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Dear Middle School Parents and Students,

Welcome to the 2015-16 school year!

The Middle School faculty and administration is excited and looking forward to working with all our middle school students and families throughout the year in helping all students reach their full potential. It is an honor and privilege to have this responsibility.

We are determined to achieve the ACS mission of empowering our students to solve problems with creativity and integrity, help them lead well-balanced lives, and to serve the community with understanding and compassion. Although these are lofty goals, I believe that they are quite attainable by forming a strong partnership between the school and family.

I am excited to begin this wonderful journey with you.

Sincerely,

Phil Wendel
Middle School Principal
American Community School at Beirut
Middle School Administration

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Mission Statement

ACS empowers students to solve problems with creativity and integrity, to lead well-balanced lives, and to serve Lebanon and the world community with understanding and compassion.

We believe:

Students learn at different rates and in different ways.
Students achieve success by being active participants in their learning.
Students develop character through engagement with others from different backgrounds and through interaction within the community.

We achieve our mission by:

Setting high expectations for ourselves and our students
Empowering students to be critical thinkers and independent learners
Working collaboratively with all members of our community
Understanding and utilizing innovative teaching and learning
Creating a safe environment for students to take risks and learn from their mistakes
Facilitating students’ intellectual, social, emotional and physical growth
Engaging students in relevant and reflective learning
Encouraging students to explore different forms of personal expression
Providing opportunities for students to make choices, to lead, and to demonstrate responsibility
Supporting students to be caring, empathetic, respectful and tolerant
Developing student awareness and communication skills through the study of languages
Involving students in local and international community service projects
Preparing students to seek admission to the most selective colleges and universities

Middle School Outcomes

American Community School Middle School is committed to providing a balanced program focusing on the development of the whole student. Our goal is to prepare students to become leaders in meeting the ever changing needs of the world and equip them with the knowledge to face challenges in a cross-cultural environment. We are dedicated to providing our students with high standards of academic instruction and performance, opportunities for service to others, and a well rounded program of activities directed toward the development of their skills, talents, and self confidence. Students of the American Community School Middle School will

- acquire an academic foundation which promotes continuing scholastic success and personal growth;
- feel confidence in their learning ability;
- develop problem solving and higher order thinking skills;
- communicate effectively and develop an environmental and global awareness;
- have opportunity to experience foreign language and culture study;
- develop an appreciation for the fine, applied, and performing arts;
- understand and practice sound personal physical health;
- recognize the relevance of current schooling to future learning and living;
- explore a variety of educational, social and personal experiences, and/or interests;
- contribute to the development of an honest and trusting school environment;
- acquire an awareness of technology's role in their future and develop the skill to utilize and expand that awareness.
**ACS Alma Mater**  
*T. Robert Bassett*

Praise to thee our Alma Mater,  
Praise to thee dear ACS.  
Hear each loyal son and daughter,  
As we stand thy name to bless;  
And with hearts in loving chorus,  
We will pledge anew to thee,  
Beneath thy banner waving o’er us,  
Our love and loyalty.

Where the gold of snow-crowned mountains,  
And the deep blue of the sea,  
Mirrored bright in learning’s fountains,  
Teach us truth and purity,  
There our colors fair and glorious,  
Purest gold and truest blue,  
Call us to noble deeds victorious,  
And make our dreams come true.

**The colors of ACS are blue and gold.**

**Homework**

Homework extends classroom learning and provides students the opportunity to rehearse and refine ideas and concepts presented in the classroom. Students that work at home on a regular basis reviewing classroom instructions and completing academic work will have greater level of success throughout the year.

Every teacher will be expecting you to do a certain amount of homework within a cycle. The ACS Middle School has a rigorous and challenging program. Homework assignment completion is considered to be an integral part of this program. Dates for major tests and cumulative projects are monitored by the grade level teams and the principal.

**Students are responsible for finding out what work they’ve missed and make it up promptly if they have been absent.**

Students are expected to access their Moodle accounts to check for resources, announcements and major assignments. Access can be done from school or from home.

Parents are also encouraged to access their child’s Moodle account.

