

THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF PANAMA



High School Student Handbook 2009-2010

*The International School of Panama
P.O. Box 0819-02588
Panama, Republic of Panama*

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This Student Handbook belongs to:

Name: _____

Grade: _____

Dear ISP Students and Parents:

ISP is a unique school and a special community, in its third decade as the truly international school in Panama.

For new students and families, and even for those who have been here for years, there is always so much to learn and know about a school. ISP, like all schools, has its policies, procedures, routines, traditions and core values.

This student handbook is a useful starting place. It gives an essential overview of the program, policies and procedures at ISP. It is important that all students and parents spend some time carefully reading over the content presented here. There are several important additions and clarifications in this updated handbook, and you will find the answers here to many of your questions.

We all look forward to a fine school year in 2009-2010. Best of luck to all!

Sincerely,

Daniel McKee
High School Principal

Student Handbook:

The International School of Panama Student Handbook is provided to help students and parents understand the school's procedures, policies, rules and expectations. In order to prepare each student for a successful school experience, we ask that you set aside some time to review the contents of this handbook together.

The handbook is provided to all students as a hard copy, and also available for all to see on the ISP web-page at www.isp.edu.pa

After reviewing the material, please complete the form below and have the student return it to their advisor.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Agreement:

We have read and reviewed the ISP Student Handbook in its entirety and understand the school's expectations. We agree to uphold the rules and regulations outlined in the handbook.

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

High School Student Handbook

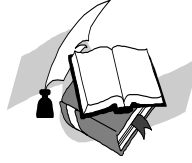
2009-2010

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Section One

Introduction



ISP MISSION

The International School of Panama will educate and inspire our students to reach their full potential and contribute to the world as responsible citizens by providing a high quality, broad-based, accredited English language education that is enriched by the diversity of our students and our multicultural community.

ISP CORE BELIEFS

- Each individual has intrinsic worth.
- Each person is responsible for his or her choices and actions.
- All people have a responsibility to contribute positively to society.
- Embracing diversity strengthens communities.
- Shared values are essential for the well-being of our community.
- Quality education expands opportunities for the individual and contributes to the development of our world.
- Education is a collaborative effort between family and school and is enriched by the community.
- Learning is an essential, life-long endeavour.
- Achievement builds self-esteem which leads to further achievement.
- Excellence is worth pursuing.

THE HISTORY OF ISP

Founded in 1982, The International School of Panama provides an international education for children living in Panama. The first Board of Directors determined

that the school would follow an international curriculum that would satisfy Panamanian, US and third country standards.

ISP is approved by the ministry of Education in Panama, and is a member of the International Baccalaureate Organization, the International Schools Association, the Association for Advancement of International Education, and The Interregional Center for Curriculum. ISP is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

Since its beginning with 43 students in one building, the school has grown to more than 900 students in pre-kindergarten through grade twelve.

ISP AT A GLANCE

Student Body of approximately 900

Air-Conditioned Classrooms

14,000 Book Library

15 CD ROM Library Stations - Internet Wireless Capability

Three Computer Labs - Internet Connected / Mac Lab

Full Service Cafeteria

Auditorium

Infirmery & Full-time Nurse

College and Student Counseling Services

Multi-Purpose Gymnasium

320 Meter Track

Two Football Fields

Covered Play Shelter and Playground

Full Bus Service

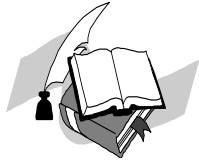
IB Program offered in 11th & 12th grades

Model United Nations Program

Sports, Band, Drama, Student Council, and many other Co-curricular Activities

Section Two

Guidelines for Student Behavior



Students at ISP are expected to demonstrate **respect, responsibility and positive conduct** in all ways. The ISP student is expected to:

1. Arrive on time to school and to all classes.
2. Attend class daily with all necessary materials and having fulfilled all responsibilities for the class.
3. Demonstrate respect for classmates, teachers and all members of the ISP community.
4. Demonstrate respect for all school rules as outlined in this handbook (and ask for clarification when needed).
5. Undertake all assignments, assessments and projects to the best of his/her ability – with honesty, integrity and a commitment to reaching his/her potential as a student.

HONOR PLEDGE

An essential feature of The International School of Panama is its commitment to integrity and ethical conduct. The Honor Pledge at ISP helps to build trust among students and faculty, and to maintain an academic community in which a code of values is shared. This pledge is based on the premise that each student has the responsibility:

1. To uphold the highest standards of academic integrity in the student's own work.
2. To refuse to tolerate violations of academic integrity in the school community.
3. To foster a high sense of integrity and social responsibility on the part of the ISP community.

The students and citizens of the ISP community are expected to commit to the following:

- I will not lie, cheat, or steal in my academic endeavors.

