



**The Awty International School
Houston**

**Student/Parent Consolidated Handbook
2021 - 2022**

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LETTER FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

August 2021

Dear Students and Parents,

I am delighted to welcome all of our students and their families to the 2021-2022 school year. Whether you are new to Awty or returning to our school, we are committed to making this year safe, enjoyable, and productive for everyone.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide useful information that will enable you to take full advantage of the many resources and special opportunities we have created. As an international school with students from around the world, Awty is a complex school.

We expect all students and parents will read this handbook and abide by the school's rules and policies. If you do not find answers to any questions you have regarding the school or its policies, please do not hesitate to contact your division administrator or me.

Once again, welcome to the 2021-2022 school year at Awty. Together, we can work toward achieving our ambitious Purpose, Vision, and Mission as described on the next page.

Lisa A. H. Darling
Head of School

PURPOSE STATEMENT

To inspire learners through academic excellence, cultural diversity, and multilingual fluency for a life of global impact.

VISION STATEMENT

A world-class international school, on a welcoming campus, with a unique school spirit, which challenges and inspires all of our students to achieve their ultimate potential.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Awty International School provides a challenging education, leading to either the International Baccalaureate or the French Baccalauréat.

Within a friendly and nurturing environment, which encourages learning and the pursuit of excellence, Awty celebrates linguistic, cultural, and international diversity and seeks to maximize the potential in all of our students as they grow to become responsible world citizens.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

At Awty, we believe all students thrive best in a culture of vibrant diversity. Diversity is an essential quality of our school environment; our commitment to learning and the pursuit of excellence can occur only in such a context. It helps us guide our students to become responsible world citizens.

We are a community of many cultures, languages, and countries of origin. We are also a community diverse in age, appearance, family structure, gender, gender identity, national origin, political view, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic level, and in the traditions we observe.

We strive to be a friendly and nurturing environment for all in our community. We value every member of our community and treat all with dignity and respect. We celebrate many traditions and seek to learn from all. Our commitment to learning about and respecting one another's diversity brings distinct richness to the Awty experience for students, alumni, employees, and parents.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Awty International School is governed by a Board of Trustees responsible for hiring, evaluating, supervising, and supporting the Head of School; establishing major school policies; developing and overseeing the strategic plan; ensuring the school's fiscal health; and fundraising. The Board of Trustees delegates day to day operations of the school to the Head of School. There are three ex-officio trustees: the Head of School, President of the Awty Parent and Personnel Association (APPA), and the President of the Alumni Association. All other trustees are nominated, oriented, and evaluated by the Board's Committee on Trustees. Current Trustees are listed on the school website.

STUDENT PARENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Student/Parent Handbook has been written to help you and your child(ren) gain the greatest possible benefit from his or her school experience. Please refer to it often throughout the school year to guide your understanding of important school policies and procedures.

At the same time, we know no set of rules or guidelines can cover every conceivable situation that might arise at school. The policies and procedures set forth in this handbook are intended to apply under normal circumstances. However, from time to time, there may be situations that require immediate or nonstandard responses. This handbook does not limit the school's authority to deviate from the normal policies and procedures to deal with individual circumstances as they arise in the manner deemed most appropriate by the school, taking into consideration the best interests of our institution, its students, employees, and school community. Additionally, the school's failure to enforce any of the policies or procedures does not preclude it from doing so in the future. The policies and procedures in this handbook may be revised or updated periodically, even during the school year. You will be advised of any changes either by email or by mail.

Since the well-being of our school and everyone in our community is of the utmost importance, compliance with this handbook is a condition of enrollment at The Awty International School. Accordingly, any violation of the school's policies or procedures by either the student or parent(s) may result in, at the school's sole discretion, disciplinary action up to and including immediate expulsion of a student or non-renewal of a student's enrollment contract for future academic years.

In keeping with Awty's vision and mission, all students and parents are expected to take pride in being a member of The Awty International School Community. Any actions by students or parents considered to reflect poorly on the school, harm the school's reputation, or negatively impact the school, may result in, at the sole discretion of the Head of School, disciplinary action up to and including immediate dismissal from the school or non-renewal of a student's enrollment contract for future academic years. The Board shall be informed of any such decision.

It is important every student and parent understand the rights and responsibilities that apply to him or her. Please read and discuss relevant parts of this handbook with your child(ren) . When you have done so, please sign the acknowledgement form on the next page and return it to one of the Primary School or Secondary School offices. Any student or parent with a question about any handbook material should feel free to speak with the Division Heads, the Proviseur, or the Head of School.

The Handbook can be found on the Awty website under [Campus Life > School Publications](#).

DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL

The Awty School, founded as a Preschool in 1956 by Mrs. Kathleen Awty, grew in size and enrollment until 1975 when an Upper School was added. The French School of Houston joined with the Awty School in 1978 and together, with special thanks to the Mission Laïque Française (a French non-profit association) for financial support, they moved to the school's current site. The school was renamed The Awty International School in March of 1984.

Accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest (I.S.A.S.) , the French Ministry of Education (M.E.N.), the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO), and the Dutch Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, The Awty International School is unique among Houston's private schools. Like many of them, it is a private, co-educational, college-preparatory day school offering programs from Preschool through 12th grade. However, its multi-national student body and strong language programs provide a multi-cultural experience not available elsewhere.

The Awty International School provides a structured cultural exchange program that fosters the sharing of the foreign culture, history, and traditions, and promotes cultural awareness and understanding. The program is designed in conjunction with the academic curriculum, extending the education experience beyond the classroom walls. Through this structured program, students, parents and the larger Houston community are provided a platform to get acquainted with aspects of other cultures, exploring their customs, history, heritage, philosophy, and traditions.

The School offers two curricula: French and International. In addition, there are second language options in French or Spanish, from pre-kindergarten to the 5th grade, and third language options starting at 6th grade. While the school has two academic programs, the school is truly one school, offering many bridges between both, focusing on ways the students can benefit from both programs.

The French bilingual program is accredited by the French Ministry of National Education. In this sense, it follows the basic program and adapts it to US specificities. The aim of the program is the French baccalaureate which is an internationally recognized diploma allowing access to European but also North American universities. The adjustments made allow students to follow fully bilingual curriculums that welcome both French and English speaking students. They challenge themselves academically, explore their creativity and increase their confidence as they speak and think in two or more languages. The French based program, rigorous and structured, offers a wide range of subjects. French program teachers are accredited by the Ministry in the subjects that require it.

The International program curriculum is based on current best practices in education, with the goal of helping students develop global perspective, become responsible world citizens, and be fully equipped to be successful in the 21st century. At all levels, there is a strong emphasis on the study of a second language to fluency. Across the school, whether in preschool or upper school, in the humanities or math and science, the curriculum makes use of themes, approaches and materials which reflect the diversity of nationalities and cultures of our students as well as internationally recognized teaching strategies and resources. All International program students

in the 11th and 12th grade levels follow the full International Baccalaureate curriculum and prepare for the I.B. diploma by sitting for examinations at the end of 12th grade.

Awty takes pride in offering two programs but uniquely fostering a 'one school environment'. While the two separate programs culminate in different diplomas, there are many bridges between the French and International programs. All children at the Early Learning Campus (PK3/PS - 1st grade/CP) follow a dual language program, alternating instructional days in French/English or Spanish/English. Children in the Lower School (2nd grade/CE1 - 5th grade/CM2) spend a great deal of time in their primary language, but with significant exposure to their second language. Students in 6th grade/6ème through 10th grade/2nde from the two programs mix for language, elective, and physical education classes.

CAMPUS POLICIES

COVID-19 Pandemic Disclaimer: All COVID-19 protocols supersede the handbook policies found within this document. To access and read the COVID-19 protocols, [click here](#). All students, parents, faculty, and staff are expected to be familiar with and abide by the COVID-19 protocols.

SCHOOL INCLUSION POLICY

The Awty International School admits students of any race, color, national, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PARENT RESOURCES

The Awty International School is a diverse institution embracing over 50 nationalities and over 40 languages among its teachers, parents, and students making clear communication channels a necessity. To help consolidate information sharing, please rely on the following sources of information in addition to your student's Division Office. Your student's Division Office will be able to assist with most items or guide you to the right place should you need further assistance.

AWTY NOTES

This weekly electronic communication is emailed to all parents and it is also posted to the website each Friday during the school year, beginning in August. To ensure you receive the Awty Notes, please provide your current email information to the school by updating your profile in My Backpack or you may contact the [Business Office](#).

