



**The Awty International School  
Houston**

**Student/Parent Handbook  
2018 - 2019**

**Livret du Règlement Intérieur  
Parents/Elèves  
2018 - 2019**

## **LETTER FROM THE HEAD**

August 2018

Dear Students and Parents,

I am delighted to welcome all of our students and their families to the 2018-2019 school year. Whether you are new to Awty or returning to our school, we are committed to making this year an enjoyable and productive one 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. Therefore, it is important that students and their families become familiar with the unique features that characterize our academic programs and school life.

We expect that 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 myself.

The Awty International School is a stimulating international and cosmopolitan organization which prides itself on instilling strong character and universal values. We have found a high correlation between the effort a student demonstrates in class, on assignments, in sports and the arts, and in other activities and the recognition that student receives from his or her teacher, coach, or sponsor. We expect courteous, respectful behavior among our students and between students and adults.

Once again, welcome to the 2018-2019 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 Baccalaureat.

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.

## **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 four ex-officio trustees: the Head of School, President of the Awty Parent and Personnel Association (APPA), President of the Alumni Association, and a representative from the Mission Laïque Française. 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 to guide your understanding of important school policies and procedures.

At the same time, we know that 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, faculty, 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.

Because 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 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 that are 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 that 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 student(s). When you have done so, please sign this acknowledgement form and return it to the Primary School or Secondary School office. Any student or parent with a question about any handbook material should feel free to speak with the Division Heads, the Proviseure, or the Head of School.

The Handbook is found on the Awty website.





## 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.) and the Council of International Schools (C.I.S.), the French Ministry of Education (M.E.N.), the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO), as well as 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 12<sup>th</sup> grade. However, its multi-national student body and strong language programs provide a multi-cultural experience not available elsewhere.

The School offers two curriculum: French and International. In addition, there are second language options in French or Spanish, from pre-kindergarten to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and third language options starting at 6<sup>th</sup> grade. The French Bilingual program closely follows the curriculum laid down by the French Ministry of Education for French schools abroad. The official French curriculum at The Awty International School is followed at all accredited French schools throughout the world. Students in the French Bilingual program prepare for the French Baccalaureat. This diploma is awarded to students based upon their results in examinations at the end of *Première* (11<sup>th</sup> grade) and *Terminale* (12<sup>th</sup> grade). Teachers in the French Bilingual program at Awty are certified by the Ministry or have had experience teaching in French schools. They are often recommended by the Mission Laïque Française.

The International program curriculum is to a large extent American through the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, and is based on best practices at American schools both in the U.S. and abroad. At all levels there is a strong emphasis on the study of a second language to fluency. The curriculum in the humanities makes use of themes, approaches and materials which reflect the diversity of nationalities and cultures of our students. All International program students in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade levels follow the full International Baccalaureate curriculum and prepare for the I.B. diploma by sitting for examinations at the end of 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

At most grade levels there are many bridges between the French and International programs. All children at the Early Learning Campus (PK3 - 1<sup>st</sup> grade/*Petite Section* - *CP*) follow a dual language program, alternating instructional days in French/English or Spanish/English. Children in the Lower School (grades 2 - 5/*CE1* - *CM2*) spend a great deal of time in their primary language, but with significant exposure to their second language. Students in 6<sup>th</sup>/*6eme* through 10<sup>th</sup>/*2nde* from the two programs mix for language, elective, and phys. ed. classes.

## **CAMPUS POLICIES**

### **CAMPUS VISITORS**

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 will either use their current "HECTRA" tag used for the toll roads (which will require parents to give their HECTRA tag code to the school) or an Awty hang tag. This will enable parents to pull up to the entrance and the security arm will automatically raise.

In addition, all visitors to campus 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.

### **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. Arrangements can be made by contacting the appropriate Division Office in advance of the visit.

### **SAFETY DRILLS AND FIRE ALARMS**

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

### **SMOKE FREE CAMPUS**

Please remember the entire campus is "smoke-free." Smoking and vaping are prohibited both inside and outside of the buildings.

### **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.

## **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:

- An emergency e-mail notification to all parents, faculty and staff.
- A broadcast telephone message and text service.
- Emergency notices posted on the school website at [www.awty.org](http://www.awty.org).
- Local news media will also be notified by the school and will be key sources of information. Listen to radio station 740 AM, or one of the network TV stations. 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 as paramount.