**The Curriculum**  
**Academics:**

One of ACS's purposes is to prepare students to enter quality universities. As a result, the program is both demanding and balanced, accommodating those who seek an American college preparatory diploma, an International Baccalaureate Diploma and/or The Lebanese Baccalaureate. The Middle School is designed to promote a smooth transition between Elementary and High School academically and socially. It is during this time that most students experience dramatic cognitive, social, emotional and physical changes. The Middle School strives to provide a nurturing environment so that students may thrive during this tumultuous time in their development. In support of this goal, a traditional American middle school curriculum is followed, with the addition of Arabic and French. Additionally, in eighth grade, Algebra and Geometry are integrated and provide an important foundation for the secondary math programs. Each year of Middle School, the student is expected to complete the following courses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic MSA/AFL</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Physical Education</th>
<th>Science</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Fine Arts: Music/Band/Art/Drama/Movement/Digital Photography (grade 8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Co-Curricular:
All ACS students are encouraged to participate in co-curricular, and community service activities. These types of activities are considered to be essential for the development of the whole student. The school has varied interscholastic sports programs as well, and has developed an Outdoor Education program, where instruction will take place away from the Beirut campus for up to a week at a time.

Community Service
ACS’s commitment to its community is reflected in the fact that community service is a graduation requirement. The objective behind this requirement is to expose students to the real community that they live in and to learn that being a citizen means accepting responsibilities as well as enjoying rights.

Athletics
ACS offers a strong middle school and junior varsity program for boys and girls. This includes teams in swimming, badminton, cross country, track and field, basketball, volleyball and soccer. ACS competes with schools throughout Lebanon and abroad, this affords students the opportunity to travel and compete with other schools in the region.

Classroom Without Walls
ACS Middle School has incorporated educational travel as part of the curriculum. To add to the dimensions of learning we have expanded instruction outside the confines of the classroom walls. This program changes the dynamics of learning dramatically by changing the learning environment.

Week Without Walls Philosophy
We choose to offer a Week Without Walls program to our Middle School students to meet the following goals:

- **New Experience**: WWW will visit areas students are unlikely to travel to with family or friends. WWW will offer activities that are either unavailable to or not commonly experienced by students at ACS.
- **Curriculum-Based**: Make specific and thematic connections to as many areas of the curriculum as possible.
- **Inter-Personal Skills**: Create opportunities for students to learn how to appreciate others’ differences and develop respectful relationships.
- **Team-Building**: Improve trust and cooperation within the community by facing challenges and experiences together (problem solving, group planning and cooperation through exposure to new languages, traditions, cultural practices, and physical challenges).
- **Inclusion**: Include as many students as possible, recognizing that 100% attendance is not likely.
- **Confidence-Building**: Improve students’ self-esteem by providing physical, intellectual and emotional challenges (new physical activity, exploring a new city, speaking a different language, functioning in an unfamiliar environment, etc.).
- **Supporting Middle School Philosophies**: Tolerance by exposure to new cultures; living values by promoting responsibility, cooperation and goal-setting.
- **Authentic Learning**: Provide students with hands-on-learning experiences and real-world connections to curriculum (museums, science centers, environmental education, music, politics, etc.).

Building for the Future: Educating for a Lifetime
Middle School Social Events & Dances
During the ACS school year there are a number of dances and social events.
- Students may not leave early without the permission of the teacher or chaperone in charge.
- All ACS rules are in effect at Middle School social events and dances.
- Dress regulations may vary, depending on the social occasion. Use common sense, in any case.
- ACS Middle School students may not attend High School dances
- Please arrange prompt pick-up after a dance or event. Any student who delays the departure of chaperones jeopardizes the right to attend future events.

Students currently on disciplinary probation are not allowed to attend a dance or any other ACS event without permission of the principal.

After-School Activities
An interesting aspect of ACS social life is that an activity of almost any nature can be formed if enough students are willing to join it and keep it going. All after-school activities and organizations are open to any middle school student who wishes to join. Some of the after-school activities that have been on offer in previous years:

Arabic Play  Art  Band  Jazz Band  Chess  Choir  Community Service  Drama  MS Model UN  MS Publication  Ping Pong  Robotics  Technology club

Grading Policy
Grades are a statement of a student's progress.
Letter grades are issued four times a year, (twice a semester)

Letter Grade Descriptors
What is an “A”?
- Sustained excellence
- Outstanding performance relative to standards
- Excellent work habits
- Exceptional work
- Thorough grasp of content and form
- Superior knowledge and insight on assessments.
- Ample evidence of serious thought and analysis.
- Exhibits constant creativity and initiative

What is a “B”?
- Solid performance relative to standards
- Strong work habits
- Fine quality work
- Firm grasp of content and form
- Sound knowledge and insight on assessments.
- Adequate evidence of serious thought and analysis.
- Exceeds basic course requirements
- Often exhibits creativity and initiative

What is a “C”?
- Adequate performance relative to standards
- Meets or approaches standards
- Acceptable work habits
- Satisfactory work
- Basic grasp of content and form
- Reasonable knowledge and insight on assessments.
- Exhibits occasional creativity and initiative.
What is a “D”?
- Poor performance relative to grade level standards
- Meets only some of the academic standards
- Work habits need much improvement
- Substandard work
- Minimal grasp of content and form
- Insufficient knowledge and insight on assessments.
- Rarely shows creativity and initiative.
- Barely fulfills requirements
- Minimal evidence of academic growth

What is an “F”?
- Inadequate performance relative to standards
- Fails to meet needed academic standards
- Poor work habits
- Unacceptable work
- Insufficient grasp of content and form
- Lacks knowledge and insight on assessments.
- Fails to show creativity or initiative.
- Does not fulfill requirements
- Little or no evidence of academic growth
- Not passing

All grades are recorded on a school transcript.

