



BOSTON SCHOOL INTERNATIONAL

HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Academic Year 2022-2023

This Handbook complements the “Reglamento Interno” document. Should there be any discrepancies between the two documents, the Reglamento Interno shall have priority.

Updated: June 2022

Revised: August 2022

FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Dear BSI Family,

We ask that you read this handbook with your child. Please complete the information below once you have completed your review of this document, sign this page and return it to school.

My child, _____ and I have read and we understand this handbook for the 2022-2023 school year.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date: _____

FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

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CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL INFORMATION

1.1 Mission Statement

To develop in our students, active, creative minds and the capacity for critical thinking through a technologically advanced and international bilingual education program.

1.2 Vision Statement

To be one of the best schools in Panama and the world providing an education system based on personal competency that will enable students to meet and surpass the individual and academic demands of our modern world.

1.3 Philosophy

At Boston School International we believe that all students can learn. We promote learning through inquiry, leadership, development of tolerance, intercultural understanding, and citizenship.

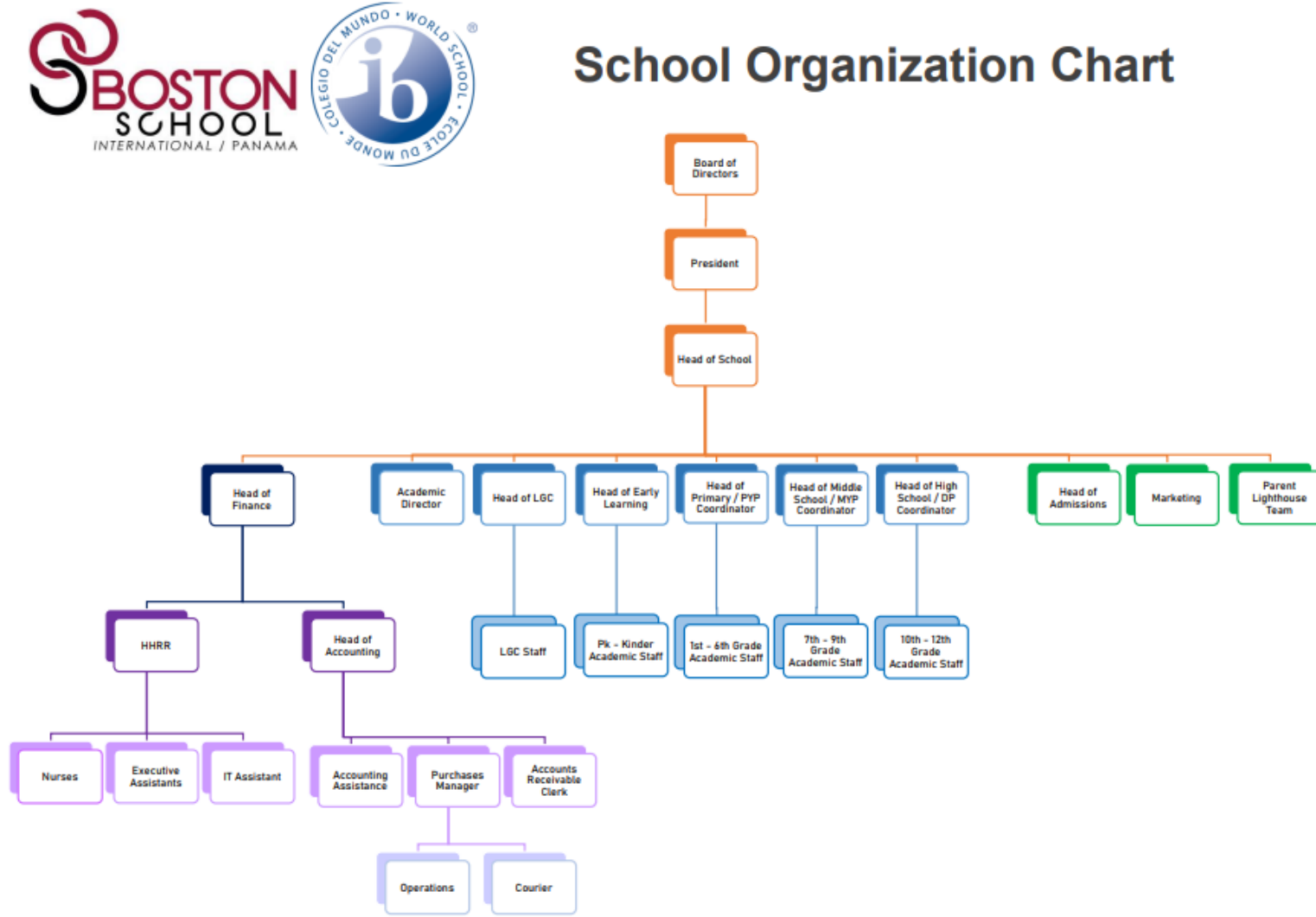
1.4 Values

Commitment to Excellence, Integrity, and Solidarity

1.5 Staff

FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

1.5.1 Organizational Chart



FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

1.5.2 Senior Lighthouse Team

Mr. Alexander Bennett	Head of School	alex.bennett@bostonschool.edu.pa
Ms. Ruth Mendoza	Head of High School/ IBDP Coordinator	rmendoza@bostonschool.edu.pa
Ms. Keyla Lopez	Head of Middle School/ MYP Coordinator	keyla.lopez@bostonschool.edu.pa
Ms. Bronwyn Gordon-Bennett	Head of Primary/ PYP Coordinator	bronwyn.gordon@bostonschool.edu.pa
Mrs. Anabella Calvo	Head of Early Learning	anabella.calvo@bostonschool.edu.pa
Ms. Milagro Garcia	Academic Director	milagro.garcia@bostonschool.edu.pa
Ms. Ixchel Luna	Head of The Learning & Growth Center	ixchel.luna@bostonschool.edu.pa
Ms. Elsie Soto	Leader in Me Coordinator	elsie.soto@bostonschool.edu.pa

1.5.3 Learning and Grow Center (LGC)

Head of LGC- Spanish AB/B	Ixchel Luna	ixchel.luna@bostonschool.edu.pa
Psychologist - Secondary	Samanta Gronchi	samanta.gronchi@bostonschool.edu.pa
Psychologist - Primary	Maria Gabriela Rosas	maria.rosas@bostonschool.edu.pa