- I will forthrightly oppose each and every instance of academic dishonesty.
- I will not represent another's work or any part thereof, be it published or unpublished, as my own.
- I will consult with faculty and other sources to clarify the meaning of plagiarism; learn the recognized techniques of proper attribution of sources used in the preparation of written work; and learn to identify allowable resource materials or aids to be used during examinations or in completion of any graded work.
- I will comply with school regulations designed to reduce the possibility of cheating—such as removing unauthorized aids from the room and protecting my own examination papers from the view of others.
- I will maintain the confidentiality of examinations by divulging no information concerning an examination, directly or indirectly, to another student yet to write the same examination.
- I will conduct all academic work within the letter and spirit of the Honor Pledge, which prohibits the giving, or receiving of unauthorized aid in academic endeavors.
- I will not engage in any activity which prevents other students from having fair access to materials assigned or suggested by the instructor.
- I will not tamper with another student's work or impair in any way the instructor's ability to assess the academic performance of another student.
- I will not assist, attempt to assist, or conspire to assist another student in violating any point of the Honor Pledge.
- I recognize that violations of the Honor Pledge shall include any attempt to commit any offense as outlined above.
- I join the student body of the International School of Panama in a commitment to the Honor Pledge.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is considered vital to the academic success of the student.

Attendance Policy and Procedures:

Unless students are sick or there are other compelling reasons why they should be excused, they are expected to be present for all scheduled school days and classes. For excused absences, teachers will make reasonable accommodation for advance assignments and make up work. Students who are absent will be responsible for the work missed during their absence including homework, projects, assignments, quizzes and tests.

At the discretion of the principal, a grade of incomplete may be given to a student with a defined make up period for completing the work. With satisfactory performance the incomplete grade may be replaced with the grade earned.

Vacations scheduled within the annual school calendar will not be considered as excused absences. For such unexcused absences students may make up missing work for only a passing grade of 60%.

Anticipated Absences:

Whenever a student is aware in advance that he/she will be absent from school for any reason, he/she should bring a note from parents stating the reason and the dates. When an absence from school is anticipated, it is the student's responsibility to obtain an Anticipated Absence Form from the HS Office and have it completed by teachers at least three days before departure. Teachers will determine how work missed will be handled.

Excessive Absences:

Students missing more than 10% of the class periods in a semester will not receive course credit without the written approval of the school administration. This applies to the total number of absences – excused and/or unexcused.

For chronic absenteeism, the Principal may require a contract, defining attendance expectations for the student, as a precondition for continued enrollment at the school.

School-sponsored field trips, including sports tournaments, MUN, etc. are not considered absences from school.

Lateness:

ISP students are expected to arrive on time to school in the morning, and to all classes throughout the day. For a late arrival to school or class to be considered excused, the student must present a valid excuse in writing, from the parent or staff member.

Chronic unexcused lateness is grounds for the following consequences:

- A student with three unexcused tardies to any class in one quarter will be assigned an After-School Detention.
- An additional two unexcused tardies to that class will lead to a second detention.

- An additional unexcused tardy after the second detention is grounds for in-school suspension.

DISCIPLINE

The rules and guidelines in the student handbook are for the well-being of the students and members of the ISP community. Our aim is to establish and preserve a positive learning environment. A student's failure to follow these rules or adhere to these guidelines is grounds for consequences.

Student misbehavior will be classified as one of the following types:

Type A

Disrespect
Unexcused Tardiness
Lack of materials
Uniform violations
Disrupting class
Vandalism (minor)
Hiding others property
Dishonesty
Inappropriate displays of affection
Use of unauthorized electronic devices in class (phones, music devices, etc.)

Type B

Cutting class
Unauthorized departure from campus
Entry to unauthorized location on campus
Cheating, Plagiarism or other act of Academic Dishonesty
Deception
Defiance or refusal to comply with a teacher's directive
Bullying and/or harassment
Fighting
Vandalism or destruction of school property
Repetitions of Type A behaviors

Type C

Theft
Smoking on campus
Possession and/or use of drugs and/or alcohol
Assault or acts of physical aggression
Use of a weapon
Repetitions of Type B behaviors

Disciplinary Process:

The following disciplinary process applies to the behaviors outlined above. Type C behaviors are subject to immediate suspension and review by the Principal and Director for possible dismissal/expulsion.

Type A, B and C behaviors are grounds for the following consequences:**Type A Behaviors**

1. Notification to Principal with documentation for student file.
2. Parent contact from Teacher and/or Advisor.
3. Possible detention.
4. Parent-Teacher Conference if necessary.

Type B Behaviors

1. Immediate referral to Principal with documentation for student file.
2. Parent Conference or contact from Teacher, Advisor and Principal.
3. Detention.
4. Possible suspension for serious or repeated offense.

Type C Behaviors

1. Immediate suspension for period to be determined, with documentation in student permanent record.
2. Parent Conference with Principal and/or Director.
3. Probation.
4. Dismissal/Expulsion from school considered if circumstances warrant.

Suspension:

All suspensions are considered matters of documented record in the high school. In-school suspensions are recorded in the student's internal file and are considered matters of internal record only. An out-of-school suspension is considered a matter of the permanent record, and a letter is placed in the student's cumulative file.

Suspended students are entitled to make up any and all work missed. Teachers, however, are not expected to re-teach the material missed. Assignments and work are explained and provided to the student.

Students with more than one suspension may be placed on a probationary contract, or referred to the Director for dismissal/expulsion from school.

Disciplinary probation:

Disciplinary probation can be imposed for any of the following reasons:

- Consistent non-compliance with school rules resulting in referrals to Principal, detentions, or suspension from school.
- Serious infractions of school rules.
- Previous suspensions, or history of disciplinary problems prior to entering ISP.