**Reporting and Parents/Teachers Conference**
The Middle School observes two semester grading periods. In order to keep parents up to date on their child's progress, it is the policy and practice of the Middle School to provide report cards at the end of each semester as well as Interim Reports at least once during each semester. Parent/Teacher meetings and/or Student-Led Conferences are held throughout the academic year. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers should any question arise. Our doors are always open to parents. Parents have an opportunity to meet with all teachers to discuss the child’s progress on request.

**Promotion Policy:**
- A yearly average of a C- or higher is attained in all courses in the middle school.
- A yearly average in the D range (D+ to D-) in no more than two (2) courses will require summer work completion and taking a Threshold Evaluation in those courses.
- A yearly average of D+ or below in any three (3) courses will result in **retention** of the current academic year.
- Any course with a yearly average of an F will cause the student to be considered for retention for the academic year.

Retention is decided on a case by case basis.

**Attendance**
The school day begins officially at 8:00 am and ends at 3:20 pm. While on school premises and during these hours students become the school's responsibility and are not allowed to leave without permission from the office. Any student needing to be dismissed early must sign out in the MS office.

Students are expected to attend all assigned classes on time. If for some reason the teacher or substitute has not appeared on time, students are expected to remain in the classroom while one member of the class notifies the office.

**Students may not remain on campus after 3:20pm, unless attending a teacher directed and supervised activity.**
Tardiness
Students are expected to arrive to class on time with all appropriate classroom materials. Arriving late is disruptive to the learning environment. Tardiness will be addressed by the teacher or principal. Students that are habitually tardy will require a meeting with the parents and an action plan will be put in place.

Absences
Any pupil whose absences, excused or unexcused, exceed 15 days per year will be promoted only upon consideration and approval by the Principal. Students should be absent only for necessary and important reasons, such as illness or emergencies. The parent or guardian must verify any absence with a written excuse presented to the office. Make-up end of year exams require a medical excuse and can be given only when arranged and approved by the school administration. Absences of three days or more require a written medical excuse. Students are responsible for making up all missed work, whether or not an absence has been excused. The school calendar should be studied carefully as students are not excused from classes prior to or after the announced school breaks. Failure of the parent to get the student to school on time is not a valid excuse.

Pre-Arranged Absences
• Students going on school-sponsored trips are required to complete a pre-arranged absence form.
• If a family situation arises that might cause a student to miss school for an extended period, the parents must contact the principal at least one week in advance to discuss the reasons for the pre-arranged absence.
• The decision as to whether or not to grant the pre-arranged absence will be based on the student’s attendance pattern, academics and behavior to date as well as upon the reasons for the absence.

ACS Rules General Premise
When a student is accepted to ACS, it is expected that he/she desires to observe the highest standards of personal conduct. Each individual’s responsibility is to behave in a manner that reflects credit on him/her and on the school. Failing to make proper use of given opportunities or behaving in a way which is prejudicial to ACS will lead to the curtailing of a student's privileges.

ACS middle school students are expected to behave respectfully and responsibly. These expectations apply on ACS school premises and at any school related/sponsored activities.

General Offenses
The following behaviors are not tolerated at ACS, they include but are not limited to:
• Fighting
• Theft
• Truancy
• Smoking or use of alcohol and/or drugs
• Possession of a knife, mace, pellet gun, firecrackers or stink bombs, etc.
• Malicious injury (physical or verbal) to another person
• Racial or religious slurs
• Foul or abusive language
• Abuse of school or other property
• Gambling
• Leaving campus without permission
• Intimidation: verbal or physical
• Refusal of a reasonable faculty/staff request.
• Play fighting, rough housing, and hurtful games.
• Sexual jokes, contact, gestures and drawings.
• Cyber bullying

Interventions
Disciplinary measures related to the above mentioned list and other disruptive behaviors can range from verbal warning, parent conference, suspension and/or expulsion. The severity and frequency of the infraction will determine the severity of the disciplinary measures taken.
**Student Intervention:**
- Taking responsibility for behaviors
- Taking responsibility for school success
- Meeting with teachers, counselor or principal to address concerns
- Making plan for improvement if needed

