

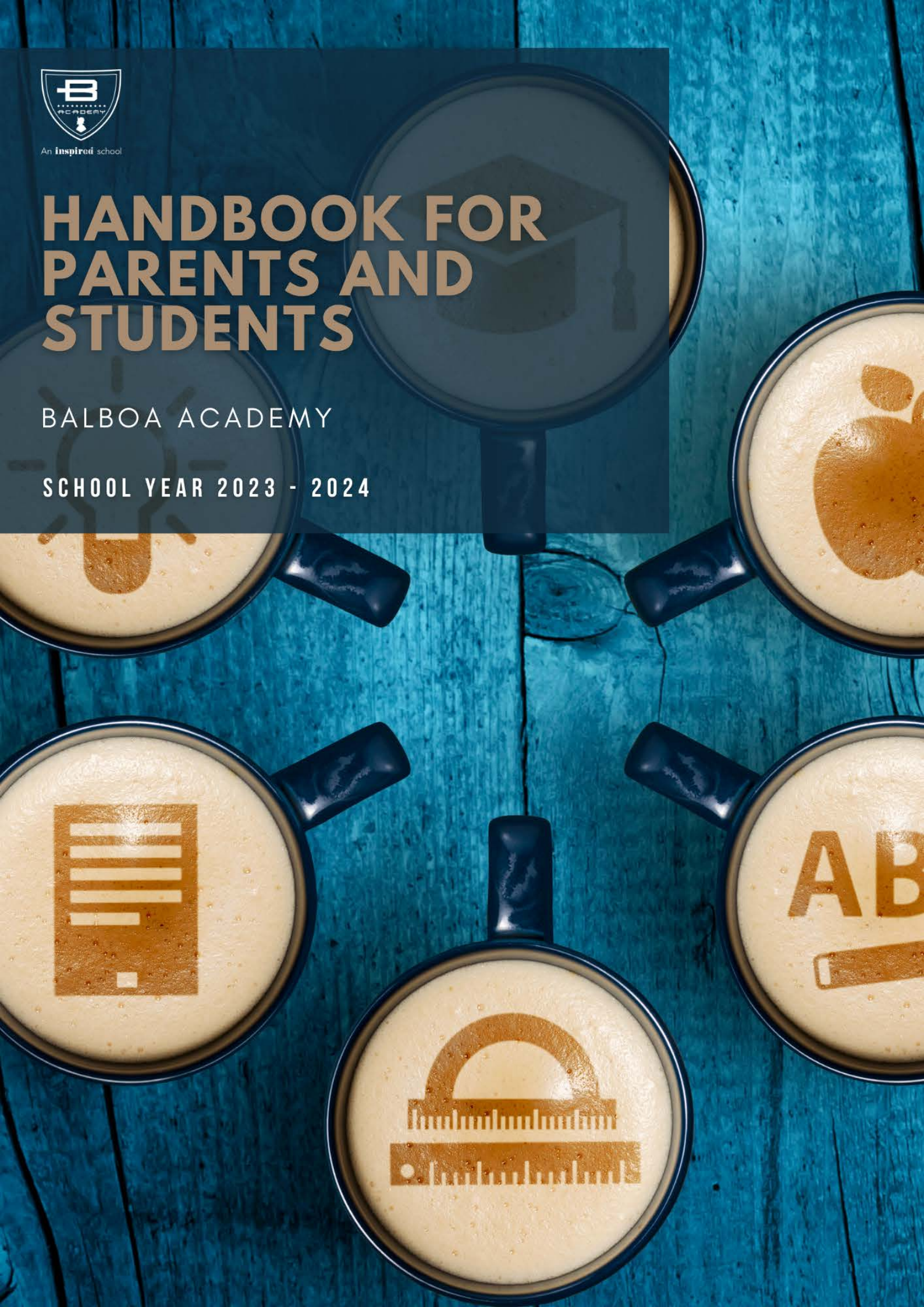


An inspired school

# HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

BALBOA ACADEMY

SCHOOL YEAR 2023 - 2024







**BALBOA ACADEMY**

**HANDBOOK  
FOR  
PARENTS AND STUDENTS**

**CITY OF KNOWLEDGE, CLAYTON  
PANAMA, REPUBLIC OF PANAMA  
[HTTPS://BALBOAACADEMY.EDU.PA](https://balboaacademy.edu.pa)**

**2023-2024**





Welcome to Balboa Academy!

We are delighted to have you as part of our Balboa Academy family.

We invite you to actively participate and kindly request your support. We encourage you to read this handbook together as a family, as it will provide answers to many of your questions and demonstrate our unwavering commitment to providing your children with the best possible academic experience. Throughout the year, please stay updated on events, activities, and celebrations taking place on our campus by checking our Facebook, Instagram, email, weekly newsletters, and chats. We invite you to join us in experiencing these events alongside our students and staff.

Our administrators, teachers, and support staff extend a warm welcome to you and encourage you to consider volunteering as well.

Once again, thank you for choosing Balboa Academy. We are excited to embark on this educational journey with you and your children.

Warm regards,

The Staff of Balboa Academy



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## General Information

Balboa Academy is a prestigious international, coeducational, college preparatory school that provides a US-based curriculum education from Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade. Our dedicated faculty delivers all courses in English, with the exception of Spanish and foreign language classes. Established in September 1999 in Panama City, Panama, Balboa Academy proudly celebrated its inaugural graduation ceremony in June 2000, with a graduating class of 16 students. The majority of our graduates choose to pursue higher education at esteemed four-year universities in the United States, Europe, or Panama. At Balboa Academy, we value and celebrate the diversity of our student body, which encompasses various economic, social, and cultural backgrounds.

As part of the Inspired Educational Group, a global network of more than 100 schools, Balboa Academy upholds the highest standards of academic excellence. The school is overseen by a Chief Academic Officer (CAO) who holds the position of Academic Director. Our faculty comprises highly skilled educators who are fluent English speakers and possess exceptional teaching abilities.

We take great pride in providing a nurturing and enriching learning environment that prepares students for their future endeavors. At Balboa Academy, we are committed to fostering intellectual growth, character development, and global citizenship in our students.

Welcome to Balboa Academy, where educational excellence meets international diversity.

## Language of Instruction and Inclusion

At Balboa Academy, our community is comprised of individuals who come from diverse linguistic backgrounds. To ensure inclusivity and effective communication, we have established English as the language of instruction and interaction within our school. It is our expectation that when engaging with students and fellow staff members, we use English as the primary language to promote inclusiveness and create a supportive environment for all.

By adhering to this expectation, we not only foster a sense of belonging for everyone but also provide our students with valuable opportunities for English language immersion throughout the school day. This approach enhances their English proficiency and enables them to thrive academically and socially in an English-speaking environment.

We appreciate your cooperation in embracing English as the language of instruction and inclusion at Balboa Academy. Together, we can create an environment where all members of our community feel valued and empowered.

## Ministerio de Educación (MEDUCA)

Balboa Academy is a privately-owned and independent educational institution that operates in accordance with the regulations set forth by the Ministry of Education (MEDUCA). We are duly registered and recognized by MEDUCA, and we adhere to the guidelines outlined in the Reglamento Interno (Internal Regulations) as mandated.

As a responsible educational institution, Balboa Academy ensures strict compliance with the legal and policy frameworks established by MEDUCA for private and independent schools. We actively participate in MEDUCA meetings and stay updated on policy changes and procedural updates to ensure that our school remains in alignment with the regulations. Our faculty is consistently informed about MEDUCA's regulations and any updates that may affect our operations.

By diligently following the guidelines and standards set by MEDUCA, Balboa Academy upholds its commitment to providing a quality education within the legal framework of private education in Panama. We strive to maintain a transparent and compliant educational environment that meets the expectations of our students, parents, and regulatory authorities.

## School Accreditation: Cognia

Balboa Academy holds accreditation from Cognia, an esteemed organization that evaluates and certifies over 35,000 schools worldwide. Cognia's accreditation serves as an external audit, verifying our adherence to the highest educational standards and ensuring quality assurance.

The Cognia high school diploma earned at Balboa Academy carries global recognition, accepted by colleges and universities worldwide. Our comprehensive curriculum and instructional program, spanning from Kindergarten to 12th grade, meet the rigorous accreditation requirements set forth by Cognia.

At Balboa Academy, we believe in continuous improvement and strive for excellence in education. As such, all members of our school community actively participate in and support the school improvement process, which aligns with our accreditation efforts and upholds the standards established by Cognia. Through this collaborative approach, we continuously enhance our educational practices to provide the best learning experience for our students.

## Vision

Together we cultivate a caring community of lifelong learners, independent thinkers, and builders of a promising future.

## Mission

At Balboa Academy, we offer a United States Standards-based curriculum that is delivered in English, our language of instruction. Our educational program is designed to be comprehensive and engaging, aiming to cultivate innovative and intellectual growth in our students. We value and respect individual differences and celebrate the diversity within our community. Our primary focus is on the holistic development of each child, nurturing their intellectual, social, and emotional well-being.

Within our nurturing community, we strive to inspire students to become responsible global citizens, equipped with integrity and compassion. Our core values are encapsulated in the phrase "WE ACT RIGHT," which serves

as a reminder of the principles we uphold at Balboa Academy. We believe in fostering a culture of respect, responsibility, and ethical conduct in all aspects of our academic and personal endeavors.

Through our educational approach and supportive environment, we aim to empower our students to reach their full potential and make a positive impact in the world. At Balboa Academy, we are committed to providing an exceptional educational experience that prepares students for a successful future.

## Philosophy

Balboa Academy proudly serves a culturally diverse student body, recognizing and addressing the unique needs of each individual. Our school is dedicated to providing an exceptional, research-based American curriculum that strives for excellence. With a sequential plan of study, we emphasize the holistic development of our students as responsible and fulfilled global citizens.