Psychologist - Early Learning	Chantall Garcia	chantal.garcia@bostonschool.edu.pa
Special Ed Teacher & Leader in Me Coordinator	Elsie Soto	elsie.soto@bostonschool.edu.pa

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Spanish as an Additional Language (SAL) Teacher	Karina Del Castillo	karina.delcastillo@bostonschool.edu.pa
English as an Additional Language (EAL)	Janeth Reyes	Janeth.reyes@bostonschool.edu.pa
Literacy Coach- Early Learning & Primary section	Katyuska Klinger	katyuska.klinger@bostonschool.edu.pa
Literacy Coach- Secondary section	Laura Gonzalez	laura.gonzalez@bostonschool.edu.pa

1.5.3 Administration Staff

Head of Finance	Kaiser Ponce	kaiser.ponce@bostonschool.edu.pa
Human Resources / ICT Coordinator	Jessie Vergara	jessie.vergara@bostonschool.edu.pa
Collection Coordinator	Carmela Vasquez	carmela.vasquez@bostonschool.edu.pa
Head of the Accounting Department	Gilberto Avila	gilberto.avila@bostonschool.edu.pa
Purchasing Coordinator	Cecilia Best	cecilia.best@bostonschool.edu.pa
Accounting Assistant	Amels Enrique Foulén	asistente.contable@bostonschool.edu.pa
Director of Admissions & Public Relations	Oriana Otto	admissions@bostonschool.edu.pa
Receptionist - Main Campus	Esikari Yanguez	esikari.yamguez@bostonschool.edu.pa
Marketing	Jaime Cherigo	jaime.cherigo@bostonschool.edu.pa
IT Assistant	Giovanni Camaño	giovanni.camano@bostonschool.edu.pa
Librarian	Mari-Ana Cuadra	mari-ana.cuadra@bostonschool.edu.pa
Transportation	Getsabel Rodriguez	transport@bostonschool.edu.pa

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Transport Assistant	Kevin Arias	-----
Nurse - Main Campus	Mirella Alleyne	mirella.alleyne@bostonschool.edu.pa
Receptionist - Early Learning	Adeth Arroyo	adeth.arroyo@bostonschool.edu.pa
Nurse - Early Learning	Lisbeth Morales	lisbeth.morales@bostonschool.edu.pa

1.5.4 Early Learning

TEACHER	GRADE	E-mail
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FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Judit Montero	Rotating Assistant	judit.montero@bostonschool.edu.pa
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1.5.5 Primary School

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SPECIALIST TEACHERS	GRADE	E-mail
Angela Varela	Arts PK3-4th	angela.varela@bostonschool.edu.pa
Jeniffer Parra	PE PK3-K	jennifer.parra@bostonschool.edu.pa
Paul Portugal	PE 1st - 6th	paul.portugal@bostonschool.edu.pa

FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Ana María Biendicho	Spanish K-1 Soc. Studies 1	ana.biendicho@bostonschool.edu.pa
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Bonnie De Famiglietti	Int. Arts 5 -6	bonnie.defamiglietti@bostonschool.edu.pa
Li Jin	Mandarin PK4 - 6	li.jin@bostonschool.edu.pa
Osver Solis	ICT PK3-6	osver.solis@bostonschool.edu.pa