Students on probationary status are not permitted to participate in student government or extra-curricular activities.

Tuesday After-School Detentions:

HS students assigned to Tuesday afternoon detention will attend a silent, supervised study hall from 2:45 to 4:15. These detentions will be assigned at the discretion of the Principal and for the established pattern of misbehaviors.

Detentions will generally be assigned for any of the following reasons: a pattern of inappropriate behaviors, repeated failure to complete assignments for one or more classes, chronic unexcused lateness, or repeated uniform violations.

Detentions may be assigned automatically for type B behaviors.

Parents will be given advance notice by email and/or phone call. Students in detention may take the after-school bus.

All teachers at ISP have the explicit authority to enforce the school's behavioral expectations and school rules. In all discipline situations the principal will make the decision as to appropriate consequences. The preceding is a guide and does not specify each and every possible situation that may occur.

ISP UNIFORM

Uniforms are required for all students at ISP. They are in keeping with public and private Panamanian school culture, and should reflect pride in our school

community. Additionally, they are an expression of preparedness and a kind of professionalism desired in ISP students.

Although the ISP uniform has a relaxed appearance, it is a uniform and must be worn according to the regulations. Violations will result in appropriate disciplinary actions.

ISP Uniform Regulations:

1. All students are required to wear a complete school uniform in accordance with the uniform items list.
2. Uniform items to be purchased and worn to school daily:
 - **Shoes:** Shoes must be all black including soles and laces. Athletic shoes are acceptable and we recommend rubber/slip-proof soles for safety reasons. No open backs or sandals are allowed.
 - **Socks:** White socks are required. They must cover the ankle.
 - **Slacks:** Navy blue uniform slacks (available at the uniform shops) or navy chinos (lightweight cotton trousers that are dressier than khakis and do not fade as easily) are required. Slacks with rips or holes, hems that reach the floor or over and/or undersized slacks are not allowed.
 - **Culottes:** ISP plaid uniform culottes are available at the uniform shop. The length of the culottes may vary from just above the knee to no shorter than 2 inches (5.0 cm) above the knee.
 - **Skirt:** ISP plaid uniform skirts are available at the uniform shop. The length of the skirt may vary from mid-knee to no shorter than 2 inches (5.0 cm) above the knee.
 - **Shirts:** ISP light blue cotton shirts or solid (teal or burgundy) ISP polo shirts are available at the uniform shop. Only students in grades 11 and 12 have the option of wearing the teal or burgundy shirt with alternating color collar. All shirts must be tucked into pants unless they are hemmed to fall 4"-6" below the navel.
 - **PE Uniform:** ISP T-shirts or plain navy T-shirts and ISP or navy blue PE shorts are required.
 - **Sweatshirts and Sweaters:** Only ISP sweatshirts or plain navy blue sweatshirts or sweaters are allowed.
 - **ISP Caps and Visors:** Only ISP caps and visors are allowed and these are highly recommended for PE and all outdoor activities. Caps and visors may only be worn outside of school buildings.
3. General Notes about special dress and grooming:

- Students may be requested to wear plain colored T-shirts or sport shirts (i.e. green, red, blue, etc.) for certain activity days.
 - On some field trips, students will be allowed to wear jeans. Torn and over or under-sized jeans are not permitted.
 - Students may wear properly sized, white and/or ISP PE T-shirts under their uniform shirts, provided they do not extend outside of the uniform shirt.
 - Hair must be clean, brushed and well kept. Unnaturally colored hair, (i.e. blue, green, red, purple, etc.) is not allowed. At times, for safety, long hair must be pulled back.
 - For safety, students should wear a minimum amount of jewelry. Some jewelry, including dangling earrings, must be removed for PE. Female students may wear one or two pierced earrings. Male students may not wear any earrings. Other facial piercings are not permitted.
4. Consequences for uniform violations in the high school:
- Teachers and staff will submit to the HS office a Uniform Violation Form when a student is not in compliance with all of the regulations outlined above.
 - A student who accumulates three Uniform Violations in a quarter will be assigned an After-School Detention. Further violations will lead to a second detention. Uniform Violations beyond the second detention are grounds for suspension.

ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

Harassment has a serious detrimental effect on working, studying, and social conditions for staff, students, and visitors to the school. Any incident of harassment will be regarded seriously and will be grounds for disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion. This policy applies to all members of the school community, staff, and students.

The following are types of harassment and are unacceptable at ISP:

- **Bullying**
- **Stalking**
- **Ethnic/ religious harassment**
- **Sexual harassment**
- **Sexual orientation harassment**

- **Disability harassment**

Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to the following:

- Physical contact such as hitting, kicking, taking or hiding belongings, throwing objects, spitting, hair pulling, pinching.
- Excluding someone from social groups in order to intimidate or isolate.
- Derogatory name calling.
- Written or verbal insults.
- Verbal abuse and threats.
- Ridicule of an individual.
- Imitating or mocking in an insulting way.
- Incitement of others to harass.
- Publishing (electronic or otherwise), derogatory or inflammatory comments about an individual.
- Menacing telephone calls, letters, or e-mails causing the recipient distress.