As a dynamic learning laboratory, Balboa Academy nurtures a community of lifelong learners, encouraging everyone to engage in activities that foster continuous intellectual growth. We value collaboration, care, and mutual support among our staff, students, and families.

Our dedicated educators continuously enhance their teaching strategies and classroom practices, staying informed of current research in education and utilizing modern instructional methods. With high expectations and a commitment to individualization, they collaborate to design effective instructional strategies and share best practices.

We believe in the crucial role of parents in the educational journey of their child(ren). Through frequent and varied forms of school-home communication, we keep parents informed about their child(ren)'s progress. Additionally, when needed, we offer in-service training to empower parents with a deeper understanding of our curriculum and programs.

At Balboa Academy, we recognize the invaluable contributions of our staff and school personnel. We are committed to their well-being and professional growth, integrating them into our school community and involving them in relevant events. We provide opportunities for their career development through participation in training activities specific to their areas of expertise.

Together, we create an inclusive and supportive environment where every individual is valued, and together we strive for excellence in education.

## Purpose

At Balboa Academy, our mission is to offer the highest quality education programs, curriculum, and instruction based on rigorous research standards. We strive to provide students from all nationalities with an accredited education that prepares them for success in an interconnected world.

We believe in the importance of promoting cultural awareness and understanding. Our curriculum encompasses a global perspective, ensuring that students gain knowledge of and appreciation for diverse cultures around the world.

Additionally, we recognize the significance of the Republic of Panama as our host country. We aim to instill in our students a deep understanding, respect, and appreciation for the people, history, and rich culture of Panama.

Balboa Academy also serves as a demonstration center for learning, fostering mutual understanding and cooperation among individuals from the global community. We embrace diversity and provide a platform for students to engage with one another, developing global citizenship skills and promoting intercultural dialogue.

Through our comprehensive educational approach, we empower students to become informed, empathetic, and responsible global citizens, ready to contribute positively to our interconnected world.

## Five Core Values

At Balboa Academy, our Five Core Values embody the essence of our school's character and serve as guiding principles in our governance and management. Expressed through the acronym RIGHT, these values shape the foundation of our community:

**R - Respect:** We value respect for oneself and others, fostering an inclusive and supportive environment where everyone is treated with dignity and empathy.

**I - Integrity:** We uphold the highest standards of integrity, emphasizing the importance of making ethical and principled decisions in all aspects of life.

**G - Good Deeds:** We encourage acts of kindness and compassion, instilling in our students the value of helping others in need and making a positive impact on the world around them.

**H - Hard Work:** We emphasize the value of hard work and perseverance, promoting a strong work ethic that leads to personal growth and the attainment of mastery in various fields.

**T - Team Spirit:** We foster a sense of collaboration and teamwork, nurturing a supportive community where individuals work together, support one another, and celebrate collective achievements.

These Five Core Values provide a clear context for our actions and interactions at Balboa Academy, guiding us in cultivating a nurturing and empowering environment where students can thrive academically, socially, and personally.

## Five Core Competencies

At Balboa Academy, our Five Core Competencies form the cornerstone of our academic program, providing a clear set of outcomes and skills that guide curriculum development and instruction. Expressed through the acronym WE ACT, these competencies encompass the breadth of our educational focus:

**W - World View:** We cultivate a global perspective, encouraging students to develop an understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures, perspectives, and global issues.



**E - Emotional Intelligence:** We prioritize the development of emotional intelligence, nurturing students' self-awareness, empathy, and interpersonal skills, enabling them to navigate relationships and understand the impact of their actions.

**A - Academics in Balance:** We strive for academic excellence, ensuring a well-rounded education that promotes critical thinking, problem-solving, effective communication, and a strong foundation across various disciplines.

**C - Creativity:** We foster creativity and innovation, encouraging students to think outside the box, embrace curiosity, and express themselves through various forms of artistic and intellectual endeavors.

**T - Technology:** We integrate technology effectively into our educational practices, equipping students with the necessary digital literacy skills and empowering them to navigate and utilize technology for learning, collaboration, and problem-solving.

Together, the Five Core Competencies and the Five Core Values, forming the acronym WE ACT RIGHT, encapsulate the essence of both the character and academic program of Balboa Academy. For more detailed information, please refer to the Appendix, where you can find comprehensive information on our competencies and values.

## Parent Volunteers

At Balboa Academy, we highly encourage parents to actively participate in the school community, as their involvement plays a vital role in building a positive and welcoming learning environment. Parents have the opportunity to contribute and support the school in various ways, including volunteering their time.

Parents can reach out to their child's teacher to express their interest in volunteering. Teachers may extend invitations to parents to assist with tasks such as preparing materials, providing classroom support, and participating in special events like Color Team days or Tribes' activities. We value the collaboration between parents and teachers in creating meaningful educational experiences for our students.

Furthermore, parents are frequently invited to join school activities, fostering a sense of community and allowing them to engage with their child's educational journey. These events provide opportunities for parents to connect with other families, staff, and students, strengthening the bonds within our school community.

By actively participating in school initiatives, parents become valued partners in their child's education, contributing to the overall success and growth of our Balboa Academy community.

# Parent Information Regarding Enrollment and Withdrawals

## Early Withdrawals

When a student is being withdrawn from Balboa Academy, it is important for parents to notify the school office in writing, even if the withdrawal date aligns with the last day of classes. Providing written notice allows us to properly manage the process and prepare official school records.

We kindly request that parents provide as much advance notice as possible, with a minimum of two weeks, regarding any planned withdrawals. This allows our administrative offices to efficiently handle the necessary paperwork and ensure a smooth transition for the student.

To receive official school records, parents must be in good standing with the school and clear of any outstanding fees or tuition. This requirement ensures that all financial obligations are met before releasing the official documents.

We appreciate your cooperation in adhering to this withdrawal procedure, as it helps us maintain accurate records and supports a seamless transition for both the student and the school.

## Transcripts

For currently enrolled students, please note that transcript requests take a minimum of three (3) working days to process. Within a 12-month period, one transcript per enrolled child will be provided free of charge. However, any additional transcripts required will incur a fee of \$15.00 per child. Payment for additional transcripts should be made to the Business Office located in Building 100.

If you are requesting transcripts from outside the country, please keep in mind that processing time will still require at least three (3) working days, in addition to the mailing time of approximately 7-10 days. Each transcript requested from outside the country will also have a fee of \$15.00 per transcript.

To request your transcripts or documents, please contact the appropriate office based on your child's grade level:

- Pre-Kindergarten: [pkoffice@balboa.edu.pa](mailto:pkoffice@balboa.edu.pa)
- Elementary School: [esoffice@balboa.edu.pa](mailto:esoffice@balboa.edu.pa)
- Middle School: [msoffice@balboa.edu.pa](mailto:msoffice@balboa.edu.pa)
- High School: [hsoffice@balboa.edu.pa](mailto:hsoffice@balboa.edu.pa)

Please reach out to the respective office via email to initiate your transcript request.

## Educational Services Contract

In accordance with the guidelines set by the Panamanian Ministry of Education (MEDUCA), Balboa Academy annually provides Educational Services Contracts that require the signature of parents or legal guardians for each student. These contracts are required to be issued in Spanish, as per MEDUCA's regulations. Balboa Academy, however, offers a translated version in English for parental or guardian reference.

Once signed, one copy of the Educational Services Contract is retained in the Student Records at the school, while the other copy can be provided to the parents or legal guardians upon request. It is crucial that parents or legal guardians sign and return the Educational Services Contract no later than the end of the first month of instruction. For new parents enrolling students at any point during the year, the contract must be signed and returned to the school office.

Please ensure that the Educational Services Contract is promptly reviewed, signed, and returned within the designated timeframe to comply with MEDUCA's requirements.

## Suspension of Contract

Parents have the privilege to express their concerns and inquiries to the staff and administration of Balboa Academy in a respectful and suitable manner. However, it is important to note that any form of physical and/or verbal abuse will result in an immediate suspension of the contract. Furthermore, if parents or students are found to be directly or indirectly involved in actions that could harm the reputation and integrity of Balboa Academy, the contract will also be subject to immediate suspension.

In cases where students fail to adhere to the school's rules of conduct, academic or administrative measures may be taken, which could result in the student's separation from Balboa Academy. It is essential for all members of our school community to maintain a positive and supportive environment, promoting mutual respect and upholding the good name of Balboa Academy.

## Student Data Protection

Balboa Academy is committed to ensuring the protection and privacy of student data in compliance with relevant data protection laws and regulations. This Data Protection Policy outlines our commitment to safeguarding the personal information of our students and establishes guidelines for the collection, use, storage, and disclosure of student data.

This policy applies to all student data collected, processed, and stored by Balboa Academy. It covers personal information obtained from students, parents, legal guardians, or any other authorized individuals.

Balboa Academy will only collect and process student data that is necessary for educational and administrative purposes. We will obtain consent from parents or legal guardians before collecting any personal information from students, ensuring transparency and providing clear explanations about the purposes and methods of data processing.

Student data collected by Balboa Academy will be used solely for educational and administrative purposes, including but not limited to:

- Enrollment and registration processes
- Academic assessments and evaluations
- Communication with students, parents, and legal guardians
- Provision of educational services and support
- Record-keeping and reporting
- Health and safety management

- Compliance with legal obligations

Balboa Academy implements appropriate technical, organizational, and administrative measures to protect student data against unauthorized access, loss, alteration, or disclosure. We maintain strict confidentiality and ensure that access to student data is limited to authorized personnel with a legitimate need to know.

Student data will be retained for the duration necessary to fulfill the purposes for which it was collected, as required by applicable laws and regulations. Once the data is no longer needed, it will be securely disposed of or anonymized to protect the privacy of individuals.

