American Youth Academy

Student-Parent Handbook

PRE-K THRU 12TH GRADE

A fully accredited FCIS, Cognia, and IB World school.

Connect with us…

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

Telephone
813-987-9282

Fax
813-987-9262

Website
Ayatampa.org

Facebook
AyaTampaFL

Instagram
AyaTampaFL

Twitter
AyaTampaFL

Table of Contents

1. Welcome Message

2. Guiding Statements

- Vision
- Mission
- School of Thought
- Philosophy
- Core Values

3. Religious & Ethnic Tolerance

4. AYA's Board of Trustees

5. Standards of Ethical Conduct

6. Reporting Child Abuse, Abandonment, or Neglect

7. Non-Discrimination Policy

8. FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)

9. Parent-School Agreement

10. Admissions Policies

- Prospective Students
- Age Requirements
- Online Enrollment
- Probation Period
- Emergency Contact Information

- Immunization Requirements
- Allergies / Special Health Accommodations
- Wait List Policy

11. Tuition & Fees

- Scholarships
- Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) Program

12. Policies & Procedures

- Arrival and Dismissal
- Student Drivers
- Senior Student Driver Policy
- Late Arrival
- Emergency Dismissal

13. Attendance & Tardies

- Extended Leave of Absence
- Unexcused Absence / Tardiness Policy
- Late Work and Excused Absence Policy
- State Law Regarding Mandatory Attendance
- Withdrawal

14. School Health Policies

- Illness Procedures
- Communicable Illness

15. Uniform & Dress Code

- Personal Grooming
- Uniform Guidelines by Grade Level
- Friday Uniform Guidelines
- Student ID Policy

16. Forbidden Items & Special Use Policies

17. Cafeteria Policies – Breakfast & Lunch Program

18. School Visitors

- Special Circumstances
- Pet Policy
- Birthday / Non-Islamic Holidays

19. Student Conduct

- General Rules
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Smoking, Drugs, Substances, Alcohol & Arms-Free Campus
- Drug Testing & Self-Referral
- Drug Education
- Arms-Free Campus Policy
- Zero Tolerance Policy
- Consequences

20. Student Privacy & Search Policy

21. Off-Campus Behavior & School-Sponsored Events / Activities

22. Guidelines for Referrals / Infractions

23. Detention Policies

- Lunch Detention
- After-School Detention
- Saturday Detention

24. Suspension Policies

- In-School Suspension (ISS)
- Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)
- Due Process

25. Expulsion Policy

- Due Process

26. Student Use of AI Policy

27. Technology Use Policy

- Acceptable Use
- Devices & Chromebooks
- Technology Violations
- Personal Device Policy

28. Academic Policies

- Grading Scale
- Report Cards / Progress Reports

- Honor Roll
- Standardized Testing
- Promotion Requirements
- Homework Policy
- Textbooks
- Graduation Requirements
- Graduation Ceremony Eligibility
- College Advising
- National Honor Society

29. Islamic Studies Department Policies

- Islamic Behavior & Dress Code
- Friday Jumu'ah Salah

30. Parent Communication & Involvement

- Parent Portal
- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Teacher Response Time
- Parent Conduct Policy

31. Safety and Emergency Procedures

- Fire Drills
- Lockdown Procedures
- Medical Emergencies

- Inclement Weather

32. Field Trip Policies

- Chaperone Guidelines
- Student Behavior on Field Trips

33. Extracurricular Activities

- Athletics
- Student Clubs
- After-School Activities

34. Transportation Policies

- Bus Rules & Safety
- Driver Conduct
- Parent Pickup Procedures

35. Lost and Found

36. School Calendar Overview

37. Directory and Contact Information

- School Administration
- Faculty & Staff Contacts

38. Acknowledgement Forms

- Student-Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form
- Technology & Chromebook Use Policy Acknowledgement
- Student Use of AI Acknowledgement Form

- Media Release Form
- Medical Authorization Form
- Field Trip Consent Form
- Transportation Agreement
- Parent-School Partnership Agreement

Welcome Message

In The Name of Allah, The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful

Assalam Alaikum American Youth Academy Community,

It is with great pleasure and gratitude that I welcome you to American Youth Academy, where we are committed to nurturing the minds, hearts, and spirits of our students. Our school is where academic excellence meets Islamic values, creating a holistic educational experience that prepares our students for success in this world and the Hereafter.

At American Youth Academy, we strive to provide a supportive and inspiring environment where students can grow intellectually, socially, and spiritually. Our dedicated faculty and staff are passionate about fostering a love for learning and a deep understanding of our beautiful faith. We believe in the potential of every child and work diligently to ensure they receive the best possible education grounded in the principles of Islam.

Our curriculum is designed to challenge and engage students, encouraging critical thinking, creativity, and a lifelong love of learning. We offer various academic and extracurricular activities, ensuring our students have ample opportunities to explore their interests and develop their talents.

In addition to academic excellence, we strongly emphasize character development and moral education. Our students are taught to embody the values of compassion, respect, integrity, and service to others. Through daily prayers, Quranic studies, and community service projects, we aim to instill a sense of responsibility and a commitment to positively impacting the world. Our focus on international-mindedness and reflective thinking aligns with the IB mission to develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people.

Thank you for entrusting American Youth Academy with your child's education. We look forward to welcoming you to our school family and partnering with you in your child's educational and spiritual development journey.

Warm regards,

Dallal Kahook, EdD
Head of School
American Youth Academy

Guiding Statements

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. This philosophy supports the IB learner profile, FCIS', and Cognia's commitment to continuous improvement and student-centered learning.

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.
Fostering Early Foundations
Creating nurturing environments where young children feel safe, supported, and inspired to explore, learn, and grow through positive relationships and developmentally appropriate practices.

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: The Board operates in alignment with FCIS standards for ethical governance, strategic planning, and fiduciary responsibility.

- 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.
- Review the performance of the Head of School annually in accordance with FCIS governance standards.
- Support the Head of School in his/her management of the school.

Standards of Ethical Conduct

At American Youth Academy, we are committed to maintaining the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct. All instructional and administrative staff are trained in these standards to ensure that students are provided a safe, respectful, and equitable learning environment.

Staff are expected to:

- Act with honesty, integrity, and professionalism at all times.
- Protect students from harm and uphold their legal rights.
- Treat all students fairly and without discrimination.
- Maintain confidentiality of student information.
- Create an inclusive, respectful, and harassment-free environment.
- These ethical standards guide our work as educators and help foster a community built on trust, respect, and accountability.

Reporting Child Abuse, Abandonment, or Neglect

American Youth Academy is committed to the safety and well-being of all students. In accordance with Florida law, all school employees and agents have an affirmative duty to report any actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect.

Reporting Procedures

Any suspicion of abuse or neglect must be reported immediately to the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) by calling 1-800-962-2873 or submitting a report online at: https://www.myflfamilies.com/services/abuse

Our School Protocol Includes:

- Listening compassionately and documenting concerns factually and confidentially
- Immediate reporting to DCF or law enforcement based on reasonable suspicion
-
- Supporting the student with access to emotional support and, if needed, a personalized safety plan
- Following up with the student's well-being, as appropriate
- Maintaining strict confidentiality throughout the process

Please note: The school is not obligated to inform parents when a report is made, as this may compromise the investigation. Communication with families will be handled by DCF or law enforcement.

Recognizing Signs of Abuse and Neglect

AYA encourages all parents and guardians to be aware of common indicators of potential abuse or neglect:

Physical Abuse: Unexplained bruises, burns, broken bones, or fearfulness toward going home

Sexual Abuse: Pain in genital areas, inappropriate sexual knowledge or behavior, fear of specific individuals

Neglect: Poor hygiene, inadequate supervision, unattended medical needs, persistent hunger or tiredness

Patterns Matter

One sign alone may not indicate abuse; however, patterns of behavior or physical indicators should be taken seriously and reported.

Legal Protections for Reporting

Under Florida Statute 39.203, any person who reports suspected abuse in good faith is protected from civil or criminal liability.

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 in specific cases (34 CFR § 99.31), 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. Parents who wish to opt out of directory information sharing must submit a written request annually to the school office.

