not be eligible for dual enrollment.
- Students are responsible for covering the cost of textbooks and any other fees that might apply.

## FLORIDA VIRTUAL SCHOOL (FLVS)

Students in grades 7-12 will have the option of enrolling in coursework through the Florida Virtual School. Only students who are highly motivated learners should take such courses. There is no cost for courses or materials for Florida residents. It should be noted that, as with Dual Enrollment courses, coursework taken should be for enrichment and should not be for replacement of AYA courses. Courses must be approved by the Head of School. What needs to be done:

- Students must submit an FLVS Course Request & Acknowledgement to the Counselor for approval before signing up for any FLVS courses.
- On the FLVS Course Request and Acknowledgment, both the parent and student must sign that they:
- Understand that the student cannot take courses on FLVS in lieu of the same courses offered at AYA. Exception: Grade Recovery (Final Grade of 59% or lower).
- Understand that all end-of-segment exams must be taken at AYA in the presence of an AYA proctor for the credit to be accepted by AYA.
- By Florida law, every high school student must complete at least one full credit of courses on FLVS.
- Also, by Florida law, students receiving funding from SUFS cannot take more than two full credits of classes per academic year.



## **HONORS' CREDIT**

Honors' Credit will be assigned to AYA courses which are determined to be at an Honors' Level. This determination will be made after comparing the standards of the course with the standards of Honors' Level courses taught in the public school system. Honors class designation will be reviewed annually.

## **ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) COURSES & EXAMS**

AYA is currently offering AP classes to its high school students. If students score a 3, 4 or 5 on their AP Exam at the end of the year, they may receive college credit for the course, in addition to the high school credit that they receive. ONLY colleges and universities can award this credit upon their discretion.

When students complete AP classes, the weight of the class will be up to a 5.00 GPA IF they sit in and complete the AP exam. Students who complete an AP class but do not complete the exam will have a maximum GPA of a 4.00 in their AP class.

## **AYA SENIORS' PRIVILEGES**

At the beginning of each school year, the Seniors will meet with the administration and discuss certain privileges that they have. These include but not limited to: Modifications in Dress Code and schedule.



## BRIGHT FUTURES SCHOLARSHIP

The Bright Futures Scholarship program, which is administered by the Florida Department of Education, is in place to provide scholarships to students with at least a 3.0 GPA and 75 hours of community service. This scholarship may be used at any Florida college or university.

- AYA will submit all student coursework, test scores and community service hours to the Florida Department of Education for evaluation for the Bright Future Scholarship.
- Seniors are responsible for completing the Demographics portion of the application and for completing the FAFSA application in a timely manner.
- It should be noted that, when calculating GPA, the Department of Education only looks at grades in the core academic subjects [English, Math, Science, Social Studies and Foreign Language (Arabic)] and does not factor in grades for other classes [PE, Islamic Studies, electives, etc.].

More information about the Bright Futures Scholarship can be found at [www.facts.org](http://www.facts.org).

## CLASS RANK

Class rank will be determined based on unweighted GPA by the end of the school year.

## HOMEWORK

The purpose of homework is to reinforce classroom activities and assist the student in understanding the day's lessons. Homework will be assigned based on the individual needs of the child or the needs of the class. Homework will not be assigned on a mass basis just to give the children something to do. On average, the total time for all subjects assigned should be as follows:

- K5: 15-20 Minutes per Day
- 1st Grade-2nd Grade: 20-40 Minutes per Day
- 3rd Grade-5th Grade: 40-70 Minutes per Day
- 6th Grade-8th Grade: 1-2 Hours per Day
- 9th Grade-12th Grade: 2-3 Hours per Day

10 points will be deducted per day for Late Homework





Please note that these times are based on the time needed by the average student; some students may require more time, others less. They are also based on the assumption that classwork has been completed in class. If classwork has not been completed in class, it may need to be completed at home and will add to the time needed for homework. Additionally, this includes all homework assigned by all teachers including special subject teachers.

Please also note that, even if the child is not assigned a specific task for homework, he/she should always spend time each afternoon/evening reading and practicing work to enhance their academic performance.

Parents are expected to provide the proper home environment conducive to learning. There are certain things that parents can do to help their child complete his/her homework successfully.

As a rule, no homework is to be assigned over breaks or vacations. Long term projects may be assigned to provide students with additional preparation time. Students are always encouraged to do outside reading during these breaks and/or vacations.

## **ASSESSMENT & TESTING**

Students at AYA are assessed in various areas, which include, but are not limited to, classwork, homework, quizzes, tests, exams, projects, reports, oral checks for understanding, etc. Tests on which students score less than 70% must be signed and returned.

Students through grade 5 will take chapter and unit tests throughout the year to assess their grasp of the subject matter. Students in grades 6–12, in addition to chapter and unit tests, will take semester exams at the end of quarters 2 and 4. The semester exam/end-of-course exam will count as 20% of the semester average. Only Seniors who have at least a 90% average in each quarter individually and do not have excessive tardies and/or absences will be exempt from semester II exams.

Review Sheets and/or study guides will be given out prior to tests and/or exams. Additionally, students are expected to keep their own notes, worksheets, quizzes, tests, and textbooks to study from before exams. They will be told which chapters, sections, etc. will be on the test/exam.

In addition to the regular classroom testing, periodic assessments are made of student's mastery of specific skills in Reading, Language Arts, and Math. These assessments allow the school to identify areas of strength and weakness and allow teachers the opportunity to modify teaching strategies to make sure areas of weakness are strengthened before the end of the year.

To assess the strengths and/or weaknesses of the school, satisfaction surveys will be completed by parents, students, and staff. The results of these surveys will be publicized through the parents' memo and/or school newsletter. For these surveys to be effective, it is very important that everyone responds to these surveys as honestly and as completely as possible.

## **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY/CHEATING**

Academic dishonesty/cheating is defined as any attempt, whether successful or not, to obtain or use the information for any communication which takes place during a test/exam. This act will result in a grade of 0% in addition to a discipline referral.

## **PSAT TESTING**

Students in grades 9 – 11 take the PSAT in October and their scores are reviewed with them in December.