AWTY WEBSITE

Awty's website (www.awty.org) is the school's primary repository of communication with parents. The myAWTY portal allows parents access to current calendars, news alerts, events, directories, online forms, volunteer information, and more. To access this portal, you will use the same username and password used to access My Backpack. If you have login or password problems, please contact the [Business Office](#).

MASS EMAIL

Awty frequently communicates a variety of important information, including emergency information and messages from the Head of School, to families via mass email. To ensure you receive emails from Awty, please be sure to provide a current email address by updating your profile in My Backpack, or you may send it to the [Business Office](#). Please note that unsubscribing from any email will result in unsubscribing from ALL Awty emails including important notices.

MY BACKPACK

My Backpack allows parents convenient and private access to their student's schedule, attendance information, and term grades over a secure, password-protected Internet connection. Student invoices are also posted in My Backpack on the 15th of every month. My Backpack can be accessed through the parent portal or by using the link on the home page of the Awty website. For new parents, your user name and password will be sent to you once enrollment has been completed.

SCHOOLGY

An integrated learning management solution that provides course management, mobile learning, and support for system-wide communication. Schoology enables our students, parents, and teachers to engage with learning materials and their school community from the classroom and beyond.

SCHOOL DIRECTORY

A searchable online directory is available through [My Backpack](#) for students, parents, staff and faculty which can also be accessed through the [myAWTY portal](#). The online directories are provided to parents for school-related purposes only -- Awty does not condone the use of these directories for any other purpose.

The directory is for the exclusive benefit of the students, parents, and personnel of Awty. The directory and/or database shall not be given or sold to any external source, and those affiliated with the school are expected to respect this policy. None of the school directories should be used for commercial use. Do not publish the school directory without explicit permission from the school.

AWTY OFFICIAL SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Awty is on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#) and regularly posts news, photos, videos, and event information.

PHOTOS AND IMAGES

Parent agrees to allow student's name, photograph, voice, image, and information to be used by the School, and those acting with the School's permission, for use in the School's publications, promotional materials, website, and social media accounts, without compensation and without prior notice. Parent agrees to allow student to be interviewed by the media on campus or at school-related events. Parent also consents to the recording and distribution or live streaming of student's voice, image and video in instruction or presentations as may be deemed appropriate in the School's discretion. Parent releases and holds the School harmless from any liability stemming from the use of the student's name, photograph, voice, video, image, or information.

If you do not want your child's voice and images recorded during distance learning, we are relying on parents to take steps with their computer or the spacing of the child to the computer to block their child's image from being recorded. If you do not want your child's voice to be recorded, we would similarly ask that you instruct your child not to verbally participate and advise the teacher of such instruction

COMMUNICATING WITH FRENCH AGENCIES

The Head of School and Proviseur act as the liaisons between families and French education agencies, including Mission Laïque Française and the French Ministry of Education. The school will communicate relevant information from French agencies to families. If you have questions or concerns to communicate to French officials, please make an appointment with the Head of School or Proviseur so they can communicate on your behalf as requested by these agencies.

THE ADVANCEMENT DEPARTMENT

The Advancement Department's role is to foster the support of the Awty community in order to help The Awty International School accomplish its goals and objectives. Tuition alone does not cover the cost of operating the school and providing the one-of-a-kind education available to Awty students. The Advancement Department's work fulfills the budget requirements.

Parents' financial support of the school is deeply appreciated. If you would like to make a donation or are interested in supporting the school, please contact the Advancement Department (713-686-4850 ext. 5861) located in the Levant Foundation Building. Business hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

VOLUNTEERS

All volunteers who have contact with students must complete the [Awty Volunteer Program](#) before volunteering at the school. The following steps are required:

1. Submit a completed [volunteer application form](#) which authorizes Awty to perform background checks on potential volunteers. The application requires private information which is handled with the utmost care and confidentiality.
2. Abuse prevention training is required of all volunteers. Live training is offered once per year at the beginning of the school year in English and French. The training is also available on-demand online in four 40-minute sessions in English, French, and Spanish.

The approved volunteer list is maintained by the school and all faculty, staff, and parent organizations (APPA, Rams Booster Club, Fine Arts Booster Club, Awty Dads Club) have access. Please see the accompanying appendix for further information on parent groups.

PREPARING FOR SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE

Families are strongly discouraged from planning absences for vacations or other avoidable circumstances. If extraordinary circumstances require that a student miss school, a parent or guardian must send a note to the student's Division Office or fill out the [Premeditated Absence Form](#) available on the Awty website.

A parent or guardian should notify the Division Office of a student's unplanned absence by 8.30 a.m. the morning of the absence, whenever possible. Students who are absent may obtain

assignments if their parents or guardian contact the Division/Program Office before 11:00 a.m. and pick up the assignments after 2:00 p.m.

Please refer to the Primary or Secondary Handbooks for specific attendance policies and procedures for each division.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

The purpose of the uniform is twofold. First, the uniform code is to instill in students a proper sense of formal grooming and presentation. Second, since Awty students come from many cultures and all walks of life, the uniform serves to equalize socioeconomic status and cultural backgrounds.

See the Uniform Section of the Division Handbooks for each grade's uniform requirements. Non-compliance with the school uniform will result in disciplinary action and may also necessitate parents delivering suitable attire to school. Awty International School uniforms must be purchased through [Dennis Uniforms](#), or at the Used Uniform store.

Students in 5th grade/CM2 -12th grade/Tle must wear a school-approved P.E. uniform and tennis shoes during class. One free P.E. uniform, including a pair of shorts and a T-shirt, is issued to each student during the first week of school. Additional P.E. uniforms can be purchased at the School Store or Used Uniform store.

SCHOOL STORE

Awty's [School Store](#) provides all the required books and supplies for both the International and French Programs, as well as miscellaneous school supplies, uniform sweatshirts and jackets, spirit wear and insignia items.

Only students in 3rd/CE2 and higher may visit the School Store unaccompanied by an adult, but they must have permission from their teacher or other staff member. Students in 2nd/CE1 are not permitted to visit the store unless accompanied by an adult. The preferred method of payment in the School Store is to charge the student's school account but checks and cash are also accepted. Credit and debit cards are not accepted.

The School Store accepts returns of purchased items under the following conditions. Between August 15 and September 6, books purchased but not needed must be returned within 21 days of purchase. After September 6, books must be returned within five days of purchase and are subject to a 10% restocking fee. All other merchandise must be returned within 21 days of purchase. All returned merchandise must be in the same condition in which it was purchased and must be accompanied by the original sales receipt.

The School Store is located in Kay Awty Center and is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. The School Store can be reached at 713-328-5858.

GETTING TO CAMPUS

DRIVING AND PARKING ON CAMPUS

Please help us keep our community, especially the children, safe by respecting the following guidelines when driving and parking on campus. Any violation of these rules may result in loss of driving privileges on school property:

- Drive slowly and prudently on campus. The speed limit is 5 miles per hour.
- Visitors must park in spaces marked "Visitor Parking Only" on the third floor of the parking garage on the main campus. Visitors to the Early Learning Campus should park in the visitor parking lot.
- Handicap parking spaces require a valid, state-issued handicap parking placard on display.
- Parking on campus is at your own risk. Do not leave valuables in your car. The school is not responsible for theft or damage to vehicles or their contents.
- Repeat parking offenders will be towed at the owner's expense.
- Cell phone use, including texting, is prohibited while driving on campus and in carpool.
- Obey all posted signs and agents of the school.

CAMPUS VISITORS

Our visitor policy prioritizes the health and safety of our community, student well-being, and overall community experience. Visits will be planned and purposeful to the student experience. All campus visitors must have prior approval from either an Academic Division or the business office. In addition, all visitors to campus including parents must register with the receptionist and be given a name badge before proceeding to their destination.

Those who are on the Approved Volunteer List will wear a volunteer name badge stating their name and the date of their visit. Those who are not on the list will wear a parent name badge stating their name and the date of their visit. This policy will be strictly enforced by our staff and faculty to ensure the safety of all of our students. See the *Volunteers* section for more information.

To ensure a safe environment for our families, the school has implemented a tag reading system at the east and west main campus and ELC entrances. Parents and Student Drivers are required to display an Awty window decal. You will also be required to input your vehicle information into the SchoolPass app. Please utilize these links to help you with this process.