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://studentprivacy.ed.gov/ferpa

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 parents are welcome and will be thoughtfully considered, as they contribute to the overall strengthening of the school community.

Parents are expected to attend Parent/Teacher Conferences and actively support other planned school activities, understanding that their involvement is critical to both the child’s development and the health of the school. In situations where parents consistently do not align with the school’s vision or are unsupportive of its mission, they may be asked to withdraw their child, as a cohesive and collaborative home-school relationship is vital to ensuring a positive and productive educational experience.

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

Prospective students interested in enrolling at AYA are welcome to schedule a shadowing visit to attend classes alongside current students. All shadowing visits must be arranged in advance by a parent and approved by the administration at least one day prior to the visit.

Student visitors are expected to follow all rules and regulations that apply to AYA students. During their visit, they may accompany their peers to lunch and salaat and are welcome to purchase lunch from the cafeteria.

Each visitor will receive a list of basic rules and policies prior to their visit, including dress code requirements, to ensure a respectful and seamless shadowing experience on campus.

Age Requirements

All early childhood students must be potty trained before entering AYA.
PreK3: Students entering PreK3 must be three years old by September 1st. ***PreK4/VPK:*** Students entering PreK4/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
  Fax: (813) 987-9262
  Email: registrar@ayatampa.com
- All prospective students will be interviewed by the appropriate principal or administrator. Additionally, parents will meet with an administrator for a conference to help determine the best fit between the student, family, and the school's mission and expectations.

Probation Period

All new students admitted to AYA will be placed on a 90 day probationary period. During this time, if the school determines that a student is not a good fit for AYA, the student may be asked to withdraw.

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 Accomodations

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.

Wait List Policy

When the number of applicants exceeds the available seats in a class, AYA will create a waiting list for that class. If a seat becomes available, parents will be notified and given the opportunity to enroll their child at that time. If they choose not to enroll, they may request to keep their child on the waiting list for consideration the following school year.

Tuition & Fees

Please refer to the website (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 payments are due as outlined in FACTS Renweb. 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 assessments 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.

Scholarships

AYA participates in Florida scholarship programs. 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)- VPK

Scholarships For Students Pre-K-12 schoolchildren (stepupforstudents.org)-

SUFS Family Empowerment Scholarship-Educational Options

(stepupforstudents.org)- FES-EO

AAA Scholarship Foundation (aaascholarships.org)- Home

Family Empowerment Scholarship-Unique Abilities (stepupforstudents.org) FES-UA

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

Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) Program

The Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) program is designed to prepare Florida's children for kindergarten by developing essential skills needed for reading proficiency and academic success. VPK emphasizes literacy standards, strict accountability measures, developmentally appropriate curricula, substantial instructional time, manageable class sizes, and qualified instructors to ensure a high-quality early learning experience.

Parents have the option to enroll their children in a year-long VPK program comprising 540 instructional hours. The Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County oversees the VPK program locally, including provider registration and parent support services.

AYA is a proud participating school in the VPK program. Any Florida resident child who turns four years old by September 1st is eligible to apply for state funding to cover tuition and fees. Please note that program availability may vary each year.

Children may only participate in the VPK program once. Once a child is eligible to enroll in kindergarten, they are no longer eligible for VPK.

If you have questions regarding your child's eligibility, please contact the Hillsborough County VPK Office for assistance at (813) 515-2340.

VPK Requirements & Enrollment

Step 1: Application Submission
Parents or legal guardians of eligible four-year-old children must complete the Child Application Form (AWI-VPK Form 01) and provide the following documentation:

- Proof of child's age/date of birth (any one of the following):
    - Birth certificate or record
    - Passport
    - Certificate of arrival in the U.S. showing age
    - Valid military dependent ID card
- Shot/immunization record signed by a licensed physician or public health official, which includes the child's date of birth.
- Proof of Florida residency (any one of the following):
    - Florida driver's license
    - Utility bill
    - Bank statement
    - Pay stub
    - Insurance policy
    - Lease or mortgage documents

Parents or legal guardians must register their eligible child with the Early Learning Coalition in the county where the child will attend the VPK program. For example, if the child resides in Pasco County but attends VPK in Hillsborough County, registration must be completed with the Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County.

Step 2: Registration Verification
Parents or legal guardians must bring the completed Child Application Form (AWI-VPK Form 01), along with proof of age and proof of Florida residency, to a VPK registration site. There, they will meet with a representative from the Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County (ELCHC).

The VPK staff will verify the submitted information. Upon successful verification of the child's age and Florida residency, parents or legal guardians will receive a VPK Certificate of Eligibility.

Step 3: Enrollment with VPK Provider
To complete the registration process, parents or legal guardians must provide the VPK Certificate of Eligibility to their chosen, approved VPK provider. At AYA, a signed copy of the VPK Certificate of Eligibility is required as part of the enrollment documentation.

Additionally, current physical examination and immunization records must be submitted prior to the child's first day of attendance. Students without these required health records will not be permitted to start the program.

Policies & Procedures

Policies are rules 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

- Utilize PikMyKid app for arrival and the dismissal of students.
- 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/streets.
- DO NOT park in spots designated for VPK 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 Building A from 7:10 a.m. to 7:40 a.m. Breakfast will be served in the homeroom classrooms.
- Early drop off for students in Kindergarten through Grade 12 from 7:10 a.m. to 7:40 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 forms (as notified) and submit it to the high school team.
Driving students must follow the school policy regarding key placement, speed, and using their cars during school hours.

- 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
- After parking, students will proceed to walk onto campus.
- Observe all directional signs.
- Practice safe and courteous driving habits.
- Do NOT possess in his/her car alcohol, tobacco, vape, or drugs of any form, opened or unopened, at any time.
- Keep the car always locked.
- 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.
- Sign an acknowledgment form agreeing to abide by these policies.
- Students are not permitted to leave early or pick up others early, including siblings. Student drivers may only pick up siblings if they are listed on the official pick-up list in FACTS SIS.

*Please note that the school is not responsible for any vehicles and is not liable for any damage or theft that may occur.

Senior Student Driver Policy

If your schedule allows for early dismissal, you must sign out at the designated time using the Raptor system. You are not permitted to take siblings home early with you. After signing out, you must leave campus.

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 AND DISMISSAL POLICY

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 2:00 p.m Monday-Thursday and 12:00 p.m on Fridays.

Parking Guidelines

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/or 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, parents should fill out the absence excuse form on Renweb or in the front office. 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 tardy unexcused to class or Homeroom.
- Tardies between classes are unexcused.
- Please note that 5 unexcused tardies = 1 unexcused absence.
- Students who receive 7 tardies in a quarter will receive a lunch detention.
- Students who have 3 unexcused absences per quarter will be disqualified from special recognition awards.

Late Work and Excused Absence Policy

At AYA, we recognize the importance of meeting academic deadlines while also supporting students through unexpected challenges. In alignment with our expectations, the following guidelines apply

Late Work:

Students are expected to submit all assignments by the assigned due date. If an assignment is submitted late without an excused absence, it may still be accepted for up to 3 school days after the deadline, unless the teacher has stated otherwise. While late submissions may not receive detailed feedback or timely support, they will still be evaluated using our established criteria to ensure fairness.

Excused Absences:

Absence Excuse forms need to be submitted within 48 hours of the student's return. For excused absences, students will be given the same number of days missed plus one to submit missed work without penalty.

Unexcused Absences:

Work missed during unexcused absences may not be eligible for full credit and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the teacher and administration.

Clear communication between families, students, and staff is essential. Requests for extended deadlines due to exceptional circumstances will be considered with appropriate documentation.

State Law Regarding Mandatory Attendance Required for Promotion

In accordance with Florida Statute §1003.21, students must attend school regularly. For promotion to the next grade level, students must not exceed 20% unexcused absences annually. Exemptions may apply for homebound students with medical documentation.

Please be advised that certain scholarships have stricter attendance requirements than the standard 20% rule set by Florida guidelines, and failure to meet these expectations places students at serious risk of losing their scholarship eligibility.