Balboa Academy will only share student data with third parties when necessary for educational or administrative purposes or with explicit consent from parents or legal guardians. We will ensure that any third parties involved in data processing comply with appropriate data protection standards.

Students and parents have the right to access, rectify, or delete their personal information held by Balboa Academy, subject to legal requirements. Requests for data access or modification should be made in writing to the school administration.

In the event of a data breach or unauthorized access to student data, Balboa Academy will promptly investigate the incident, mitigate any potential harm, and notify the affected individuals and relevant authorities as required by law.

Balboa Academy is committed to regularly reviewing and updating this Data Protection Policy to ensure its continued relevance and compliance with applicable data protection regulations.

By adhering to this Data Protection Policy, Balboa Academy aims to foster a safe and secure environment for student data, promoting trust, confidentiality, and the responsible handling of personal information.

## **Change of Contact Information**

In order to ensure effective communication and timely updates, parents or guardians are required to promptly report any changes in their address, telephone number, or email to the respective school office (PK, ES, MS, or HS). It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to keep the school records updated with accurate and current information. If there are any concerns or if there is reason to believe that electronic correspondence is not being received, it is important to notify the school immediately.

To facilitate efficient communication, it is crucial for parents to provide the correct primary email address for school correspondence and to keep this information up to date with the school offices. Maintaining accurate contact details will help ensure that important information reaches parents in a timely manner.

## **School Supplies and Textbooks**

The school will supply textbooks and certain materials and supplies for students. However, there are a few personal supplies and materials that each student is required to provide. These include a sufficiently sized

backpack to hold their homework, books, and lunch box. Additionally, each child is responsible for bringing or purchasing their own lunch.

For specific details regarding the required supplies for your child, please refer to the school's website, where you can find the most up-to-date supply list.

## ATTENDANCE

### Daily Schedule

The school day schedule for PK students is as follows:

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- Wednesday: 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

The school day schedule for students in grades K-12 is as follows:

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 2:55 p.m.
- Wednesday: 8:00 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. (except for PK students).

### Student Late Arrivals and Early Release

Balboa Academy expects all students to arrive at school punctually and ready for the day's learning. To ensure the safety and well-being of everyone, students who arrive after 8:00 a.m. must sign in at their respective school office. If a student needs to leave the school premises before the designated dismissal time due to illness, medical appointments, or other reasons, they must sign out in the Student Logbook located in the school office. Once signed out, it is mandatory for the student to leave the school premises.

### Student Absences and Tardiness

At Balboa Academy, regular attendance is considered essential for all students. Teachers maintain attendance records for each class period. We strongly discourage absences from school unless for health reasons or religious holidays.

If a student is unable to attend school, the corresponding school office must be notified by 9 a.m. for grades 5-12, and the classroom teacher must be informed for grades Pre-K-4. It's important to note that school field trips and participation in school-sponsored athletic events are not considered absences. To ensure the safety and well-being of all students, Balboa Academy diligently records and reports tardiness and absence information for all students.

## PK - 4th Grade Late Arrivals and Absences

To ensure the safety and well-being of our elementary students, Balboa Academy has a procedure in place for late arrivals. If an elementary student arrives at the school building after 8:00 a.m., regardless of whether they are accompanied by a parent or not, they must first check-in at the office before going to their designated homeroom.

We kindly request parents to notify the school by 9:00 a.m. if their child will be arriving late. This helps us maintain accurate attendance records and ensures that appropriate arrangements can be made for the student's smooth transition into the school day. Your cooperation in adhering to this procedure is greatly appreciated.

## 5th - 12th Grade Late Arrivals, Absences, and Leaving Campus Early

Balboa Academy upholds high standards of punctuality and attendance for all students. It is expected that students will remain on campus for the entire school day, from 7:50 a.m. to 2:55 p.m. The first bell rings at 8:00 a.m., and students are required to be in their respective classes on time. In the event a student is late for A period, they must sign the Student Logbook, available in their school office, indicating the date, name, and time of their arrival. They will be issued a pass to enter the classroom and must promptly report to their appropriate class, presenting the pass to the teacher (White for excused, Pink for unexcused). Please note that two tardy arrivals will be considered as one day absent and will be counted towards the total days present for MEDUCA purposes.

Consequences for tardiness are as follows:

- Tardy 1 to 5: Verbal reminder
- Tardy 6: Email sent to parents.
- Tardy 7: Behavior infraction resulting in the next day detention.
- Tardy 8: Behavior infraction resulting in next day detention.
- Tardy 9: Behavior infraction resulting in next day detention.
- Tardy 10: Referral to the Disciplinary Action Committee (DAC) \*Tardy records will accumulate throughout the semester.

Additionally, students are expected to arrive on time for periods B to G. Consequences for tardiness during these periods are as follows:

- Tardy 1 & 2: Verbal warning
- Tardy 3: Behavior infraction resulting in next day detention with the teacher.
- Tardy 4: Behavior infraction resulting in next day detention with the teacher.
- Tardy 5: Behavior infraction resulting in next day detention with the teacher.
- Tardy 6: Referral to the Disciplinary Action Committee (DAC)

If a student is absent for more than half of a class period, they will be marked as absent for that class. Excused absences require documentation in the form of a parent email sent to [msoffice@balboa.edu.pa](mailto:msoffice@balboa.edu.pa) for Middle School or [hsoffice@balboa.edu.pa](mailto:hsoffice@balboa.edu.pa) for High School. We kindly request that medical and other appointments be scheduled outside of school hours whenever possible. In cases where appointments must be scheduled during school hours, a doctor's note must be submitted to the respective office.



For early checkouts, secondary students must obtain written permission from their parents. Permission information should be submitted in the morning, prior to the student's release. Before leaving the campus, students must sign the Student Logbook. Once signed out, students are expected to leave the campus. Each early checkout will be counted as one tardy, while two early checkouts will be considered as one absent day.

Parents of secondary students who are absent will receive notification from the school. Upon returning, students must provide a parent note excusing the absence. Failure to provide a parent excuse will result in a phone call from the school to inquire about the absence.

Please note that unexcused absences, whether for the entire day or specific class periods, may lead to disciplinary action. We appreciate your cooperation in ensuring regular attendance and timely communication regarding absences.

## Lunch Tardy Policy for High School Students

High School students at Balboa Academy have the option to have lunch at the Plaza, but it is important that they return and enter their classes on time. To maintain this privilege, it is crucial for students to adhere to punctuality. If a student is late to the class period immediately following lunch on three occasions, they will forfeit this privilege for the remainder of the quarter. We encourage all High School students to manage their time effectively and prioritize punctuality to ensure a smooth transition from lunch to their subsequent classes.

## Academic Make-Up Policy

For each excused absence, the student will be granted one day to make up any missed assignments without incurring penalties. This grace period will begin the day after the student returns to class. On the day of their return, it is required for the student to meet with their teachers to discuss the assignments that need to be completed. During this meeting, the teachers will provide guidance and clarification on the work that needs to be accomplished. This policy ensures that students have the opportunity to catch up on their studies after an excused absence while maintaining a clear understanding of the tasks at hand.

## Transportation

### Driving on Campus

In order to facilitate student drop-off and pick-up, Balboa Academy permits access to drivers on campus. The safety of our students is of utmost importance to us, and we expect all drivers to adhere to the traffic signs and indicators set by the school. This includes following signals that regulate lane changing and pedestrian crossings. It is mandatory for all drivers to observe the

campus speed limit of 15 MPH or 24 KPH. To ensure the safety of everyone, the use of cell phones and texting while driving on campus is strictly prohibited. Failure to comply with these regulations may result in the denial of campus access to the respective drivers. We appreciate your cooperation in maintaining a secure and protected environment for our students.

## Bus Service

Bus transportation is provided to students through an independent transportation service that operates under a separate contract with parents. Payments for bus services are made directly to the bus company. Any changes or modifications to daily transportation arrangements must be coordinated with the bus driver and communicated to the school offices in advance (e.g., if a student will not be riding the bus). Please note that the availability of seating for additional students who do not regularly utilize transportation services is not guaranteed and should be arranged at least one day in advance. If a parent wishes to request that another child accompany their child home on the bus, a written note must be provided to the bus driver, and this note should be presented when the children board the bus.

For the safety of our Pre-K through second-grade students, they will not be dropped off by the bus driver or monitor unless there is someone present at the bus stop to accompany the child home. If no one is available at the bus stop, the bus will complete its route and the child will be returned to the school. Ensuring the safety and well-being of our students is our top priority, and we appreciate your understanding and cooperation in adhering to these guidelines.

## Student Bus Contracts

All students are expected to adhere to the bus service contract, which must be signed at the beginning of the school year. Compliance with bus rules and regulations is mandatory for all students during their bus transportation. Failure to comply with established rules will result in reporting the student to the school administration. A Bus Behavior Report will be completed and filed at the respective school office. Based on the review of the report, appropriate disciplinary actions will be determined, which may include, but are not limited to, the loss of bus transportation service.

It is important to note that even students who do not typically utilize the bus service are required to sign the contract. All rules and regulations governing bus conduct apply to all instances of transportation, including field trips, transportation provided for athletic events, and other school activities. We emphasize the significance of maintaining a safe and respectful environment while utilizing school transportation and appreciate the cooperation of all students in abiding by these guidelines.

## Bus Behavior

Bus monitors maintain communication with the school offices by submitting a Bus Behavior Report to report any incidents or concerns related to student behavior on the bus. When a Bus Behavior Report is submitted, parents will be promptly notified. The school administration will review the report and determine appropriate consequences based on the nature and severity of the behavior. In certain cases, where necessary, students with multiple Bus Behavior Reports may be referred to the Disciplinary Action Committee for further action.

For serious infractions occurring on the bus, a principal will be involved, and appropriate measures will be taken. This may include an immediate loss of bus privileges for a specified period or suspension from bus service, depending on the circumstances.