- [Update Your Plates on the SchoolPass App for Parents](#)
- [Update Your Plates on the SchoolPass Website for Par](#)

BUS SERVICE

The Awty International School contracts with AFC Transportation to provide bus service to and from school. In a city as large as Houston, the buses must pick-up and drop-off students at designated bus stops rather than each rider's home. To schedule your child(ren) for one of the bus routes, please register your child by completing the Bus Registration Form in [My Backpack](#).

Please note: To be eligible to ride the bus, PK3 and PK4 students must have a sibling in at least 3rd grade or higher riding the same bus.

Students must be at the bus stop at least five minutes before the scheduled departure time, and the person designated to pick them up must be at the same stop in the afternoon at least five minutes before the bus is scheduled to drop students off. Under no circumstances will students be left unsupervised at the bus stops. If a parent or guardian is not there to pick them up, the child(ren) will be returned by bus to the school.

STUDENT VISITORS

Students are not permitted to bring visitors to school. All prospective students should be directed to the [Admissions Office](#) to schedule campus visits.

Alumni and former students in good standing with the school are welcome to visit the school for a day with permission from the appropriate Division Office or the Alumni Office. Arrangements can be made by contacting the appropriate Division Office or the Alumni Office in advance of the visit.

PARENTS AND VISITORS FOR LUNCH

Due to space constraints, we are unable to accommodate parents and visitors for on-campus lunch with students.

PETS ON CAMPUS

Pets are not allowed on the campuses of The Awty International School. Service animals are permitted on campus in accordance with and as defined by applicable federal and Texas state law. Anyone with questions regarding service animals on campus should contact their division head. At the School's sole discretion, police and search animals may be permitted on campus.

ON CAMPUS

FOOD SERVICE

[SAGE Dining Services](#) manages the school's food service program. SAGE provides a variety of healthy, fresh food selections for students. As part of the Spice of Life, SAGE has introduced the Spotlight Nutrition program to teach students about making healthy choices. Sage also offers a downloadable app which includes ingredient lists and nutritional values for daily menu items. The daily menu can be found in the myAWTY portal on the Awty website.

Questions, concerns, and suggestions about the food service program can be addressed to the [Chef](#) from Sage Dining.

Lunch and snack service is required; it appears on student tuition bills as a separate fee.

ALLERGENS AT SCHOOL

The Awty International School strives to maintain a "nut free, peanut free" environment. Due to the prevalence of food allergies, especially peanut allergies, please do not include nuts, peanut butter, peanut products, or other nut butter or nut products as part of a student's lunch or snack.

The school may prohibit certain other foods from being brought on campus or to certain locations on campus.

Parents and students are responsible for protecting the student against exposure to allergens. If a student has a severe allergy, it should be documented with the School Clinic via a doctor's written report.

LIBRARIES

SECONDARY LIBRARY

The Secondary Library serves Middle and Upper School students. It is open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Mondays through Thursdays and until 4:30 p.m. on Fridays. At all times, the library should be utilized as an academic resource center. Early Learning and Lower School students are not allowed in the Secondary Library without a teacher. Parents wishing to use the library should contact the librarians.

LOWER SCHOOL LIBRARY

The Lower School library, located on the second floor of the Lower School building, serves students in 2nd grade/CE1 to 5th grade/CM2. It is open every day during school hours. Visiting times will be arranged by class at the beginning of the school year.

EARLY LEARNING LIBRARY

The Early Learning Library, located at the ELC, serves students in PK3/PS to 1st grade/CP. Visiting times will be arranged by class at the beginning of the school year.

LOST AND FOUND

Families are urged to mark all uniforms, clothing and other belongings with the student's first and last name. Each Division maintains a Lost & Found. If you believe an item has been lost, please contact your child's respective Division Office for guidance. Lost & Found will be cleaned out three times per year near the end of each trimester; dates will be announced in the Awty Notes. All items remaining in Lost & Found will be donated to charity one week after the last day of school.

AWTY PLUS: BEFORE SCHOOL

Supervision begins at 7:15 a.m. on regular school days. This is for the convenience of parents who need to drop their children off early because of work commitments. There is no fee for this service.

Parents whose children are in Upper or Middle School activities before school may only leave Lower School siblings if they are in the care of Awty Plus staff members. Other students may not be left at school before 7:30 a.m.

AWTY PLUS: AFTER SCHOOL

Supervised after-school activities are provided for a fee on regular school days, from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The activities offered by Awty Plus include sports, art, music, dance, karate, and many more. Homework assistance is offered to students in 1st grade/CP through 5th grade/CM2. The

school does not guarantee qualified homework completion support in all subjects at all grade levels. Please refer to the [Awty Plus web page](#) on the school's website for registration information.

Awty Plus is not a day care facility, but a program designed for students wishing to pursue activities after the conclusion of the regular school day. There will be adult supervision on campus until 6:00 p.m. The school does not offer any regular services after 6:00 p.m., and students must be picked up by that time.

Further inquiries regarding the Awty Plus Program should be directed to the Awty Plus Director.

SAFETY ON CAMPUS

SAFETY DRILLS AND FIRE ALARMS

The school will periodically conduct safety and fire preparedness drills. All people on campus during these drills must participate including students, employees, and visitors. Fire alarms are only to be pulled in an emergency. Pulling an alarm in any other circumstance will result in disciplinary action.

CAMPUS PREPAREDNESS

The school is committed to providing an innovative, challenging education in a safe environment. To that end, campus preparedness plans have been developed to address both day-to-day safety issues, as well as emergency situations.

The school utilizes several methods to contact parents in the case of an emergency:

- Emergency notices posted on the home page of the school's website at www.awty.org and on the school's social media platforms.
- An emergency email notification to all parents, faculty, and staff.
- A broadcast telephone and/or text message.
- Awty will NOT follow other schools in regards to announcements of school closings. Awty will assess its own situation, always keeping in mind the safety of our students and employees as paramount.

For reasons of both personal and student safety, parents should always check local media, email, voicemail, the school website, and/or the school's social media platforms before traveling to the campus.

SMOKE FREE CAMPUS

Please remember the entire campus is "smoke-free." Smoking and vaping are prohibited both inside and outside of the buildings including in your vehicle while anywhere on campus.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL FREE

Any student who voluntarily comes forward to ask for assistance with a drug or alcohol related problem will be treated as a health, rather than a disciplinary, case. A student who is caught in

possession of alcohol or drugs who only then asks for assistance will be treated as a disciplinary case.

Any student found in possession of illegal drugs, including those prescribed for someone else, while on campus or at a school-related activity may be disciplined up to and including expulsion from the school. Any student caught selling drugs on campus or at a school-related function may be disciplined up to and including expulsion from the school. The school reserves the right to report illegal behavior to the police.

Any student caught in the possession of or under the influence of alcohol will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

Any student caught in the possession of drug paraphernalia will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

In accordance with the school's efforts to ensure a drug and alcohol free campus, the school may conduct random searches of any area of the school premises, including student lockers, cars, and personal belongings such as backpacks at any time and without prior notice. Anything found in unattended bags or unlocked lockers will be considered the possessions of the owner of the bag or the locker. Therefore, all students are urged to look after their possessions at all times and to lock their lockers. The school may employ the assistance of dogs in its searches.

WEAPONS

The Awty International School prohibits anyone from possessing or carrying weapons of any kind on school property, in school vehicles, or in personal vehicles at any school function on or off campus, or while on school business. This includes:

- Any form of weapon or explosive
- All firearms
- All knives or blades

If someone is uncertain whether an item is covered by this policy, he or she should contact the appropriate Division Office. Families are responsible for making sure that any item they possess is not prohibited by this policy. Police officers, security guards, and other individuals who have been given express consent by the School to carry a weapon on the property are permitted to do so.

While the school has a policy prohibiting weapons, nothing in this policy shall be construed as creating any duty or obligation on the part of the school to take any actions beyond those required by existing law.

SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING

The School may conduct monitoring to help ensure employee and student safety and security, including video and audio surveillance of non-private areas to identify safety concerns, maintain security, detect theft and misconduct, and discourage and prevent acts of harassment and violence which may or may not be monitored at any time. Images from the video surveillance

cameras will be recorded and maintained for not more than 14 days. While the School's video surveillance camera system is primarily for property protection purposes, it may also be used for disciplinary purposes, policy enforcement, legal proceedings, or investigations. Viewing and other use of the monitoring equipment and recordings shall be limited to those individuals authorized by the Head of School at his or her sole discretion. Unauthorized use or misuse of the school's video surveillance camera system is grounds for disciplinary action.