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

At AYA, student health and safety are a top priority. Staff certified in first aid and CPR and will respond appropriately in emergencies. To protect the well-being of our community, we ask that students who are unwell remain at home. Basic health services are available through our infirmary. If a student requires medication during school hours, it must be submitted in its original container with the proper

documentation. Please ensure the school is informed 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. Parents are strongly encouraged to keep emergency contacts up-to-date to ensure timely communication.

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. Nail polish and fake nails are not permitted
- **Makeup Policy – No Excessive Makeup**
  Students who choose to wear makeup must ensure it is minimal, modest, and age-appropriate. A clean and professional appearance is required at all times.

The following are strictly prohibited and will be considered **excessive makeup**:

- Heavy eyeliner (including tips and wings)
- Mascara
- Eyeshadow
- Lipstick or Lip Liner
- Contouring/ Blush
- Glitter/highlight
- Heavy foundation
- Lash extensions

The school administration retains full authority to determine whether a student's makeup is excessive or inappropriate for the academic environment. Any violation of this policy will result in a uniform violation being issued.

- Jewelry and accessories (Girls' and boys' grades Preschool-12)

Female students may not wear exaggerated jewelry including but not limited to large chains, rings, bracelets, and hair/hijab accessories.

Male students are strictly prohibited from wearing hats, caps, headgear, makeup, or jewelry. The only exception to this rule is the wearing of one ring on the hand. A kufi is permitted as acceptable headwear.

- Body markings - No body art or piercings, temporary or otherwise, are allowed.
- Hair

Girls grades PreK3-5th - 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.

Girls- Grades 6-12th – Students must properly always wear hijab. (Covered hair & neck)

Boys- Grades PreK3-12th - Hair should be neat, clean, natural in color (no highlights), and Hair must be moderately cut and maintained. Specifically, the length of the hair must not exceed 3 inches. Hair should be cut above the collar at the back, above the eyebrows at the front, and above the ear on the sides. Exaggerated cuts and hairstyles, including shaved areas behind the earlobe, styles such as the Edgar haircut, spiked hair, brightly colored hair, or overly styled hair, are strictly prohibited. Hair must remain neat, clean, and well-groomed at all times.

Boys' Facial Hair - inappropriate beard are not permitted

Infants and Toddlers

- AYA uniform is not required. Please follow the guidelines as per the homeroom teacher.

Uniform Grades K3 - 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.
- Hip-hugger, skinny/tight, baggy, cargo, carpenter, pajama, parachute or sweat pants, denim or nylon-like material, gray color, stripes, background, or lettering are NOT permitted.
- Polo shirts with AYA logo purchased from Verona Uniforms.
- Black, white, and/or gray shoes and socks. (No open toed/open heeled shoes, or crocs).
- Physical Education: (PE attire) Shirts must be purchased from Verona. Black uniform pants
- Only AYA-branded hoodies are approved for daily wear for K-12. Jackets with hoods must be worn with the hood down at all times while on campus. Jackets must not be tight-fitting or form-fitting. AYA jackets or hoodies purchased in previous years may still be worn.

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.
- Hip-hugger, skinny/tight, baggy, joggers, cargo, carpenter, pajama, parachute or sweat pants, denim or nylon-like material, gray color, stripes, background, or lettering are NOT permitted.
- Polo shirts with AYA logo purchased from Verona Uniforms.

Black, white, and/or gray shoes and socks. (No open toed/open heeled shoes, or crocs)

- Physical Education: (PE attire) Shirts must be purchased from Verona. Black uniform pants. PE uniform may not be worn at any other time except during PE class.

- Only AYA-branded hoodies are approved for daily wear. Jackets with hoods must be worn with the hood down at all times while on campus. Jackets must not be tight-fitting or form-fitting. AYA jackets or hoodies purchased in previous years may still be worn.

Grades K 3 - 5 Girls

- Solid black dress pants - Pants should be straight-leg, hemmed, or cuffed to the proper length purchased from Verona Uniforms.
- Hip-hugger, skinny/tight, baggy, cargo, carpenter, pajama, parachute or sweat pants, denim or nylon-like material, gray color, stripes, background, or lettering are NOT permitted.
- Light blue polo dress with AYA logo purchased from Verona Uniforms.
- Solid black, white, and/or gray shoes and socks. (No open toed/open heeled shoes, or crocs)
- Hair accessories
- White prayer scarf - A white prayer scarf must be brought to school and purchased from Verona Uniforms.
- Physical Education: (PE attire) Shirts must be purchased from Verona. Black uniform pants
- Only AYA-branded hoodies are approved for daily wear for K-12. Jackets with hoods must be worn with the hood down at all times while on campus. Jackets must not be tight-fitting or form-fitting. AYA jackets or hoodies purchased in previous years may still be worn.

Grades 6-12 Girls

- Solid black dress pants (straight legs, hemmed, or cuffed to the proper length) purchased from Verona Uniforms.
- Hip-hugger, skinny/tight, baggy, joggers, cargo, carpenter, pajama, parachute or sweat pants, denim or nylon-like material, gray color, stripes, background, or lettering are NOT permitted.
- Verona abaya with AYA logo or Mid-thigh Oxford tunic with AYA logo purchased from Verona Uniforms. (Tunic may not be hemmed or shortened for any reason)
- Hijab (black, white, teal or gray) purchased from Verona Uniforms (all hair and the neck area must be covered).
- Black white, and/or gray shoes with black socks. (No open toed/open heeled shoes, or crocs)
- Physical Education (PE attire): black yoga pants during PE class and PE shirt purchased from Verona Uniforms. PE uniform may not be worn at any other time except during PE class.
- Only AYA-branded hoodies are approved for daily wear. Jackets with hoods must be worn with the hood down at all times while on campus. Jackets must not be tight-fitting or form-fitting. AYA jackets or hoodies purchased in previous years may still be worn.

Friday Uniform Grades 6-12 (Can be worn on Friday's only)

Girls- Any color abaya and any color hijab. Abaya's must be closed. (black pants must be worn underneath and all hair and the neck area must be covered). Black white, and/or gray shoes with black socks. (No open toed/open heeled shoes, or crocs)

Boys- Any color thobe (black pants must be worn underneath) Black white, and/or gray shoes with black socks. (No open toed/open heeled shoes, or crocs)

Privilege will be revoked for students who do not abide by the expectation.

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 snack

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.

Cafeteria Policies - Breakfast & Lunch Program

The lunch weekly menu will be posted on RenWeb. All meats served in the cafeteria are Certified Halal.

AYA is approved for the National Free Breakfast and Lunch Program for all students. Breakfast will NOT be served after 7:40 am. This is to ensure that students arrive at class. All students are eligible for one free Breakfast meal, to complete the meal each student has to choose from three to four items off the menu items, one of the items has to be Fruits, (100% juice is credited toward Fruits). Additional Meal cost $4.50.

All students are eligible for one free Lunch meal, to complete the meal each student has to choose from three up to five items of the menu items and one of the items has to be Fruit or Vegetable, (100% juice is credited toward Fruits). Additional meal cost $7.00. Parents of students with allergies or special diets must provide the Cafeteria Manager and nurse office a doctor's note stating allergens needing to be avoided or special diet needs. The parent will need to pack lunches for their child(ren) on days their child(ren) cannot eat the school lunch. The school cannot provide a substitute meal for students with allergies or special diets. The school will not provide alternative meals unless medically required and documented.

All of our cafeteria staff receive yearly training in HACCP principles, (Hazard Analysis of Critical Control Points) a comprehensive federal and state food safety program designed to track food from delivery to service. The Cafeteria Manager and the Kitchen Chef are certified in ServSafe, a federal program administered by the National Restaurant Association and Food Allergy Awareness.

*Lost or forgotten ID: students will be Charged $5 for lost or forgotten ID in the business office with tuition and fees.

* For A la carte items Students Can pre-paid or pay at the point of service using cash, check or credit card.

*Students can owe up to $10.00 for A la carte items, a letter from the cashier will be sent to parents.

* Students should not share food and bring unhealthy snacks and drinks to school including but not limited to Takis, soda, and energy drinks.

* Students cannot bring any nuts or nut-containing products to school. We are a nut-free school zone.

Meal Modifications for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations and federal civil rights laws, AYA will provide reasonable meal modifications for students whose disabilities restrict their diet, when supported by a licensed healthcare provider's medical statement.