## **TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH AN IEP**

Any students with an IEP who require special testing accommodations must submit documentation from the public school, a physician, or a licensed psychologist. Such documentation must include a full report describing how the evaluation was conducted and what special accommodations are required.

A doctor's note on an Rx pad is NOT considered adequate or sufficient documentation. Students with documented IEPs will be allowed to pass with grades of 60% or higher.



## GRADING SYSTEM

The following numerical equivalents will be used when determining values for letter grades:

Letter	Numerical Range	Description
A+	97-100	Superior
A	93-96	Outstanding
A-	90-92	Excellent
B+	87-89	Very Good
B	83-86	Good
B-	80-82	Above Average
C+	77-79	Average
C	73-76	Average
C-	70-72	Fair
D+	67-69	Below
D	63-66	Weak
D-	60-62	Passing
F	Below 59	Failing

Although 60% is considered passing in the public schools, at AYA, students are expected to achieve 70% or higher in each class to pass to the next grade level.

## RETENTION POLICY

Students who fall within a specific set of grading criteria can be retained. Specific criteria(s) for retention are based on testing information (Standardized Tests and other multiple measures), classroom assessments and daily performance.

- Students who fail any subject must be retested in the subject they failed in and pass the exam with at least 70% before they can be promoted to the next grade level.
- If a student fails the retest, they will be sent on an academic interventional plan.
- Any student failing three or more classes in grades 3-12 will be retained and will have to repeat the same grade level.
- Testing sessions will take place in July and the school will make the proper arrangements with the parents.
- Parents will be responsible for supporting their children and help prepare them to pass the exam.
- The school will provide instructions and a study guide to help the students better prepare for the exam.
- The grade will be changed to “D” if the student passes the exam.
- A student can only be retained once. In the case of a retained student who is not eligible to be promoted again, a parent conference shall be conducted, and an alternative solution may be offered.



## **QUR'AN EXEMPTION FOR STUDENTS WITH AT LEAST ONE NON-MUSLIM PARENT**

Parents may request that their children be exempted from Qur'an class if at least one parent is not Muslim. Students who are exempt are required to attend Qur'an classes but will not be graded on their efforts. If they choose to be graded, the grades will not appear on their Report Cards. For the exemption to be granted, both parents must sign the Request for the Qur'an Exemption form.

Students will not be exempted from prayer.

## **GRADE FORGIVENESS**

Throughout their high school careers, students may receive grades that are lower than what they would have liked to receive. Students in high school can request a maximum of two full credits of grade forgiveness for any grade below 70%. These grades can only be forgiven if they are replaced with course completion of an equal-level class, which will be determined by the school.

## **GRADE SKIPPING POLICY (GRADES 1 THRU 4 ONLY)**

AYA administration discourages grade skipping as a courtesy to students' social and emotional development that might be impacted. However, under special circumstances, this might be allowed if the parents submit a written request for the child to skip the grade. The child needs to meet ALL the following to be eligible to skip a grade:

- The parents must submit a written request for the child to skip the grade no later than the last Friday of July before the new academic year starts.
- Letter "A" grade in the subjects of Math, Science, Social Studies, and Language Arts and only one letter "B" grade at most in the elective or other subjects.
- For an AYA current student, the admin team will meet with the child's teachers of all subjects to determine academic and social readiness/eligibility to skip the grade.
- The student must pass Math, Science, Social Studies, Language Arts/English, and standardized assessments of the grade which he/she intends to skip with a score of at least 90%. Such exams shall be taken no later than two weeks before the new academic year starts.
- Two recommendation letters are required for a transferring student.
- The Department Lead shall conduct an interview to make a final recommendation.





## **PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION**

Any parent who has children enrolled at AYA or staff who is a paid employee within AYA will be deemed a member whose standing is based on complying with the purpose and basic policies of AYA. Membership is open to any parent/guardian who has a child enrolled at AYA. The role of the PTO is advisory in nature. There are no dues levied. PTO has the following duties:

- To promote an atmosphere in which children can grow as individuals, raise awareness of his/ her own worth and value in society.
- To foster awareness among parents of the need for their participation in the total education of their children.
- To develop united efforts between educators and the public that will secure for every child the highest achievements in religious, mental, social, and physical education.
- To provide a forum for constructive communication between parents, teachers, and administration.
- To sponsor community, social and fund-raising activities to promote the general welfare of AYA and its students.

## **CLASSROOM OPPORTUNITIES/ CLASSROOM PARENTS**

Each class has two classroom parents that support classroom activities and teachers. This is a full-year commitment. Classroom parents will serve as liaisons between the teachers, the PTO and other classroom parents. Parents for each classroom will be selected at the beginning of each school year.

Their functions include such duties as

- To coordinate helpers for special activities.
- To create a phone tree for communication among families.
- To support parents' group activities.
- To coordinate celebration events for families.
- To welcome new families to the classroom.



## SCHOOL-WIDE OPPORTUNITIES

AYA also offers many school-wide volunteer opportunities:

### ***Events:***

Volunteers help organize, decorate, and clean up school events such as Qur'an Competitions, the annual Hajj simulation and other school activities.

### ***Beautification:***

Volunteers improve and maintain the grounds around the school building. Volunteers help with weeding, pruning, raking, and spreading fertilizer and mulch.

### ***Hospitality:***

Volunteers help provide refreshments for school events or help clean up afterward.

PTO Meetings: All parents are invited to attend monthly meetings and to learn about and work on school initiatives.

### ***Library:***

Volunteers are trained to assist the librarian by shelving, repairing and cataloging books. Volunteers also assist during the book fair.

### ***Family Fun Day:***

Volunteers help coordinate and publicize the Family Fun Day or volunteer on the day of the fair. Fun booths offer a range of activities.

### ***School Pictures:***

Volunteers assist during Picture Day.

## VOLUNTEER HOURS POLICY

All AYA families are required to volunteer a minimum of two hours per month or a total of 20 hours per year. Families may opt to donate \$10 per hour or \$200 for the entire year if they are unable to volunteer. Volunteers must be approved to be on campus per the school guidelines and must follow the set procedure for remaining on campus to volunteer.





## STUDENT SUPPORT, ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

### *Counseling*

Students face unique and diverse challenges that impact academic achievement. At AYA, we ensure students are prepared to become the next generation of workers, leaders, and citizens. Every student needs support, guidance, and opportunities. AYA provides a behavioral counselor to help students through personal challenges.