For reasons of both personal and student safety, parents should always check local media, e-mail, voicemail, and/or the school website before traveling to the campus.

## **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 forty-minute sessions in English.

The approved volunteer list is maintained by the school and all faculty, staff, and parent organizations (APPA, Ram's Booster Club, Fine Arts Booster, Dad's Club) have access.

## **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"

- 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

## **CAMERAS ON CAMPUS**

The Awty International School uses video surveillance cameras on campus which may or may not be monitored at any time. Images from 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.

## **PETS ON CAMPUS**

Pets are not allowed on the campus 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.

## **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 student(s) for one of the bus routes, please register your child by completing the "Bus Registration Form" in MyBackpack.

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.

## **BUS SAFETY**

The opportunity for a child to ride the bus is a privilege, not a right. The School provides no bus monitors so it is important that students observe the following rules for their safety. Please review these rules with your student(s) and make sure they understand them.

- Always remain seated with the seat belt properly fastened when the bus is in motion. Wait for complete stop before entering or exiting. Enter or exit the bus at the front door only, except in case of an emergency.
- Obey the driver's instructions to ensure safety.
- Stay off the roadway while waiting for the bus. Cross at least 15 feet in front of the bus; never in rear of the bus.
- Do not leave the bus without the driver's consent. No unauthorized stops will be made.
- Keep feet out of aisles, off seats or back of seats. Keep head, arms and hands inside bus.
- Behave politely and quietly. Fighting, pushing or shoving will not be tolerated. The driver must not be distracted while bus is in motion.
- Smoking, eating or drinking is not allowed on the bus.
- No animals, weapons or other materials which could be dangerous to passenger safety will be allowed on board.
- Parents are responsible for supervision of bus stops prior to the arrival of the bus.

Should your student(s) not respect these rules, a letter of warning will be sent home. Students may be suspended from riding the school bus when such action is deemed necessary by the Head of School or his or her designee. Under these circumstances, bus fees will not be refunded.

## **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 through the 'cahier de communication' or the planned 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 am the morning of the absence, whenever possible. Students who are absent may obtain assignments if their parents or guardian contact the Division/Section Office before 11:00 am and pick up the assignments after 2:00 pm.

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

## **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.

Questions, concerns and suggestions about the food service program can be addressed to Fabrice Maraine ([fmaraine@awty.org](mailto:fmaraine@awty.org)) with Sage Dining.

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

## **EATING AREAS**

All food must be stored and eaten in designated areas. Students in all divisions must eat at their assigned lunch time and under proper supervision.

## **PARENTS AND VISITORS FOR LUNCH**

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

## **ALLERGENS AT SCHOOL**

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 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 Health Clinic via a doctor’s written report. Young students with food allergies are encouraged to keep a bag of safe snacks in their classrooms to allow the student to participate with their classmates on special occasions such as birthday parties.

## **SCHOOL CLINIC**

The School Clinic supports student health through all three divisions and is staffed with three Registered Nurses (R.N.) who rotate through both campuses. The School Clinic for staff and students 2<sup>nd</sup>/CE1 through 12<sup>th</sup>/Term is located in the Lower School building on the main campus. The second School Clinic in The Early Learning Campus (ELC) is for staff and students PK-3/PS through 1<sup>st</sup>/CP. Both locations are open Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 3:30 pm when school is in session. Admission to the School Clinic for students 1<sup>st</sup>/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.

## **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 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 student's record through the MagnusHealth portal prior to the start of school, and must update their profile annually. 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.

## **ATTENDANCE WHEN ILL**

The control of contagious diseases within the school depends in large part on parents' cooperation. If a student contracts a communicable disease, please notify the School Clinic as soon as possible. School policy states that a student should not attend school in the following circumstances:

- If your child vomits or has diarrhea prior to coming to school. A period of 24 hours without symptoms must pass before returning to school unless the circumstances have been discussed and approved by a school nurse.
- If your child has an elevated temperature of 100 (a child must be feverless over a period of 24 hours without fever medication before returning to school).
- If your child has an itchy red eye with discharge (please visit the pediatrician prior to returning to school).