How to Request a Meal Modification

1. **Submit a Written Request**
   Parents/guardians must complete the *Meal Modification Request Form.*

2. **Include Medical Documentation**
   The request must be accompanied by a medical statement signed by a licensed physician, physician's assistant, or nurse practitioner. The statement must include:
   - The child's disability
   - How the disability restricts the child's diet
   - The specific dietary modification(s) needed
   - Any foods to be omitted or substituted

3. **Review and Determination**
   The school's Cafeteria Manager will review the request in consultation with parents/guardians and appropriate staff. Families will receive a written response within **10 school days** of the request.

4. **Implementation**
   Approved modifications will be implemented promptly and recorded in the student's file.

Procedural Safeguards

- Parents/guardians will receive a **written response** to this request within **10 school days**.
- If the request is **denied**, the written notice will include the reason for denial.

- Parents/guardians have the **right to appeal** the decision by submitting a written request to Dr. Dallal Kahook at headofschool@ayatampa.com within **10 school days** of the denial notice.
- Appeals will be reviewed, and a final written decision will be provided within **10 school days** of receiving the appeal.

Civil Rights & Equal Access Compliance

American Youth Academy ensures compliance with USDA Civil Rights requirements by maintaining the following policies and practices:

1. **Auxiliary Aids and Services**
   Qualified interpreters, large-print or Braille materials, assistive listening devices, and electronic communication supports are available to ensure equal participation and effective communication for individuals with disabilities.

2. **Interpreter Policy**
   AYA does not rely on family members, friends, or children to serve as interpreters, except in rare emergencies or when specifically requested by the individual with a disability, and only when appropriate.

3. **Service Animals**
   AYA permits individuals with disabilities to be accompanied by a service animal or trained miniature horse in all areas where program participants are allowed, in compliance with ADA requirements.

4. **Language Access**
   This form and the meal modification process are available in other languages upon request. Please contact the Cafeteria Manager at cafeteriamanager@ayatampa.com for assistance.

USDA Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at:
https://www.usda.gov/oascr/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint,
from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged

discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation.

The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
   Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
   1400 Independence Avenue, SW
   Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. Fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. Email: program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

School Visitors

AYA welcomes visits from parents and community members, recognizing the many benefits of increased community engagement. However, to protect the learning environment, ensure student and staff safety, and prevent misuse of school property, limitations may be placed on visits. Administrators have the authority to evaluate the purpose and potential impact of each visit before granting approval. All visitors must comply with AYA dress code and dress modestly.

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 school premises any individual who disrupts or is likely to disrupt the educational environment. Such individuals will be directed to leave immediately, and law enforcement may be contacted if 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/Non-Islamic Holidays

Non-Islamic Holiday decorations, Birthday cakes, cookies, treats, decorations, etc. cannot be brought to school to commemorate birthdays/non-Islamic holidays.

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. The staff of 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 eight principles of our Discipline System are These principles foster personal responsibility and support the development of the IB learner profile attributes.

- Show respect to all staff, peers, and school property by following all classroom and school rules and expectations.
- Attend school regularly and be on time.
- Use appropriate language at all times.

- Refrain from physical or verbal aggression among staff and peers.
- Avoid the use of tobacco,vape, alcohol, drugs, or any illegal substances.
- Use technology responsibly and only for educational purposes.
- Dress in accordance with the school Islamic dress code, whether in school, on field trips, and all school events.
- 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, vape, alcohol, drugs, or other illegal contraband on AYA property or at school-sponsored events.
- Conduct or speech that violates Islamically accepted standards.
- Failure to comply with lawful direction of AYA Administration and staff while performing their duties.

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 Principal. 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, Substances, 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. Which includes, but is not limited to, the following conduct:

- Smoking, vaping, or inhaling of any substance
- The use or possession of drugs, tobacco products 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 electronic smoking devices
- The use or possession of alcohol/liquor

AYA's zero-tolerance policy towards tobacco, drugs, illegal substances, and weapons applies to all off-campus school activities as well. 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 students suspected of a violation of AYA's zero-tolerance policy towards tobacco, drugs, illegal substances. Furthermore, distribution or attempt to distribute illegal drugs or any paraphernalia will automatically render the student liable for expulsion.

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 students will be given an opportunity to self-refer, as stated 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.

Self-Referral

It is important to support and encourage students who seek help for issues such as alcohol, tobacco, or other substance use, as well as those experiencing abuse, self harm or who may be causing harm to others. A student who is struggling with the aforementioned topics may need to seek professional help. A student who seeks help from a school counselor, administrator, or teacher should not be disciplined if the referral occurs prior to the aforementioned issues. Any student who takes the responsibility to seek help will be supported by the administration, faculty, and staff. AYA encourages all students and family members to seek appropriate help for the student's specific issue. The school will take appropriate measures regarding the student's specific needs as necessary. 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 self harm, 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 evaluation report must be prepared by the agency and given to the school.
- The student must participate in education and counseling sessions if applicable.
- Students and guardians must meet with the administration before the student is allowed to re-enter the school. Students will be required to uphold the listed conditions set by the administration for their continued enrollment at AYA.

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.

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.

Arms Free Campus

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) is not permitted. This is in compliance with Florida Statute §790.115, which prohibits possession of firearms on school property or within 1000 feet of school grounds.

For the safety and well-being of all students and staff, toy guns, replica weapons, lasers or any other object resembling weapons or can cause bodily harm are strictly prohibited on school grounds, buses, and at all school-related events.

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

- Contacting authorities.
- Any student found to be in violation of this policy will be 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.

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 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 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. All searches must be based on reasonable suspicion and conducted in a manner that is justified at its inception and reasonable in scope as required by law.
In the event of a suspected case, the policy will apply as follows:

- Staff will take particular care to respect students' privacy.
- 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 and School Sponsored Events/Activities

Students are not to engage in any activity that violates AYA policies at any school event or activity, including when representing AYA in the community.

Guidelines for Referrals/Infractions

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

Minor Behavior Closed (Tier 1) Teacher

Behavior	1st offense	2nd offense	3rd offense	4th offense
1. Disruptive Behavior 2. Disrespectful Mild Language 3. Uniform Violation 4. Technology Distraction (on a different tab or playing a game) 5. Minor property damage/misuse 6. Salah Violation	Verbal Warning	Written Warning	Parent Teacher Conference	Tier 2 Consequence

Major Behavior Open (Tier 2) Administration

Behavior	Definition	Minimum Consequence	Maximum Consequence
Same Multiple Minor	Repeating the same behavior from tier 1 more than 3 times	Detention	Suspension
Bullying, Mockery, Intimidation, Threatening, Defamation	Refer to Anti-bullying Policy & Procedures	Saturday Detention ISS	Short or Long OSS
Disrespect, Defiance, Non-compliance, Insubordination to an Adult	Treating personnel or any others with contempt or rudeness including profanity. Intentionally resisting or disregarding the authority of school	Detention	Suspension

	personnel.		
Forgery or Falsification	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.)	Detention	Suspension
Cheating or Plagiarism	Knowingly using the information or other property of another or knowingly sharing academic information to gain an unfair advantage. This includes AI Usage Policies & Procedures	Points deducted to no Credit on the assignment	No Credit on the assignment AND Detention or suspension
Skipping, Ditching, Truancy	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.	Detention	Suspension
Soliciting on school campus	The act of requesting, promoting, or attempting to sell goods, services, or donations—whether for personal, commercial, or organizational purposes—without prior	Detention	Suspension

	authorization from school administration. This includes, but is not limited to, distributing flyers, setting up tables, conducting surveys, fundraising, or approaching students, staff, or visitors with promotional materials or sales pitches. All forms of solicitation must be pre-approved by school administration to ensure they align with the school's mission, policies, and student safety guidelines.		
Unauthorized Electronic Devices	Refer to Technology Usage Policies & Procedures		
Technology Misuse (Chromebook Usage), Computer Tampering	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. Includes damage to the technology	Confiscation Detention	Long Term Suspension Expulsion