Our counselor provides confidential crisis counseling and consultation to students. Through the help of the counselor, students can recognize self-defeating behaviors, develop positive coping skills and are able to deal with conflict resolution/mediation effectively. We also provide individual counseling sessions to help students with educational and personal concerns. The counselor may also participate in conferences with students, teachers, parents, and other relevant individuals concerning grades or/and behavior concerns to provide guidance and advice for improvement.

### *Mentorship Program*

The AYA Mentorship program creates and supports relationships that provide consistent, positive and Islamically relevant interaction between students and AYA staff members who will be an advisor and supporter on the path to maturity.

Students will have regular interaction with the AYA staff member via Google Classroom as well as scheduled group events. The primary goal of the program is to allow students to reach his/her maximum potential by providing a mentor to guide and provide a positive influence during the student's formative years to become mature and responsible adults.

### *AYA Support & Awareness Program (A.S.A.P)*

The A.S.A.P Program is offered to middle and high school students to help them make positive life choices by educating, empowering, and supporting them in dealing with life-changing matters and decisions. Subjects to be discussed will include but are not limited to:

- Substance abuse
- Bullying
- Internet safety
- Depression and Self-injury
- Eating Disorder

This program is led by a team of educators and professionals which include the Head of School, Dean of Students, counselor, guest speakers, and law enforcement.



### ***National Honor Societies***

AYA is part of the National Honor Society, National Junior Honor Society and National Elementary Honor Society. The purpose of the 3 Honor Society chapters is to create an enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, promote worthy leadership and citizenship, and to encourage the development of character in students at AYA.

Students are selected annually according to a criterion decided by the National Honor Society bylaws and the Faculty Council. This selection is based on and shall be based on the criteria of scholarship, service, leadership, citizenship, and character. Academic qualifications apply.

- National Honor Society: National Junior Honor Society: <https://www.njhs.us>
- National Elementary Honor Society: <https://www.nehs.us>

### ***Student Council***

The Student's Council is established and run according to the constitution set forth by the National Association of Student Councils. Students are elected annually to different offices within the council. The student council promotes leadership, self-confidence, self-reliance, and Islamic morals. It is a privilege, not a right, and teaches students important lessons regarding the proper balance of religion, freedom, privilege, and responsibility.

Students must meet the selection criteria.

National Association of Student Councils: <https://www.natstuco.org/>

### **STUDENT-ATHLETE HANDBOOK**

Students are encouraged to participate in school sports programs based on their interests. To be eligible to participate in sports, students must not only obey general school rules but also exemplify positive behavior while representing the school.



The following policy pertains to all sports and related areas below:

- No athlete may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs in school, at practice, at a contest or at any other school function. The penalty for an infraction of this rule is immediate dismissal from the sport.
- Any athlete who before, during, or after a contest enters a physical confrontation with an official, coach, team member, or spectator, is immediately suspended from the sport, pending the outcome of a conference held by the athlete, his parent/guardian, the coach, athletic director, and school administrator.
- Insubordination by an athlete to his coach or athletic director will result in immediate suspension from the sport, pending the outcome of a conference held by the athlete, his parent/guardian, the coach, the athletic director, and the school administrator.
- All athletes are expected to attend every practice as his/her absence affects the entire team's performance and a missed practice may necessitate a reshuffling of the line-up. In the event an athlete must miss a practice, prior notification to the coach is expected.
- An athlete must maintain a GPA of 2.5 to participate in the program.
- Athletes who are on suspension from school are also suspended from participating in practice and/or a contest until he/she is allowed to return to school. If this suspension occurs on a Friday, then the athlete is not eligible during that weekend or the following Monday if it is a school vacation.

Coaches may set further standards for their respective sport or activity. Please see Student-Athlete Handbook for additional information including but not limited to tryouts, practice schedules, expectations, and costs.

### ***Field Trips and Events***

Participation in field trips/events or school-sponsored trips is a privilege. Students will go off campus for a visit to an educational facility or event/show suitable for the grade level. Below are the participation requirements:

- Students may not be allowed to participate in a school-sponsored trip or field trip/event if he or she is serving a suspension, expulsion, or other forms of exclusion from school due to violations of the policies and procedures given in AYA's Parent-Student Handbook.
- Student's behavioral performance may be considered to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of other students participating in the field trip/event.
- While on a field trip/event or school-sponsored trip all school-based rules and all rules set forth in the AYA Parent/Student Handbook apply.
- No student will be permitted to participate in a field trip/event or school-sponsored trip unless the signed Parent Permission Slip has been received.
- Students are expected to take part in all planned group activities unless excused by the teacher-chaperon(s).
- If a student requires medical attention while on a trip, the student's parents/guardians will be notified immediately.



- Students should wear their school uniform on all field trips.
- No family members or friends of the chaperone will be allowed on field trips
- All chaperons on AYA Field Trips must abide by the AYA staff dress code.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Report Cards are issued to students three (K4) or four times per year (all other students) to give parents an indication of their child's progress and to serve as an official document of student progress and achievement.

- Students in K5-grade 1 who join the school after the middle of any quarter will not receive a Report Card for that quarter. They will receive an Incomplete.
- Students in grades 6-12 who join the school in the middle of any quarter will be responsible for all information missed, as they will be tested on that information on a Semester basis for grades 6-12
- Report Cards will be held in the case that a family has an outstanding financial obligation in the Business Office.

## **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Two Parent-Teacher Conference meetings are held each year. These are the times to get acquainted with the teachers, school policies, educational programs, and the school in general. The public, family and friends are invited to these meetings. To provide an effective educational program, it is AYA's policy to maintain close communication between the home and the school.



## COMMUNICATION

Throughout the school year parents and students will receive communication about important information, events, and activities related to school. AYA has various channels used to send out communication.

### *Orientation Events*

All parents are invited to attend the parent and student orientation day held before the start of the school year. The orientation is mandatory for all parents. The purpose of the orientation day is to allow parents to meet with the staff, and teachers, tour the facility, pick up relevant handbooks and sign any agreements related to the school and students.

### *Email*

Parents' email addresses must be provided and updated with the administration to keep our distribution list current. We send communication relating to the school or student through email.