1.5.6 Secondary Teachers

TEACHERS	SUBJECTS	LEVELS	Email
Carolina Herrera HR - 7.1	Eng: Lang & Lit	7 th & 9 th	carolinad.herrera@bostonschool.edu.pa
Betzabeth Neglia HR - 7.2	Esp: Len & Lit	7 th to 9 th	betzabeth.neglia@bostonschool.edu.pa
Jossimar Alvarado HR - 8.1	Math	7 th & 8 th	jossimar.alvarado@bostonschool.edu.pa
	Science	8.1	
Jennyfer Williams HR - 8.2	Eng: Lang & Lit	8 th	jennyfer.williams@bostonschool.edu.pa
	Science	7 th & 8 th	
Laura Gonzalez HR - 9.1	Eng: Lang & Lit	10 th	laura.gonzalez@bostonschool.edu.pa
	Integrated Humanities	9 th	
Jesed de Arco HR - 9.2	Math	9 th & 10 th	jesed.dearco@bostonschool.edu.pa
	Physics	10 th	

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Jose Wong HR - 10.1 Sci	Biology, Chemistry	10 th to 12 th	jose.wong@bostonschool.edu.pa
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	TOK	11 th	
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Keyla Lopez	IB Eng A: Lit	11 th & 12 th	keyla.lopez@bostonschool.edu.pa
	TOK, EE	12 th	
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Osver Solis	ICT/Design	7 th	osver.solis@bostonschool.edu.pa

1.6 Campus Hours

Campus administration hours are from 7:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., weekdays.

1.6.1 Arrival

- Student arrival time is **from** 7:00 A.M. - 7:20 A.M.
- Please, make sure students arrive on time as classes begin at 7:25 A.M.

1.6.2 Departure

- PK3 to 12th grade ends at 2:45 P.M. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.
- **Wednesday release** is at 12:55 P.M. for Early Learning and Primary students.

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Secondary students release at 1:00 P.M.

- Students with permission to depart early must sign out at the front desk.

1.7 Calendar and School Events

1.7.1 School Calendar

The school calendar is posted yearly on the school website.

1.7.2 School events

A variety of special school events occur throughout the year to which parents are invited. Significant ones include:

- Gala Folklorica
- Mother's Day
- Father's Day
- Leadership Day
- STEAM Fair
- Student's Day
- 6th Grade Exhibition
- 12th Grade TOK Exhibition

Other events will be published in the Boston Howl and social media platforms.

Student attendance is expected for the **full duration** of any event unless specifically indicated otherwise by the school. Students must remain in supervised areas during events. Early departure or absence follows standard protocol for permission.

1.8 Co-curricular activities

- Co-curricular activities (twice per week) are included within the regular school day and are organized by trimester.
- Students must remain in their selected activity for the duration of the trimester (changes will only be authorized under exceptional circumstances).
- Activities are Monday and Thursday for Early Learning; Tuesday and Thursdays for Primary and Middle School; 10th Grade either Tuesday or Thursday and 11th on Fridays. No CCA time assigned for 12th grade.

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- Some activities require specialized external instructors and/or equipment and may carry an extra cost.

1.9 Parents and Visitors

- Visitors' schedule is 8:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. Access to the building will only be granted through the side entrance by the security gate. (Main Campus)
- Signing in at the front desk is mandatory.
- Visitors are not allowed to enter classrooms and/or wander through the halls.
- We welcome parents at the school, but please make sure you schedule your appointment prior to arriving, so as to ensure we are able to meet your needs.
- Visitors are respectfully requested to come to school appropriately dressed for an educational institution.

1.10 Transportation

1.10.1 Car Riders

- BSI students who are dropped off and picked up by parents must comply with campus hours 7:00 a.m – 3:00 p.m.
- Early Learning students must be picked up and dropped at the main entrance of the Early Learning Campus.
- Primary students must be picked up and dropped off at the main entrance (Avenida Paseo del Mar).
- Secondary students must enter and leave school through the side entrance by the gate.
- During class hours, all students and parents must enter and leave the school through the side entrance by the gate.
- Make sure to pick up students by 1:00 P.M.(Wednesday)/ 2:45 P.M. (the rest of the week).
- Adult supervision will be provided until 3:15 P.M. at the end of the school day (except Wednesday's early release day).