To ensure the safety of all students, bus drivers have the authority to assign seats on the bus as necessary. This measure helps maintain a secure and orderly environment during transportation.

For more detailed information, including copies of the Bus Contract and the Bus Behavior Report, please refer to the appendix.

## Health Services

### Health Clinic

Balboa Academy maintains a dedicated health clinic led by a qualified and certified nurse. The clinic provides care and assistance to students in various situations, including:

- Assessing students who appear to be ill or experiencing discomfort.
- Attending to students who have sustained injuries.
- Administering approved medications accompanied by a note from parents.

Parents are encouraged to reach out to the health clinic for any necessary updates to their child's medical records, to obtain information, or to inform the school about any specific health conditions or concerns that require attention.

The health and well-being of our students is of utmost importance, and the clinic plays a vital role in ensuring their care.

### Illness or Injury at School

Balboa Academy prioritizes the safety and well-being of our students, and we have comprehensive measures in place to address emergencies and injuries. Here are the key aspects of our emergency response protocol:

1. **Trained Staff:** Our campus is equipped with Red Cross Certified trained staff members, including a nurse, who are prepared to assist students in case of injuries or emergencies. Additionally, all teachers are CPR certified to provide immediate care if needed.
2. **Ambulance Service:** Balboa Academy has a contract with a reliable ambulance service to ensure prompt and efficient transportation in emergency situations.
3. **Accident Insurance:** We have partnered with a local insurance company to provide accident insurance coverage for all students. This provides additional support and financial protection in the event of accidents or injuries.
4. **Parent Communication:** In the event of an emergency, parents or guardians will be contacted immediately. It is crucial for us to have updated contact information to ensure prompt communication and necessary arrangements.

5. **Hospitalization and Medical Care:** If the student's health condition requires immediate attention and the parents or emergency contact cannot be reached, we will take the necessary steps to ensure the student receives appropriate medical care. This may include arranging transportation to a hospital or clinic for vital treatment.

Please note that while we take every precaution to ensure the safety and well-being of our students, Balboa Academy cannot be held liable for any medical malpractice or traffic accidents that may occur during the transfer of a student to a hospital or clinic. Our primary concern is to act swiftly and responsibly in addressing any medical emergencies that may arise.

## Medical Records

Ensuring the safety and well-being of our students is of utmost importance at Balboa Academy. To facilitate efficient medical care and emergency response, we have the following requirements regarding medical records and emergency contact information:

1. **Up-to-date Medical Records:** It is mandatory for every student to have up-to-date medical records on file at the school. These records provide essential information about the student's medical history, allergies, existing conditions, and any prescribed medications. Having accurate and current medical records enables us to provide appropriate care in case of emergencies or health-related incidents.
2. **Medical Emergency Form:** To further enhance our ability to respond promptly, parents or guardians are required to complete a medical emergency form. This form includes details such as emergency contact information and any specific instructions regarding who should be contacted in the event of an accident or illness requiring immediate treatment at school. It is crucial that this form is completed accurately and updated whenever necessary.
3. **Parent/Guardian Responsibility:** It is the responsibility of the parents or guardians to ensure that medical records and emergency contact information are kept up to date. If there are any changes in the student's medical history, contact numbers, or emergency contacts, it is important to promptly notify the school office. This ensures that we have the most accurate and relevant information to respond effectively during any medical situation.

By adhering to these guidelines, we can maintain a safe and responsive environment for our students, ensuring that their medical needs are addressed promptly and efficiently.

## Medication Administration

At Balboa Academy, we take the administration of medication for students very seriously. To ensure the safety and well-being of all students, we have established the following guidelines:

1. **Parental Notification and Permission:** If a child requires medication to be taken during school hours, the parent or guardian must provide a written note along with completing a Permission for Medications form. This form authorizes the school to administer the medication as prescribed.
2. **Medication Registration:** All medication, including over-the-counter and prescription drugs, must be registered with either the health clinic or the school office. It is essential to provide accurate information about the medication, such as the name, dosage, and any specific instructions. This registration process helps us keep track of the medication and ensures that it is administered safely and responsibly.

3. **Confiscation of Unregistered Medication:** Medication that is not registered with the health clinic or school office may be confiscated for the safety of the students. Parents will be notified in such cases and advised to complete the necessary registration process. This policy is in place to prevent the unauthorized use of medication and to ensure that proper protocols are followed.

To access the Permission for Medications form, please refer to the provided appendix. This form must be completed and submitted along with the medication to the health clinic or school office.

By adhering to these guidelines, we can effectively manage the administration of medication and prioritize the health and safety of our students.

## Student Illness

We kindly request that you keep your child at home when they are sick, as it helps prevent the spread of illness to others within our school community. To ensure the well-being of all students and staff, we ask that you pay particular attention to the following symptoms:

- A temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit / 37.7 degrees centigrade or higher
- General conditions such as:
  - Discharge from the nose or eyes
  - Severe cough
  - Sore throat
  - Vomiting
  - Diarrhea
  - Earache
  - Undiagnosed rashes
  - Open draining lesions

If your child exhibits any of these symptoms, it is essential for them to remain at home to avoid the possibility of infecting others. We kindly ask that you observe a minimum of 24 hours of normal temperature and symptom-free condition before your child returns to school.

While the symptoms are common indicators of illness, please note that this list is not exhaustive. It is always advisable to seek medical attention for any condition that may require treatment. In the event that a student exhibits these symptoms at school, they will be sent home promptly. As parents, it is your responsibility to arrange for the immediate pickup of your child in case of illness or injury. Please note that the health clinic or school cannot serve as a "holding area" for sick children.

By following these guidelines and keeping sick children at home, we can collectively maintain a healthier environment for all students and staff at Balboa Academy.

## Safety and Security

At Balboa Academy, we strongly believe that cultivating positive behavior habits is a collective responsibility of our entire school community. This includes staff, parents, volunteers, coaches, substitutes, and after-school facilitators. By consistently demonstrating exemplary conduct, we serve as role models for our students, shaping their behavior through what they see, hear, and experience.

We recognize the influential power of our actions and the impact they have on our students' development. Therefore, it is essential for all members of our school community to uphold high standards of behavior and demonstrate the values we wish to instill in our students. Whether in classrooms, hallways, or extracurricular activities, we must consistently model positive conduct.

By fostering an environment where positive behavior is actively promoted and exemplified, we can help our students develop and internalize these good habits. Together, let us embrace our responsibility to guide and inspire our students through our own actions, creating a supportive and nurturing community at Balboa Academy.

## Visitors to Campus

To ensure the safety and security of everyone within the school premises, we have established the following protocols for parents and visitors:

1. **Identification and Sign-In:** Parents and visitors are required to present a valid photo ID at the entrance and sign in with the security guard. This helps us maintain a record of individuals present on campus.
2. **Bag Searches:** As part of our security measures, visitors may be asked to consent to purse and backpack searches if requested by the security personnel. This precautionary step is taken to ensure the safety of our school community.
3. **Visitor Badges:** All visitors must always wear the provided visitor badge while on campus. This visible identification allows our staff members to easily identify authorized visitors.
4. **Reporting to the Office:** Upon entering the building, visitors should proceed directly to the school office to communicate the purpose of their visit. This helps us maintain a centralized system for managing visitor access and ensures appropriate guidance throughout the campus.
5. **Compliance with Biosecurity Measures:** Visitors are expected to adhere to all biosecurity measures and guidelines established by the school. This may include wearing masks, practicing physical distancing, and following any specific protocols in place to maintain a safe environment.
6. **Restricted Exit Doors:** For security purposes, all exit doors, except designated and supervised entry doors, remain locked from the outside. This helps regulate access to the school buildings and maintain controlled entry and exit points.
7. **Security Personnel:** We have dedicated security guards stationed at the front door of each school building to monitor access, provide assistance, and ensure the safety of everyone on campus.

By adhering to these protocols, we create a secure environment that promotes the well-being and peace of mind for our students, staff, and visitors at all times.



## When Your Child Forgets an Item at Home

If a student forgets any items, such as lunches, assignments, or articles of clothing, we kindly request that they be dropped off at the appropriate school office. Our staff members at the office will ensure that these items are promptly delivered to the respective student.

We understand that forgetfulness can happen, and we want to assist our students in having access to their necessary belongings. By coordinating through the school office, we can efficiently manage the delivery of forgotten items and minimize disruptions to the learning environment.

## Emergency Drills

Periodically, Balboa Academy conducts various safety drills to ensure the preparedness of our students in emergency situations. At the beginning of each school year, teachers will provide instructions regarding the procedures for each drill, and these instructions will also be visibly posted in each classroom.

During a safety drill, it is crucial for students to follow the guidance provided by their teachers. They should leave the room in an orderly manner, maintaining silence, and proceed to the designated location as directed. It is important for students to understand the importance of these drills and to act responsibly and attentively.

Non-compliance with emergency drill procedures by students may result in disciplinary action. We emphasize the significance of these drills as they contribute to maintaining a safe and secure environment for everyone in our school community.

## Emergency Plan

Ensuring the security and safety of our students is of utmost importance to us at Balboa Academy. In order to maintain a strong line of communication and respond effectively to any unforeseen circumstances, we kindly request parents to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Regularly Check School Emails: It is essential to check your school emails regularly for important updates, announcements, and emergency notifications. Staying informed through this communication channel will help us keep you informed about any relevant developments.
2. Notify the School Office of Contact Information Changes: Please inform the school office promptly if there are any changes to your phone numbers, email addresses, or other contact details. This will enable us to reach you quickly and efficiently in case of an emergency.
3. Ensure Availability by Phone: Parents or guardians should be reachable by phone at all times, or provide an updated emergency contact who can be reached promptly. This will enable us to communicate with you swiftly and effectively when necessary.
4. Inform the School about Travel Plans: If parents or guardians plan to be out of the country, it is important to inform the school in advance. This ensures that we have accurate and up-to-date information about the availability of parents or guardians in case of an emergency.
5. Establish an Emergency Plan with Your Children: It is highly recommended to establish an emergency plan with your children at home. This will help them understand what steps to take in case of an early dismissal or any other unforeseen circumstances. By discussing and practicing this plan, your children will be prepared and know how to respond appropriately.