TECHNOLOGY CODE OF CONDUCT

ISP actively promotes the appropriate use of technology in education. We recognize the importance of using information technology in today's world. Every student must have access to information technology as an adjunct to instruction. Students need tech skills not only for their schoolwork, but also in their personal lives. Parents and educators must equip young people to use technology responsibly and to integrate these skills with other essentials, such as critical thinking, literacy, numeracy and citizenship.

Essential to the use of technology is ethical responsibility.

To ensure that students, staff, parents and other community members can take full advantage of the technologies available at ISP, all users of technology must have proper authorization and adhere to the Technology Code of Conduct as outlined below:

1. All use of technology must be in support of and consistent with the educational purposes of the International School of Panama. It is the user's responsibility to keep all inappropriate materials or files and software dangerous to the integrity of the system, away from the school's technology.

2. Users will not access inappropriate materials when using the school's equipment. Users agree that they will not send or knowingly receive pornographic materials or access pornographic sites. ISP users agree that they will not send or solicit hate mail. Users will not attempt unauthorized access (hacking) into files, programs, or network sites.
3. Individuals are responsible for adhering to the laws for copyrighted materials under Panamanian and international guidelines. Users accept responsibility for personal software when used on school premises. Such software must be appropriate for school use and conform to school policies and procedures.
4. Each user agrees to respect other individuals' work, files and programs. The modification or destruction of another person's work, files and/or programs is a serious offense.
5. Users agree not to seek password information, modify passwords, obtain copies of files or view files belonging to another person without their expressed permission. Users agree to not misrepresent themselves or log into programs or networked sites as another person when using the school's technology.
6. It is the user's responsibility to obtain proper authorization prior to the addition, removal, or relocation of any equipment or software.
7. It is the user's responsibility to make sure no equipment or software is destroyed, modified, or abused in any way. Users must ensure that all food and drink are kept away from the equipment.

The consequences for failure to adhere to the Technology Code of Conduct will result in restriction or complete loss of access to technology at ISP. Other disciplinary measures deemed appropriate by the school administration may also be applied.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Electronic Devices:

ISP strongly discourages students from bringing electronic devices to school. Such devices include I-Pods, cell phones, video games, etc. Such items may not be taken out or used in classrooms or during class time. Teachers will confiscate and turn in to the Principal any electronic device that is used during class time.

While cell phones are often a necessary communication tool, they are to be used only during break or lunch times.

The school does everything within reason to safeguard private property, but it will not be responsible for lost valuables, or those left unattended or in an unlocked location.

While we discourage bringing these devices to school, appropriate use during breaks and lunch times is acceptable. Study halls do not constitute break time.

Food:

Food is only permitted in the cafeteria and covered walk-way during lunch and breaks. Food is generally not allowed in the classrooms. In certain special cases, and when approved, a teacher may supervise a lunch or activity with food in his/her classroom. All ISP community members are expected to be considerate and clean up their garbage after eating.

Hall Passes:

Students are expected to have a hall pass any time they are out of class during an instructional period. Students are not admitted to the library or computer lab without permission clearly written and indicated by the teacher or staff member.

Driving Policy:

Only 12th Grade Students may drive to school. Any eligible senior must complete and submit a student driver form and be in good standing at ISP in all ways.

Driving to school by ISP Students is a "Senior Privilege" and may be suspended or revoked by the School Administration. If the student is observed to be driving recklessly on school grounds, or in the vicinity of the school, the driving privileges will be revoked. If a student drives and is consistently late to school, the driving privilege will be revoked.

Emergency Drills:

ISP holds periodic fire drills and evacuations. Students are expected to follow all rules and instructions, to conduct themselves quietly and respectfully, and to act in complete accordance with the rules and guidelines outlined for such drills.

Visitor Policy:

All student visitors must be pre-approved by the Principal prior to coming on campus, and they wear a Visitor's Pass while present. Approval is given if a compelling reason for the visit exists. This policy pertains to former ISP students.

Former ISP students returning to visit must pre-approve their visit through the HS office prior to the visit.

Visitors are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with all the behavioral expectations outlined in the handbook, and are expected to dress appropriately. All visitors must report upon arrival to the front desk to receive the Visitor's Pass.

Section Three

Curriculum and

Academic

Expectations



THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The ISP curriculum consists of a broad course of study in English, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, Spanish, The Arts and Physical Education. Offerings in the 11th and 12th grade are either in the International Baccalaureate program (IB) or College Prep.

The High School program is outlined in detail in the Program Planning Guide, published yearly and distributed to all students and families.

Graduation Requirements:

High school students must earn the specified number of course credits in order to graduate:

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Minimum Credits</u>
English	4
Social Studies	3
Science	3
Spanish	4
Mathematics	3
Physical Education*	1.5
Art	1
Elective Courses	4

The majority of ISP students will graduate with 28 credits. One credit is granted for each full year course, and is equal to approximately 125 hours of class, lab or field study.

Participation in the Graduation Ceremony is a privilege earned for the completion of all graduation requirements. Students not fulfilling graduation requirements prior to the graduation ceremony will forfeit the opportunity for participation.