**Teacher Intervention:**
- Set and reinforce class and school expectations
- Understanding and getting to know students
- Meeting with students on one-on-one basis
- Anticipating student needs
- Meeting and communicating with colleagues, counselor, principal and or parents as needed
- Referral of students to principal

**Principal Intervention:**
- Set and reinforce class and school expectations
- One-on-one meetings with students
- Meeting with teachers, counselor and parents
- Setting implementing consequences for behaviors

**In-School Suspension:** Students remain in a controlled environment and cannot participate in after school events, such as dances and sporting events: Mandatory notification of parents by principal. Students may be placed on disciplinary probation.

**Out of School Suspension:** The student stays away from school and all school related events for a specified period and will be responsible for making up all work missed. Student will be placed on disciplinary probation.

**Expulsion:** Very serious and/or chronic offenses may lead to expulsion after consideration by the Middle School Principal and the Head of School, with consultation with the student, parent(s) or guardian(s) and all involved individuals.

**Disciplinary Probation**
When a student is consistently unable to be respectful and responsible he/she is placed on disciplinary probation at the recommendation of the Principal. Disciplinary probation means that the student will not participate in extra-curricular activities nor exercise any school privileges.

**Fighting Policy**
Fighting is not tolerated under any circumstances during school or school sponsored activities or on the way to or from school or school sponsored events. Fighting may result in a suspension for the first offense; and a long-term suspension or expulsion on the second offense. Students are expected to use all possible means to avoid physical violence including:
- Avoiding a situation where physical confrontation is likely.
- Alerting a counselor, advisor, teacher, or administrator to circumstances which could lead to physical confrontation.
- Seeking advice/protection from a faculty or staff member.

Students who represent ACS on teams are expected to exhibit the highest standards of decorum and sportsmanship. Any team member involved in fighting before, during, or after a game or event will be immediately removed from the team for the balance of the year, suspended and placed on disciplinary probation. Parents’ support for the efforts of our staff and administration at the Middle School at ACS is essential. It will make our school a safe and nurturing educational environment.

**Harassment / Anti- Bullying Policy**
The Middle School is committed to create a harassment-free learning environment, a safe, non-threatening environment in which students can learn and teachers can teach.

Harassment includes:

- **Physical Contact:** hitting, punching, kicking, invading another's personal space. An act of violence against a person is the ultimate form of harassment.
Verbal Harassment: being aggressive, intolerant, teasing and taunting, making degrading comments (racial, sexual, religious or personal), swearing, spreading rumors, or bullying (a conscious effort to hurt, threaten, or frighten someone).

Body Language: using unacceptable body gestures and mannerisms towards others.

Sexual: jokes, unwanted contact, leering, gestures, drawings.

Cyber Bullying: internet, text messaging, emails, social networks, and other technologies.

Every member of the ACS community has the right to feel safe, respected, and free from any form of harassment. Harassment and bullying are an indication of a disregard for the school’s mission and values. Parents and students are responsible both at school and in their daily lives for living within the mission and values of the school as shared, read and agreed upon.

Harassment or bullying is defined as any inappropriate gesture, or written, verbal, graphic or physical act (including any electronically transmitted act – i.e. internet, cell phone, or wireless hand held device) directed at an individual or group that could be based on, but not limited to gender, ethnic origin, religious belief, age, physical characteristic or grade in school. Spreading rumors, malicious whispering, defamation and non-verbal aggression are all forms of harassment. Sexual harassment is particularly offensive and unacceptable. The fact that a comment or act is labeled as humorous does not make it acceptable.

Students who intervene to stop bullying or harassment, walk away and refuse to participate in such behavior, and report incidents of such behavior are of good character and are helping to create a healthy environment. The school prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of harassment or bullying. The school also prohibits any person from falsely accusing another of harassment or bullying; false accusations will lead to a range of responses from positive behavioral interventions to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

If a student believes that he or she has been a victim of harassment, he or she should contact any adult member of the ACS Community as soon as possible. Offenders face a range of responses from positive behavioral interventions to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

No real or toy weaponry is allowed on school premises. Possession is considered a major offense that may result in suspension and/or expulsion.

**Academic Integrity Policy**

Academic integrity is the foundation of an effective school. The core premise of academic integrity is that the work a student turns in is the product of his or her own thinking.

Academic integrity violations occur, primarily, in two areas:

- **Cheating**
- **Plagiarism**

Each year, in every class, teachers will review the concept of plagiarism. They will explain rules of citation, paraphrasing and what constitutes common knowledge and the public domain. If students are unsure about whether the use of material would be plagiarism, it is their responsibility to ask for clarification.