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1.10.2 Bus Transportation

- Students riding the bus must go to their designated boarding area when classes end.
- Buses leave immediately after school, so students must be onboard at 2:55 P.M.
- **On Wednesday**, students will leave the classroom at 12:55 P.M. (Early Learning and Primary) and 1:00 P.M. (the rest of the school). Buses depart at 1:10 p.m.
- Adult supervision will be provided until 3:15 P.M. at the end of the school day (except Wednesday's early release day).
- If a student misses his/her bus, the parent will be called and asked to pick up the student.
- All school rules apply during the time students are riding on the bus to and from school.
- Students must wear seat belts, be on time, wait in line, remain seated while on board, keep aisles free, and wait for the bus to stop before getting off.
- Bus rules must be respected.
- Parents are prohibited onboard.
- Sanctions according to discipline regulations will be imposed on students who violate these rules.
 - On the first infraction, the bus driver will issue a verbal warning.
 - On the second infraction, the bus driver will issue a written warning with a copy to the transportation and section heads who will take disciplinary action.
 - On the third infraction, the student will be suspended from using the service.

Note: Any change in individual student transportation arrangements must be made in advance and in writing or email to the school's transportation coordinator and the student's homeroom teacher by 1:00 P.M.

1.11 Communication

Effective communication, respect, and teamwork are vital for the success of our school.

- If you have a question concerning your child, please direct inquiries through the

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proper channels as indicated:

1. Teacher (should be the first contact)
2. Coordinator / Head of Section (after speaking with the teacher)
3. Head of School

- Many questions can be addressed at the front desk.
- Cancellations and Emergency Closings: when school is closed or canceled due to inclement weather or emergency situations, an official announcement will be issued via messaging. Parents should monitor local media outlets to determine if the school has been canceled or closed early. Whenever possible, the school will also use a notification system to alert community members by email and text message.
- Change of Address/Telephone Number: Please notify your child's homeroom teacher and copy the Admission Department (admissions@bostonschool.edu.pa) immediately if you have a change of mailing address, email address, or telephone number (home, work, cell phone).
- The "Boston Howl" and our website are the most direct source of information along with the *SchoolPack* platform.
- All weekly assignments and grades are posted on *Google Classroom*. Secondary students will also receive, via email, a study guide every Friday.
- Feel free to contact faculty and staff through email. Staff endeavor to reply within 48 hours.
- If you wish to meet with a teacher, please request the appointment directly with the teacher. If you wish to meet a Head of Section, contact the receptionist to arrange an appointment.
- For primary students, weekly graded assessments, quizzes, projects and/or assignments will be sent home each Friday. Student's work may be accompanied by a form that needs to be signed and returned to the teacher on Monday.

FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

1.12 Assessment

1.12.1 Assessment Philosophy

Assessment is integral to all teaching and learning as it provides feedback on the learning process and therefore informs decisions made by teachers and students about what will be learned and how it will be learned. Assessment is the practice of gathering and analyzing information about learning outcomes. Assessment identifies what students know and are able to do; what students understand and are able to explain through learning experiences; as well as what students can communicate and reflect at different stages of the inquiry process. At BSI assessment is authentic, ongoing, informative, personalized, varied, purposeful, and collaborative, involving teachers, students, and parents.

Students and teachers should be actively engaged in assessing student progress as part of the development of their wider critical-thinking and self-assessment skills. Assessment is not just about assessing the final product. It is about assessing all steps of the learning process, from what the students know and understand to all skills, attitudes and actions developed during this process. It aims to integrate and support both the process and the product.

Assessment provides information through its diagnostic, formative, and summative components. Moreover, assessment outcomes provide valuable information that drives instructional and curricular decision-making to help meet students' individual needs. It thoughtfully and effectively guides students' learning.

Assessment is central to the International Baccalaureate Programme goal and to measure the scope of the school goals.

1.12.2 Assessment practices

- The school year is divided into trimesters.

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- Students must comply with assignments, projects, and exams that will be published weekly through Google Classroom or any other virtual learning assessment platform determined by the school.
- Work will be evaluated from 1.0 to 5.0 in accordance with Decree 810 Article 12 of MEDUCA.
- The student must have at least a 3.0 average to pass a subject.
- A student who does not pass more than three subjects must repeat the school year¹.
- If during the trimester a student needs to reinforce concepts, they will have coordinated sessions with their teachers.
- In the spirit of supporting our students, the school and parents will seek alternatives to support students in achieving a passing grade, including private tutoring; These sessions will have a cost that must be assumed by parents.
- If after the joint effort to support the student at school and at home, they fail one, two, or three subjects, they will be required to take a recuperation course in each. This course lasts for one month during the end of year vacation or the month before starting the next school year.
- Every recuperation course has an additional cost per subject.
- At the end of each unit, primary students will present a final synthesis project for the IB “Primary Years Program”.
- Sixth-grade students will present the PYP exhibition at the end of the year, which will be evaluated.
- At the end of each trimester secondary students must submit a summative assessment; attendance is mandatory.
- The TOK Exhibition is required for 12th-grade students.
- Students are also assessed in Life Skills. These Life Skills are grouped into 4 areas:
 - Integrity: Coherence between Actions and Expectations
 - Respect and Proactivity
 - High Expectations

¹ Minister of Education. Decree No. 810, Chapter 2, Article 22.