Fire Alarm Misuse, False Emergency Calls and Tampering with Cameras	Intentionally ringing a fire alarm when there is no fire or touching safety cameras.	Short-Term Suspension	Long-Term Suspension Expulsion in certain cases.
Physical Contact	Tussles, minor confrontations, pushing and shoving	Detention	Suspension
Fighting	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
Theft	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
Verbal Abuse or Racial Slur	The use of profanity or any derogatory language stated publicly to one's self or others.	Grades 1-4: 1 detention Grade 5-6: 2 detentions Grades 7-12:	Long Term Suspension

		Short Term Suspension	
Vandalism or Unauthorized Entry, Property Misuse	Willful destruction or defacement of school or personal property; breaking into any area of the school unauthorized.	Detention and Pay for Damages	Suspension and Pay for Damages
Endangerment I	Recklessly or intentionally or unintentionally 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. Throwing objects with potential to harm	Suspension	Long-Term Suspension Expulsion

Major Behavior Tier 3 Administration Zero Tolerance

Behavior	Definition	Consequence	
Vape or Smoking (Use, Possession, or Selling)	See related Smoking, Drugs, Substances, Alcohol & Arms Free Campus Policies & Procedures	Long Term Suspension Smoke Cessation Program	Zero Tolerance

Gender Fraternization	Involves social or romantic behavior between students of different genders that crosses boundaries of professionalism, discipline, or school conduct rules. Romantic relationships that cause distractions in class. Public displays of affection (PDA) violating school rules	Short Term Suspension	Long Term Suspension Expulsion
Endangerment II	Intentionally creating a risk of injury to another.	Zero Tolerance	Zero Tolerance
Alcohol or Drug (Use, Possession, or Under the Influence	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
Weapons	Possession of weapons or anything intended to be. Including, but not limited to, pocketknife, iron bars, chains…	Zero Tolerance	Zero Tolerance

Detention Policies

Lunch Detention

Students assigned lunch detention will report to a designated area during their lunch period instead of the cafeteria or lunch with peers. During this time, students are expected to eat quietly and may be required to complete a reflection activity or schoolwork.

After-School Detention

After-school detention takes place at the end of the regular school day, lasting 1 hour. Students are required to report to a designated room where they will remain quiet and complete academic work or a reflection task.

Saturday Detention

Saturday detention is held on designated Saturdays from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM. Students must arrive on time and are expected to remain seated, silent, and engaged in assigned work or a behavioral reflection activity. A **$40 fee** is required to cover staffing and operational costs.

Suspension Policies

In-School Suspension (ISS) – Community Service-Based

In-School Suspension is a structured disciplinary consequence in which a student is removed from their regular classes but remains on campus for the school day. When used as a form of community service, ISS focuses not only on discipline but also on giving back to the school community.

During ISS, students complete academic work and participate in supervised tasks that benefit the school, such as organizing materials, assisting with campus cleanup, or helping in designated school areas. The goal is to reinforce accountability, encourage reflection, and help students develop a sense of responsibility through meaningful service.

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)

Out-of-school suspensions are considered **unexcused absences**. Students are not permitted on campus during the suspension period. Any classwork, homework, or assessments missed during this time will receive a grade of **zero**, and make-up work is not guaranteed.

- **Short-Term Suspension (STS):** A suspension lasting **up to 3 school days**.
- **Long-Term Suspension (LTS):** A suspension lasting **4 to 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 Assistant Principal and Principal.
Step 2: The Assistant Principal 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 Principal 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 Head of School and School Board of Trustees; 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.
- If the student is found to be in violation of a Zero-Tolerance policy, the student will be expelled by the administration.

Student Use of AI

Student use of AI will align to the AI Use Framework. AI tools may be used to aid in research, analysis, and comprehension of course materials. However, the use of AI tools must be disclosed and properly cited in all academic work (in addition to complying with the assignment's AI Use Framework). If you have any questions on the use of AI for an assignment, please contact your teacher for clarification.

AI Tools and Responsible Use
Use of AI Tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Gemini, etc.)

Students may have access to artificial intelligence (AI) tools both at school and at home. The use of these tools is allowed only when permitted by the teacher and must follow these guidelines in the AI Framework (Traffic Light) as discussed by the teacher.

Plagiarism rules apply to AI-generated content. Submitting AI-written work as your own is considered academic dishonesty.

Use AI responsibly and never for harmful, deceptive, or inappropriate purposes.
Respect privacy: Never input personal or sensitive information (your own or others') into AI tools.

Violations of these guidelines may result in disciplinary action, depending on the severity and intent. Misuse of AI that violates academic honesty policies may result in a zero on the assignment or further disciplinary action.

AI Framework (Traffic Light)

Greenlight Statement	Yellow Light Statement	Red Light Statement
Teacher Instructions: Students are allowed to use advanced automotive tools (artificial intelligence or machine learning tools such as ChatGPT) on this assignment if that use is properly documented and credited. Failure to acknowledge the AI-generated contributions will be treated as a violation of the Honor Code/ Behavior Policy. *Student:* I acknowledge and embrace the responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a tool for assistance in this assignment. I commit to utilizing AI in a manner that upholds academic integrity and originality, ensuring that my work reflects my understanding and efforts. I understand that any undocumented use of AI in my assignment may lead to academic consequences in accordance with the Honor Code/ Behavior Policy.	*Teacher Instructions:* Students may use AI tools to help prepare for this assignment (e.g XXX). Students must explain how AI tools informed their process and are responsible for the accuracy of the ideas that are used. Failure to acknowledge the AI-generated contributions will be treated as a violation of the Honor Code/ Behavior Policy. *Student:* I understand and commit to using AI tools responsibly for XXX in this assignment. I will maintain academic integrity by ensuring that the content I produce reflects my own originality while appropriately crediting and citing any AI-generated contributions. I recognize that any violation of these principles may result in academic consequences in accordance with the Honor Code/ Behavior Policy. XXX = Examples must be provided	*Teacher Instructions:* Students are not allowed to use advanced automated tools (artificial intelligence or machine learning tools (such as ChatGPT) on this assignment. Each student is expected to complete each assignment without assistance from others, including automated tools. Any violation will be addressed in accordance with the Honor Code/ Behavior Policy. *Student:* I affirm that I will not utilize Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools or applications for any aspect of this assignment. I understand that the use of AI in my assignment is strictly prohibited and that any violation of this policy may result in academic consequences as outlined by the Honor Code/ Behavior Policy. I commit to completing my assignments through my own efforts, ensuring academic integrity and the authenticity of my work. This also includes the College Board AP Policy and IB Policy.

AREA RULES

Masjid/Salah

- Sit properly in the Masjid/Prayer Area.
- Keep quiet and respect the Masjid/Prayer area/salaat.
- Be prompt for prayers.

Classroom

- Arrive to class on time (before 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 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.
- The class is dismissed by the teacher, NOT by the bell.

Lunchroom

- 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

- 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

- 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 by 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

- 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 discretion, students who violate school policies will be disqualified from the bus service.

Locker Area

- 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 & Stairwell

- 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 visit.

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.

Use of Security Cameras and Audio/Video Recording

For the safety and security of all students, staff, and visitors, American Youth Academy (AYA) utilizes a variety of monitoring and recording systems on campus, including video surveillance, audio recording, and digital monitoring in classrooms, hallways, buses, and common areas. These measures are used solely to promote a safe, secure, and respectful school environment and may be reviewed by authorized school personnel as needed.

By enrolling their child(ren) at AYA, parents and guardians acknowledge and consent to the use of these monitoring and recording systems as part of the school’s standard safety procedures. All recordings are the property of AYA and may be used for safety review, disciplinary purposes, or legal compliance, in accordance with applicable privacy and child protection laws.

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(s)

Security officer(s) 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, Weather and Safety Drills

Fire drills will be conducted throughout the school year and regularly: 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.

Technology Usage & Electronics Policy

Games, Electronics, and Other Non-Instructional Devices/Materials (Cell phone policy rules and consequences apply to Electronics policy)

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

Cellular Phones & Smart Watches (Including any electronic devices under the electronics policy)

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 3:05 p.m.
- Phones are permitted to be used during arrival before 7:40 am and dismissal after 3:05 pm.
- 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. Teachers may use their discretion to allow or restrict phone use during dismissal.
- 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 - Device will be confiscated for 1 school day (weekends do not count).
2nd offense - Device will be confiscated for 3 school days (weekends do not count).
3rd offense - Device will be confiscated for 7 school days (weekends do not count).