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN

In compliance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act, Sections 763.85-763.99, the school has an asbestos management plan in place, which is available for review in the Maintenance Office. The school is required to comply with regulations relating to schools. The Awty International School, to the best of our knowledge, is asbestos free.

STUDENT SUPPORT

WELLNESS COUNSELORS

Awty's Wellness Counselors collaborate with the pedagogical team and parents to promote the academic success and social-emotional well-being of our students.

Throughout the year, the counselors provide services of observation and consultation for students, faculty, and parents. They offer social-emotional learning opportunities, character education, and special programs that prepare students for the challenges of life. Students are welcome to initiate a meeting with a counselor, and referrals to the counselors can be made by Division Heads, teachers, and parents.

Wellness Counselors provide parents with information and strategies to support their children's development through parenting forums on a variety of topics during the school year. The counselors are also available to meet with parents upon request. When additional assessment or services are indicated, our counselors can provide families with resources to consider in the community.

LEARNING DIFFERENCES

The Awty International School provides students with a rigorous academic education. The school does its best to admit students who will be successful in demonstrating independent mastery of the required curriculum. Reasonable accommodations are available to support students with learning differences. All accommodation plans are approved and managed by the learning support coordinator.

TUTORS AND TUTORING

When parents are considering tutoring for their child, they should contact the appropriate Division Office. The Awty International School's teachers are not permitted to tutor students in their own class and must have permission from the appropriate Division Head before tutoring any Awty student. Secondary teachers offer one hour per week of additional assistance, known as Office Hours, to assist any student.

PROGRAM TRANSFER REQUESTS

The Awty International School derives its unique character from the interaction between two programs of study, the French Accredited Program, which culminates in the French Baccalauréat, and the International Program, which culminates in the International Baccalaureate diploma. Understanding that long term language goals may change for families, it is possible for parents to request a program transfer for the following academic year. To do so, please review the [Program Transfer Policy](#).

TRANSCRIPTS AND TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Student transcripts and teacher recommendations will only be sent to other schools with a signed parental release. Requests must be submitted to the relevant Division Office. Transcripts and teacher recommendations will be mailed from the school directly to the requesting school. Transcripts will not be given to parents or students for hand delivery. This is a very strict policy, which the professional educational community respects and demands. Requests are typically completed in ten school days. If time is critical and the request is from a local school, parents may request and pay for a courier service.

TECHNOLOGY

The school provides a computer system as a tool in attaining the goals set out in the school's mission. The following guidelines apply to access and use of all of the school's technology resources including computer hardware, the school network, internet access, software, and other technology. This includes the use of computers and technology in the [Bring Your Own Device](#) program for Secondary students. Use of technology resources is a privilege and with this privilege comes responsibility.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The use of all electronic devices is prohibited during class time with the exception of laptops or computing devices used during instructional time with the express permission and approval of the teacher. If students break this rule, teachers will confiscate these devices immediately and deliver them to the Division Office. Students may pick the device(s) up at the office at the end of the day. The punishment for each offense of this rule is a Saturday morning detention. Students and parents will be informed of the date and time of the detention. The fourth offense of this rule may result in a school suspension. Violation of this rule may be treated as an Honor Code violation. Continued disrespect of this rule may result in expulsion from the school.

STUDENT POLICIES FOR TECHNOLOGY USE

By signing the Student/Parent Handbook Acknowledgement form, students and parents indicate that they have read, understood, and will abide by its provisions, including acceptable use of technology.

The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act requires any child under age 13 to have parental consent before creating accounts on certain websites. The School uses various websites and online programs in tandem with its one to one technology program for educational purposes.

Many of these websites require accounts to be created for students. In some cases, the Technology Department or a teacher will need to use a student's personal information (name, email address, age, etc.) to set up an account. By signing the Handbook Acknowledgement, you agree to allow your child or an employee at the School to use my child's personal information to create online accounts for access to educational websites and programs used at the School.

The school reserves the right to block access on the school's network to social media and other internet content it deems inappropriate for students. The school reserves the right to monitor, review, audit, intercept, access, and disclose all messages and files created or received for any purpose with or without notice. Files, including email, and websites accessed through the school's network, internet access, or technology resources are not private. The school makes no warranties of any kind that the functions or services provided by or through the school computer system will be error-free or without defect. The school will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data, interruptions in service, or computer virus infections. The school establishes a retention schedule and maintains the school's network anti-virus software.

STUDENT ACCOUNTS

Each student from 2nd/CE1 through 12th grade/Tle will be assigned an account, user name, and password. Once a student receives a user name, they will be able to log onto the computer system at Awty until departure from the school. A student account allows the student to access the appropriate network drives from designated student access locations.

Students are responsible for their class account and must take all reasonable precautions to prevent other individuals from accessing their accounts. Personal passwords must not be shared. Students are also responsible for ensuring their account stays within its space allocation quota by deleting unnecessary or outdated files.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The school allows internet and school network access to be used only for educational purposes and school-related activities.

- Students are expected to be familiar with and comply with school policies concerning copyright and plagiarism. Students are expected to refer to their teachers if they have any questions on what constitutes violation of this policy. To promote originality in student work, the students may be required, on designated assignments, to submit their work to an on-line plagiarism prevention service.
- Students must treat the school's computer system, its data, and all hardware and software with the utmost care.
- Students are expected to inform their teachers or email the helpdesk immediately if they receive any messages that are inappropriate or do not comply with the Acceptable Use Policy.
- Students must inform their teacher or Technology Department personnel if they see other users misusing the school's computer system and/or violating the terms of this policy.
- Students are expected to back-up their work to their Google Drive folders.
- Students are expected to keep hard copies of any assignments.
- Students are expected to refrain from printing material that is not needed for a class activity.

Parents or guardians may advise the school at any time, in writing, that they wish to withdraw their child from the internet access program.

PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR

- The intentional spreading of computer viruses, destroying data, modifying, altering or tampering with system hardware or software.
- Using the system to create, receive, or distribute any offensive, harassing, derogatory, or disruptive messages (cyberbullying) will not be tolerated.
- Downloading software (including shareware, freeware or evaluation copies), audio, or video files, or installing personal software without the prior approval of the Technology Department.
- The installation, copying, or reconfiguration of inappropriate or illegal software on school computers.
- Playing video games, use of chat-rooms, or instant messaging.
- Use of the Internet for any personal or private purposes.
- Attempting to crash, reduce performance, or gain unauthorized access to the computer systems and networks.
- Accessing accounts or files of another student, staff, teacher, or administrator.

The school reserves the right to search and inspect personal electronic devices and any data, messages, or imagery contained in them when these devices are confiscated due to a violation or alleged violation of any school policy.

SOCIAL MEDIA

We strongly advise families to use extra caution in supervising and managing their children's access to and use of social media. Families who do not respect the following guidelines may be subject to discipline.

The Awty International School reserves the right to block access on the school's network to social media and other internet content we deem inappropriate for children. For these reasons, we also prohibit students from using their school email accounts for social media purposes.

The school is not responsible for any material (photographs, videos, audio recordings) posted on personal websites or social media platforms or transmitted through other electronic means such as text messaging or photo sharing websites without its permission.

If Awty International School families choose to use social media, the following guidelines apply:

- Use a respectful tone and appropriate language when making social media posts or messages involving or about the school or other members of The Awty International School community.
- When posting pictures, videos, or audio recordings from Awty International School events, use strict privacy settings and allow only family and other Awty International School community members access.

- Avoid using names of students and ages/grade levels appearing in social media posts or messages and only use first names of adults.
- Do not use the school's logo or other intellectual property without prior written permission from the school's Communications Department. Similarly, do not purport to speak on behalf of the school or mislead others into believing you speak with authority from the school unless you have prior written permission from one of the school's Division Heads.

The school will from time to time review publicly available social media posts and messages made by The Awty International School community members and take action on any information learned from those reviews. Inappropriate use of social media, including cyberbullying, or violations of other school policies learned about via social media will be handled through the school's disciplinary procedure set forth in the Student/Parent Handbook and can result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the school or non-renewal of a student's enrollment contract for future academic years.