By adhering to these guidelines, we can work together to enhance the security and safety of our students. We appreciate your cooperation and commitment to maintaining effective communication and preparedness.

## Unexpected School Schedule Changes

The safety and well-being of our staff and students are our top priorities at Balboa Academy. In certain situations, or extenuating circumstances, it may be necessary to close the school for a full day or part of a day. Here is important information regarding school closures:

1. **Decision-Making Process:** The official decision to close the school will be made by the Director after careful consideration of the prevailing conditions. This decision will be based on ensuring the safety and well-being of our entire school community.
2. **Communication of School Closures:** In the event of a school closure, whether it be a full day or partial day, parents and students will be promptly notified by school officials through various communication channels, including emails, phone calls, social media, and other available means. It is essential to stay updated and monitor these communication channels during such situations.
3. **Cell Phone Usage:** During a school closure or early dismissal, students will be allowed to use their cell phones under adult supervision. This will enable them to contact their parents or designated after-school care providers and ensure a smooth transition during such situations.
4. **Virtual Operations:** Depending on the nature of the circumstances, it may be necessary for the school to close for the entire day and shift to virtual operations. In such cases, students will be provided with the necessary instructions and resources to continue their learning remotely.
5. **Elementary "Home Plan B":** Elementary parents are strongly encouraged to discuss and establish a "Home Plan B" with their children. This plan should outline what to do in the event of an unplanned early dismissal when no one is at home. At the beginning of the year, students in Grades K through fourth will complete a Home Plan B worksheet with their parents. All families are encouraged to update and consistently plan with their children for unexpected early dismissals.

Please refer to the Appendix for a copy of the "Plan B" worksheet to facilitate discussions and preparation with your child.

We appreciate your understanding, cooperation, and proactive approach to ensure the safety and well-being of our entire school community during any unplanned school closures or early dismissals.

## School and Parent Communication

At Balboa Academy, we prioritize effective communication with parents and students to foster a strong home-school partnership. To achieve this, we utilize various methods of communication, including but not limited to:


1. **Email:** We regularly communicate important information, updates, and announcements via email. Teachers are expected to check their Balboa Academy email daily to ensure timely responses to parent inquiries.
2. **Phone Calls:** We understand the importance of direct communication, and phone calls are used when immediate or more personal interaction is necessary. Parents can expect to receive phone calls from teachers or school staff as needed.

3. Video Conferencing: To facilitate remote communication and virtual meetings, we utilize video conferencing platforms. This allows for face-to-face interaction and discussion when in-person meetings are not possible.
4. Chats: We also employ chat platforms or messaging apps to provide quick and convenient communication channels. These platforms enable efficient and timely exchanges between teachers, parents, and students.

These various forms of communication serve as a vital bridge between home and school, ensuring effective collaboration and support for student success. In order to maintain a high standard of communication, teachers are expected to respond to parent emails within one working day.

Furthermore, all staff members are available for meetings by appointment, which can be arranged through email or phone communication. We value open dialogue and encourage parents to reach out to teachers or school staff to schedule appointments or discuss any concerns or questions they may have.

By utilizing these diverse communication methods, we aim to maintain strong lines of communication and foster a collaborative environment that promotes the best interests of our students;

<div>  <b>Balboa Academy Communication Guide</b>                      We believe that clear communication fosters understanding and a strong sense of belonging within our community.                      In an effort to clarify our channels of communication, we have created this chart to help you when you have questions.                 </div>					
Question about		Ask First		Ask Second	Ask Third
Attendance (absences or tardies)	→	Building Secretary	→	Building Principal	→ Director
Assignments/ Tests/ Grades	→	Teachers	→	Building Principal	→ Director
Counseling / SEL	→	Counselor	→	Building Principal	→ Director
Afterschool Activities	→	Afterschool Activities Coordinator	→	Sports + Wellness Manager	→ Director
Competitive Sports	→	Coach or Competitive Sports Coordinator	→	Sports + Wellness Manager	→ Director
Payments / Invoices	→	Budget Office	→	Director	→ Director
Buses	→	Bus Coordinator	→	Director	→ Board of Directors
Transcripts	→	Building Secretary	→	Building Principal	→ Director
Tuition	→	Business Office	→	Director	→ Board of Directors
School Policies	→	Building Principal	→	Director	→ Board of Directors
Student Academic Program	→	Counselor	→	Building Principal	→ Director
Report Cards	→	Counselor	→	Building Principal	→ Director
Special Services	→	Case Manager	→	Building Principal	→ Director
Health	→	School Nurse	→	Building Principal	→ Director
Admissions Process Policies	→	Admissions Office	→	Director	→ Board of Directors
School Lunch	→	School Lunch Provider	→	Director	→ Board of Directors
	→		→		→
Helpful Phone numbers					
High School	→	302-0041		Business Office	→ 302-0034
Middle School	→	302-0032		Bus Coordinator (Mr. Escudero)	→ 6613-8066
Elementary School	→	302-0031		Nativiva	→ 387-5002
Preschool	→	317-0191			
Athletics	→	302-0037			
Central	→	302-0035			
Helpful Emails					
High School		<a href="mailto:hsoffice@balboa.edu.pa">hsoffice@balboa.edu.pa</a>		Payments / Budget Office	→ <a href="mailto:payments@balboa.edu.pa">payments@balboa.edu.pa</a>
Middle School		<a href="mailto:msoffice@balboa.edu.pa">msoffice@balboa.edu.pa</a>		Bus Coordinator	→ <a href="mailto:tranespanama@gmail.com">tranespanama@gmail.com</a>
Elementary School		<a href="mailto:esoffice@balboa.edu.pa">esoffice@balboa.edu.pa</a>			→
Preschool		<a href="mailto:pkoffice@balboa.edu.pa">pkoffice@balboa.edu.pa</a>			→
Gym		<a href="mailto:athletics@balboa.edu.pa">athletics@balboa.edu.pa</a>			→

## Phone Numbers

To ensure effective communication with our administrators, teachers, and staff members, you can leave a message and your call will be promptly returned. Please find below the telephone numbers for different departments and offices at Balboa Academy:

- Director: 302-0035
- Elementary Administration (Bldg. 100): 302-0031
- Middle School Administration (Bldg. 107): 302-0032
- High School Administration (Bldg. 104): 302-0041
- Preschool Office (Bldg. 104): 317-0191
- Health Clinic (Bldg. 100): 302-0038
- Business Office (Bldg. 104): 302-0034
- Sports and Wellness Program (Gym): 302-0037
- Admissions (Bldg. 100): 302-1076
- Operations (Bldg. 104): 302-0039
- Human Resources (Bldg. 104): 302-0042

When calling, please leave a detailed message including your name, contact information, and the purpose of your call. Our staff members will make every effort to return your call as soon as possible.

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we strive to provide efficient and timely communication to meet your needs. Thank you for your cooperation, and we look forward to assisting you.

## Meeting with Teachers

We value the collaborative partnership between teachers and parents in supporting the learning and development of students. To ensure effective communication and maximize instructional time, we have established the following guidelines:

1. **Teacher Time:** Teachers have dedicated instructional time during the school day for delivering instruction and planning engaging lessons for students.
2. **Parent-Teacher Meetings:** Parents are encouraged to schedule appointments with teachers outside of instructional time to discuss individual student concerns, progress, or any other matters related to their child's education.

By scheduling meetings outside of instructional time, we can provide dedicated attention to addressing your concerns and ensuring a productive discussion that focuses on your child's needs. This allows teachers to maintain their focus on delivering high-quality instruction during classroom hours.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in adhering to these guidelines, as they help create a conducive learning environment for all students. Working together, we can best support your child's educational journey.

## Microsoft Teams

Each student in grades 5 - 12 has been provided access to Microsoft Teams, a digital platform where teachers post assignments, classwork, and valuable resources. It is important for students to share their usernames and passwords with their parents to ensure access to this platform.

By sharing the login credentials, parents can actively support their child's education by staying informed about assignments, class updates, and any additional information shared by teachers. This collaboration between students, parents, and teachers fosters a more comprehensive learning experience.

We encourage parents to regularly access Microsoft Teams using the shared login information to stay connected with their child's academic progress and support their learning journey effectively. Together, we can enhance communication and engagement to promote a successful educational experience.

## Email

All staff members at Balboa Academy have school email accounts, which typically follow the format of first initial and last name plus @balboa.edu.pa. These email accounts are an essential means of communication, and staff members are expected to check their emails on a daily basis.

By using these email accounts, staff members can efficiently communicate with colleagues, parents, and other stakeholders in the school community. It ensures timely responses to inquiries, facilitates collaboration, and promotes effective information sharing.

We encourage staff members to regularly check their school email accounts to stay informed and maintain open lines of communication within the Balboa Academy community.

## School Newsletters and Announcements

At Balboa Academy, we strive to keep our school community informed and engaged. To achieve this, we have established a regular communication system that includes weekly newsletters and building-level updates.

Our weekly newsletters serve as a comprehensive source of news and information, providing updates on school events, achievements, important dates, and other relevant announcements. These newsletters are distributed to all members of our school community, including staff, students, and parents/guardians.

In addition to the school-wide newsletters, we also ensure that specific information is shared at the building level. This allows us to address building-specific news, activities, and resources that are relevant to students and staff in each specific area of our campus.

By implementing these communication channels, we aim to foster a strong sense of community, keep everyone well-informed, and encourage active involvement in the life of our school.