### *The School Information system*

School Information System is the main tool for Parents' communication. Please make sure you have access to the account and check your notifications regularly to stay informed of emails, absences, tardies, and grade reports.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD ADDENDUM

### *EARLY CHILDHOOD PHILOSOPHY*

In addition to AYA's stated mission and philosophy we believe that the education of the child begins from a very early age and to have a continuity of education and development, AYA strives to provide an enriched environment for early age children, which benefits their social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. This allows them to then progress to the school-age programs successfully and with ease.



### ***GENERAL STATEMENT***

This manual summarizes general policies and procedures of the American Youth Academy Daycare and Pre-K programs. The Early Childhood programs administered by AYA serve children from two to five years of age.

- Children are placed in rooms according to ages and accommodations.
- Enrollment is understood to be for the full school year. Any withdrawal for more than 2 weeks will result in a re-registration fee, which will be prorated.
- The office must be notified immediately of changes in addresses, telephone numbers, employment changes and marital status, etc.
- All students are expected to meet the conduct standards, as well as adhere to its rules and regulations.
- There is an Open-Door Policy with regards to parents/guardians visiting the classrooms. AYA welcomes their visits and their observations with regards to the Early Childhood Program.

### ***CURRICULUM***

The early childhood programs at AYA provide opportunities for children to develop their exploratory nature through creative challenges. The curriculum encourages children to be actively involved in the learning process, which balances child-initiated/teacher-initiated, active/quiet, and indoor/outdoor activities. Learning centers allow children to choose from a variety of learning activities, which include building, drawing and dramatic play. In addition, by incorporating the teachings of Islam into our everyday curriculum and by involving parents in the programs, AYA can foster and nurture the Muslim identity of each family it touches.

The developmentally appropriate curriculum includes:

- Islamic Studies and Arabic Language Studies
- Language Development and Literacy
- Mathematics
- Science and Nature
- Life Skills
- Physical Education
- Arts and Crafts

The K4 classrooms use the Houghton Mifflin Pre-K curriculum. Both formal and informal assessments are completed with the use of this curriculum, which is recognized by the VPK and School Readiness programs. Houghton Mifflin uses the Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) assessment. The VPK assessment is a set of specific skills and abilities that link to key benchmarks for preschool children in 5 areas:

- Print Knowledge
- Phonological Awareness
- Mathematics
- Language / Vocabulary



AYA's Early Childhood Program adheres to the regulations of the Hillsborough County Childcare Licensing and follows the guidelines of the Florida VPK and School Readiness Programs as well as the Florida Kindergarten Council (FKC).

## **FLORIDA KINDERGARTEN READINESS SCREENERS**

Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS) is a kindergarten screening instrument that assesses the readiness of each student for kindergarten based on the performance standards. FLKRS must be administered to all kindergarten students within the first 30 days of each school year. Our VPK program is designed to prepare our transitioning students to successfully score on the FLKRS. The results of this screening provide valuable information about your child's readiness for school, help teachers develop lesson plans to meet each child's individual needs, and offer useful information to parents.

### ***DROP OFF***

All children must be escorted to their classroom by a family member or by an adult authorized by the family between 8:00 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. It is very important to sign your child in and to make the teacher aware that your child is there.

We also ask that as you take your child to their room you ensure they have used the restroom and have properly washed their hands to begin our day germ free. Please refer to the hand-washing policy regarding proper steps we must follow; there are steps posted in each bathroom for your convenience. We thank you for your help in this process.

### ***PICK UP***

All children in the early childhood programs must be escorted from their classroom by a family member or by an adult authorized by the family between 3:00 p.m. and 3:20 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and between 12:15 p.m. and 12:30 p.m. on Fridays. It is very important to sign your child out and to make the teacher aware that your child is leaving with you.

Should a child be left beyond his/her early childhood program pick-up time, the child will be escorted to AYA's after school care program. Parents will be charged for this service. The charge will be \$5 per child for the first half hour.



All children must be in a car seat or booster seat and have their seat belts fastened before they leave the school grounds, as required by Florida law.

- Teachers and Assistants will remain in their classrooms during arrival and dismissal.
- Parents will come to the classrooms and sign-in/sign-out their children daily. Only parents and/or authorized people to pick up will be allowed to sign-out children. Picture ID may be required if the parent/ authorized person is not known to the teacher.
- Parents with children in other grade levels should pick up their Early Childhood Children first, then drive to the appropriate area to pick up their other children.

### ***ASSESSMENT AND SCREENING***

K3 and K4 students are screened for developmental progress using the Ages & Stages screening tool. At each stage of the student's development, it is expected that he/she should have mastered certain skills. Assessments will be conducted by the teachers and the Director of Early Childhood Education.

Second Step is a curriculum that supports positive behaviors and social emotional awareness, creating a sense of community and positive interactions in preschool aged classrooms. When students enter kindergarten with the self-regulation and social-emotional skills taught with evidence-based Second Step Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), they're set up for success.

If, after the screening, it is determined that there are concerns in the student's development, the lead teacher will meet with the parents and recommend additional screening outside of AYA.

It must be noted that parents have the option of NOT having their children screened. It is the parents' responsibility to inform the lead teacher, in writing, that he/she does not want his/her child screened.

### ***AWARDS ASSEMBLIES***

Recognizing students for their efforts and their achievements is an important part of their ongoing success. As such, AYA will organize an awards program at the end of each semester. Students will be recognized for their participation in programs, clubs, and other school-sponsored events. Award Assemblies will be held on a semester basis to recognize outstanding student achievement.

### ***Students of the Month***

Two or three (depending on class size) students will be chosen by their teachers each month to receive the Student of the Month awards. These students must demonstrate a willingness to do their best in class and cannot have more than three tardies for that month. Students will receive a certificate recognizing their achievement and a medal on a ribbon.



## **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE AND POLICY**

It is very important that every parent be aware of the behavior expectations and disciplinary procedures of AYA's Early Childhood Program.

It must be remembered, always, that the purpose of discipline is to teach children how to cope with people and their surroundings in a positive manner; the purpose is NOT punishment. The goal of discipline is to help children build their self-control, not to have them blindly obey adult commands.