CYBERBULLYING

- Any act online or through electronic devices (cellular phones, tablets) that deliberately threatens, harasses, intimidates an individual or group of individuals; places an individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual or damage to the individual's property; has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school is considered cyberbullying.
- Awty prohibits acts of cyberbullying by Awty students or employees through the use of any Awty owned, operated, and supervised technologies. The Head of School or his/her designee may report allegations of cyberbullying to law enforcement authorities.
- Awty has a zero tolerance policy against cyberbullying. Any incidence of cyberbullying should be reported to your division head or direct supervisor immediately. All cyberbullying incidents are to be taken seriously.
- Any Awty student or employee who believes he/she has or is being subjected to cyberbullying, as well as any person who has reason to believe a student or employee has knowledge or reason to believe another student or employee is being subjected to or has been subjected to cyberbullying shall immediately make a report to their division head, direct supervisor, or the Head of School.

PROHIBITION ON SHARING INFORMATION

The School prohibits screenshots, photos, audio/video recordings, and distribution of any virtual educational experiences. This is in order to protect privacy, prevent cyberbullying, and reduce distribution of content from virtual educational experiences. Parents/guardians and other household members who normally are not privy to day-to-day classroom activities agree to respect and keep confidential any personal or private information inadvertently discovered about other students due to their proximity to virtual education.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

The School has adopted health and safety protocols in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and students and parents should be familiar with it. The COVID-19 Protocols, which is subject to change, will control if there is any discrepancy between the Protocols and a handbook provision. The policies in this Handbook and the School's Honor Code apply whether students are on campus or engaging in distance learning.

Students are reminded that anyone who takes deliberate action which endangers the health or safety of the school community, including coming to the School campus with a dangerous viral infection, will face disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

COVID-19 RISK ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The School cannot promise that even with the steps we are taking, that your child(ren) will not be exposed to COVID-19. By sending your children to our School, you acknowledge the contagious nature of COVID-19 and knowingly and voluntarily assume the risk that you and your child(ren) may be exposed to or infected by COVID-19 by coming to our campus and participating in School activities, such as but not limited to the sharing of supplies, belongings, and equipment, and that such exposure or infection may result in personal injury, illness, permanent disability, or death. You further acknowledge and understand the risk of becoming exposed to or infected by COVID-19 may result from or be caused by the actions, omissions, or negligence of yourself or others, including other School families, School employees, or other third parties.

SCHOOL CLINIC

The [School Clinic](#) supports student health through all divisions and is staffed with three Registered Nurses (R.N.). The School Clinic for staff and students 2nd/CE1 through 12th/Tle is located in the Lower School building on the main campus. The second School Clinic at the Early Learning Campus (ELC) is for staff and students PK-3/PS through 1st/CP. Both locations are open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. when school is in session. Admission to the School Clinic for students 1st/CP and above requires a signed note from a teacher or staff member, even during breaks or lunch time, unless it is an emergency.

IMMUNIZATIONS

The Awty International School complies with immunization requirements outlined by the Texas Department of Health-Immunization Division. Each student must be vaccinated or file an approved exemption set forth by the State of Texas. All immunizations or exemption documents must arrive into the clinic prior to the first day of school. Failure to do so may result in a student being excluded from school. Students will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities until their immunization records are up to date. Immunizations are reported annually to the Texas Department of Health in December.

INSURANCE

All enrolled students are covered by a student accident insurance policy that conditionally provides coverage for injuries that occur during school sponsored and supervised activities. The policy provides benefits for certain expenses that are not covered by any other medical

insurance, but the claim must first be submitted to the student's primary medical insurance. The claim must be submitted within 90 days, or as otherwise required by the school's insurance carrier, from the date of the injury. The nurses in the School Clinic should be contacted for a claim form. The school does not and cannot assume the responsibility of parents in making sure they have medical coverage for their families.

STUDENT HEALTH RECORDS

The Awty International School uses the [Magnus Health](#) student medical "need to know basis" record system to store student health information. All parents must complete their individual child's record through the Magnus Health portal prior to the start of school, and **must update their profile annually**. Parents must update any medical changes, recent diagnoses, newly prescribed medications to the student's profile throughout the year. Grade-specific health screenings for vision, hearing, diabetes and spinal are mandatory by the State of Texas. All screening results must be reported at the end of the school year to the State of Texas Health Board. Parents must complete the SchoolPass application every morning prior to the student's arrival on campus. This helps to ensure that children are healthy before entering the Awty campus.

STUDENT MEDICAL LEAVE POLICY

In certain circumstances, it may become necessary for a student to have an extended absence from school for medical reasons. The school will handle these situations on a case-by-case basis. Please contact the appropriate Division Head who will coordinate any medical leave. The school will ask for medical releases before the student returns to school, as well as releases for the school to speak with appropriate health professionals to assist in the smooth and healthy return to school.

STUDENT ILLNESS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The School has a responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for employees, parents, students, and visitors. In the case of global or local threats of a communicable disease, the School will take all reasonable measures that may be necessary to protect the safety and health of members of the School community. These may include implementing infection control guidelines designed to stop or slow the spread of infectious diseases. The School will apply guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and its affiliate, NIOSH, state and local health departments, and the World Health Organization (WHO), and other agencies and resources as appropriate. Each communicable disease is unique. The School's response depends on public health guidance for the specific communicable disease, the nature and stage of the disease, whether mitigation methods are or can be used, and public health guidance on the risk and exposure. Response may include, without limitation, a determination that no risk exists or that no action is required, immunization programs may be put into place, mandatory health screening may be implemented, mitigation steps may be needed such as a student refraining from some activities, utilizing bandages or other barriers, enhanced housekeeping, cancellation of field trips, a medical exam and release, and being sent home from school. Depending on the event, the School may require parents to disclose upcoming travel plans and to self-quarantine their child upon return. School closure may be necessary or the School may need to modify its curriculum, schedules, length of the school year, and/or means of learning and teaching methods. During certain communicable disease events, threat levels may change

rapidly and the School may need to modify various measures as additional information becomes available.

Examples of communicable diseases include seasonal influenza; tuberculosis; measles; chicken pox; mumps, scarlet fever, hepatitis A, C, and D; meningitis; antibiotic-resistant staph; Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS); H1N1 Flu; Swine Flu; Avian Flu; Ebola; and novel coronavirus - COVID-19. Lice, ringworm, pinworms, impetigo, pink eye, strep infection, hand, foot and mouth disease, mononucleosis, and other similar childhood illnesses are covered by this policy. We recognize that some diseases may not be infectious under certain circumstances.

We rely on our parents as the first step in preventing infection in the school environment. We count on them to use good judgment in protecting our school community. A sick child should not be in school but should remain at home in an environment where proper care may be given. The School nurses are available to students daily. If a student is not feeling well, he/she/they should inform the classroom teacher and ask to be excused to go to the nurse's office. If a student asks to go home, the student will be released only with permission from the parent/guardian or from the person designated on the student's emergency card. A student who presents at school with symptoms of an illness and/or is unable to participate in the day's activities will be removed from the classroom and the parents, or an emergency contact if the parents cannot be reached, will be contacted. Students must be picked up within the hour of the School's request that the child be sent home due to illness. The student should be signed out by the clinic. Teachers will be informed of the student's dismissal for illness. To prevent the spread of infection through direct contamination (coughing, sneezing, talking, sharing articles, etc.) students must be asymptomatic without the aid of medications before returning to School. In other words, students must have no fever (<100.4), vomiting, etc. for 24 hours prior to their return to School.

Parents/students who know or have a reasonable basis for believing that a student has a communicable disease that may pose a threat to other students, parents, school employees, visitors, or the public should immediately contact their health provider. Parents/students have a "reasonable basis" for believing that a student has a communicable disease when they show or feel signs or illness, such as coughing, sneezing, fever, joint aches, have an overall ill feeling, or when they know that they have been exposed to someone with a known communicable disease or suspected communicable disease. For the health and safety of the School community, parents should report to their Division Head and the School Nurses at clinicstaff@awty.org if their child has a confirmed communicable disease that poses a risk to others in the School community. The Department of Health shall be notified when a student is sent home because of a communicable disease. In case of student absence due to the reportable communicable disease, a release card from the Department of Health or a letter from the family physician indicating that the Department of Health regulations have been fulfilled must be presented when the student returns to school (indicating that the student is no longer infectious).

The School will generally not identify an infected student to School employees or other students or their parents, although public health guidance will guide the School's communications. It may be necessary to alert others in the community who were in certain areas or at certain times that exposure could have occurred. The School will disclose sensitive medical information of students no further than is necessary to ensure the health and safety of our employees, students,

parents, and visitors in a manner consistent with applicable law. The School will comply with all federal and state laws in regard to confidentiality and privacy requirements.