Promotion:

Grade placement and promotion to the next grade in high school is based upon the minimum total number of credits earned as follows:

- Promotion to grade 10: earned 6 credits
- Promotion to grade 11: earned 12 credits
- Promotion to grade 12: earned 18 credits

Class Load:

Students must take seven subjects in an eight block schedule. The 8th class may be a Study Hall. In the block schedule, each day is divided into four instructional periods meeting each for 90 minutes. Classes meet on alternating days.

Block Schedule:

<u>Day 1</u>	<u>Day 2</u>	<u>Day 3</u>	<u>Day 4</u>
A	E	B	F
B	F	A	E
C	G	D	H
D	H	C	G

Dropping and Adding Courses:

At the beginning of the school year, there is a Drop / Add Period lasting two weeks. During that time, a student may make changes to his/her schedule of classes – in consultation with the guidance counselor, and with the signed approvals of the teachers involved. Provided the desired changes correspond to diploma and graduation requirements, they may be approved. All changes to the

schedule are done by the counselor after the Drop / Add form is completed and submitted.

After the two-week Drop / Add Period, changes can only be considered for extraordinary reasons, and must be requested in writing and in conference with parents. Such changes (after the Drop / Add Period) are indicated on the report card and official transcript with a W for "withdrawal."

DIPLOMAS & CERTIFICATES

IB Diploma and Certificate:

At the end of the 10th grade year, students are invited to apply for the International Baccalaureate Diploma or Certificate Program. The IB is a rigorous course of study and is the signature and culminating piece of ISP's educational program. Students may apply for the full IB Diploma – which requires a two-year course of study in six core subjects, along with Extended Essay, the Theory of Knowledge (TOK) course, and the completion of Creativity, Action and Service (CAS) projects. Or, students may decide to pursue IB Certificates in subject areas of their choice.

The student's progress through the IB program is supervised by the school's IB Coordinator.

Panamanian Diploma:

Panamanian and other students from Latin America are strongly recommended to complete all the requirements for the Panamanian "Ciencias y Letras" diploma given by the Ministry of Education. Students must complete all ISP Graduation requirements plus:

- 4 years of Math and Spanish.
- At least one full year of Biology, Chemistry and Physics.
- 1.5 years of Panamanian Studies.
- Two semesters of Theory of Knowledge (TOK).

FOUR YEAR PLANNING

Each year the HS counselor meets individually with students to establish and revise their Four Year Plan. This plan will list the courses that the student will

take throughout high school. Many courses will have prerequisites, so advance planning is essential.

The course selection process for high school classes takes place during March and April for the subsequent school year. At that time students receive instructions on the registration process and the ISP Program Planning Guide. The Program Planning Guide describes all the courses offered in the high school. By using the Four Year Plan along with the guide, students will work with counselor and advisors to select classes that meet the ISP graduation requirements, Panamanian diploma requirements, IB requirements, and/or the requirements for the type of university degree desired by the student.

It is critical that students plan ahead and give serious consideration to their choice of classes, as there will likely be requirements for the college degree program they are interested in. Many colleges may have specific entrance requirements.

Students are encouraged to challenge themselves and to take the highest-level courses for which they are prepared.

HOMEWORK

Purpose of homework:

Teachers at ISP assign work to be done outside of school in order to:

- Provide training for the student in planning and organizing time.
- Help the student establish habits of study, concentration and self-discipline.
- Afford the student the opportunity to test understanding of the material taught.
- Allow the student to consolidate concepts learned, and practice skills.
- Foster independent learning and challenge the student to explore.
- Communicate to parents what is being taught in the classroom and the progress being made by their children.

HS students are expected to devote time every day to quiet, focused study and homework. Work to be done outside of school consists of homework assignments, study for tests and quizzes, completion of class-work, and longer-term projects.

Some students may need several hours per night, especially those students who are English language learners and those who are extending themselves by taking challenging courses. IB Diploma and Certificate students should expect

significantly increased hours of study and homework, as these courses are part of an intensely rigorous program.

Areas of student responsibility:

In order to be successful, students are expected to ensure the following needs are addressed. Parental assistance is also expected with:

- Setting up a quiet place at home to study and to complete assignments and projects.
- Maintaining a routine of study and development of regular habits of study.
- Keeping a record of assignments and projects (in agenda).
- Organization of time so as to complete longer-term projects over adequate period of days.

GRADING & REPORTING

The school year is divided into two semesters consisting of two quarters (or bimesters) each. The quarter is approximately nine weeks in length. The published school calendar shows the exact dates.

Semester grades will be based upon grades for the two quarters plus the grade earned on the semester final exam. Teachers may choose to assign alternative assessments that exhibit the student's understanding of the subject through a comprehensive cumulative project or presentation. IB courses follow grading procedures as outlined by the International Baccalaureate Organization.

For grades 9-12, a report form with "A" through "F" grades is used.

On the ISP student's official transcript, final grades from each semester of grades 9-12 are shown. Quarter grades and exam grades are not seen on the official transcript.

Semester Exams:

Final semester exams take place at the end of the first semester in December, and at the end of the second semester in June. The exam counts for 20% of the student's final grade for the semester. Absences will only be considered excused during the exam period in the event of a documented emergency, medical or otherwise. In the event of such emergencies, make-up exams may be scheduled through the HS office. The school will not re-schedule examinations

to accommodate early departures for vacation. Students and parents are expected to plan according to the school's published calendar of exam dates.