- If your child is on a new antibiotic(s) (he or she may not return to school until they have been on the medication for 24 hours and have been fever-free without fever reducing medication for 24 hours).
- If your child is recovering from surgery or other type of procedure that requires pain medication more than over the counter Tylenol or Advil (the student should not be at school unless the circumstances have been discussed and approved by a school nurse).
- If your child has a cough preventing him/her from having a full night's sleep, or if the cough is chronic and has not been evaluated by a physician.
- If your child has a skin eruptions or rashes that cannot be attributed to a known trigger (these should be evaluated by a physician prior to sending a student to school; documentation of the physician's findings should be provided to the nurses).

If a student misses two consecutive days due to illness, the parents or guardian should notify the School Clinic, explaining the nature of the illness by the end of the second day. The school reserves the right to, in its sole discretion, require any family to submit a physician's report indicating the student is no longer contagious and/or is healthy enough to attend school prior to returning to school. Any students not attending school during the school day due to illness or injury may not attend special school events (including holiday parties) or extracurricular activities.

## **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.

## **EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL**

With regard to communicable diseases, Awty International School will follow the recommendations in the Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases of the American Academy of Pediatrics or The Center of Disease Control (CDC) or The Texas Department of Health Human Services. A student, who has been diagnosed as having a highly infectious disease must be excluded from all school activities until appropriate medical authority asserts that the person is no longer contagious. The nurse may seek discussion or counsel with a physician or members of the school administration for concerns. The School reserves the right, however, to exclude a student with a communicable disease from school facilities or program, if the School determines that the person constitutes a threat to the health or safety of others. Parents should report to the Student Health Center all medically diagnosed cases of influenza (Flu). The School will follow all the governmental guidelines for handling a pandemic flu outbreak, including coordination with local and state health departments.

## **ILLNESS AT SCHOOL**

Any student who becomes ill at school should visit the school nurse immediately. The student should obtain a pass to the nurse's office from a teacher or division secretary. The school nurse shall make the determination whether a student should return to class, stay in the School Clinic, or goes home. The student should not call or text their parents arranging transportation home before first seeing the school nurse. A student who goes home for reasons of illness must check out through the School Clinic. A parent or emergency contact will always be notified if a student is leaving the campus.

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 sent to the hospital with a school official in an emergency vehicle at parents' expense.

## **MEDICATIONS**

Taking medications at school should be arranged directly through the school nurse. Please do not send any medication with your student in his or her backpack. Medications arriving to 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 MagnusHealth 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 MagnusHealth 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. The school nurse reserves the right to require a written, dated order from a medical doctor before dispensing any non-FDA approved substance.

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.

## **SCHOOL COUNSELORS**

The school's counselors collaborate with the pedagogical team and parents to promote the academic and emotional success of our students. This department is staffed by four professional counselors working with students in English and French.

Throughout the year, the counselors provide services of observation and consultation for students, faculty, and parents. They offer parent education, character education, and special programs that prepare students for the challenges of life. Referrals to the Counselors can be made by Division Heads, teachers, and parents. Students are welcome to visit them with an appointment and may also request to speak with them through the Division Office.

Information about psycho-educational evaluations and professional recommendations for reasonable accommodations is coordinated by the counselors. When additional assessment or services are required, our counselors can provide families with resource suggestions in the community.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

The Awty International School is a diverse institution embracing over 70 nationalities and over 20 language groups among its teachers, parents and students making clear communication channels a necessity. To avoid confusion or misinformation, please rely on the following sources of information:

### AWTY WEBSITE – [www.awty.org](http://www.awty.org)

Awty's website is the school's primary form of communication with parents. The Parent Portal allows parents access to current calendars, news alerts, events, directories, online forms, and more. To access this portal, you will use the same user name and password used to access My Backpack. If you have login or password problems, please contact [the Business office](#).

### 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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.

### 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](#).

## MASS EMAIL

Awty frequently communicates a variety of important information, including emergency information, 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](#).

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Awty is on [Facebook](#), [TWITTER](#), [YouTube](#) and regularly posts news and event information.

## SCHOOL DIRECTORY

A searchable online directory is available through My Backpack for students, parents, staff and faculty which can also be accessed through the Parent Portal. Directories are provided to parents for school-related purposes only -- Awty does not condone the use of these directories for any other purpose.

## **COMMUNICATING WITH FRENCH AGENCIES**

The Head of School and Proviseure 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 Proviseure 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 hold a fundraiser for 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 am to 4:00 pm.

## **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. Student Support Teams and reasonable accommodations are available to support students with academic challenges; however, the school is not equipped to handle severe learning differences.