MEDICATIONS

Taking medications at school should be arranged directly through the school nurse, not the teachers. Please do not send any medication with your child in his or her backpack. Medications arriving at school in this manner will not be administered.

Prescription medications given by the nurse must be in their original container, appropriately labeled with the student's name, dosage, and directions for administration. A "Permission to Administer Medication" (located on the [Magnus Health](#) portal) must accompany each request. Prescription medication must be from a recognized U.S. pharmacy and prescribed by a U.S. physician or dentist. To avoid transporting the medication daily to and from home, duplicate bottles should be requested from the pharmacist; pharmacists are accustomed to this request since it is standard policy in many schools. Under no circumstances will pain medications containing narcotics or controlled substances be administered by the school.

Over-the-counter medications are available at the School Clinic and available by request. Medications will be given if the parent has given permission on the Magnus Health portal and the school nurse feels the request is warranted. If your child needs a non-prescription medication that is not available through the School Clinic, this request must also be arranged with the school nurse. All medication (prescription and over-the-counter medication) must be taken home at the end of the school year or the medication will be discarded. We cannot leave medication in the clinic over the summer months.

Students who have asthma, diabetes, or food allergies are required to have an "Action Plan" signed by their treating physician yearly on file in the School Clinic. Parents are responsible to bring into the School Clinic all the necessary medications and medical equipment to care for the student while attending school. Students will not be permitted to attend field trips or school-sponsored events with expired or missing medications.

Students may not have any medications in their possession, including backpacks, lockers, and cars, while at school or school-sponsored activities, unless written authorization from a U.S. physician is on file with the School Clinic (i.e., Epinephrine pen, asthma inhaler and diabetes medications). For the safety of our student body, students may not administer any medications to themselves or to others.

STUDENT INJURY

In the case of serious illness or injury, the school will attempt to contact the parents first and then the emergency contacts supplied by the parents. If such contact cannot be made, and if the situation requires, the student will be transported to the hospital with a school official in an emergency vehicle at the parents' expense.

LICE PROTOCOL

Students with live head lice are sent home to be treated, and may return to school the same day after treatment and clearance from the School Nurse. A confidential follow-up lice letter will be sent home to all the students in that classroom.

DISCIPLINE

Disciplinary measures exist to ensure respect for others, tolerance, honesty, and discipline. Families should be aware that inappropriate behavior, even outside of school hours or off school property, may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the school or non-renewal of a student's contract for future academic years. Such conduct will be evaluated at the sole discretion of the school, and the school reserves the right to deviate from the regular disciplinary process as necessary. Examples of such outside conduct include but are not limited to any criminal or illegal behavior, threats of harm to oneself or others, misuse of computers, computer websites or social media, or any other behavior that is contrary to the well-being of The Awty International School and its community.

Though it is impossible to list all situations requiring a specific rule, the school expects students to exhibit common sense in all situations. Division specific disciplinary procedures can be found in the Primary School and Secondary School Handbooks. However, certain expectations and guidelines apply to all students as set forth in this handbook. Violation of any provision of the Student/Parent Handbook may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the school or non-renewal of a student's enrollment contract for future academic years

Students who have been dismissed from the school may reapply through the school's regular admissions procedure and may or may not be readmitted at the school's sole discretion.

HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity and honesty are central to the life of the school and to the development of each student. Students must demonstrate integrity and honesty in their work and in their behavior. The school does not tolerate cheating or plagiarism. Students suspected of cheating or plagiarism will be subject to the disciplinary procedures and sanctions of their division. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, a student's use of ideas or words that are not his or her own without adequately acknowledging their source. Plagiarized materials can be printed materials, internet or electronic materials, television, or audio materials. If a student is uncertain about plagiarism, he or she should speak with a teacher or Division Head. If a student is uncertain about plagiarism, he/she/they should speak with a teacher or Division Head. *Please note:* All students in 3rd/CE2 through 12th grade/TIe must read and sign the School Honor Code.

TEASING, BULLYING, AND HARASSMENT

Teasing, bullying, and harassment in any form, including verbal, physical, sexual, social, emotional, cyber, or electronic, will not be tolerated. Any mean-spirited or unkind behavior, including behavior based on race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disability, is prohibited. Additionally, threatening to cause harm or bodily injury to another student, engaging in sexually intimidating conduct, causing physical damage to the property of another student, subjecting another student to physical confinement or

retaining, or maliciously taking any action that harms another student's physical or emotional health or safety is prohibited.

OTHER POLICIES

GIFTS

When parents or students wish to honor or express appreciation to a faculty or staff member, we ask that they do so in a modest way with a token of appreciation not exceeding \$50.00 value.

FINANCIAL AID

The Awty International School seeks to enroll qualified students who will be successful in our programs and who will add to the diversity of our school community. Financial assistance is awarded to families whose financial circumstances would generally preclude their child(ren) from attending The Awty International School or for whom the total school expenses are greater than his or her family's ability to pay them; all awards are based on need.

Financial assistance is available for students entering 1st/CP through 12th grade/Tle. For more information, please see our [financial aid web page](#).

FAMILY MATTERS

The School requires all parents (married, unmarried, divorced or separated) cooperate with one another in the best interests of their child's education at the School. Failure of parents to cooperate with one another in such a manner may lead to dismissal of their child(ren) from the School or non-renewal of enrollment for future academic years. The school may at any time require parents to seek a court order pertaining to any school matter as a condition of continued enrollment.

If your family has a court order in place including, but not limited to, a divorce decree that includes custodial arrangements, a custody order, or a restraining order, you must provide the school with a complete and official file-stamped copy of the court order. We require parents and guardians to abide by any court order applicable to your child(ren). If a situation arises in which the custody or possession of a child is in question, a school representative will call 911 to request an officer arrive at the school to resolve the dispute.

If a School employee or trustee is required to testify, provide information for, or otherwise participate in a legal dispute or proceeding to which the school is not a party, the School shall be entitled to recover from, at the school's discretion, either or both parents, the School's attorneys' fees and costs incurred with such legal proceeding. This includes, but is not limited to, the cost of legal counsel as well as costs incurred by the School such as those associated with collecting documents and hiring substitute teachers or staff.

RESIDENCE

It is the School's position that in order for students to have the foundation necessary to excel in school and other endeavors, students must have appropriate living accommodations, support,

and supervision. As a result, the School requires all students, regardless of age, continuously live with a parent or court-appointed legal guardian at least 25 years of age so long as the student is enrolled at the School. Failure to do so will result in the student's dismissal from the School. Living with friends, distant relatives, nannies, by themselves, etc. is not acceptable. There will be no refund of tuition where such enforced withdrawal occurs. A parent or legal guardian must immediately notify the School should a student's living arrangements change during the school year. The School reserves the right to request at any time and from time to time, satisfactory proof (in the School's sole discretion) of a Student's living arrangements, including, without limitation, verification of with whom the student lives and where the student is living.

ONLINE LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND COPPA INFORMATION

We are committed to high quality teaching and learning. We realize that part of 21st century learning is adapting to the changing methods of communication and providing rich and varied contents and experiences for our students. The importance of teachers and students engaging, collaborating, learning, and sharing in digital environments is a part of 21st century learning and provides students the opportunity to develop as literate and technologically competent individuals. Educational standards are now requiring the use of online education tools and our School uses several computer software applications and web-based/cloud-based education technology services operated not by the School, but by third parties. These applications include, but may not be limited to, Google Workplace for Education, Schoology, Zoom, Google Meet or other video conferencing platforms, Discovery Education, See Saw, Scratch, Tinkercard, Typing Club, Kodable, Canva, Nearpod, Padlet, Brainpop, Turnitin, IXL, Code Monkey, Kids A to Z, Flipgrid, and other similar educational programs. A complete list of the program with the privacy policy for each can be found on our School website.

In order for our students to use these programs and services, certain personal identifying information—generally the student's name and school email address—must be provided to the website operator. Please note that any personal information provided by the School is for educational purposes only and is used by the School solely to communicate with the service provider. Students will receive a school email address to participate in certain of these computer software applications and web-based/cloud-based services. Under federal law entitled the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), certain website providers must provide parental notification and obtain parental consent before collecting personal information from children under the age of 13. For more information on COPPA, please [click here](#).