Grading System:

ISP students earn grades and grade point average (GPA) according to the chart below:

The International School of Panama GRADING SYSTEM <i>(Conversion of Percentages to Letter Grades to Grade Point Equivalent GPE)</i>			
Percent	Letter	GPE	IB Equivalent
98-100	A+	4.4 or above	5.4
93-97	A	4.0	5.0
90-92	A-	3.7	4.7
87-89	B+	3.4	4.4
83-86	B	3.0	4.0
80-82	B-	2.7	3.7
77-79	C+	2.4	3.4
73-76	C	2.0	3.0
70-72	C-	1.7	2.7
67-69	D+	1.4	
63-66	D	1.0	
60-62	D-	.7	
59 & Below	F	0	

Students who earn grades of C- or above in IB courses will earn an additional 1.0 Grade Point Equivalent for each IB course. ISP uses a 4.0 scale when reporting grades on transcripts and report cards. Grades of A+ receive an additional .4 toward the Grade Point Average.

HONOR ROLL

Director's List:

A student earns this special recognition when he/she earns no more than two grades of B and all other grades of A. No grades of C may be earned. Students must be enrolled in seven courses to earn this status.

Academic Recognition:

A student achieves this recognition when he/she earns four grades of A and all other grades of B. No grades of C. Students must be enrolled in seven courses to earn this status.

STUDENTS AT RISK**Recuperation / Make-Up of a Failed Course:**

When a student earns a grade of F for the semester, the student is required to sign a Recuperation Contract, and given another opportunity to earn a passing grade, thus receiving course credit.

The subject teacher will give necessary assignments that need to be completed satisfactorily (before the beginning of the next semester) in order for the student to earn course credit. The student will then need to re-take a Final Exam at the beginning of the next semester, on the date specified. If the student fulfills the contract terms, and achieves a passing grade on the exam, the teacher signs the completion agreement and a recuperation grade of 60 (or D-) will be posted on the report card and in official school records.

If the student continues to fail in the next academic semester, enrollment at ISP will be jeopardized.

Academic Warning / Probation:

Enrollment in the HS program at ISP is contingent on the student achieving a minimum C- average by the end of each semester, while exhibiting acceptable conduct as described in the Student Handbook.

Students who do not achieve the minimum average will be placed on Academic Probation, and may be asked to leave the school if minimum requirements are not met. Students who fail two courses in a semester, or earn three or more grades of D, will automatically be placed on Academic Probation.

The purpose of this probation is to maximize the chances that the student will improve performance to reach his/her potential. A team consisting of administration, guidance counselor and teachers will recommend actions to help the student overcome any special difficulties he/she is confronting. The team

may require the student's family to provide additional tutorial support outside of school hours.

Parents of students placed on Academic Probation will be contacted by the Principal. A conference will also take place to discuss with the student and parents a plan of action for improvement, and the potential consequences of probation. The family's collaboration in improving the student's performance is essential.

If the student fails to improve academic performance in the next semester, the team will issue a recommendation to the Director regarding the continuity of the student in the school. Failure to meet probation requirements may restrict re-enrollment

Probationary status will be lifted when the student achieves the minimum grade average of C- in the core subjects.

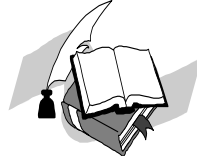
In all cases ISP reserves the right to determine the students' eligibility to continue to study at the school. Any student facing a second consecutive year still on Academic Probation will not be allowed to enroll for the following school year.

Dismissal:

Students who fail more than two subjects may be dismissed from school or be required to repeat the year. If a student who is repeating a grade level continues to fail during the next academic semester, he/she will be asked to leave after that semester.

Section Four

Home - School Communication



ED-LINE

Teachers use Ed-line to post information about homework, projects, assessments and quarterly plans. All students and parents have access to Ed-line through the school web-page, and will be given an Ed-line access code at the beginning of the school year. Ed-line is a vital communication tool and it is the school's expectation that students and parents make full use of it.

OPEN HOUSE

Open House occurs a few weeks after school has opened. Its purpose is to inform parents about the programs and to discuss general expectations for the high school program.

PROGRESS REPORTS

In order to keep parents fully informed of student progress, progress reports will be sent to parents during each mid-quarter of the school year, notifying them of student progress in each subject. These reports are in addition to the quarterly report cards. A separate report is sent for each subject, including any reasons for poor performance, and suggestions for improvement before the end of the quarter.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are distributed four times each year. They are sent electronically and the official report card is given as a hard copy. Grading is based upon tests, quizzes, class participation, projects, etc.

PARENT - TEACHER CONFERENCES

Days are devoted to Parent–Teacher Conferences each year at the end of the first and third quarters – in October and March. Parents should feel free to contact the school whenever there are questions concerning progress or adjustment in school. Conferences may be requested by parents, teachers, counselor, or administration. Conferences requested by parents may be arranged by calling the HS office to schedule an appointment.

COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS

All ISP teachers have e-mails where students and parents may reach them. Addresses can be accessed on the ISP web-page.