The school’s definition and handling of each situation follows:

**Cheating:**
Using another person’s work to gain an advantage without the express permission of the instructor. Also refers to actions that compromise a teacher’s ability to get accurate assessment information:

Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:
- copying the work of another student,
- stealing test materials,
- providing answers,
- receiving answers.

**School Response:**
Automatic zero for the work in question.
Informing parents of the infraction.

**Plagiarism:**
The wrongful act of taking the product of another person’s mind and presenting it as one’s own. It is false assertion of authorship.
Plagiarism may take the following forms:

Building for the Future: Educating for a Lifetime

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Repeating another's sentences as your own,
Adapting a particular idea or phrase as your own,
Presenting someone else's line of thinking as your own.
Plagiarism applies to ideas in written, verbal or electronic form. Although a writer may use another’s words and thoughts, they must be acknowledged as such by footnotes or bibliographic entries.

The first time a student plagiarizes will be viewed as a teaching opportunity and carry a lesser penalty. Successive instances will be subject to progressively stronger sanctions, up to and including a recommendation of expulsion. Any instances of plagiarism will be considered to be cumulative; that is, they will remain on a student’s record throughout their time at ACS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Offense</th>
<th>The first time a student plagiarizes will be viewed as a learning opportunity for the student to understand what he or she did incorrectly. The assignment in question will receive a zero, but the student will have the opportunity to rewrite the assignment using a different topic and a new grade is assigned. The teacher will address the concern as a learning opportunity and will inform other parties (parent, counselor, advisor, principal).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second Offense</td>
<td>The second case of plagiarism will result in a zero on the assignment in question. A call home from the Principal and the student will be put on Academic Probation immediately and through the following term. The student will also be given an in-school suspension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third and subsequent Offense(s)</td>
<td>A third instance of plagiarism will result in a zero for the assignment, a conference with the principal, parents, and counselor to review the student’s broader academic and social standing, and academic probation for one full year. In addition, the student will receive two days of in-school suspension. A student may be expelled at this point depending on the circumstances.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The Library Media Center

The Upper School Library Media Center occupies the full top floor of the middle school building and is a completely wireless facility with full printing and copying capabilities. A multi-purpose room and several seating areas provide teachers with areas for teaching and students with space to study independently. Using a web browser-based library management system, the library can be accessed wherever Internet service is available. While maintaining a core print collection of 34,000 volumes, the library also delivers full-text electronic resources, periodicals and audio-visual materials and equipment, providing for the research and recreational reading pleasure of students, staff and parents.

The Library Media Center is open from:
- Monday-Thursday: 7:15 am – 5:30 pm
- Friday: 7:15 am – 4:00 pm

Middle school students may borrow up to ten items for a four-week period. Borrowed materials may be renewed one time if they are not reserved by another patron. There are no fines on overdue materials, but students are responsible for all materials checked out under their name and must reimburse the library for any lost or damaged items; students are charged the price of the book plus shipping and handling fees. All accounts will be clear of overdue materials and replacement costs before students receive their report cards.

To safeguard library materials, food, drink and gum are not to be consumed in the facility. While in the library students are expected to behave in a manner that does not interfere with the rights of other users to study, learn and enjoy the facility and its materials.

### Digital Citizenship Policy

**I. PREAMBLE**

The digital age opens ACS students to the world’s library of knowledge. ACS intends for technology of all kinds to be used by students, individually and collaboratively, to promote educational excellence. Technology will be used creatively as part of the planning, problem-solving, research, and presentation processes throughout the curriculum at all grade levels. As an ACS community member, understanding of “digital citizenship” is essential to enriching one’s knowledge and interacting with the ACS, Lebanese, and world communities with respect.

Building for the Future: Educating for a Lifetime
II. POLICY STATEMENT
Access to the school network is a privilege that enables students and employees to conduct research and to communicate as it relates to school learning and business. As consumers and creators of information, users must be aware of the impact their actions have on themselves, others, and the reputation of the school.

This document has been created to serve ACS students, teachers, and staff as a guide as to what is acceptable and not acceptable when using technology resources and when connected to the school network.

Users of digital devices and Internet technology at ACS are expected to abide by and model the accepted Digital Citizenship Agreement. ACS students must sign the Digital Citizenship Agreement before they are granted access to the school's network services.

Technology, faculty, and administrative staff have the right to:
- inspect student devices to ensure that they are in proper working order and they meet school expectations.
- confiscate any individual's device, if inappropriate use is suspected.
- deny internet access.