COPPA permits schools such as ours to consent to the collection of personal information on behalf of its students, thereby eliminating the need for individual parental consent to be given directly to the website operator. Your signature on this Handbook will reflect and constitute your consent for our School to provide personally identifying information for your child consisting of first name, last name, an email address, username, and school-related information, such as school name, class, and teacher name. Your signature will also reflect and constitute your consent for your child to participate in video conferencing, podcasts, and live chats, which means that their voice will be heard and their image displayed to others and both may be recorded. If you do not want your student to participate in these programs, please notify the appropriate Division Office.

RIGHT TO INVOLVE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The School has a duty to report certain situations to The Department of Family and Protective Services and/or law enforcement. The School also may contact and/or cooperate with law enforcement personnel or other governmental agencies if the School, in its sole discretion, believes it is warranted in a particular situation. The School may assess disciplinary consequences for student conduct, even if a criminal investigation or other legal action is ongoing.

COURT ORDERS

In the event your family has a court order in place, please provide The Awty International School with a copy of the current order for your child(ren's) files. We expect parents and guardians to abide by any court order applicable to your child. If a situation arises in which the custody of the child is in question, a school representative will call 911 and request an officer arrive at the School to resolve the dispute.

PARENT/FAMILY COOPERATION

As stated elsewhere, the School believes that a positive and constructive working relationship between the School and family members (defined as parent, student, or other person associated with the student) is essential to the fulfillment of the School's educational purpose and responsibilities to its students. If the parent's or other family member's behavior, communications, or interactions on or off campus (including during school-sponsored events) is disruptive, intimidating, overly aggressive, or reflects a loss of confidence or disagreement with the School's policies, methods of instruction, or discipline, or otherwise interferes with the School's safety procedures, responsibilities, or accomplishment of its educational purpose or program, the School reserves the right to dismiss the family or family member from the community. In addition, the School reserves the right to place restrictions on parents' or other family members' involvement or activity at school, on school property, or at school-related events for reasons that the School deems appropriate.

POLICY FOR STUDENTS WHO TURN 18 YEARS OLD

Students who reach 18 years of age while enrolled in the School are bound by all student and parent obligations in the Student/Parent Consolidated Handbook and the Secondary School Student/Parent Handbook. Student's continued enrollment after reaching 18 years of age evidences the student's agreement with this requirement. Students must report to the Upper School Office on their 18th birthday (or the first school day after their 18th birthday if their birthday falls on the weekend or a school holiday) to sign various school forms. In addition, even after the student turns 18 the School will continue to share all health/medical, disciplinary, grades, progress reports, and other information with the student's parents/legal guardians throughout the student's enrollment at the School. Should a student have a concern about particular information being shared with his/her parents/legal guardians, the student should consult with the Head of Upper School.

FORCE MAJEURE

Should events beyond the control of the School, including, but not limited to, any fire, act of God, hurricane, tornado, flood, extreme inclement weather, explosion, war or armed conflict, governmental action, act of terrorism, risk of infectious illness, epidemic, pandemic, shortage or disruption of necessary utilities, or any other event beyond the School's control, occur, the School has the discretion to close the School and/or modify its operations, curriculum, schedules (including, without limitation, the provision of instruction on Saturdays and/or Sundays), length of school day, length of school year, and/or means of learning and teaching methods. The family's contractual financial obligations for tuition and fees remain in full force and effect. Should the School close, the School's duties and obligations shall be suspended immediately without notice until such time as the School, in its sole and reasonable discretion, may safely reopen. If the School cannot reopen due to a force majeure event, the School is under no obligation to refund any portion of tuition paid.

MAIN CAMPUS:

7455 Awty School Lane
Houston, Texas 77055-7222
Telephone: 713-686-4850, Fax: 713-686-4956

EARLY LEARNING CAMPUS:

1110 North Post Oak Road
Houston, Texas 77055
Telephone: 713-328-5956

www.awty.org

AWTY GLOSSARY

The guide below has been compiled to aid your understanding of Awty terms and traditions.

Awty Annual Fund: Gifts to The Awty Annual Fund are the first and most important gifts we ask of our community each year. They are an investment in Awty! Therefore, they are an investment in the academic future of our students. Awty Annual Fund dollars are unrestricted gifts, supporting areas of greatest need at Awty including the following: STEAM, professional development, financial aid, libraries, campus maintenance and enhancement, fine arts, and athletics.

- **Awty Annual Fund Week:** Usually held during the month of November; a week-long campaign promoting The Awty Annual Fund throughout the Awty community and inviting individuals to make their annual gift to the school.
- **1956 Society:** The 1956 Society is The Awty Annual Fund's leadership donor recognition society. Named to honor the school's founding year, it is comprised of donors who give \$1,956 or more annually. The 1956 Society gathers twice a year for an exclusive kick-off party in the fall and a celebratory reception in the spring where new members are welcomed.

Awty Connects Week: Scheduled in March, this is a week of experiential programming for all Secondary students. There are no regular classes. Instead, students choose from a range of required activities beyond the classroom. For 9th/3^{ème} students, this week will be spent exploring careers with internship/*stage*. For Middle School and 10th/2^{nde} and 11th/1^{ère} students, week-long excursions (local, national, and international trips) are a chance for Awty students and faculty to connect to the world outside of the classroom. For 12th/1^{ère} students, this week is a chance to prepare for the IB exams or the French Bac.

Awty Dads Club: A social group dedicated to giving parents (both moms and dads) occasions to meet new fellow parents and opportunities to pitch in and help organize the events. There are no dues or obligations, just networking and fun!

Awty Notes: This weekly electronic communication is emailed to all parents and it is also posted to the website each Friday during the school year, beginning in August. To ensure you receive the Awty Notes, please provide your current email information to the school by updating your profile in My Backpack or you may contact the [Business Office](#).

Awty Parents & Personnel Association (APPA): This is the main volunteer organization at The Awty International School. It serves as the parent's voice to the school, and works to represent the views of its members across the Awty community. APPA meetings are open to everyone and attendance is encouraged.

Awty Plus: An after school enrichment program that provides the Primary (PK3/PS-5th/CM2) students of The Awty International School with the opportunity to create lifelong memories in a safe, stimulating, and nurturing environment. Our primary goal is to provide a diverse selection of affordable activities for students who desire an exciting experience.

Awty Village Moms: This is a group of Black American, Afro-Caribbean, Afro-Latinx, African, and Black adjacent moms dedicated to creating a joyous space and rigorously supporting inclusion initiatives for the Black students at The Awty International School. Their mission is to promote understanding, highlight the achievements, and inspire appreciation of the overall Black American contributions to our great country.

Big Bend Trip: This is a required activity during Awty Connects Week for the entire 8th grade/4ème where they embark on a one-week camping trip in West Texas to Big Bend National Park or Palo Duro Canyon. The focus is on character development and cooperation through adventure and a variety of outdoor education activities.

Black History Month: With the support of Awty Village Moms, Awty specially celebrates and integrates Black History into the Awty community throughout the month of February.

Booster Clubs: The Booster Clubs are volunteer bodies composed of individuals and businesses that support programs at The Awty International School. Awty has both an Awty Rams Booster Club (supporting athletics) and a Fine Arts Booster Club (supporting fine arts).

CampFire: These virtual campfires were established during the pandemic to keep our community connected when the school went remote. These themed events showcase events, academic programs, student talent and more. They are held via Zoom monthly during the school year for students, teachers, staff, and parents.

Cheerleaders: Cheerleading in the U.S. is considered a sport. It is a combination of dance and gymnastics and demands great strength and coordination. Students attend an intensive summer camp like other sports and practice during the week. They cheer at various sporting events and are responsible for encouraging school spirit in all students.

Community Service: Community Service commitment reflects a long-standing tradition at Awty. Students in both programs fulfill community service requirements for graduation. Students in the International Program are asked to participate in community service in 6th grade through 10th grade. In 11th and 12th grade, students will participate in the IB CAS program, which incorporates creativity, action and service and looks for long-term dedication from our students. Students in the French Program are asked to participate in community service in 6ème through 4ème. In 3ème through 1ère, they are asked to complete 50 total hours of community service in order to graduate. Awty provides lists of community service opportunities both inside and outside the school and students may also perform service during the summer months. There are regular announcements made and opportunities posted online. Students may not receive remuneration for any community service activity.

Fall Fun Festival: Each fall, the APPA organizes a carnival style fair for students in Primary and Middle School. Admission fee grants access to rides, various games and activities, snacks and refreshments. Family friendly costumes are encouraged. The event is usually held on a Saturday in October, and it is open to the entire family.