## The Balboa Academy Website (<https://www.balboaacademy.edu.pa>)

The official Balboa Academy website, located at <https://www.balboaacademy.edu.pa>, serves as a valuable resource for potential and current students, providing comprehensive and up-to-date information about our school.

The website contains a wide range of public information that is relevant to the entire school community. Prospective students and their families can explore the website to learn about our school's mission, values, academic programs, extracurricular activities, admissions process, and other essential details that can help them make informed decisions about joining our community.

For current students, the website serves as a hub of information, offering access to resources, school policies, academic calendars, event updates, and other important announcements. It provides a centralized platform for students to stay connected with their school community and access the information they need to support their learning journey.

Additionally, the Balboa Academy website may also feature news articles, achievements, and highlights showcasing the accomplishments and talents of our students, faculty, and staff.

We encourage all individuals interested in Balboa Academy to visit our website at <https://www.balboaacademy.edu.pa> to explore the wealth of public information available and get a comprehensive understanding of our school and its offerings.

## Social Media

Stay connected with Balboa Academy by following us on various social media platforms:

- Facebook: Like and follow our official Facebook page to stay updated on school-wide activities, events, and important announcements. We will regularly post information about upcoming events, student achievements, and other news related to our school.
- Instagram: Follow our Instagram account to get a glimpse into the vibrant life at Balboa Academy. We will share photos, videos, and stories showcasing the various activities, projects, and experiences of our students and staff.
- WhatsApp: Join our WhatsApp group to receive timely updates and notifications about school-wide activities, early dismissals, and school closures. This platform enables quick and direct communication between the school and our parent community.
- Chat Groups: Engage with other parents, teachers, and staff members through dedicated chat groups. These groups provide a space for discussion, collaboration, and sharing of information related to specific grades, clubs, or interest areas.
- Twitter: Follow our official Twitter account for real-time updates, event highlights, and important announcements. We will share concise and timely information to keep you informed about what's happening at Balboa Academy.

By following us on these social media platforms, you will have access to the latest updates, event information, and important notifications. We strive to keep our school community informed and connected through these channels.



Please note that while we make every effort to communicate through these platforms, official school-wide information, such as early dismissals and school closures, will also be posted on our website and communicated through other official channels to ensure maximum reach and accessibility.

Join us on Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Chat Groups, and Twitter to stay connected and engaged with Balboa Academy!

## Scheduled Meetings for Parents

### Open House

On the day before school opens in August, we invite parents to attend our informal Open House. This special event provides an opportunity for parents and students to visit their new classroom(s) and meet their new teacher(s).

During the Open House, parents and students can familiarize themselves with the classroom environment and get to know the teacher(s) who will guide them throughout the academic year. It's a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere where parents can ask questions, discuss any concerns, and gain a better understanding of the upcoming school year.

We believe that this Open House event helps foster a strong partnership between parents, students, and teachers right from the start. It sets a positive tone for the school year and allows everyone to begin building connections and forming a supportive community.

We look forward to welcoming you to our Open House and starting the new school year together!

### Back-To-School Nights

In the latter part of August, we invite parents to attend our Back to School Night where they can meet their child(ren)'s teacher(s) and gain valuable information about the curriculum, program, expectations, class rules, and other important topics.

We understand that many parents have multiple children attending our school, so each building plans and schedules their own Back to School Night to accommodate everyone. This allows parents to attend the sessions relevant to their child(ren)'s grade level(s) and ensures they receive specific information tailored to their needs.

Prior to the Back to School Night, we will notify parents in advance of the specific dates and times for each building. This will enable parents to plan accordingly and make the most of their time during these informative sessions.

Back to School Night is a valuable opportunity for parents to establish a strong connection with their child(ren)'s teacher(s) and gain insights into the academic journey that lies ahead. We encourage all parents to attend and actively participate in this important event.

We look forward to welcoming you to our Back to School Night and starting the new academic year on a positive note!

## Parent-Teacher Conferences

At Balboa Academy, we prioritize open communication and value the partnership between school and home. We believe in maintaining frequent contact with parents to ensure the success and well-being of our students. Here are some ways we engage with parents:

- Teachers are encouraged to meet with parents on an as-needed basis throughout the year. This allows for personalized discussions regarding student progress, concerns, and achievements.
- We emphasize regular communication between teachers and parents. Teachers are encouraged to keep parents informed about areas of concern as well as celebrate areas of success.
- In the PK (Pre-K) program, teachers will hold individual parent conferences at the end of the first and fourth marking periods. These conferences provide an opportunity to review the student's progress and discuss strategies for improvement. Additionally, a mid-year report will be sent to parents at the end of the third quarter, and meetings will be requested with parents of students who may be experiencing difficulties.
- In grades K-5, teachers will hold individual parent conferences at the end of the first and third marking periods. These conferences serve as an opportunity to discuss the students' progress and explore strategies for improvement.
- In grades 6-12, teachers are available to meet with parents upon request. Parents of students requiring extra assistance will be automatically scheduled for a conference at the end of the first and/or third marking periods.
- When students join us midyear, teachers will arrange a parent-teacher conference within one month after the student's enrollment. This conference allows for a smooth transition and an opportunity to address any specific needs or concerns.

We believe that ongoing communication and collaboration between teachers and parents contribute to the academic and personal growth of our students. By working together, we can create a supportive and nurturing environment that fosters success.

## Academics

### Instructional Program

#### Teaching What Matters Most

At Balboa Academy, we are committed to preparing our students to become global citizens who are equipped with the necessary skills and values to thrive in the world. Our instructional program focuses on the following key areas:

#### Five Core Competencies

Balboa Academy's academic program is centered around five core competencies that shape our curriculum and instruction. These competencies are encapsulated by the acronym WE ACT, representing the following:

W = World View: We cultivate a global perspective, encouraging students to understand and appreciate diverse cultures, perspectives, and global issues. We aim to develop their awareness and empathy for the world around them.

E = Emotional Intelligence: We prioritize the development of emotional intelligence, nurturing students' social and emotional skills. We empower them to understand and manage their emotions, build positive relationships, and demonstrate empathy and resilience.

A = Academics in Balance: We emphasize the importance of academic excellence while promoting a balanced approach to learning. We strive to provide a comprehensive education that encompasses a range of subjects, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and a love for lifelong learning.

C = Creativity: We encourage and celebrate creativity in all its forms. We provide opportunities for students to express themselves artistically, think outside the box, and explore innovative solutions to challenges. We value imagination, originality, and the ability to embrace new ideas.

T = Technology: We recognize the vital role of technology in today's world and integrate it into our instructional practices. We equip students with the necessary technological skills and digital literacy to navigate the digital landscape responsibly and effectively.

These five core competencies, represented by the acronym WE ACT, guide our curriculum and instruction, ensuring that students develop the essential skills and knowledge to succeed academically, emotionally, and socially. When combined with our five core values, which form the acronym WE ACT RIGHT, they encapsulate the essence of both the character and academic program at Balboa Academy.

## Special Services

### Differentiation

At Balboa Academy, we strive to meet the diverse academic, social, and emotional needs of every student. We understand that each student is unique, and as such, we provide accommodations and modifications for some students while offering enrichment opportunities for others. We hold high expectations for all students, tailoring our approach to suit the individual needs of each learner.

We firmly believe that every student has the capacity to learn and grow. Our dedicated educators actively seek ways to engage and support all students, ensuring that school is a positive and inclusive learning environment for everyone. Our ultimate goal is to empower every student to achieve success and reach their full potential.

### Individualized Services

Balboa Academy is committed to providing an inclusive learning environment that caters to the needs of all students. Students are assigned to grade-level homerooms and attend classes based on specific content areas. We firmly believe that every student has the potential for academic and behavioral growth, and we continuously monitor and measure their progress through assessments, observations, and records.

Using the collected data, we develop academic and behavioral action plans as necessary. Our administrators, education specialists, and teachers collaborate closely with parents and students to identify and address any additional support services required to enhance academic and social development. Balboa Academy offers a range of supplemental services, including:

- Support for Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) and Accommodation Plans (AC)
- English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction
- Counseling services
- Small group instruction in math and reading foundations.
- Support for inclusive education in regular classrooms
- On-campus speech, physical, and occupational therapy during school hours, provided by external professional service providers (separately paid for by parents).

Through these comprehensive support measures, we strive to ensure that each student receives the necessary assistance to thrive academically and socially within our school community.

## Assessment, Cycle Testing, and Grading Policies

At Balboa Academy, we firmly believe in the potential of every student to learn and grow. Our approach to grading is designed to provide meaningful feedback that supports student achievement. We have developed grading guidelines based on best practices and research-backed principles that foster effective learning for all students.

Our commitment to varied forms of assessment allows us to capture the diverse strengths and abilities of our students. We recognize that each student has unique talents and learning styles, and we aim to provide a holistic view of their progress and accomplishments.

By employing these grading practices, we create an environment where students can thrive, embrace challenges, and reach their full potential. Our ultimate goal is to promote a love for learning and empower our students to become lifelong learners.

In grades 5 - 12, we have implemented a scheduled cycle testing system that focuses on two subject areas per week. To ensure effective preparation, students and parents will receive a schedule of the cycle tests in advance.

One week prior to each cycle test, students will be provided with a comprehensive study guide. It is important to note that only the topics covered in the study guide will be included in the exams. This approach aims to help students prioritize their studying efforts and feel confident in their exam preparation.

Furthermore, at the end of each semester, students will have semester exams. Similar to the cycle tests, study guides will be distributed one week ahead of each semester exam to facilitate focused and targeted review.

By providing study guides and aligning exam content with the materials covered, we aim to support students in their academic success and promote effective study habits.

## Grading System for Elementary School

At Balboa Academy, our teachers utilize formative and summative assessments to evaluate student progress in relation to grade-level standards. These assessments help us measure student achievement and guide our instructional practices.