ISP WEB-PAGE

The school web-page is found at www.isp.edu.pa

The site is meant to be a valuable resource and communication tool for parents and students. This HS student handbook is published on the web-page, as are a variety of school newsletters, and news updates. There is an important section on the ISP web-page devoted to our IB program as well.

STUDENT RECORDS

To release student records to another school in which an ISP student intends to enroll, the parents or legal guardian must notify the school and specifically request that the appropriate records be released.

To release student records to other persons or agencies, written consent must be given by the parent or legal guardian of the student. This consent must state which records will be released, to whom, and the reason for the release. A copy of the student record to be released will be made available to the person signing the release form. All authorizations for release will be kept in the student's cumulative folder.



Section Five

General Information

LIBRARY – MEDIA CENTER

The library – media center is open daily from 7:30 until 3:00, for students, staff and parents. The library may be used by HS students for research and reference, required reading, and the pursuit of personal reading interest. The library is meant to be an area of quiet work and study.

Library Resources:

- The newest issues of magazines and newspapers remain in the library. Back issues may be checked out overnight.
- The newest encyclopedias are available for use in the library. Other reference books may be checked out overnight. Videos, DVDs and audiocassettes are checked out to teachers only.
- Reserved books to be used for classroom assignments are to be kept on a special shelf and used only in the library.
- Destiny is the web-based catalog of all library materials, and is accessible from the library computers. On-line research databases are also accessible from the library computers.
- There is an extensive list of Ebsco databases available in the library. They allow access to a vast number of magazines and newspapers. These databases are also available for home access.

Circulation and Fines:

- Books from the general collection are circulated for two weeks and may be renewed as often as needed.
- Some reference books, with the permission of the Librarian, may be checked out at the end of the school day for overnight use and must be returned the next morning.

- Students are expected to return books on time. Students with overdue books will lose the privilege of borrowing or renewing library books until their obligations are fulfilled.
- Students with overdue books will also have report cards withheld until they meet their obligations.

Students will be held responsible for the cost of lost or damaged books or other library materials checked out in their name.

Library Rules and Procedures:

- Students must have a pass to visit the library during the school day.
- Students visiting the library are expected to have a specific task to do, whether it is checking out or returning a book, reading, studying or research.
- The library is meant to be a place of quiet study, research and work. Students in the library must be quiet and respectful of others who are working.

Library Computers:

- Scheduled classes have priority over individual students using the library's computers
- Students may use the computers for research purposes and school assignments
- Library computers are for school work only. Using the computer for other purposes will result in the student being asked to leave the library, and may result in loss of network privileges.
- The expectations, as outlined in the Technology Code of Conduct, apply to the use of library computers.

CAFETERIA

ISP offers snacks and lunch daily. In addition to a hot lunch option, the cafeteria offers sandwiches, salad bar and other snacks. The current monthly menu is available on the ISP web-page. The cafeteria is open from 8:00 to 3:00 Monday through Friday. Students are allowed to be in the cafeteria only during the designated breaks and lunch period.

Method of Payment:

In order to facilitate the use of the cafeteria service, a pre-paid card system has been implemented:

- Each student receives an ID card to be used in the cafeteria.
- Cards can be reloaded Monday through Friday from 8:30 to 1:00 at the cafeteria.
- Accepted forms of payment are checks or cash.
- Refund of remaining balance when students withdraw from school
- \$5.00 fee for lost or stolen cards.

This is a pre-paid system and students are required to have money in their accounts to be able to use the cafeteria services.

Cafeteria Rules:

1. Good manners are expected and courtesy is to be extended to teachers, food servers and classmates.
2. Students must wait their turn in the serving line.
3. Students who drop or spill anything on the floor are to clean and/or pick up immediately.
4. After students finish eating, food and papers are to be cleared away and placed in the trash containers. Clean-up is a cooperative effort and expected from all.

ISP BUS

Bus Safety Rules and Procedures:

The bus drivers and monitors are charged with the safe transportation of ISP students to and from school, and they must have the full cooperation of students on the bus at all times. All ISP rules (and discipline procedures) as outlined in this handbook apply on the bus.

The following are the essential expectations for all student riders:

1. **Respect for other riders**
No rough play, bad language or inappropriate behavior.
2. **Respect for the bus**
No eating or drinking. Treat the bus with care.
3. **Respect for the driver and monitors**

Follow all directions.

Specifically, students are expected to adhere to the following procedures:

1. Board the bus carefully and on time.
2. Fill all available seats before using fold-down seats.
3. Fasten seat belt.
4. Stay seated while bus is in motion.
5. Keep hands and articles away from windows.
6. Keep aisles clear.
7. Follow the instructions of the driver and monitor.
8. Be courteous and respectful.

Bus Discipline Policy:

At the discretion of the driver and monitor, a mis-behaving student may be given a Pink Slip, with follow-up from the Principal. A student receiving a third Pink Slip will be suspended from the bus. The duration of the bus suspension will depend on the severity of the offense. Students involved in any Type B or C behaviors on the school bus will receive an immediate suspension from the bus, and suspension from school when indicated.

If after suspension, serious or continuing offenses on the bus persist, a Parent-Student-Principal Conference will be held. The student may be suspended from the bus for the rest of the school year.