If any offense occurs after the 3rd time, the device will be confiscated until the end of the semester.

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 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.

Chrome book Policy

Student/Parent Complaint Policy

AYA encourages open communication and provides a clear process for addressing concerns. Students and parents may submit complaints through the appropriate channels outlined in our full Complaint Policy

Student/Par
ent Complaint Policy

Technology Use Agreement-Terms & 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.

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.

Principal's Honor Roll:	All A's/ MYP equivalent
High Honor Roll:	All A's and up to two B's/MYP Equivalent
Honor Roll:	No grade below a B-/MYP Equivalent

Gifted, Talented, and Students with Accomodations

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. 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.

An IEP is a document that is developed to ensure that a student with an identified learning difference or disability receives adequate support and services. At AYA, we do not create Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students. However, we welcome students with existing IEPs and are committed to implementing the accommodations outlined to support their educational success within our limited resources when possible.

Specialized support and accommodations are provided to students in accordance with the recommendations of the IEP within our capacities. The IEP is reviewed with teachers at the beginning of the year via meetings with the counselor. The counselor goes over the IEP and important elements for the teachers to review and ask questions as needed. Teachers are responsible for implementing the IEP in the classroom and across all subjects (Core subjects, QAIS,and specials). An IEP will be reviewed and implemented within a two-week period from when the school receives the document.

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 may be teaching 12th grade students dual enrollment courses on campus. Dual Enrollment is reserved for students who have a minimum unweighted GPA of a 3.0 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.
Dual enrollment courses are taken independently by AYA students in addition to their AYA schedule.

- Students taking Dual enrollment courses must adhere to HCC's grading policies.
- For all semesters, students must submit an Official Transcript of courses completed each semester.
- Students are responsible for covering the cost of textbooks and any other fees that might apply.
- Prior to students submitting their approval paperwork on their HCC account, parents and students must read through the parent agreement form. Dual Enrollment Student and Parent Agreement 4-23
- Students are limited to one class per Summer as HCC charges AYA for courses taken in the summer.
- Understand that the student cannot take courses via Dual Enrollment in lieu of potential college credit they may receive from courses offered at AYA (IB or AP). Exception: Transfer student entering AYA without required state core course(s).

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. 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 Principal. What needs to be done:

- Students must submit an FLVS Course Request to the Counselor for approval before signing up for any FLVS courses.
- 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).
- By Florida law, every high school student must complete at least one full credit of courses on an authorized online institution - for example, HCC Dual Enrollment or FLVS.
- Also, by Florida law, students receiving funding from SUFS are subject to receive an invoice for the course they enroll on FLVS.

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 successfully complete AP classes, the weight of the class will be up to a 5.00 GPA.

AYA Senior Privileges

1. Uniform

(a) ***Senior Boys Dress Code***

Senior boys are permitted to wear any color polo shirt paired with khaki chino pants. Jeans are strictly prohibited. Alternatively, they may wear a thobe; however, no pajamas or inappropriate garments may be worn underneath. Senior boys also have the option to wear the standard AYA school uniform.

(b) ***Senior Girls Dress Code***
Senior girls are permitted to wear an abaya of any color. If the abaya is open in the front, a modest dress must be worn underneath. Senior girls also have the option to wear the standard AYA school uniform.

(c) Footwear must be closed-toe and closed-heel. Open-toe or open-heel shoes, including slides and Tasman UGGs, are strictly prohibited.

2. IB Seniors

(a) ***External Food Orders***
IB seniors are permitted to place one external food order per academic quarter. The entire group must collectively agree on a single day and a single order for that quarter. All orders must comply with school guidelines and be approved in advance by the designated staff member.

(b) ***Lunch Study Privilege***
IB seniors are allowed to remain in a designated classroom during the lunch period for the purpose of independent study. This privilege is contingent upon the presence and supervision of a faculty member. No student may remain in a classroom unsupervised.

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 https://floridabrightfutures.gov/

Class Rank

Class rank will be determined based on weighted GPA by the end of the school year for high school seniors only.

Homework

Homework will be assigned during the week based on reinforcement, enrichment, and on the individual needs of the child. The student will receive homework in any of the subjects that he or she is expected to complete over the course of the academic year.
To support balance and well-being, generally students will receive no more than two homework tasks per weeknight—one focused on reading and the other on a different subject. This structure ensures students have ample time to rest and prepare for upcoming assessments.

Families can support their child by creating a quiet, comfortable space for learning at home. Helping their child stay organized, asking about their day, and encouraging good study habits can help support their academic progress.

In general, homework will not be assigned during school breaks or vacations except if it were a summer reading packet or completing IXL skill plans.

Sometimes, students may have long-term projects that span a few weeks, and they can use break time to work on the assigned project.

AYA Assessment & Grading Policy

Background & Introduction

AYA uses a combination of summative and formative assessments, both norm-based and criteria-based. Academic Honesty is stressed, reinforced and enforced on all assessments. The students are often reminded of one of Prophet Muhammad's PBUH sayings: "Whoever cheats is not from among us."

AYA Assessment Philosophy

- Assessment, in its various formats, allows teachers and administrators to gauge students' level of mastery of skills and concepts taught.
- In order for assessments to have value, and for students to attain success on them, they must be:
    - relevant to the students and subjects at hand.
    - diverse in type
    - developed in order to test students' abilities to think, analyze, infer and draw conclusions. They must not be developed to simply have the students regurgitate facts that they have been taught
    - analyzed before they are administered, and their scores analyzed after they are taken
    - reviewed by the teachers and students in order to learn from them and to build upon them
    - reflected upon by students in order to foster further growth
    - scheduled so that students are not overwhelmed at certain times with a large number of exams and then have lapses in time when they have no assessments.

- Students' grades should accurately reflect the students' abilities and mastery of subject-matter.

AYA Assessment Goals

1. To establish a starting point for students using diagnostic assessments and to assess student growth using formative, summative, and standardized (MAP/PSAT) assessments.
2. To guide students during the learning process, so that they can be successful on all forms of assessment administered to them.
3. To analyze and reflect upon students' results on assessments in order to learn from them and to determine future teaching goals.
4. To allow students to analyze and reflect upon their performance on assessments in order to learn from them and to build upon what they have learned.

2025-2026 Assessment and Achievement Policy

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-NMSQT Testing

Students in grades 8-10 will take the PSAT-NMSQT in October and.they will be able to access their scores via College Board 4-6 weeks after test administration.

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.

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 K-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.

Non-Muslim Student or Students with at least one Non-Muslim Parent

AYA is an Islamic school that provides all instruction and activities within the framework of Islamic values. All students, Muslim or non-Muslim, are expected to respect the Islamic environment of the school, including dress codes, dietary guidelines, and overall culture. Non-Muslim students are welcome to enroll and are expected to respect the Islamic environment of the school. They will participate in school-wide assemblies, cultural and values-based programming, and classroom learning as assigned. Non-Muslim students will attend daily prayer periods with their peers but will not be required to perform acts of worship. Enrollment in Arabic language, Qur'an, and Islamic Studies courses is required for all students and the school will work to determine appropriate adjustments.

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 K Through 4th 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 all 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 95%. 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 student is required to undergo an assessment by the school counselor.
- The Principal shall conduct an interview to make a final recommendation.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

- 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 may have 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

At American Youth Academy, we greatly value our school's and parents' partnership in fostering a supportive and enriching environment for our students.

We offer a variety of volunteer opportunities throughout the school year, including but not limited to:

- School events (for example: field trips, fundraising events)
- Library assistance
- Sports events and tournaments
- Administrative support
- Community service projects
- Drop-off/Pick up duties and supervision
- Attending School Events (such as International Day, Coffee with Dr. Dallal, etc.)
- Donating classroom supplies (Every $10 dollars spent equals 1 volunteer hour)

Student Support, Organizations & Activities

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. Please note that the counselor will not disclose any information shared during these sessions with parents or guardians unless there is a safety concern that would require confidentiality to be broken. 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.