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- Common Welfare and Global Citizenship
- Life skills are assessed with the following achievement key: A for Outstanding, B for High, C for Meeting, D for Approaching.

1.13 School Nurse

The infirmary is open throughout the school day with a full-time nurse on duty.

- Each student will have a health card on file in the infirmary.
- Through the homeroom teachers, parents must provide the nurse with up-to-date information regarding their child's health and medical conditions including allergies.
- If a student needs medication, parents are required to send the prescription with the medication and a written note signed by the parent explaining the reasons for its administration. All medication should be sent in child-resistant packaging.
- The prescription should include dosage and schedule for its administration.
- All accidents and relevant medical conditions must be reported to the nurse and homeroom teachers.

CHAPTER 2: RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 The school's responsibility is to:

- Provide quality education that promotes values
- Ensure a safe and sound environment appropriate for learning
- Uphold effective communication with parents
- Establish an efficient and collaborative work relationship among students, parents, faculty, and staff
- Promote ethical behavior, self-discipline, and global citizenship

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2.2 The parents' responsibility is to:

- Be involved in the student's academic and behavioral development
- Reinforce school rules and study habits
- Be aware and understand school regulations and requirements
- Uphold effective communication with school
- Ensure their children attend school regularly and on time
- Ensure their children wear the correct school uniform
- Attend parent-teacher conferences and provide homeroom teachers with relevant information and evaluation results regarding student's academic and behavioral conditions
- Notify school in written form of events that may affect their child's academic performance and/or behavior, absences, tardiness, early departure, changes of relevant information, etc.
- Parents are respectfully requested to come to school appropriately dressed for an educational institution

2.3 The student's responsibility is to:

- Attend school regularly
- Wear the correct school uniform
- Be prepared to learn
- Maximize English use and practice
- Behave appropriately in and out of class
- Respect classmates, faculty, and staff
- Punctually comply with all assignments
- Give parents all communications sent by school
- Be responsible for his/her belongings
- Respect others' property
- Actively cooperate with and participate in school activities
- Respect patriotic symbols

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2.4 Uniform

All BSI students must wear appropriate school uniforms according to their class schedule. Students should be neat and clean in their person and clothing.

2.4.1 Boys

- Early learning: blue shorts (school designated model)
- First to twelfth grade: long blue pants
- Polo shirt embroidered with school logo
- Blue or plain dark dress socks
- Black leather or synthetic shoes
- Jacket with school logo (school designated model)

Note:

- Boys cannot wear earrings, or necklaces
- Hair must be kept discrete, neat, and of a natural color shade.
- High school boys should come to school clean shaven unless an official letter from a religious organization and parents is on file
- Boys are allowed to use up to two discrete bracelets per wrist
- The school is not responsible for any lost items but maintains a lost-and-found at the Reception.

2.4.2 Girls

- Early Learning: blue skirt (school designated model)
- First grade to twelfth grade: blue skirt (school designated model), pants are optional
- Polo shirt embroidered with school logo
- White, blue, or plain dark socks (above the ankle)
- Black leather or synthetic shoes
- Jacket with school logo (school designated model)

Note:

- Skort/skirt must be at knee length, (1 inch above the knee max)
- Girls may only wear a small pair of silver or gold earrings and a simple watch
- Hair must be kept discrete, neat, and of a natural color shade.

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- Hair accessories should be discreet and school colors
- Girls cannot wear makeup
- Girls nail polish: natural nails French manicure only for 7th to 12th grade students
- Girls are allowed to use up to two discrete bracelets per wrist
- The school is not responsible for any lost items but maintains a lost-and-found at the Reception

2.4.3 PE Uniform

- T-shirt with school logo
- Shorts (school designated model/ Secondary students wear shorts only during PHE class and the school sweatpants the rest of the day or the regular uniform)
- Sweetpants (school designated model)
- White socks
- Sport shoes with flexible soles

Note:

- Students must wear their PSPE/ PHE uniforms on days they have PSPE/ PHE class
- Swimsuit (school allowed models/ one piece for girls- mid length jammers swimsuit for boys -dark colors) and a swimming cap

CHAPTER 3: REGULATIONS

3.1 Banned Items

The following are banned in school:

- Handheld electronic games are not allowed in Primary. Secondary School students (7th to 12th) are permitted to use electronic games at lunch.
- Primary students may bring toys to class with the teacher's permission.
- Pets are not allowed on campus without permission.
- Knives or weapons. 'Knife' includes any bladed article including - craft knife, Stanley knife, Swiss Army knife, fishing knife, razors, kitchen knives, etc., or any

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bladed item. The term 'weapon' refers to any gun, including air rifles, BB guns, toy guns, pellet guns, crossbows, tasers, blowpipes, knuckle dusters, or any similar item, and includes any item made for the purpose of assault or defense. The above is not an exhaustive list and could include other bladed items or weapons not specified above.