## **TUTORS AND TUTORING**

When parents are considering tutoring for their student, they should contact the appropriate Division Office. 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 / week of additional assistance for any student.

## **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. Use of Technology Resources is a privilege and with this privilege comes responsibility.

## **STUDENT POLICIES**

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 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 5<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade will be assigned an account, user name, and password in their computer class. 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 that 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 will 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 the Technology Director 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 in approved locations and save on the appropriate drives: USB flash drives.
- 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 (cyber bullying) 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 Director of Technology.
- 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 to supervise and manage 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 sites 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 security settings and allow only family and other Awty International School community members access.
- Avoid using names of students 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 Awty International School community members and take action on any information learned from those reviews. Inappropriate use of social media, including cyber bullying, or violations of other school policies learned about via social media will be handled through the school's disciplinary procedure set forth in the Parent Student 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.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

The Physical Education Program is an integral element of the school's curriculum. The purpose of the program is to teach students the value of good health and conditioning regardless of physical limitations. In addition, the program seeks to inspire students to explore their athletic potential by exposing them to the basic elements of a wide variety of sports and movement.

Students in grades 5<sup>th</sup>/CM2 -12<sup>th</sup>/Tmle 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.

Students who are temporarily unable to participate in physical education must bring a signed and dated note from their parents. If a student is medically unable to participate in physical education for more than 5 days, he or she must have a written physician's report on file with the Health Clinic and P.E. teacher indicating in what, if any, level of activity the student is able to participate.

For further information and details regarding the physical education program, contact the Head of Physical Education Department or the relevant Division Office.

## **INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC PROGRAM**

The goal of the Athletics Department at Awty is to enhance the students' physical, mental, emotional, and social development. This development is implemented through a variety of extra-curricular sports. Awty has developed a program suited to the age and ability of students in grades 6<sup>th</sup>/6eme – 12<sup>th</sup>/Tmle that encourages maximum student engagement and enjoyment. The school encourages participation in athletics, recognizes achievements and celebrates the successes of students.

Team schedules, including try-outs, can be found on the [athletic department's website](#). For further information, contact the [Director of Athletics](#).

## **TRANSFERRING BETWEEN INTERNATIONAL AND FRENCH BILINGUAL PROGRAMS**

At the school's sole discretion, and with the Provisure and appropriate Division Head's approval, it is possible for students to transfer between programs. However, acceptance into one section does not automatically confer entry into another section. Students required to repeat a grade in one program may not transfer to the other program to matriculate to the next grade. Requests for transfer must be made in writing to the Director of Admissions by the reenrollment date. Absent exceptional circumstances, transfers are only allowed at the beginning of a new school year. Approval of the Provisure and appropriate Division Head is required.

## **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 10 school days. If time is critical and the request is from a local school, parents may request and pay for a courier service.

## **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**

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 of by existing law.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Disciplinary measures exist to ensure respect for others, tolerance, honesty and discipline. Families should be aware that 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.

## **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.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

The use of all electronic devices is prohibited during class time without the express permission and approval of the teacher. Refer to the BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) policy for details on the use of computers at school. Cell phones, i-pads, i-pods, and all other electronic devices must be silent and out of sight unless the teacher gives express and specific permission to use them. 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.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Families are urged to mark all uniforms, clothing and other belongings with the student's first and last name. ELC Lost & Found is located in Building A, Primary School lost and found is located near the Primary School office and the Secondary School Lost & Found is located in room 312 in the atrium at the north-east corner of the quadrangle. Secondary students and parents will have strictly limited access to the lost and found at the discretion of the Division Offices. 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.

## **LIBRARIES**

### SAROFIM LIBRARY:

The Sarofim Library serves Middle and Upper School students. It is open from 7:30 am to 6:00 pm, Mondays through Thursday and until 4:30 pm on Fridays. At all times the Library should be utilized as an academic resource center. Preschool and Lower School students are not allowed in the Sarofim 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 grades 2/CE1 to 5/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 CAMPUS LIBRARY:

The ELC Library, located at the ELC, serves students in Grades PK3/PS through 1<sup>st</sup>/CP. Visiting times will be arranged by class at the beginning of the school year.

## **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(rens) 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.

## **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.

## **SCHOOL UNIFORM**

The purpose of the uniform is twofold.: the first purpose of the uniform code is to instill in students a proper sense of formal grooming and presentation. Secondly, 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 on campus.