Student Safety and Self-Harm Policy

AYA is committed to maintaining a safe, supportive, and responsive learning environment. This policy outlines the procedures and requirements for addressing concerns related to self-harm or threats of harm to others. It emphasizes early intervention, collaboration with families, and the necessity of professional mental health evaluation in serious cases.

Reporting and Identification

- Students are encouraged to report any feelings of emotional distress, self-harm, or suicidal thoughts to a trusted adult, such as a counselor, teacher, or administrator.
- Any student or staff member who becomes aware of another student expressing intent to harm themselves or others must report the concern to school staff immediately.
- All reports are taken seriously and handled with discretion and care.

School Response

- Upon receiving a report, the counselor or designated admin (Nurse & principal) will conduct an initial risk assessment to determine the level of concern.
- If the risk is deemed significant, the school will:
    - Notify the student's parent or guardian immediately.
    - Remove the student from situations that could present immediate danger.
    - Refer the student for further evaluation by a licensed mental health professional.

Requirement for Professional Evaluation

In cases where a student is considered a potential danger to themselves or others, the following will be required:

- **A comprehensive psychological or psychiatric evaluation** from a licensed mental health professional.
- A **written statement from the provider** confirming that the student is emotionally stable and safe to return to school.
- Documentation must be submitted to the school counselor or administration before the student may re-enter the classroom environment.

Re-Entry and Support Plan

- A re-entry meeting will be held with the student, parent/guardian, counselor, and relevant staff to ensure a supportive return to school.

- A **personalized support plan** may be created, which may include:
    - Regular counseling sessions
    - Academic accommodations (if needed)
    - Safety check-ins or monitoring procedures

- Follow-up meetings may be scheduled to monitor the student's progress.

Confidentiality and Compassionate Care

- All information will be handled in accordance with federal and state confidentiality laws (e.g., FERPA, HIPAA).
- The school is committed to offering compassionate, non-punitive support to all students experiencing mental health challenges.
- Our goal is to foster a safe and healthy school climate where students are supported and empowered to seek help.

Emergency Mental Health Resources:

- National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: **988**
- Crisis Text Line: Text **HOME** to **741741**

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-injure
- Eating Disorder

This program is led by a team of educators and professionals which include the Assitant Principals, counselors, 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.

Please refer to the Student Athlete Handbook for more information.

Student Athlete Handbook

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:
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 including Renweb FACTS portal, Google Classroom, and Email.
Renweb Facts 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.

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.

Library Policies and Procedures

Students are expected to use the library responsibly and follow all guidelines for borrowing and returning materials. For detailed information, please refer to our full Library Policies and Procedures here:

Library Policies and Procedures

Early Childhood Addendum

Early Childhood Philosophy

At AYA's Early Childhood program, we cultivate an enriching environment that supports the holistic development of young children. Grounded in The Creative Curriculum for Preschool, our approach empowers children to become confident, creative, and compassionate learners through hands-on, play-based investigations. This research-backed methodology seamlessly integrates language, literacy, and mathematics into daily activities. Our commitment to learning centers encourages critical thinking as children freely engage in activities such as building, drawing, and dramatic play.

Moreover, we integrate Islamic teachings into our curriculum, fostering an environment where children can explore and embrace their Muslim identity. By actively involving parents, we ensure a collaborative approach to nurturing each family's cultural and educational values.

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 infants 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.
- At AYA, we value and encourage parental involvement as a vital component of student success. To support a productive learning environment for all students and to minimize disruptions to instruction, classroom visits and observations are permitted only during designated times and under specific guidelines.

Early Childhood Curriculum

The Creative Curriculum is a research based whole-child curriculum that builds children's confidence, creativity, and critical thinking skills through hands-on project based investigations. The studies derived from the Creative Curriculum are built on the following foundations:

- ***Volume 1: The Foundation***
- ***Volume 2: Interest Areas***
- ***Volume 3: Social–Emotional, Physical & Cognitive***
- ***Volume 4: Language & Literacy***
- ***Volume 5: Mathematics***
- ***Volume 6: Science and Technology, Social Studies & the Arts***
- ***Volume 7: Objectives for Development & Learning, Birth Through Third Grade***

Our program frequently emphasizes physical activities, ensuring that children engage in regular exercise and cultivate healthy habits from a young age. This focuses on child health, enhances overall well being, and also ensures the development of fine and gross motor skills. In addition to these foundation elements, we incorporate the study of the Arabic language, the Quran, and principles of Islamic Studies according to

preschool standards. By incorporating the teachings of Islam into our everyday curriculum and by involving parents in the programs, AYA fosters and nurtures the Muslim identity of our students.



Early Childhood Drop Off

For the safety and well-being of all students at AYA, the following procedures must be followed:

All students must be escorted to their classroom between 7:40 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. by a parent, guardian, or an authorized adult listed in RenWeb.

It is essential that the accompanying adult signs the student in and notifies the teacher of the child's arrival.

Students must be dropped off and picked up by an individual who is 18 years of age or older, listed in RenWeb, and able to present valid photo identification when requested.

Breakfast will be served until 7:55 a.m. Students arriving after this time will not be offered breakfast.

These procedures help ensure a secure, smooth, and well-structured start to the school day. We appreciate your partnership and cooperation.

Early Childhood Pick Up

To ensure the safety and proper supervision of all children in AYA's Early Childhood Programs, the following dismissal procedures must be followed:

- Children must be picked up from their classroom by a **parent, guardian, or an authorized adult** listed in **RenWeb** between the following times:
    - **Monday through Thursday:** 3:20 p.m. to 3:55 p.m.
    - **Friday:** 12:35 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- It is essential that the authorized adult **signs the child out** and **informs the teacher** at the time of departure.
- The adult picking up the child must be **18 years of age or older** and prepared to present **valid photo identification** if requested.
- If a child is not picked up by the end of the designated dismissal window, they will be escorted to **AYA's After-School Care Program**, and **families will be billed** accordingly for this service.

These guidelines are in place to ensure a smooth, safe, and accountable dismissal process. We appreciate your cooperation in helping us maintain a secure environment for all students.

Parents of preschool students are required to park in designated parking areas and physically enter the building to sign their child out for the day.

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.

Assessments & Feedback

We utilize regular assessments to track student progress and gather feedback from both teachers and parents to inform ongoing improvements. Assessments and feedback are crucial components that enhance the preschool program by revealing developmental or behavioral issues early; data from assessments allow teachers to make informed decisions about curriculum adjustments, resource allocation, and program improvement overall.

We invest in creating a stimulating and safe classroom environment with updated materials and resources that encourage exploration and creativity. An enhanced learning environment significantly enriches our preschool program in various ways such as encouraging independence and autonomy, supports diverse learning styles, and stimulates curiosity and engagement.

STAR Assessments

AYA provides a framework for evaluating daily assessments and outlines the roles and responsibilities of teachers and students in enhancing assessments conducted by administrators. By incorporating the STAR Assessment, following guidance from the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards, and conducting regular checks for understanding, we support and ensure school readiness.
In Teaching Strategies, color bands and checkpoints are used to show a child's progress and development in relation to widely held expectations.

AYA Preschool Positive Behavior Support Plan

At AYA, our approach to behavior is rooted in positive guidance, Islamic values, and a play-based curriculum that supports healthy social-emotional development in young children.

Core Beliefs

We believe every child is learning and growing through experience. Guided by Islamic principles of compassion (rahmah), respect (adab), and intentional guidance (tarbiyah), we help children understand their emotions, build positive relationships, and make good choices.

Core Values

Fostering Early Foundations

Creating nurturing environments where young children feel safe, supported, and inspired to explore, learn, and grow through positive relationships and developmentally appropriate practices.

Key Components

- Positive Reinforcement:
  We praise and encourage good behavior, kindness, and cooperation using warm language and recognition. “Whoever does an atom’s weight of good will see it.” (Qur’an 99:7)
- Gentle Redirection:
  Teachers guide children toward better choices with calm redirection and options. We help children understand and repair behavior rather than punish it.
- Play-Based Engagement:
  A hands-on, developmentally appropriate curriculum keeps children engaged and reduces behavior issues by meeting their natural need to explore, play, and connect.
- Family Partnership:
  When additional support is needed, parent-teacher conferences are held to work together on consistent strategies, grounded in mutual respect and care for the child’s well-being

At AYA, we aim to nurture the whole child—heart, mind, and character—through love, guidance, and a learning environment shaped by the values of Islam.