- Alcohol or illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Tobacco and cigarette papers (including E-cigarettes/ Vapes)
- Fireworks
- Offensive material - pornographic, racist, or extremist material (in any medium)
- Cell Phones cannot be used during class time, except for the development of a class and with authorization of the teacher
- Only Secondary School students (7th to 12th) are permitted to use cell phones during lunch breaks

3.2 Internet and Laptops Usage

This handbook outlines the rules regarding the use of school-provided laptops, privately owned laptops, and Internet access with any equipment on campus. It does not detail every possible violation but provides a general guideline. If a parent, student, or faculty member has any questions regarding a particular activity not outlined in this handbook, he/she is encouraged to contact the Heads of Section who in turn will address the concern to our technology administrator and provide a prompt answer.

BSI laptops and Internet services are to be used solely for educational purposes; their use is also governed by general school policies including Academic Honesty Policy. Using this resource for personal purposes is prohibited. There are some social media and Internet streaming sites (e.g. Netflix, Spotify, Facebook, Youtube) that are blocked by the school to preserve the bandwidth for educational use. A student using BSI WIFI different from the student designated WIFI during classes will be sanctioned with a verbal warning the first time. Any subsequent infraction will result in written sanction and/or possible suspension.

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We discourage students from using their own Internet service through their mobiles. If they do, the usage of this service must comply with school regulations and its misuse will be sanctioned.

The following actions are considered violations and will be sanctioned in accordance with school regulations and may result in the temporary or permanent revocation of the privilege:

1. **Accessing and/or Communicating Inappropriate Information:** Students may not access, publish, post, download, forward, or display inappropriate information (illegal, sexually explicit or suggestive, obscene, defamatory, discriminatory, threatening and/or harassing).

Any messages used for bullying one or more students will be considered a serious violation and will immediately be addressed by the disciplinary committee for probation.

2. **Violating Copyright and Software Licenses:** Students may not download, share or copy any copyrighted material in accordance with Panamanian law; therefore, the school does not assume responsibility for technological copyright infractions done by students. The school will report violations to the authorities.
3. **Plagiarism** is a copyright violation. Students may not plagiarize material found on the web and pass it as their own. This violation also merits a grade of 1.0 (secondary school) or 2.0 (primary) on any assignment. Please refer to the Academic Honesty Policy for details.
4. **Vandalism:** Any student vandalizing (hacking, creation and/or uploading viruses) will be sanctioned in accordance with section 4.2.2. below.
5. **Care of Resources:** Students must use school resources appropriately. Intentionally damaging equipment will be sanctioned. Parents will have to compensate the school for the damage. Unintentional damage to the equipment

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will not be sanctioned, but parents must compensate the school for such damage. In the case of privately owned laptops, the student is responsible for his/her equipment. The school is not responsible for damage, loss or theft of any equipment nor is the school responsible for property damage between students.

6. As we commence our journey towards becoming a one-to-one (one device per student) school in order to enhance learning, we encourage parents of students in 6th Grade and above to provide a tablet or laptop (preferably a laptop from 6th Grade) for their child to bring to school every day.
7. **Unauthorized Access:** Students may not access sites that are blocked by the school filters. They may not attempt to use any software, applications, and/or other means for this purpose. Students may not share or use other's passwords or access others accounts (students, faculty, or staff).
8. **Privacy:** The school reserves the right to review the contents of school and private laptops, cell phones, or any other electronic device, in the presence of the student if there is a reasonable doubt that the student has violated any regulations or engaged in misconduct.

Finally, for security reasons, students are discouraged from sharing any personal information on the web without parental permission or teacher instruction. Students must immediately inform the teacher of any inappropriate information or messages they have received. Also, if any student identifies a security problem, he/she must immediately notify teachers or academic coordinators. He/she may not breach security to access unauthorized material nor share this discovery with other students.

We remind students who bring privately owned laptops to bring their laptops fully charged.

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3.3 Attendance And Tardiness

3.3.1 Attendance

For students to be successful in learning, regular, daily attendance is necessary and expected of all students.

- In case of a justified absence, the student is expected to complete all assignments that were missed.
- Students are responsible for catching up with the material taught during their absence.
- Absences must be corroborated by parents/guardians in advance either in the form of a written note or an email sent to the Head of Section and the Homeroom teacher.
- We recognize that procedures for Visas, Passports, official business etc. can be long and cumbersome. We expect students to come to school for whatever part of the school day remains once such procedures are completed.
- We recognize the importance of student religious practices and encourage parents to seek a balance between observation of religious practice and school attendance that ensures that their school program is not overly impacted.

In accordance with Decree 123, absences are divided into justified and not justified.