III. ACCEPTABLE AND UNACCEPTABLE USE

RESPECT and PROTECT

A. Resources
Students should respect all technological resources including all equipment - their own, that issued by the school, and that of other students; bandwidth which is an expensive and limited resource. It is intended for educational use only, not for social, recreational, or personal purposes.

Care and security of family owned devices are the sole responsibility of the user.

Students will:
- handle, store, and secure devices carefully.
- properly maintain hardware and software on their own devices.
- label their own devices. (This will include their first and last names, grade, and contact number.)
- refrain from lending their devices.
- refrain from checking out equipment for others.
- bear the costs for lost or damaged equipment.
- only stream or download files (documents, music, video, images, apps, or software) directly related to their coursework.
- not game online.
- not use a VPN or a proxy server.
- think before they print and share electronically when possible
- refrain from environmentally unfriendly color or mass printing.

B. Principles of Community
The American Community School at Beirut promotes an online environment of honesty, individual privacy, respect towards others and accountability of all users. In particular, ACS finds all forms of cyber-bullying to be unacceptable. Openness, not secrecy, is the expectation. Students are expected to acknowledge their mistakes, report any problems or issues to faculty or staff, and to change their behavior.

Students will:
- turn off and store all personal technology unless usage has been initiated by the teacher.
- conduct all school communication via the school assigned e-mail.
- communicate in an appropriate and respectful manner.
- not get involved in any online conversations that are unkind, mean or bullying.
- report the above types of communication or any disturbing material they may encounter on the web or in e-mail to any adult member of the ACS community.
- not make multiple postings or mass mailings (spam).
- not forge documents or attempt to impersonate others online.
- not "hack" or otherwise try to gain access to another person's or organization's computer system.
• report unsecure user information and equipment immediately to any adult member of the ACS community.
• not access, store, share, or display through any online medium content that contains:
  ● pornography, gambling, extremist/militant material, hate speech, prejudicial or discriminatory attacks on students, teachers, or the school - all of which are inconsistent with our mission.
  ● advertising, political, or religious lobbying.
  ● is not age appropriate.

C. Intellectual Property
Information about fair use, Creative Commons, and royalty-free material can be acquired from teachers, librarians, or tech. office staff. For any applications used by ACS faculty, staff and students, the school follows the security and privacy policies as stated by each provider for their users.

Students will:
• Demonstrate integrity and academic honesty at all times.
• Follow copyright and fair-use guidelines for all resources including multimedia.
• Properly cite all work that is not their own.
• Present only their own original work and credit all sources and collaborators.
• Not download or share media obtained illegally.
• When posting material outside of our ACS community choose the appropriate level of copyright.

D. Privacy of Self and Others
In the 21st century it is important for students to manage their digital presence. Students should remember that what is shared online may also be viewed by people they don’t know. And once it is online, it could be there forever. So think before you post.

Students will:
• behave safely at all times while online.
• keep their personal details private, not share personal or family information (full name, addresses, phone numbers, photographs, etc.) without school or parental permission.
• not share their passwords to any accounts or allow other students to use their account to access the Internet or school network
• only invite people they actually know in the real world to be their friends in the online world.
• never agree to meet someone they have only met online without parent or school permission.
• set privacy settings so that only the people they know can see them and their personal information.
• choose online names that are suitable and respectful.
• think before posting. Once posted, it can be difficult to remove and can leave a long and lasting impression on many different audiences.
• not post things that they don't want others to know about or that they would not say to their face.
• show respect for other’s privacy by:
  ○ not logging on to someone else’s account or attempt to access another user's online spaces.
  ○ not sharing their classmates, faculty or staff information.
  ○ not record and/or post any audio, video, or still images of any ACS community member without their knowledge and prior approval.
  ○ not reading, deleting, copying, or modifying the electronic documents of other users.
  ○ not electronically stalking others.

IV. DEFINITIONS
• ACS Community Member - includes faculty, staff, and students.
• Bandwidth - the amount of data that can be carried from one point to another in a given time period (usually a second). This kind of bandwidth is usually expressed in bits (of data) per second (bps).
• Copyright Licenses - legal right, given to the originator for a fixed number of years, to print, publish, perform, film, or record literary, artistic, or musical material.
• **Creative Commons** - A Creative Commons license is one of several public copyright licenses that enable the free distribution of an otherwise copyrighted work. A CC license is used when an author wants to give people the right to share, use, and build upon a work that they have created.

• **Cyber-bullying** - includes, but is not limited to, text, images, video or any other content that denigrates, insults, humiliates, or shames others such as:
  - personal attacks
  - harassment
  - posting of private information
  - teasing
  - intimidation
  - issuing of threats
  - hurtful messages
  - vulgar, derogatory, obscene, or profane language and/or images
  - hate mail
  - discriminatory remarks
  - spamming

• **Forge** - produce a fraudulent copy or imitation of (a document, signature, banknote, or work of art).