Parent-Teacher Conferences: Building a Strong Partnership

At AYA, parent-teacher conferences are a valuable opportunity to strengthen the connection between home and school. These meetings give parents and teachers time to discuss each child’s growth in a supportive, collaborative setting.

For preschoolers, conferences help:

- Celebrate developmental milestones and learning progress
- Share observations about social-emotional and behavioral growth
- Set shared goals that support your child both at school and at home
- Address any concerns early with care and understanding

We view parents as partners in the learning journey. Regular conferences, 3 times a year, ensure we're working together to support your child's success, rooted in compassion, communication, and trust.

Universal Precautions & Hand Hygiene Guidelines

At AYA, we are committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all students, staff, and families. To help prevent the spread of illness, we follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines known as Universal Precautions.

These precautions are called "universal" because they apply to everyone, regardless of whether a person appears sick or not. They are especially important when dealing with blood or bodily fluids containing blood, but are a best practice in all situations to minimize the spread of germs and infections.

Key Handwashing Guidelines:

Proper hand hygiene is one of the most effective ways to prevent the transmission of disease. The following steps should be followed consistently:

- Use running water that drains (never standing water).
- Use liquid soap (bar soap is not recommended).
- Rub hands together for at least 15 seconds to create friction, which helps remove germs.
- Rinse thoroughly under running water for at least 30 seconds.
- Use a paper towel to turn off the faucet, as the faucet is considered a contaminated surface.

Who Should Wash Their Hands?

All individuals in the classroom—including teachers, assistants, volunteers, student workers, and parents—must wash their hands:

- After arriving at school
- After using the restroom or assisting a child in the restroom
- Before and after handling food
- After contact with bodily fluids
- After wiping noses, mouths, or cleaning surfaces
- After handling shared toys or classroom materials

By consistently following these simple precautions, we greatly reduce the risk of illness and create a safer, healthier environment for everyone in our care.

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. Please refer to school policy as pre-school will follow the same rules and regulations school wide.

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.

Preschool Rest Time Policy

Each day, preschool students are provided the opportunity to rest or take a nap. It is required that each child have a sheet or blanket placed directly underneath them, as well as a separate blanket to cover themselves during rest time. These items should be taken home every Friday for laundering and returned to school on Monday morning in a large zip-lock bag.

While children are not required to sleep, they are expected to rest quietly to avoid disturbing others who may be sleeping. This quiet rest period helps all students recharge and prepare for the remainder of the day's activities.

Pest Control

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

Play Safe and Have Fun!

At AYA, the playground is a place to laugh, explore, and make friends — all while staying safe! Here's how we keep playtime awesome for everyone:

- Listen up! When your teacher calls, it's time to stop and pay attention.
- Be a friend! Think about others — does your friend want a turn? Would they like to join your game?
- Hold tight! Always use both hands when climbing or swinging to stay safe and steady.
- Think first! Before you jump, run, or climb, ask yourself: "Will I or someone else get hurt?"

Let's play smart, be kind, and have a blast together!

Potty Training & Potty Training Policy

At AYA, students enrolled in the Three-Year-Old Program and VPK are required to be fully potty trained prior to enrollment. Students two years old and younger are not required to be potty trained.

For students in the Two-Year-Old Program, AYA implements the following potty training support policy:

- Teamwork is key: Teachers and parents must collaborate closely. Parents are expected to continue potty routines at home to ensure consistency and success.
- Regular potty breaks: Children will be offered potty breaks approximately every hour. During these times, teachers will assist the child in using the restroom, which includes a standard commode with a step stool for comfort and safety. Children receive positive reinforcement with a fun hand stamp for their effort, whether or not they successfully use the potty.
- Pull-ups: Children should wear pull-ups with side fasteners for easy removal and dressing without complete undressing.
- Transition to underwear: Children will remain in pull-ups until staff and parents feel confident that the child is ready to wear regular fabric underwear.
- Soiled clothing procedures:
    - Urine-soiled underwear will be placed in a sealed plastic bag and sent home.
    - Stool-soiled underwear may be sent home in a bag or discarded by the school, based on parental preference.

If a child has a medical condition affecting potty training or requiring special accommodations, parents should:

- Schedule a meeting with the child's teacher and the Early Childhood Principal.
- Provide a letter from the child's pediatrician outlining specific needs.
- Authorize communication between the school and pediatrician if needed to support the child's success.

AYA is dedicated to fostering each child's growth with care and respect. Working together, we strive to make potty training a positive and successful experience for all.

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

At AYA, the safety and security of our students and staff is our highest priority. We take every precaution to prevent accidents and ensure a secure learning environment.

General Safety Guidelines

- All unsafe conditions must be promptly reported to the administration.
- Teachers must keep a copy of each child's emergency information with them at all times.
- All medications and cleaning supplies are securely stored out of children's reach.
- Teachers are required to carry a fully stocked first aid kit during activities.
- All teaching staff must complete CPR and First Aid training.

Accident and Incident Procedures

- First aid kits are available in every classroom.
- Gloves must be worn whenever handling bodily fluids to ensure proper hygiene and safety.
- Appropriate first aid will be administered as follows:
    - Bumps and bruises: Apply ice packs
    - Cuts and scrapes: Clean with soap and water
    - Insect bites: Rinse with cool water
- All accidents or incidents must be reported immediately to the infirmary office by the teacher.
- An Incident Report will be completed and initiated by the Early Childhood Principal prior to parental review and signature, whenever possible.
- The Incident Report must include a detailed description of the event, the circumstances leading to it, and any resulting injuries.
- The head teacher, associate teacher, or an authorized substitute may sign the incident report.
- Once signed by the parent and Early Childhood Principal, the original report is placed in the Early Childhood Principal's mailbox.
- The Early Childhood Principal logs the incident in the accident log and files the report in the child's confidential file.

Toileting Accident Protocol

- The child's clothing will be changed promptly following any toileting accident.
- Soiled clothing will be placed in a sealed plastic bag and sent home with the child.
- Any floors, furniture, or materials contaminated during the incident will be thoroughly disinfected to maintain a clean environment.

Staff: Early Childhood

The Early Childhood staff at AYA are dedicated, nurturing professionals who meet or exceed all education and training standards required for their positions.
Educational Qualifications:

- K4 teachers hold at least a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education.
- Teachers of 3-year-olds, toddlers, and infants possess either a Bachelor's degree or a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, along with 45 hours of specialized training and VPK instructor certification (for VPK teachers).
- All teachers meet the minimum qualifications established by the Florida Council of Independent Schools (FCIS) accreditation.

- **Professional Development:**
  - Staff are required to participate in ongoing continuing education and in-service training programs to maintain and enhance their skills.
  - Each staff member must complete a minimum of 10 administration-approved training hours annually.
  - All early childhood training programs are overseen and managed by AYA's administration to ensure quality and consistency.

- **Health and Safety Requirements:**
  - All teaching professionals must maintain current CPR and First Aid certification.
  - Background checks are conducted through the Florida Department of Children and Families as part of our commitment to safety and compliance.

Teacher-to-Child Ratios

AYA strictly adheres to the adult-to-child ratios mandated by State Statute 402.305 (4) and Hillsborough County Child Care Licensing to ensure optimal supervision, safety, and quality care:

Age Group	Required Adult-to-Child Ratio
Birth through 1 year of age	1 adult : 4 children
1 year of age or older, but under 2 years	1 adult : 6 children
2 years of age or older, but under 3 years	1 adult : 11 children
3 years of age or older, but under 4 years	1 adult : 15 children
4 years of age or older, but under 5 years	1 adult : 20 children
5 years of age or older	1 adult : 25 children

For VPK students (4–5 years old):

- During VPK instructional hours, AYA maintains a ratio of 1 adult to 11 children to align with VPK standards.

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.

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. I herby agree that my signature is received electronically as part of the enrollment process.

Useful Resources

Language Arts:

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

Math:

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.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.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.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
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=rela