- Spanking or any form of physical punishment is prohibited.
- Discipline shall not be associated with food, rest, or toileting.
- Children shall not be subjected to discipline that is severe, humiliating, or frightening.

It must also be remembered, always, that:

- We must all learn to recognize potential problems and take actions to prevent them before they occur.
- Any discipline technique is most successful if it is used calmly, without any trace of anger.
- All behavior is communication. When children feel understood, valued, powerful and loved, there is no need to misbehave.

The staff uses positive techniques of guidance, including logical and natural consequences applied in problem situations, redirection, anticipation of and elimination of potential problems, and encouragement of appropriate behavior rather than competition, comparison, or criticism. Consistent, clear rules are developed in conjunction with the children and are discussed with them to make sure they understand. The staff describes the situation to encourage children's evaluation of the problem rather than impose the solution. The staff does not force children to apologize or explain their behavior but help children recognize another child's feelings. The staff abstains from corporal punishment or humiliating or frightening discipline techniques. Food or beverages are never withheld as a disciplinary measure. In the event of excessive inappropriate behavior, teachers and directors will work with families and their children on an individual basis.



The following are methods that will be used in guiding young children's behavior:

### ***PRAISE***

Positive behavior will be recognized and reinforced. Children will be complimented when they are behaving appropriately. Praising good behavior is one of the most effective discipline methods.

### ***IGNORE***

Inappropriate behavior will be ignored whenever possible. When behavior is annoying, but not harmful, it may be best to ignore it. Children will eventually see there is no gain in using that specific behavior and will tend to stop.

### ***CHOICES***

Children like to feel that they have control. Therefore, teachers will provide space, materials, and activities appropriate to the age, needs and interest of the children. This structure gives the children control over their environment and avoids behavior problems involving conflict with others.

### ***COMMUNICATION***

Good communication helps develop confidence and great relationships with others. Teachers will try to always:

- Communicate at eye level.
- Talk with (not at) children.
- Listen attentively.
- Make simple requests in a positive way.
- Tell the children what to do, not what NOT to do
- Use "I" messages:
  - "I" messages are sent to the children to avoid blame, shame, guilt, or fear tactics to get the children to cooperate. Using "I" messages helps children feel less accused and defensive and, therefore, more willing to cooperate.



### ***LIMITS/RULES***

Teachers will clearly define and consistently maintain limits in the classroom. Rules set limits that children learn and depend on. They should be simple, clear and few. For example: A rule could be as basic and encompassing as: You may not hurt yourself, others, or things. Directions will also be given in a positive way. This gives the children a model they can use in interactions with others.

### ***CONSEQUENCES***

When children do not follow the established rules, teachers will explain what the consequence of the inappropriate behavior will be. This gives children the responsibility for the results of their own actions. The consequence will:

- Be related to the unacceptable behavior.
- Occur every time the unacceptable behavior does.
- Be acceptable to both the parents and the teachers.

### ***SELF-QUIET TIME***

Time out periods are NOT used as punishment. Instead, they are used as an opportunity for self-quieting. Self-quieting teaches internal control and self-responsibility. It is taking a break to work through emotions or find alternative solutions to a problem. It is a way for both adults and children to become calm. Children help decide where time out will take place and what the place will look like.

- The space should be quiet and comfortable.
- There should be objects present to help the children quiet themselves (books, teddy bears, peaceful songs and/ or Qur'an, silky fabrics, etc.)
- The space should be available to the children for as little or as much time as the child decides.

### ***REDIRECTION***

Sometimes children are unable to use materials and equipment appropriately or are unable to handle playing with others. The teacher will suggest or help the children become involved with another activity in which they can be successful. By redirecting the children, teachers help them avoid negative situations in which they may be rejected or frustrated.



### ***CONFERENCES***

If discipline continues to be a problem, parents will be called for a conference to discuss possible solutions. If the behavior causes an injury to a student or to other children, the parents will need to take the child home.

The American Youth Academy reserves the right to suspend a child or dismiss a child from the center when it becomes clear that we are unable to manage the child.

### **HAND-WASHING PROCESS AND PROCEDURE**

The Center for Disease Control has identified some guidelines called “Universal Precautions.” These guidelines are considered universal because they should be used in caring for everyone, whether it is known that the person is sick or not. “Universal Precautions” are not difficult to follow and will make a big difference in controlling the spread of disease. The basic guidelines are also easy to remember. These precautions apply particularly to blood and bodily fluids containing blood. Good handwashing can never be stressed enough as a means of preventing disease transmission.

The concepts to remember about handwashing:

- Use running water that drains, not containing water.
- Use liquid soap.
- Rub hands together for approximately 15 seconds. Friction helps remove germs.
- Rinse hands well under running water for 30 seconds.
- The faucet is always considered dirty. If touched, clean hands will become contaminated. Use the paper towels to turn off the faucet.

Each person in the classroom who touches surfaces, toys and children should wash their hands. This includes the teachers, volunteers, student workers and parents who volunteer in the classroom.



AYA early childhood students and teachers must wash their hands:

- When they arrive in class in the morning.
- Before meals.
- After meals.
- After using the toilet.
- After playing with shared toys.
- When they come in from outside activities.
- After blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If their fingers have been in their nose, mouth, or ears.

## HEALTH

To maintain the good health of AYA students and staff, we request that children not be sent to school if they are sick. By keeping them at home when sick, you are helping us prevent the spread of viruses and/or infections to other children.

In case of accidents or illness at school, only minimal first aid can be provided by school personnel. The home will be called when a child appears ill enough to go home. If a parent cannot be contacted, the designated emergency person will be contacted. If the illness or accident is serious and the parent and/or emergency cannot be reached, AYA staff may make the decision to contact Emergency Medical Services and, if necessary, have the child transported to the nearest hospital for care. It is essential that we have your permission to do so on the forms you filled out when registering your child. It is also very important for the school to have insurance information as well as any information related to existing health problems, so that appropriate care can be given.

In the event of an outbreak of a communicable illness or condition such as chicken pox or head lice, AYA staff and teachers will use standard procedures for dealing with them and every effort will be made to inform the parents as soon as possible. This information will include information on how to recognize as well as treat the problem. Every effort will be made to deal with the affected students in the kindest way and in a way which does not attract undue attention to him/her.