- The following are justified absences and must be corroborated by parent/guardian:
 - Illness
 - Accident
 - Attending the funeral services of a member of his/her immediate family
 - Legal procedures
 - Academic, athletic, and/or cultural extracurricular activities in which student represents school/country
 - Religious holidays observation or ceremony of his or her religion

A student who has been absent fifty percent or more of the trimester will not receive a grade for the trimester if his/ her absences are unjustified.

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On the other hand, if his/ her absences are justified, the student will receive a grade only if he/she has completed two-thirds of the assignments. The Head of School and the Head of Section must be previously informed of the situation to give their authorization.

3.3.2 Tardiness

Punctuality is important, as students who arrive late disrupt class and may miss vital information discussed in lessons.

- Students who arrive after 7:25 A.M. are late; **two late arrivals equals one absence.**
- Justified tardiness must be corroborated by parents/guardians through written notification.
- The following are justified late arrivals:
 - Late arrival of school bus
 - Medical appointment
 - Accident
 - Legal procedures

BSI complies with the norms established by MEDUCA regarding absences and tardiness (Decree 123).**HANDBOOK**

3.4 Food

The school cafeteria provides healthy meals at a reasonable cost. Students may order food from the cafeteria before 8:00 a.m. If there is a medical condition that requires a student to eat at certain hours outside their recess time, parents will need to send a formal notification validated with the medical report or note.

Students are not allowed to order food delivery to the school.

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CHAPTER 4: DISCIPLINE INFORMATION

4.1 Overview

Teachers are the first line in correcting students' behavior; therefore, each teacher will set essential agreements with their students. However, there are rules and regulations that govern the behavior of all BSI students as stipulated in Decrees No. 142 and No. 162 of the Ministry of Education of Panama. See complete versions of these decrees on the following links:

[Decree No. 142](#)

[Decree No. 162](#)

- First, all staff and faculty report all discipline violations of a BSI student to the proper school authority.
- Second, all disciplinary sanctions enforced by the school are independent of any external process.
- Third, both instigators, and offenders will be sanctioned.
- Fourth, when an act constitutes two or more violations, it will merit the next disciplinary sanction.
- Fifth, disciplinary sanctions are subdivided in section 4.2. according to the severity of the action in section.

4.2 Behaviors Subject to Disciplinary Actions

Minor Offenses. Level 1 Violations: The following behaviors fall outside of expected student comportment and are subject to disciplinary actions on an increasing scale if/when they accumulate. See Detention Regimen below.

- Disrespecting classmates, faculty and/or staff
- Use of offensive language/gestures
- Disrupting class
- Skipping class
- Wandering through halls without permission
- Unjustified lateness/absence
- Behavior within or outside of school that may bring disreputation to the school

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- Violation of uniform rules
- Inappropriate use of technology
- Any other violation that school authorities determine to be inappropriate

Note: Written notices must be returned signed. If a student fails to do so within two days, he/she will have one period of detention; two written sanctions equal one detention.

4.3 Discipline Regimen

The school operates two discipline levels. The first level is applied in cases of routine behaviors, see 4.3.2 below. The second level is applied in cases of major school rules including fighting, bullying, theft, disrespect to authority, etc. per Decrees 142 and 162 (see above). In major rules cases and when level 1 infringements surpass 12 demerits, the Discipline Committee convenes to investigate and determine consequences, which may include suspension or expulsion.

4.3.1 Discipline Committee

The Discipline Committee is appointed by the Academic Director. The Committee follows protocols and procedures for the investigation of incidents in conformity with MEDUCA's guidelines, established by the Executive Decrees 162 of July 22, 1996 and Executive Decree 142 of September 4, 1997. A student's Homeroom teacher serves as the advocate in cases where a parent cannot attend a meeting with the Discipline Committee. In cases of a significant school incident, the Discipline Committee recommends consequences to the Head of School and the Academic Director but it is the Academic Director who ultimately enforces the sanctions.

4.3.2 Behavior Consequences:

Secondary students in violation of policy/practice of the minor infringements below will have inappropriate behavior logged. Continued inappropriate behavior will be assigned consequences/detention. There are two types of detention that a student could be assigned:

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- 1) Detention during the morning or lunch break
- 2) After school detention from 3:00-4:00 pm
- 3) Intervention of the Discipline Committee

Students will comply through community service, school service (for example helping to clean up the cafeteria area or a classroom assigned, etc.), or an assignment.