Teachers provide feedback to students through comments or number grades, offering valuable insights into their performance. To communicate student progress on the acquisition of standards, we issue quarterly report cards.

The report card scale is as follows:

- 1: Below Standard
- 2: Approaching Standard
- 3: Meets Standard
- 4: Exceeds Standard

When modifications have been made to accommodate a student's needs, an asterisk (\*) is included to indicate such adaptations. Additionally, the report card reflects any special services received by the student during the quarter.

Teachers also include personalized comments on the report cards to provide a more comprehensive overview of the content covered, individual student progress, and suggestions for areas of improvement.

Through these grading practices, we aim to provide a comprehensive assessment of student progress and offer valuable feedback to support their academic growth.

## Grading Scale for Middle School and High School

At Balboa Academy, we utilize different grading scales depending on the class. Here are the grading scales for most classes and some specific classes:

1. For most classes:

- A: 100-90
- B: 89-80
- C: 79-70
- D: 69-60
- F: 59-20

2. For some classes:

- P: 100-60 (Pass)
- F: 59-20 (Fail)

Please note that for all classes, the minimum grade recorded in the gradebook is 20%. This policy applies in all circumstances, including cases of cheating and plagiarism. If such violations occur, the student will be referred to the Discipline Action Committee (DAC) for appropriate action.

We strive to maintain academic integrity and ensure fair assessment practices for all students.

## Grading Practices

At Balboa Academy, we have established guidelines and expectations for grading and recording student progress. Here are the key points:

1. Grade Posting and Access:
  - Middle School and High School grades will be posted to Plusportals (soon on iSAMS) on a weekly basis, as determined by the principal.
  - Students in Grades 5-12 and their parents will have access to student grades in Plusportals (soon on iSAMS).
2. Minimum Number of Grades:
  - For Elementary School (ES):
    - Literacy, Math, and Spanish classes will have two grades per week.
    - Science and Social Studies classes will have one grade per week.
    - ES Co-Curricular Classes (PE, Art, Music, Media, and Technology) are graded on a Pass/No Pass (P/NP) basis and evaluated primarily on participation, not necessarily graded every week.
  - For Middle School (MS) and High School (HS), a minimum of two grades per week is expected in all courses taught.
3. Timely Recording of Tests and Projects:
  - Tests and projects should be recorded in Plusportals (soon on iSAMS) within one week to provide students with timely feedback on their performance.
4. Late Work Policy:
  - Late work, not due to absence, will be subject to a penalty of no more than 5% points deducted per day.
  - Excused absences allow the student one day for each day absent to make up late work without penalty, starting from the day after the student returns to class.
  - On the day of the student's return to class, teachers must explain the required work that needs to be completed.
  - Extended absences will be addressed on an individual basis, considering the specific circumstances.

We aim to ensure consistent grading practices, timely feedback, and fair opportunities for students to make up for missed assignments.

## Grading Symbols

At Balboa Academy, we utilize various grading scales and symbols to accurately assess student performance. Here are the grading scales and symbols used:

1. Percentage-based Grading Scale:

- A = 95%
- B = 85%
- C = 75%
- D = 65%
- F = 55%

2. Symbol-based Grading Scale:

- $\sqrt{+}$  = 95%
- $\sqrt{\phantom{+}}$  = 85%
- $\sqrt{-}$  = 75%

3. Additional Symbols:

- \*\* = Student exempt from work. This does not count towards or against the student's grade average.
- INC = Incomplete. This symbol is used when a student has missing work due to a recent absence. It does not factor into the grade average.
- NC = Not Completed / Unsatisfactory. If work is not completed, the student will receive a 20% grade.

By using these grading scales and symbols, we aim to provide clear and comprehensive feedback on student performance and progress.

## Retake Policy in Middle School and High School

At Balboa Academy, we understand that students may sometimes need an opportunity to improve their performance on a test. Therefore, we have a retake policy in place. Here are the details:

1. Retake Period: Students may be permitted to retake a test within a two-week period, as scheduled by the teacher. This allows students ample time to review and prepare for the retake.
2. Tutoring Session Requirement: To be eligible for a retake, students must participate in at least one tutoring session with the respective teacher. This session aims to provide additional support and guidance to help students better understand the material.
3. Modified Exam: The retake exam will be similar to the original exam but not identical. This ensures that students have the opportunity to demonstrate their improved understanding of the content.
4. Grade Recording: After the retake, the higher of the two grades (original exam and retake) will be entered in the grade book. This encourages students to strive for improvement and acknowledges their progress.



It's important to note that specific retake policies may vary depending on the course and teacher. We encourage parents and students to review the individual syllabi for any additional guidelines or requirements regarding retakes.

For students in Grades 5-12, the assessment schedule at Balboa Academy includes two cycle tests per week, specifically on Tuesdays and Fridays. A calendar will be provided to students, indicating the dates of each cycle test for their reference. All other regular tests will be administered on Mondays and Thursdays. Quizzes, on the other hand, may be given on any day of the week.

To clarify, a test is considered an assessment that typically takes longer than 20 minutes to complete, while a quiz is generally shorter and can be completed within 20 minutes or less.

This assessment schedule aims to provide a structured framework for students' academic progress and to ensure a balanced distribution of assessments throughout the week. It allows students and teachers to effectively plan and prepare for their assessments while maintaining a consistent rhythm in their learning journey.

## High School Semester and Final Exam Guidelines

During final exam week, teachers at Balboa Academy will follow the school's exam schedule for students. The schedule is as follows:

Grades 9-12 (December) and Grades 9-11 (June):

- Day 1: A & B periods - 8:00-9:30 a.m. and 9:45-11:15 a.m.
- Day 2: C & D periods - 8:00-9:30 a.m. and 9:45-11:15 a.m.
- Day 3: E & F periods - 8:00-9:30 a.m. and 9:45-11:15 a.m.
- Day 4: G period - 8:00-9:30 a.m.

Seniors (May):

- Day 1: A & B periods - 8:00-9:30 a.m. and 9:45-11:15 a.m.
- Day 2: C & D periods - 8:00-9:30 a.m. and 9:45-11:15 a.m.
- Day 3: E & F periods - 8:00-9:30 a.m. and 9:45-11:15 a.m.
- Day 4: G period - 8:00-9:30 a.m.

Before taking exams, students must show their books or turn them in. If a student has lost their book, they must pay for it before taking the exam.

Please note the following guidelines regarding final exams:

1. Absences: If a student does not show up for an exam and the school is not notified of this absence by the parent(s) or guardian(s), the student may receive an "F" for the exam, with a 20% grade inserted in the final exam column. Teachers must notify the office immediately if a student does not show up for an exam.
2. Exam Weightage: Final exam grades should not count for more than 20% of the final semester grade.

3. Exemptions: Teachers have the choice to exempt students from taking the final exam. To be exempt, students must have an overall average of 94% calculated from the two-quarter grades. Exempted students must receive an "A" for the semester grade and the exam grade.
4. Grading: Semester and final exam grades are recorded as letter grades on the report card. The grade point average is calculated using numeric values assigned to the semester grades.
5. Study Guide: Teachers are required to provide students with a detailed study guide that identifies the concepts, skills, and vocabulary they need to know for the exam. This ensures clarity and eliminates misinterpretation.
6. Exam Duration: Students are given one and a half hours (1 ½ hours) to take a final exam. During the first 60 minutes of the exam period, all students must remain in the classroom. Afterward, students who have finished their exam may be dismissed by the teacher, but they should report to a designated area for their next exam or transportation.
7. Uniform: Students must come to school dressed in the school uniform during final exam week.
8. Special Learning Needs: Exam content, format, and testing environment may be modified for students with special learning needs. Individualized modifications will be discussed and planned by the counselor, specialists, and teachers to promote success.
9. Early Departure: Students who plan to leave early and not return will be permitted to take their semester exams before their departure. Students who leave early with the intention of returning will receive an incomplete for their courses until they take their semester exams upon their return. Students who miss a semester exam without prior notification from parents will receive a failing grade for that exam.
10. Exam Review and Appeals: Students are permitted to review their graded exams. If a student believes they were unfairly evaluated, they may appeal to the building principal. If a satisfactory remedy cannot be found, the student may appeal the decision to the Educational Committee.

These guidelines ensure a fair and organized final exam process for all students at Balboa Academy.

## Course Recovery

For secondary students in grades 7-12 at Balboa Academy, earning a final yearly average below 3.00 on the Panamanian scale (equivalent to a 2.0 on the Balboa Academy scale) in a class requires completion of Course Recovery for that specific course. Course Recovery involves independent study of the fundamental concepts and skills covered in the class that the student did not pass.

Following the independent study, the school administers an exam to assess the student's mastery of the content. Course Recovery takes place at the end of the academic year. Students who successfully complete Course Recovery will receive credit for that course for the year. However, students who are failing (below 3.00/2.0) in more than three courses at the end of the academic year are not eligible for Course Recovery and will be considered as not passing the entire academic year.

It's important to note that students who do not pass an academic year will not be allowed to return to Balboa Academy. This policy ensures that students have the opportunity to reinforce their understanding of course material and demonstrate proficiency before advancing to the next academic year.

## Assessments

At Balboa Academy, we utilize various assessment measures to track the academic progress of our students. In Grades 1-8, we administer the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests during the fall and spring semesters, with some students also participating in a winter testing session. These test results are shared with parents, and copies are filed in the students' records for reference.

For Grades 9-12, students take the PSAT and SAT tests, which provide valuable insights into their college readiness. In addition to these standardized tests, we employ a range of formative and authentic assessments throughout the year to continually monitor student growth and development. These assessments help us determine appropriate program placement and identify students who may benefit from additional support.