Fall Trips: Every fall, shortly after the start of school, Secondary students take two days outside of regular class time to participate in the annual Fall Trips Program. These trips and activities are designed to introduce students with their teachers to the wide variety of customs, cultures, and languages within the Awty community. Entire grade levels will explore in and around Houston or will go on an overnight trip to a camp in Texas. We depend on the value of these community-building programs to bring students and teachers together in the true Spirit of Awty.

Fiesta de Mayo: This festival is held by the Spanish Department, celebrating customs and traditions from Spanish-speaking countries. This celebration is held in early May for Primary School students.

Fine Arts Day / Month: There are two Fine Arts Days each school year, usually one in October and one in March. On these two days, students and employees show their support of the fine arts by wearing a concert/music/performance T-shirt or a homemade art T-shirt. Fine Arts Month is celebrated during the month of March with various fine arts events including, but not limited to, theatre performances, music concerts, and an IB art show.

Francophonie: This is a day celebrating French language, culture, and traditions from French-speaking countries around the world. It is usually held on the third Friday in March.

Freshman: 9th grade student.

Gala: An annual fundraising event which consists of a formal dinner, dance, and auction. This event is organized by the Advancement Department with the help of parent volunteers. Funds raised go toward the annual giving at Awty, supporting initiatives like Awty's financial aid program and faculty/staff professional development.

- **Auction Items:** Items are donated by individuals, companies, retail stores, etc. to Awty. These items are auctioned off either by a silent or live auction at the Awty Gala to the highest bidder. A large portion of the Gala revenue is collected through these auction items.
- **Paddles Up:** This event happens during the live auction at the annual gala. During Paddles Up, gala attendees are asked to donate to a special initiative like Awty's financial aid program and faculty/staff professional development.

Go Texan Day: A celebration of Texas history and its rich and varied culture. Typically coincides with the start of Houston's Livestock Show and Rodeo in February. All students, staff, and faculty are encouraged to wear "cowboy" attire.

Graduation (also known as Commencement): This is a traditional ceremony marking the end to a student's high school career. It is usually held in the PAAC and attended by Seniors (12th grade/Tle students), their parents and families, Board of Trustees, and teachers. Students and academic staff wear caps and gowns. High school diplomas are presented to the Seniors. Promotion celebrations also take place for Kindergarten/GS and 5th grade/CM2.

Homecoming: One game during the fall soccer season is chosen as the "Homecoming Game" where the players and cheerleaders are recognized. It is a time where the whole school is invited to participate and share the Awty School Spirit. Homecoming consists of various events and customs, including the following:

Homecoming Court: Students in Upper School nominate a Freshman/3^{ème}, Sophomore/2^{nde}, and Junior/1^{ère} girl and boy to serve on the Homecoming Court and vote for one Senior/Tle girl and boy to serve as the Homecoming Queen and King. During halftime of the Homecoming game, one girl and boy from each grade will be announced as the Homecoming Court Princess and Prince along with the Senior Queen and King.

- **Homecoming Dance:** It is usually held the evening following the Homecoming game, for all Upper School students.
- **Homecoming Spirit Week:** A week of fun activities for the students including dress up days, contests, and more. These events, which are meant to increase School Spirit, culminate with two varsity soccer games at the end of the week on Friday evening.
- **Pep Rally:** An event to build school spirit for Homecoming. The entire student body is gathered in the PAAC. The cheerleaders lead various cheers and encourage students to show their Awty Spirit.

Junior: 11th grade student.

Labor Day: The first Monday in September; this federal holiday traditionally honors and recognizes the American labor movement and the works and contributions of laborers.

Martin Luther King Day: The third Monday in January; this federal holiday celebrates Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the advances he made for civil rights.

Memorial Day: The last Monday in May; this is a federal holiday honoring the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military.

My Backpack: My Backpack allows parents convenient and private access to their student's schedule, attendance information, and term grades over a secure, password-protected Internet connection. Student invoices are also posted in My Backpack on the 15th of every month. My Backpack can be accessed through the parent portal or by using the link on the home page of the Awty website. For new parents, your user name and password will be sent to you once enrollment has been completed.

myAWTY Portal: The myAWTY portal is the private side of the Awty website only accessible by current students, parents, staff, faculty, and board members using the same username and password used to access My Backpack. Inside the portal, users can access news alerts, event and volunteer information, online forms, daily lunch menu, Parent Post-Its, and more.

Newcomer's Day: A day early in the school year during which all students and faculty wear name badges marked with the number of years at Awty. It's an opportunity to learn people's names and for existing students and staff to pay special attention to who is new. A special treat is distributed during break that day!

Parent Post-Its: An online parent message board where parents, staff, and faculty can post items for sale, messages seeking tutoring or childcare, join carpools, and more. Parent Post-Its is located in the myAWTY portal. Messages to be posted should be sent to the Communications@awty.org with complete details, photos (if necessary), and contact information.

Prom: A formal dance held in the spring for Seniors, Juniors, and their guests.

Ramifications: A student publication that gives a voice to all Secondary students in our rich diversity of languages and ways of seeing the world. This annual student publication includes short stories, poems, drawings, photographs, and other artworks.

Rampage: A monthly newspaper created by students to inform the student body about school, local, and international issues and happenings.

Room Parents: Usually two parent volunteers per class who liaise with the teacher, their school Division Head, and the APPA Liaison. They coordinate volunteers to assist on field trips and school parties, welcome new families to the school, and communicate relevant information to parents. At least one of the Room Parents attends a monthly meeting with the Division Head.

SchoolPass: A streamlined online communications tool, which also includes a SchoolPass parent app that will allow Awty families to use their smartphones and smart devices to quickly complete the required daily wellness check, and will eventually allow parents to communicate any attendance or carpool changes to the teachers and staff.

Schoology: An integrated learning management solution that provides course management, mobile learning, and support for system-wide communication. Schoology enables our students, parents, and teachers to engage with learning materials and their school community from the classroom and beyond.

Senior: 12th grade student.

Sophomore: 10th grade student.

Staff/Faculty Appreciation: A week-long event giving parents and students the opportunity to thank the teachers and staff with kind messages, notes, and small gifts of gratitude.

Thanksgiving: The fourth Thursday in November; it is an American holiday celebrating the first feast of the pilgrims and the Native Americans.

Tree Lighting Ceremony: During this winter holiday tradition, the oldest and longest attending Awty Senior/Tle student(s) light a decorated holiday tree with the help of the newest and youngest PK3/PS student at an all-school sing-a-long assembly in the PAAC.

Volunteers: It is common throughout most private and public schools in the U.S. that parents volunteer in many facets of school life. Parents help with special events, sporting events, library duty, and many other areas.

Washington, D.C. Trip: This is a required activity during Awty Connects Week for the entire 7th grade/5^{ème} where they embark on a one-week trip to Washington, D.C. The trip includes first-hand learning outside of the classroom and the opportunity for the students to share this experience with peers and educators. Students explore the historical foundations of the United States and visit a variety of museums. Moreover, students gain invaluable self-confidence from traveling on their own.

Yearbook: The yearbook is produced by a committee of students under the supervision of a school advisor and is available toward the end of the school year. It contains individual photographs of all students and staff, athletic teams and student clubs as well as articles written by the students.

GRADE EQUIVALENTS

<u>Early Learning</u>	<u>Lower School</u>	<u>Middle School</u>	<u>Upper School</u>
PK3 = PS	2nd grade = CE1	6th grade = 6ème	9th grade = 3ème
PK4 = MS	3rd grade = CE2	7th grade = 5ème	10th grade = 2nde
Kinder = GS	4th grade = CM1	8th grade = 4ème	11th grade = 1ère
1st grade = CP	5th grade = CM2		12th grade = Tle

ABBREVIATIONS

ELC =	Early Learning Campus
LS =	Lower School
MS =	Middle School
US =	Upper School
LFB =	Levant Foundation Building
KAC =	Kay Awty Center
PAAC =	Performing Arts & Athletic Center
APPA =	Awty Parents & Personnel Association
RBC =	Rams Booster Club
FABC =	Fine Arts Booster Club
A+ =	Awty Plus
SPC =	Southwest Preparatory Conference
HJPC =	Houston Junior Preparatory Conference
IB =	International Baccalaureate
CAS =	Creativity, Action, and Service
BYOD =	Bring Your Own Device