• **Hacking** - gain unauthorized access to data in a system or computer.

• **Harassment or bullying** - is defined as any inappropriate gesture, or written, verbal, graphic, physical act, and cyber-bullying (including any electronically transmitted action – i.e. internet, cell phone, or wireless handheld device) directed at an individual or group that could be based on, but not limited to, gender, ethnic origin, religious belief, age, physical characteristic, sexual orientation or grade in school. Spreading rumors, malicious whispering, defamation and verbal and non-verbal aggression are all forms of harassment. Sexual harassment is particularly offensive and unacceptable. The fact that a comment or act is labeled as humorous does not make it acceptable.

• **Impersonate** - pretending to be (another person) for entertainment or fraud.

• **Online medium** defined as, but not limited to, blogs, online discussion forums, e-mail, electronic chat/instant messaging/texting, social media, and micro-blogging.

• **Proxy server** is a server (a computer system or an application) that acts as an intermediary for requests from clients seeking resources from other servers.

• **Spam (Spamming)** - The use of electronic messaging systems to send unsolicited bulk messages (spam), especially advertising, indiscriminately to many other accounts.

• **Stream** - to transmit or receive (data, especially video and audio material) over the Internet as a steady, continuous flow.

• **Torrent sites** - Bittorrent sites (also known as "torrents") allow users to transfer large amounts of data over the Internet. It is used for distributing large files, like software, music albums, and videos.

• **VPN (Virtual Private Network)** - enables a computer to send and receive data across shared or public networks as if it is directly connected to the private network.

**Awards**
The Middle School presents two awards annually. The **Renaissance Award** is presented to one student at each grade level. The recipients are multi-talented individuals who excel not only academically, athletically and artistically, but have a strong commitment to public service. The **Humanitarian Award** is given to a member of the 8th grade who demonstrates empathy, maturity, leadership and is a positive leader for change within his/her community.
Student Dress Code
Dressing for school is not the same as dressing to work out, dressing to root for your favorite team, or dressing for the beach. ACS students come to school dressed to learn, and need to look professional.

ACS students are expected to abide by the following dress code:

- Shirts must be collared and may have small logos no larger than a shirt pocket. T-shirts are also permitted, but must be free of all logos or writing larger than a shirt pocket.
- Shirts must cover the shoulders, mid-riff, and back.
- No tank tops, spaghetti straps, or anything similar.
- Clothing may not be see-through; under garments may not be visible.
- Pants must be in good condition, free from any rips, holes, or tears, and worn from the waist.
- Shorts may be worn to school if they are not athletic shorts, but school shorts, skirts, and dresses must be longer than the students’ fingers when the student is standing with the arms extended at his / her side.
- Athletic attire, including athletic shorts, team shirts, sweat pants, and sweat shirts with large logos or lettering are not permitted to be worn to school. The only exception is that students may wear ACS athletic shirts and shorts to school.
- Tights and leggings, as long as they are opaque and not see-through in nature, may be worn to school. Leggings, panty hose, and / or stockings that are made of a sheer material must be covered by an appropriate top or skirt that is longer than students’ fingers when the student is standing and the arms are extended at his / her side.
- Footwear can be sneakers, boots, sandals, or shoes. Flip flops are not permitted.
- Students must wear appropriate footwear for PE and recess.

For team travel or performance activities: see Athletic and Activities Handbook.

Parents will be contacted if their children are dressed inappropriately.

Students are expected to change into athletic attire for physical education and health classes, sports shoes are required.

Lockers and Book Bags
Middle school students are assigned a locker and a combination lock. The students are responsible for the physical condition of their lockers. They should be kept tidy and clean, and no food is to be left overnight. Graffiti, abuse of lockers, or opening another student's locker are offenses resulting in the loss of locker privileges and, possibly, other disciplinary measures.

The loss of a lock should be reported immediately to the office. Students will be charged $10.00 for lost or damaged locks. Do not share the combination to your locker with anyone.

Use of Electronic Equipment
Personal electronic devices such as cell phones, MP3, iPads and hand-held games, are not to be used at school during school hours without prior teacher approval. Items confiscated will be turned in to the middle school office (phones will remain in the office safe for 3 school days). There are many telephones available for students to use to call home.
Theft
ACS considers that taking property that does not belong to you a very serious act even if done as a prank.

To prevent the loss of personal property the following is recommended:
- Students should not bring large amounts of money or expensive items to school. If these items are brought to school it will be the sole responsibility of the owner.
- Keep your possessions in your locker and keep your locker locked. Do not leave money, phones, MP3, etc. in your book bag unattended.