## **AWTY PARENTS AND PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION (APPA)**

All Awty International School parents and personnel are encouraged to participate in APPA, the volunteer parent organization that supports the school through social, educational and community building events. APPA representatives meet each month with the Division Heads to learn about the school and how parents can provide meaningful and appropriate support. APPA is a useful means for parents to engage with the Awty community and participate in the life of the school.

## **AWTY PLUS: BEFORE SCHOOL**

Supervision begins at 7:15 am 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 am.

## **AWTY PLUS: AFTER SCHOOL**

Supervised after-school activities are provided for a fee on regular school days, from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. The activities offered at Awty Plus include sports, art, music, dance, karate, and many more. Homework assistance is offered to students in grades 1/CP – 5/CM2. The School does not guarantee qualified homework completion support in all subjects at all grade levels. Please refer to the Awty Plus page on the School's website ([www.awty.org](http://www.awty.org)) 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 pm. The school does not offer any regular services after 6:00 pm, and students must be picked up by that time.

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

7455 Awty School Lane  
Houston, Texas 77055-7222  
Telephone: 713-686-4850, Fax: 713-686-4956  
[www.awty.org](http://www.awty.org)

## APPENDIX

*The APPA has produced this guide to aid your understanding of Awty traditions.*

**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 part of the Gala revenue is collected through these auction items.

**Big Bend Trip:** This is a required activity for the entire 4eme/8<sup>th</sup> grade who embark on a one week camping trip in West Texas to Big Bend National Park. The focus is on character development and cooperation through adventure and a variety of outdoor education activities.

**Booster Club:** The Ram's Booster Club is a volunteer body comprised of individuals and businesses that support programs at The Awty International School. Awty has both an Athletics Booster Club and a Fine Arts Booster Club.

**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.

**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.

**Fall Trips:** Every fall, shortly after the start of school, students in Secondary go on an overnight trip. The trips are organized by grade and have a variety of destinations. The purpose is to integrate new students, develop bonds and new friendships and engage teachers with the students to set a positive tone for the start of a new school year.

**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; parents are invited to attend.

**Francophonie:** This is a day celebrating French language and traditions from French-speaking countries around the world. It is generally held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of March.

**Freshman:** 9<sup>th</sup> 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 Fund at Awty.

**Go Texan Day:** A celebration of Texas history and its rich and varied culture. Typically coincides with the start of Rodeo in February. "Cowboy" attire is encouraged for all students and staff.

**Graduation** (also known as Commencement): Traditional end to a student's High School career. Held in the PAAC and attended by Seniors (12<sup>th</sup> grade students), their parents, 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, 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

**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/3eme, Sophomore/2nde, and Junior/1ere girl to serve in the Homecoming Court and votes for one Senior/Tmle girl and boy to serve as the Homecoming Queen and King. During halftime of the Homecoming game one girl from each grade will be announced as the Homecoming Court Princess along with the Senior Queen and King.

**Homecoming Dance:** held the evening following the Homecoming game, for all Upper School students.

**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:** 11<sup>th</sup> grade student.

**Labor Day:** The 1<sup>st</sup> Monday in September; this holiday is traditionally 'the worker's day off'.

**Martin Luther King Day:** The 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in January, this holiday celebrates Dr. Martin Luther King and the advances he made for African American people.

**Memorial Day:** The last Monday in May; this is an American holiday to honor people who died in the wars.

**Newcomer's Day:** A day early in the school year during which all students and faculty wear name badges with stars on them, one for each year 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 (one-star people). A special treat is distributed during break that day!

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

**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 into the class and communicate relevant information to parents. At least one of the Room Parents attends a monthly meeting with the Division Head.

**Senior:** 12<sup>th</sup> grade student.

**Senior Banquet:** Academic awards ceremony for Seniors, attended by their parents and guests. It is usually held the evening before Graduation at a venue off campus.

**Sophomore:** 10<sup>th</sup> grade student.

**Teacher Appreciation:** an opportunity for parents and students to thank the teachers and staff.

**Thanksgiving:** The 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday in November; it is an American holiday celebrating the first feast of the pilgrims and the Native Americans

**Tree Lighting Ceremony:** In this winter holiday tradition the oldest and longest attending Awty Senior/Tmle student lights a decorated holiday tree with the help of the newest and youngest PK3/PS student at an all school sing-along 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.

**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, team and club photographs, and articles written by the students.