Infringement
Use of the cell phone / headphones in hours not allowed
Misuse of the uniform
Leave clutter or trash in any school area
Order or consume delivery food without permission
Being late (HR / class / CCA)
Being in the classroom unsupervised during break
Absent from class without authorization
Being late for Detention (2 minutes grace period for arrival)
Missed Detention
Disrupt Detention
Use inappropriate Language

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Disruption during classes (hallway)
Disruption/distraction during Acto Civico
Unprepared with class material(s), e.g. laptop

4.3.1 Suspension:

Students will be suspended from class from one to ten days, determined by the Discipline Committee if they:

- Repeat violations
- Commit physical aggression against classmates, faculty, and/or staff
- Bear any type of weapon within school premises
- Leave school premises without school's authorization
- Destroy/damage school property
- Extract school documents
- Possess and/or use drugs in violation of Panamanian laws
- Perpetrate immoral and/or unlawful acts in or out of school
- Offenses in or out of school that may bring bad reputation to the school

Note: A student who is suspended must attend school wearing a school uniform and must comply with all daily assignments and tests; however, he/she may not attend class.

4.3.2 Expulsion:

Students may be expelled from school if they:

- Repeat violations that merit suspension
- Traffic illegal drugs
- Endanger the life and wellbeing of themselves and/or others
- Damage private property
- Tarnish the school's image

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Note: A student who is expelled will not be readmitted to school.

Students may be searched if there is reasonable doubt he/she has committed a violation that merits such a search of his/her person and belongings.

Finally, the Disciplinary Committee is constituted by the Head of School, Section Heads, Academic Director, and two teachers who will review all serious disciplinary cases that merit suspension and expulsion.

4.4 Bullying

To protect the rights of all students and ensure a safe and healthy environment, the school prohibits acts of bullying, and other forms of aggression and violence.

- Bullying can be defined as the repetitive prolonged disrespectful behavior that is intended to intimidate, humiliate, or undermine another person involving verbal harassment, social exclusion or isolation, physical aggression, coercion, and discrimination among other forms.
- BSI expects students to conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of classmates, faculty, and staff.
- Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a student who engages in one or more acts of bullying or harassment may range from behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion.
- This procedure will be followed:
 - The Disciplinary Committee will review the case and determine the sanction.
 - The student will be placed on probation.
 - If it is recommended that a student receive counseling support, the parent must provide evidence of the support provided.
 - If the behavior does not improve, he/ she will face suspension, expulsion or non-readmission to school depending on the severity of the case.

Note: See [Meduca Anti-Bullying Protocol](#)

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4.5 Probation

Students who are placed under probation may forfeit their right to remain in school. If the situation does not improve after the student is placed under probation, he/ she will face expulsion or non-readmission to school.

4.5.1 Academic Probation

- In the event a student is unable to make adequate progress in our program despite the recommendations and support provided, the student will be placed on academic probation.
- Parents will meet with the relevant Head of Section, Academic Director, counselor, psychologist and any personnel necessary to determine the scope of the situation and discuss strategies for improvement.
- However, if the student does not pass four subjects, for a second time, at the end of the school year, he/she will not be readmitted to school.
- It is the responsibility of parents, at their expense, to comply with all recommendations made by the school to support the student in succeeding.

4.5.2 Disciplinary Probation

- In the event a student is repeatedly unable to behave according to school regulations, the student will be placed under disciplinary probation.
- Frequency and severity of violations of norms will determine the decision to put a student under probation.
- The disciplinary committee will review the case and will decide if the student will be placed under probation.
- Parents will meet with the relevant Head of Section, Academic Director, counselor, and psychologist to determine the scope of the situation and discuss strategies for improvement.

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CHAPTER 5: OTHER SCHOOL REGULATIONS AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES

5.1 Field Trips

Field trips are valuable educational experiences that strengthen the curriculum objectives. They are opportunities to enrich and provide a context for classroom learning. Parents must sign authorizations in advance of the trip in order for students to attend. The school will cover the costs of local field trips (Panama City). Students must follow school rules and regulations during any field trip.

5.2 Travel

School trips that entail travel out of Panama City will have informational meetings for students and parents regarding the benefits, logistics, safety/security measures, and costs. The BSI Trips and Travel protocol guides planning, preparation, traveling, and follow-up for trips at all grade levels. Note: school travel programs are specifically for students to learn and enjoy with classmates and teachers. Parents will enjoy hearing about learning and adventure upon return of the group, and in some circumstances, parents may be invited to join certain excursions.

5.3 Birthdays

- As a courtesy to our families and if requested, we will distribute birthday invitations as long as all students or all boys/girls in class are invited.
- Students may celebrate their birthdays in the classroom during recess or lunch (cake and drinks). Sodas are not permitted by MEDUCA.
- Teacher supervision is necessary.

5.4 Extra-curricular/ Co-curricular Activities

This program allows students to explore areas outside the academic curriculum and develop a variety of skills.

- Students must follow school rules and regulations during co/extra-curricular classes.

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- Non-compliance of the rules will be sanctioned according to established disciplinary measures.

CHAPTER 6: CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Parents must read the Child Protection Policy. Please click [here](#).

This handbook lists and briefly explains the guidelines to be followed by all BSI students and supports parents' knowledge and understanding for partnership.