Character Development Program
The MS Character Development Program is an ongoing concept that transcends instruction of a given program and associated activities.

The House concept combines social and academic development for the MS students. The aim is to involve all MS students in meaningful experiences that are connected to their day to day interactions in school and in their greater community. All MS teachers serve as advisors/house parent. They work with their students on skills related to learning. They build and model proper interpersonal relationships through caring and trust. An important aspect of our program is the inclusion of all MS students and having them work across grade levels. The aim is to create a collective with common understanding and goals.

Various topics addressed throughout the year are:

Tolerance, Acceptance, Respect, Responsibility, Service to our community, Cooperation. Study Habits, Goal Setting, Dealing with change, Conflict Resolution, Eating Habits, Prejudice, Making Friends, Taking care of our environment, Helping others, ....

We want students to learn to take an informed active role in their school culture and learn that they are directly implicated in helping insure a better environment every day.

Health Information
The school has two full-time registered nurses, one for the upper school and one for the lower school. In the event of an emergency the nurse is contacted immediately, along with the parents and the principal. Students are insured against accidents during any ACS sponsored activity or event. This insurance also includes a consultation with a specialist and any follow up treatment.

Every student should have an updated and complete medical history form on file with the nurse. Parents whose children have special medical concerns should notify the nurse at the beginning of the school year, as well as place all special medication in the nurses' care if it is to be administered during school hours. The nurse has OTC (Over-the-Counter) medications available for all students.

Students who need to leave school early because of illness can only do so after checking with the nurse. The nurse informs the MS office then the student is signed out. Parents are asked not to make medical appointments for their children during the school day.
Middle School Academic Calendar 2015/2016

28 August Friday New to ACS MS Student Orientation 09:00-10:00
02 September Wednesday Orientation grade 6 New & Returning (8:00am - 12:00noon)
03 September Thursday Orientation grades 6, 7 & 8 (8:00am - 12:00noon)
04 September Friday MS First Full Day (8:00am – 3:20pm)
15 September Tuesday MS Curriculum Orientation at 1:30pm – Students’ dismissal 12:35pm
17 September Thursday Professional Development ½ day – School dismissal 1:00pm
23-27 September Wednesday-Sunday Fall Break (including Eid El Adha**) – No school

05 October Monday 1st Semester Afterschool Activities Start
08-09 October Thursday-Friday Outdoor Education
14 October Wednesday Islamic New Year** - No School
23 October Friday Ashoura* - No School
29 October Thursday Professional Development ½ day – School dismissal 1:00pm

06 November Friday End of Quarter 1
13 November Friday Mini-NESA – No School for students
20 November Friday 1st Quarter Reports Out
22 November Sunday Lebanese Independence Day
26 November Thursday Thanksgiving – Student dismissal 12:00noon
27 November Friday Thanksgiving – No School

03 December Thursday Parent/Teacher Meetings 8:15am-3:15pm (No classes for MS students)
18 December Friday School Dismissal 12:00 noon – Winter break begins
19 Dec. – 06 Jan. Saturday-Thursday Winter Break (including Christmas, New Year, Prophet’s Birthday** and Armenian Christmas)

07 January Thursday Classes Resume
21 January Thursday Professional Development ½ day – School dismissal 1:00pm
29 January Friday End of 1st Semester

05 February Friday 1st Semester Reports Out
09 February Tuesday St. Maroun Holiday – No School
10-11 February Wednesday-Thursday Parent/Teacher Meetings (time TBA)
14 February Sunday Commemoration Day
18 February Thursday Professional Development ½ day – School dismissal 1:00pm

09 March Wednesday Teacher’s Day – No School
18 March Friday End of 3rd Quarter
24 March Thursday 3rd Quarter Reports Out
25 March – 3 April Friday-Sunday Feast of Annunciation and Western Easter Break – No School

04 April Monday Classes Resume
14 April Thursday Professional Development ½ day – School dismissal 1:00pm
29 April- 02 May Friday–Monday Eastern Easter and Labor Day – No School

03 May Tuesday Classes Resume
19 May Thursday Professional Development ½ day – School dismissal 1:00pm
23-27 May Monday-Friday Week Without Walls
25 May Wednesday Liberation of the South Holiday – No School**

02 June Thursday Student Led Conference
03 June Friday Year End Reports Due (no comments)
08 June Wednesday Ramadan begins
10 June Friday 8th Grade Celebration
15 June Wednesday Last Day for Students and Distribution of Year End Report Cards
17 June Friday Last Day for Faculty

**tentative

Building for the Future: Educating for a Lifetime