If a student has a medical condition, that is non-communicable and requires medical treatment, the following procedures will be followed:

- Medications and/or medical supplies, such as nebulizers, etc. will be kept in the AYA Infirmary.
- The Administrative Assistant will ensure that:
  1. Documentation is on file regarding dispensing medication and/or providing treatment.
  2. Documentation of medical requirements is shared with the student's teacher(s) and will be kept in the emergency packet that each teacher takes with him/her during an emergency evacuation.
  3. Medications and/or medical supplies are taken with him/her at time of any emergency evacuation.

Administering medication at school requires written permission from the parents. School policy prohibits school personnel from administering any medication to students without written permission from the parents and written directions from the physician, in the case of prescription medication. An "Authorization for Medication" form must be completed and is available in the school office. All medication must be kept in the school infirmary and administered by one of the trained administrative assistants. Each new school year requires a new doctor's permission slip.

A medical form and CURRENT immunization form from your child's physician's office, including hepatitis B, signed by the child's physician, and a medical emergency information (via renweb) form must be in the school's files before the child can be admitted each year. We require updated forms upon expiration.

Families are requested to sign an authorization giving the school supervisor and/or staff permission to act In Loco Parentis for emergency treatment.





For the protection of all children in any of the Early Childhood programs, children should not be sent to school when they are ill or exhibiting the symptoms of any illness. Children should be kept at home, or they will be sent home, if they develop any of the signs or symptoms of a contagious or other disease. AYA reserves the right to send any child home if at least two (2) members of the Early Childhood Staff, in their sole discretion, believe that the child may pose a risk to him/herself, other children, and/or AYA staff. Reasons for removal from the Preschool include, but are not limited to, the following diseases and other contagions:

- COVID-19
- Runny Nose
- Gastrointestinal Illnesses (Stomachache)
- Vomiting and /or Diarrhea
- Bacterial Gastroenteritis
- Giardia (a parasite)
- Hepatitis A
- Fever of 99.5-degree Fahrenheit or higher axillary
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis)
- Contagious skin rashes
- Meningitis
- Respiratory Illnesses
- Mumps
- Croup
- Influenza
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Tuberculosis (TB)
- Chicken Pox

Further, if a child behaves unusually, appears to be uncomfortable or is inconsolable for an extended period, the parents may be requested to retrieve their child.

Bringing a child with any sign or symptom of illness to school may cause other children to get sick. If all families keep sick children at home, everybody's children will stay healthier. Children must be kept home until the following signs or symptoms disappear:



***Fever***

99.5-degree Fahrenheit or higher axillary. Children must be fever free without fever suppressants for a full school day before returning to school.

***Diarrhea***

Two or more abnormally loose stools per day. Children must be diarrhea-free for twenty-four hours before returning to school OR present a physician's note stating the cause of diarrhea and that the child is not contagious. If a child develops diarrhea at school, s/he will be sent home as diarrhea diseases spread very easily among young children.

***Upper Respiratory***

Severe Coughing - Child makes high-pitched croup or whooping sound after s/he coughs.  
Ear infections with fever - mucus/discharge from ears and/or nose with fever.

***Difficult or Rapid Breathing***

This is especially important in an infant under six months of age.

***Yellowish skin or eyes, gray or white stool and/or unusually dark, tea-colored urine***

***Pink Eye / Conjunctivitis***

Tears, redness of eyelid lining, irritation followed by swelling and discharge of pus.

***Unusual spots or rashes***

Children must be free of rashes and spots for twenty-four hours before returning to school OR present a physician's note stating the cause of the rash and that the child is not contagious.

***Sore throat or trouble swallowing***

***Infected patches of skin and fever (crusty, bright yellow, dry or gummy areas of skin)***

***Families should consider keeping their children home, under observation, if they exhibit any of the following:***

- Unusual behavior
- Child is more cranky than usual
- Less active than usual
- Child cries more than usual
- Child feels general discomfort or just seems unwell
- Loss of appetite



When a child becomes ill at school, a sick-child report will be filled out by the teacher and must be signed by a member of the family or authorized adult before leaving school. Children will be admitted to school only when the above signs or symptoms disappear or a health care provider state in writing that the child is no longer contagious and can safely return.

For your convenience, medications will be administered to children only with daily signed authorization. All medications must be in the original container with the child's name on it and prescription number and given to the office. Expiration dates of medication must be current.

The Administrative Assistant will administer no more than the dosage of medication printed on the label. Over-the-counter medication will be administered with the same parental authorization if a standing order from a licensed health professional is provided with details on the specific circumstances and provides instruction on dosage. Any noticeable adverse reaction to the medication will be reported and communicated to the family. Medicine may not be left beyond its course. The American Youth Academy does not permit Tylenol, Motrin, and OTC cold medicines to be left on hand "in case". Sunscreen with UVB or UVA protection and SPF of 15 or higher must be provided with parental permission or sun protective clothing must be worn when in the sun. For the health and safety of the children and staff, AYA has a smoke-free environment.

## **LIBRARY PATRON - TEXTBOOK MANAGEMENT BYLAWS**

### **Purpose**

To ensure the accountability of patrons to uphold the quality of the checked-out resources while also maintaining responsibility for any fees due to damaged or lost items.

1. In implementing textbooks for use in the school system, the board must carefully consider the rights, freedoms and responsibilities of students, parents/legal guardians, and teachers.
2. The school's first commitment in the selection and adoption of textbooks will be the preservation of the student's right to learn in an atmosphere of academic freedom. The board supports the teachers' right to exercise professional judgment in their work; but, at the same time, will require teachers to balance this right with an awareness of their responsibility to meet the district's educational goals and objectives.
3. The school recognizes the rights of parents/legal guardians to influence the education of their children. The board will not, however, allow the wishes of any individual to infringe upon the rights of the majority of the students in any class.
4. The content of these textbooks will reflect the substance and level of performance outlined in grade specific educational standards adopted by the state board of education.



### **Section 1.01**

Student, Parent, or Guardian is responsible for each textbook issued to the student. A student who fails to return all textbooks forfeits the right to free textbooks until each textbook previously issued but not returned is paid for by the student, parent, or guardian. The school shall allow the student to use textbooks at school during each school day. If a textbook is not returned or paid for, the school may withhold the student's records and/or report cards.