Dismissal and Pick-Up:

Dismissal is at 2:40 daily, and 12:00 on Wednesdays. Student riders are expected to report promptly to the bus after the dismissal bell. ISP buses leave no later than 2:55, and by 12:15 on Wednesdays.

After School Activities Pick-up:

After School Activities conclude at 4:15 and buses leave ISP no later than 4:30.

Request for Change in Transportation:

To request a change in transportation for a student the following steps must be taken:

- The parent fills out a Transportation Permission Slip. This slip can be found on the ISP web-page or a copy can be requested from the office.
- The Transportation Permission Slip must be filled out and emailed, or taken to the appropriate office where the student will receive a Transportation Approval slip to be given to the bus monitor.
- Hand-written notes are not accepted and student will not be permitted to call home for a last minute change.

Emergencies:

When the possibility of an emergency situation arises, such as civil unrest or demonstrations that block traffic, the school contacts the US Embassy Security Office to confirm and request that up-dates and security suggestions be provided. The school contacts the bus owners to have their drivers monitor the roads and report by radio any activity that might compromise the safety of our students. The Administrative Team is kept apprised of the situation, its progress is monitored and reviewed, and appropriate action is taken when necessary. This action may include early dismissal, changes in the bus routes through more secure areas, the cancellation of after school activities due to the transportation difficulties, or keeping students on campus until it is safe to transport them home.

If a bus accident occurs, drivers and monitors will be in touch with the school administration, who will communicate with parents.

In the event of an accident or emergency it is very important that students stay calm, and stay seated until receiving instructions or until help arrives. Students must not get off the bus unless told to by the driver, and must follow the bus driver's instructions at all times.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found boxes are located in the Gym and in the HS office. If a student loses something important he/she should report it at once to the HS office secretary or the Principal.

We recommend that students do not bring valuable items to school, such as I-pods, CD Players or video games. We ask students not to bring large sums of

money to school. The school does everything within reason to safeguard private property, but it cannot be responsible for lost items.

Section Six

Getting a Good Start



GET ORGANIZED

Getting a good start at the beginning of the school year is important. Start good habits right away. Being organized will help you be successful at ISP. Here are some tips to help you on your way.

Plan Your Day:

Before you go to sleep, organize your books and materials, so that you are ready for the next day and not rushed in the morning. Be sure you have the necessary tools for a successful day at school.

The habits you develop in August and September will continue throughout the year. Most adolescents need at least eight hours of sleep each night.

Your Locker:

At school your locker is your main organizer. It is your "home away from home." Lockers are provided for your books and clothing. Books and other materials are never to be left in the classroom. You should keep your locker uncluttered and locked. If you need safe storage of an item in a location other than your locker, you should see your advisor or the HS office secretary. If your locker needs repair, you should report this to the office. Remember your locker is school property and you are required to take good care of it.

Taking Care of Books and Supplies:

You should cover all books. Make sure that your name is on your book cover. You should repair tears to the cover or pages. The books will last longer and you will not be charged a fine when you return them. The care of school material is your responsibility.

Phone Buddy:

It is important to have at least one person in your class to call for assignments and messages. In the early part of the school year, establish a list of phone numbers and/or email addresses so you have classmates to contact when the need arises.

STUDY HABITS

Below is a list of recommended practices that can help you achieve and be successful in any and all classes.

- Keep an assignment notebook/agenda.
- Make and keep to a study schedule. Set a specific time of the day to study.
- Study in the same quiet place every day. Keep all materials in that study place.
- Plan ahead - work on long term projects as well as daily assignments.
- Always read directions before beginning a task. If the assignment seems difficult, read the instructions aloud. If you still don't understand, read them to someone else and seek advice.
- Establish open and frequent communication with your teachers.
- Make certain your assignments are done neatly and with attention to detail.
- Limit distractions (internet, email, TV, radio, I-pods) when studying.
- Organize your work and materials at the end of the day. Leave work ready to be picked up easily in the morning before going to school.

The Place:

At home, you may need the discipline of a desk in a room where there are few interruptions. Keep your study area clean, cool, and well lit. Keep your books and materials easily accessible.

The Time:

How you manage your time can make a world of difference to your efficiency. Know when and how you function best. Learn your best methods for studying and then set up the conditions for them. Ask yourself these questions: Do you work best before or after meals, indoors or out, in the morning, afternoon or evening?

If You Feel Bogged Down While Studying:

Move... get up and do something. Stretch, take a walk, get a snack, take a shower. Then go back and review your notes - to get a fresh start on your subject.

SUPPORT

School Counselor:

The School Counselor is available to help you in making a successful adjustment throughout your years at ISP. If you are experiencing any problems or if you have any concerns, seek the aid of your Counselor. The high school counselor can help students with academic or personal counseling.

Advisor:

Each high school student is assigned a grade level advisor, a teacher you will meet with once a week formally, and when necessary informally. The advisor is meant to be a teacher who knows you well, a coach and guide for the duration of the school year. Develop a relationship with your advisor and seek him/her out when you have questions, doubts or concerns, when you need guidance or help, or when you are struggling. Each student is part of a group of students in the same advisory. This group also serves as a network of support.

GOOD LUCK!

We wish all ISP students a successful school year, a year of growth and achievement, in 2009-2010.