1. Always keep textbooks in good condition. Any misuse of textbooks due to carelessness or neglect may be considered cause to charge the student a fine for that textbook.
2. Return textbooks to the teacher or textbook coordinator at the end of the year or when the student withdraws from school.

### **Principle**

The principal at the school designates a School Textbook Coordinator. In service, either in a group situation or individual assistance will be provided to all coordinators. The District Textbook Coordinator is always available via phone or e-mail to help answer any textbook-related question.

#### **Textbook Funds/Lost and Damaged Books**

1. A receipt should be issued to every student paying for a book. This receipt should include the title of the textbook and the price.
2. The Business Office will send emails informing parents/guardians of the charge.
3. Report cards of students who fail to pay for lost or damaged textbooks can be held. The report cards are not sent home with the students, mailed, or emailed. A note may be sent to the parent or legal guardian informing them that the student has fees that have not been paid and they should come by the school to pick up the student's report card. Parents could be requested to sign a waiver stating that their child will not be issued textbooks to take home if they choose not to pay. For low-income students, schools may provide a payment plan.
4. It is the goal of the school to minimize textbook losses.
5. Schools that issue textbooks directly to students should hold students accountable for the textbooks issued. Every effort should be made to collect textbooks lost by students.
6. Prior to the beginning of a new school year, elementary, middle school, and high school textbook coordinators should send to the respective receiving school, a list of students who have outstanding textbook charges. The receiving school is asked to withhold issuing textbooks to the student until the fines/charges have been satisfied. Payments should be made at the school from which they were assessed.
7. Seniors should clear all fines before graduation. The school has the option of refusing to allow students to participate in graduation ceremonies if fines/charges are not clear. At the very least, diplomas may be withheld

until fines/charges are satisfied.

Business Office personnel to bill patrons for the fee set by the Textbook Coordinator. As stated in Article III number 2, a list containing the Name, Grade, Title, and Price of the textbook(s) and novel(s) will be sent to the



AMERICAN YOUTH ACADEMY

BO. BO is to find the patron's accordingly and communicate back to the Librarian/Textbook Coordinator to clear their accounts as active and balance paid in full or with payment plan.

## **Fines**

Money collected for abused books, in the form of fines, is retained by the school and deposited into the textbook activity fund to cover lost books for which the school is unable to collect. Textbook coordinators and teachers are encouraged to use good judgment when levying fines -- if marks are minor and can easily be erased or whited out, do it or encourage the student to do it! The recommended fine schedule is as follows:

### **DAMAGES % OF COST OF BOOK**

1. Damaged cover 25%
2. Loose bindings – due to apparent abuse 50%
3. Minor water damage (no mildew) 50%
4. Missing/torn pages 100%
5. Obscenities - drawn or written 100%
6. Damages that prevent re-issuing books  
(Including ANY mold or mildew) 100%
7. Missing bar codes (if applicable) 100%

If a student pays for a book in full, he/she is entitled to keep that book!

Occasionally there are problems with new books that do not hold up to normal use. Typically, the bindings break. If books in use in the schools seem to have a manufacturing defect, please bring it to the attention of the state textbook office. If it is determined that a manufacturing defect has caused the damage, the books should be replaced or repaired by the publisher. Students should not be charged a fine for books that fall into this category. Any books with mold or mildew should be thrown away immediately!

### **Casualty Loss**

Occasionally, textbooks become unusable due to some occurrence that is out of human control. In situations where a book is lost in a flood or fire that occurs at school, please report the loss to the Textbook Coordinator/Librarian within 30 days of the incident. The email must include the date of the damage, the reason, the title of the book, grade, and name of patron.

## **Article VI. Consumable Textbooks**

Consumable textbooks are designed to be completely used and written throughout the year. Consumable textbooks are not to be sent with student records when a student transfers out of the district. They are to be tossed out at the end of the academic year. If lost during the year, the student may purchase a replacement at full price.

K3 and K4 classrooms have sets of books in their classroom for student use. Each week they are allowed to



AMERICAN YOUTH ACADEMY



check out a new book (if they have returned the old one) to encourage them to read and prepare them for the K-12 level, when they will have the opportunity to visit the school library regularly. Also, the Librarian visits the classrooms once per week with a selection of books from the library.

## **LUNCH & BREAKFAST**

Children will not be permitted to share lunch brought from home to avoid allergy and health issues, and special care will be taken to separate meals to ensure that specific foods are not in proximity to a student with food allergies or to his/her plate/food. All childcare students are served lunch in their classroom. Students may bring lunch or purchase hot, nutritious meals from the cafeteria. Classroom assistants or lead teachers coordinate the number of lunches needed each day with the cafeteria staff. Menus are sent home each month. If you have any suggestions regarding the menus, please feel free to let us know.



To ensure cleanliness, students must wash their hands before and after each meal/snack. Students also clean up after themselves after lunch. Teachers' clean tables with a 10% bleach solution.

## **NAP/ REST TIME**

Each day, K3 and K4 students will have the opportunity to rest or take a nap. It is required that the child has a sheet or blanket directly underneath them and one to cover up with. These are to be taken home each Friday to be washed and returned in a large zip lock bag on Monday morning. No child is required to go to sleep, but to simply rest quietly. This is so that they will not disturb others who may be sleeping, and to help everyone give their bodies a chance to re-energize for the next portion of the day

## **PEST CONTROL**

AYA has contracted an outside company to service the school monthly and as needed for pest control.

## **PLAYGROUND RULES**

Students must:

- Listen for their teacher's voice.
- Think about their friends (Does he/she want a turn, or would they like to join me?)
- Hold on with both hands when climbing or swinging.
- Think before they act (Am I or someone else going to get hurt?)



## **POTTY TRAINING & POTTY-TRAINING POLICY**

All students enrolled in the VPK or K4 program are required to be potty-trained. If the teacher discovers that a child is not yet potty-trained, the school reserves the right to exit the child from the program.

AYA implements the following Potty-Training Policy for students in K3:

- The teacher and parents must work as a team and parents should follow with the potty breaks and routine at home for it to succeed.
- Every hour the children involved will have a “potty break”: The teacher will take him or her to the bathroom and assist him or her to use the potty. We use the normal commode and a step up. Regardless of if the child goes or not, after cleaning up and hand washing, the teacher will then give the child a fun hand stamp for effort.
- Pull-ups must be used (the kind that fasten on the sides, for easy removal and putting on without having to undress the child.)
- The child must remain in pull-ups until we feel confident, he/she can wear normal fabric undergarments.
- If the fabric undergarment is soiled with urine, it will be placed in a plastic bag and sent home with the child.
- If the fabric undergarment is soiled with stool, you will have the option of sending it home in a bag or throwing out the article of clothing.

If a child has a medical condition which might hinder the potty-training process or requires additional attention in this matter, the parent needs to:

- Schedule a time to meet with the teacher and the Director of Early Childhood.
- Provide a letter from the child’s pediatrician explaining the matter and any special requirements that may be needed.
- If necessary, authorize the school to communicate with the pediatrician directly to ensure optimal success.

## **RECESS**

Students have recess daily for 20 minutes.

## **RESTROOMS**

During the first two weeks of class, the K-3 teacher works diligently with K-3 students to make sure that they are self-sufficient in the restroom. All pre-kindergarten children may use the restroom when they need to, however, they are asked to go after lunch, before naps and after naps. Teachers make sure that the students wash their hands diligently after using the restroom.





## **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

AYA believes that the safety and security of its students is of the utmost importance. Every caution must be taken to guard against accidents to children and teachers.

- All unsafe conditions must be brought to the attention of the administration.
- All Teachers always keep a copy of each child's emergency form with them.
- All medicine and cleaning supplies are kept out of the children's reach.
- All Teachers must always have a first aid kit with them.
- All Teachers are required to receive CPR and First Aid Training.

## **ACCIDENTS/ INCIDENTS**

- First Aid Kits are in each room.
- Gloves must be worn before dealing with any Bodily fluids.
- Appropriate first aid to be administered:
- Bumps and bruises iced
- Cuts/scrapes washed with soap and water
- Insect bites rinsed with cool water
- All accidents/incidents must be reported by the teacher to the infirmary office immediately.
- The Incident Report must be filled out and initiated by the director before the parent signs, if possible.
- The report should include a description of what happened, under what conditions and the resulting injury.
- The head teacher, associate teacher, or a substitute for the head or associate teachers can sign the incident report.
- The original copy of the incident report, once it is initiated by the director and signed by the parent, is to be put in the director's mailbox.
- The director will log the information into the accident log and place the accident report in the child's file.
- In the event of a toileting accident, the child's clothing should be changed. Soiled clothing is to be placed in a plastic bag to be sent home.
- The floor, furniture or any materials that may have been contaminated by the toileting accident must be thoroughly disinfected.



## **STAFF: EARLY CHILDHOOD**

The Early Childhood staff at AYA consists of nurturing and caring individuals who have met education and training requirements for the position held. Lead teachers and K4 teachers have CDA/CDS teacher certification or associate degrees in Early Childhood Education, 40 hours of training and VPK instructor training (VPK teachers only.)

- All are also required to participate in continuing education programs and in-service training sessions.
- All teaching professionals must have CPR, First Aid training, and a background check provided through the Department of Children and Families.
- A minimum of 10 Administration-approved training hours is required for each staff member yearly.
- All AYA early childhood teacher-training programs are overseen by AYA's Administration.

## **TEACHER/CHILD RATIO**

All AYA's classrooms follow teacher/child ratios as required by the Hillsborough County Child Care Licensing, VPK and FKC. Licensing requires the following minimum adult-child.

Ratios:

- 2–3-year-olds: 1:11
- 3–4-year-olds: 1:15
- 4 -5-year-olds: 1:22



## **AMENDMENTS & ADDENDUM**

This handbook is a work in progress, amendments and/or addenda may be added from time to time as policies are added, changed, or deleted.

## **AGREEMENT STATEMENT**

I acknowledge that I have received the American Youth Academy Parent and Student Handbook either as a hard copy, or online access through the school website at [www.Ayatampa.org](http://www.Ayatampa.org)

I have been given the opportunity to read it and review it with my child/children. I understand that I may call the school office if I have any questions about the information contained in the handbook.

I hereby agree to cooperate and abide by all the rules and regulations provided in the American Youth Academy Parent/Student Handbook. I acknowledge that by enrolling my child in American Youth Academy, I acknowledge and agree to the terms, conditions, and regulations.



## USEFUL RESOURCES

### Language Arts:

<http://www.schoolexpress.com/create.php>

### Math:

[http://www.mathplayground.com/hm\\_multiplication.html](http://www.mathplayground.com/hm_multiplication.html)

<http://www.mathplayground.com/alienangles.html>

<http://www.funbrain.com/>

<http://www.coolmath4kids.com/>

<http://www.AAAMath.com>

### Science:

<http://www.botanical-online.com/polinizacionangles.htm>

[www.biology4kids.com](http://www.biology4kids.com)

<http://www.glenbrook.k12.il.us/gbssci/Phys/Class/waves/u10l1a.html>

<http://www.fearofphysics.com/Sound/dist.html>

### Social Studies:

[http://www.sheppardsoftware.com/web\\_games.htm](http://www.sheppardsoftware.com/web_games.htm)

<http://www.desertusa.com/index.html>

<http://azstateparks.com/index.htm>

### Qur'an:

<http://www.altafsir.com/>

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/7751958/Learn-Quran-with-Basic-Rules-of-Tajweed->

[www.QuranSchool.com](http://www.QuranSchool.com)

<http://www.quranexplorer.com/>

<http://tanzil.info/>

### Islamic Studies:

<http://www.islamicplayground.com/scripts/prodView.asp?idProduct=60>

**Arabic - English translator:** [http://www.stars21.com/translator/arabic\\_to\\_english.html](http://www.stars21.com/translator/arabic_to_english.html)

**24 hours Arabic Islamic channel:** <http://www.fomny.org/Islam-tv.php>

**Arabic fruit song:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SIU0CdKT-0s&feature=related>

**Ya taiba:** [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_nSswIYmkkM&feature=relat](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_nSswIYmkkM&feature=relat)