We believe in using assessment data as a tool to inform our instructional practices and support the individual needs of our students. By analyzing the results, we can tailor our approach to education and ensure that each student receives the necessary resources and guidance for their academic success.

## Sports and Wellness

### Physical Education Classes

Balboa Academy offers physical education (PE) classes for students of all grade levels, ranging from Pre-K to twelfth grade.

### Philosophy

Physical Education plays a crucial role in a comprehensive and well-rounded educational curriculum. It serves as an integral part of a student's overall development, encompassing various aspects of wellness. Our primary objective is to equip students with essential skills to actively engage in a wide range of sports and recreational activities. Through these experiences, we aim to foster a lifelong commitment to physical fitness, emphasize the importance of regular physical activity, and instill an understanding of how it contributes to a healthy lifestyle.

### Policies

The guidelines and regulations for physical education are clearly defined in the syllabi distributed to students at the beginning of the academic year. In PE classes, students' grades are determined by their active involvement and participation. It is mandatory for students to engage in daily physical activities while adhering to appropriate attire. Additionally, students are expected to demonstrate improvement in their fitness levels throughout the course to achieve a passing grade.

## After-school Activities Program

### Philosophy

Our After-School Program is specifically designed to foster the holistic development of every child, encompassing their social, emotional, physical, and academic growth.

### Policies

The offerings in our After-School Program are subject to change throughout the year, providing a diverse range of activities for students. Please note that certain activities may have limited availability based on participant capacity, and some may have specific requirements or incur additional costs. To participate, students are required to maintain good academic standing and always display appropriate behavior.

## Competitive Sports Program

Balboa Academy actively engages in various national and international competitions, fostering a culture of participation and encouraging our students to engage in competitive sports. We believe that involvement in these competitions provides valuable opportunities for personal growth, teamwork, and skill development.

### Philosophy

We firmly believe that our Competitive Sports Program offers both boys and girls the chance to develop their leadership abilities and athletic skills. Through comprehensive training and engaging in high-level competition, students have the opportunity to enhance their personal growth. Our program also fosters social interaction and cultivates a sense of school pride among participants.

### Policies

To join Balboa Academy's competitive sports program, students must complete and submit a Parent/Student-Athlete contract. This contract serves as a guide for students and parents, outlining the expectations and responsibilities associated with participation. Additionally, it is important to note that certain activities may involve additional costs for students. For further details, please refer to the Appendix, where you can find a copy of the Parent/Student-Athlete contract.

# Technology

## Overview

Teachers will go over the details of this policy with students, but we also encourage parents to take a few minutes to review it with their child, as many of the rules and guidelines apply to computer usage at home as well.

At Balboa Academy, our faculty is dedicated to incorporating 21st-century educational technology practices into our curriculum. Through our technology integration program, we aim to promote the following:

- Personalized learning content: Tailoring educational materials to meet the individual needs and interests of students.
- Creativity in understanding relationships: Encouraging students to think critically and make connections between different concepts and ideas.
- Aid in cognitive processes: Utilizing technology tools to support cognitive development and problem-solving skills.
- Higher order thinking skills: Fostering analytical thinking, evaluation, and synthesis of information.
- Knowledge Network: Providing access to a vast network of information and resources for expanded learning opportunities.

Balboa Academy provides students and staff with a range of technological resources. These resources offer valuable opportunities to enhance learning and engage with a global community beyond the traditional classroom setting.

## Responsible use of BA's technology resources

We strive to educate our students about responsible behavior both in the real world and in the digital realm. Our approach to "Digital Citizenship" is built upon four key pillars:

1. Self-Respect: Users are encouraged to choose appropriate online names and images and exercise caution when sharing personal information.
2. Respect for Others: Users are expected to treat others with respect and refrain from using technology to bully, tease, or harass individuals.
3. Protection of Self and Others: Users are encouraged to safeguard themselves and others by promptly reporting any instances of abuse or inappropriate material, and to avoid forwarding such content.
4. Respect and Protect Intellectual Property: Users are expected to give proper credit and cite sources when utilizing websites, books, media, or any other form of intellectual property.

The use of Balboa Academy's technology resources must align with ethical principles, show respect for others, maintain academic honesty, and support the school's mission. Materials created for electronic publication should be intended for educational purposes. School administrators, teachers, and staff may monitor these materials to ensure compliance with content standards.

It is important to note that digital storage and electronic devices used for school purposes are considered an extension of the physical school environment. Files stored on the school's network are the property of the school and may be subject to inspection at any time, and should not be treated as private.

Users are expected to follow generally accepted rules of network etiquette. Users will be held accountable, both personally and financially, for any intentional or malicious damage caused to the network software, data, user accounts, hardware, or for any unauthorized costs incurred.

The following activities are strictly prohibited:

- Using electronic devices to access, submit, publish, or display defamatory, inaccurate, racially offensive, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, or threatening materials or messages, whether publicly or privately.
- Using the school's technology system for illegal, harassing, or vandalizing purposes.
- Using computing resources for commercial activities, product advertisement, religious or political lobbying.

Harassment is defined as engaging in behavior such as slurs, comments, jokes, innuendos, unwelcome compliments, cartoons, pranks, or any other verbal conduct that interferes with school operations.

Vandalism is defined as any attempt to harm or destroy the infrastructure, operating system, application software, or data.

Inappropriate use is considered a violation of school policy and shall be defined accordingly.

## Use of Personal Electronic Devices (Ed)

Balboa Academy has implemented a campus wireless network that grants users varying levels of access, including internet connectivity. Students are allowed to bring their own computing devices, such as iPads, tablets, smartphones, netbooks, or laptops, to access the campus wireless system for educational and instructional purposes in the classroom.

While computing devices are not mandatory, they are considered valuable tools for students, and they are encouraged to bring their own devices to school. However, it is important to note that no student will be excluded from the instructional process if they do not have their own device.

The academy is committed to providing a safe environment that aligns with the maturity level and needs of student users. Instructors will monitor students' internet access, but it is essential for students and parents to understand that students bear the ultimate responsibility for their conduct online. To ensure that personal electronic devices do not disrupt the learning process, students are expected to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Cell phones, smartwatches, earbuds, or other electronic devices may only be used in class when authorized by the teacher for a specific activity.
- Students are prohibited from recording media or taking photos during school without permission from both a staff member and the individuals being recorded/photographed.
- Students should refrain from making calls, sending text messages, emails, using social media, or engaging in electronic communication with others using their personal devices during class time.

Technology is a powerful tool that enhances learning and provides students with access to a wide range of academic resources. Balboa Academy has established a filtered wireless network to enable students to connect their privately owned electronic devices. Students using their electronic devices on school property or the school's wireless network must adhere to the guidelines outlined in the Responsible Computer, Network, and Internet Use Policy Agreement, which all students are required to sign. Please refer to the Appendix for a copy of the agreement.

Specific guidelines for electronic device usage at different grade levels are as follows:

- High School: Students are allowed to bring electronic devices that can access the internet for educational purposes as determined by the classroom teacher.
- Middle School: Students are allowed to bring electronic devices that can access the internet for educational purposes as determined by the classroom teacher. However, devices should not be used during passing periods or in the lunchroom. Middle school teachers may designate special "Electronic Fridays" where students can use their devices during the lunch period.
- Elementary: Students in grades 2-5 are allowed to bring electronic devices for academic classroom use as determined by the classroom teacher.
- Buses: Students are permitted to use their personal electronic devices while on the buses.

## Expectations for Students Using Personal Electronic Devices

To maintain a safe and productive technological environment, Balboa Academy has established the following guidelines for student electronic device usage:

- Each year, students are required to sign the Balboa Academy Electronic Use Policy Form.
- Students are only permitted to use the student WIFI password. Accessing WIFI using the teacher password will result in disciplinary action.
- Bandwidth: The school's network is shared among all users, so students must be respectful of this environment and ensure that programs and file sharing activities do not impede the flow of information.
- Virus Protection: Laptops requiring virus protection must have approved virus scanning software installed.
- Power: Students are responsible for bringing their devices to school fully charged. They may also bring their power cords to recharge their devices if needed.
- Security:
  - Students are accountable for the safety of their own devices and must not leave them unattended.
  - Devices should be kept with students or stored in a designated space within a backpack or case.
  - Students must use password protection on their devices to ensure security.
  - The school reserves the right to inspect a student's electronic device if deemed necessary.
  - During sports events, lunch, physical education (P.E.) classes, and other after-school activities, students should keep their devices in a secure place. Teachers will not be held responsible for any damage or theft of personal devices.



## Graphing Calculators

We highly recommend that all middle and high school math and physics students purchase a school-approved graphing calculator, specifically the TI 83 or TI 84 calculator. These calculators are beneficial for the coursework and will enhance the learning experience.

## Student Use of Office Telephones

Students have the option to request a pass from their teacher to use the phone in the school office or Health Clinic to make a call to their parents. In addition, students who possess personal cell phones can request to use their own device within the office or under adult supervision when deemed necessary.

## Policy Violations

Failure to comply with these terms and conditions may result in the loss of the privilege to use such devices for students, and appropriate consequences will be imposed for any misuse. In cases of more severe violations, disciplinary action may be taken, which could include temporary or permanent suspension of computer or Internet access, and referral to the Disciplinary Action Committee.

## Student Dress Code and Uniform

### Student Dress Code

We highly value and encourage students to maintain a well-groomed personal appearance, which includes wearing the proper school uniform. The responsibility for ensuring students adhere to the uniform policy lies primarily with the students and parents.

Uniform requirements may vary depending on the grade level. A descriptive brochure is available in the School Office to assist families in selecting the appropriate uniform. All Balboa Academy uniforms can be purchased at Galapago, located at Calle 71 San Francisco, across from Pizzeria Ciao Bella. The store is open from Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and on Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. For inquiries, you may contact them at 274-7398. Uniforms can also be purchased online at <https://galapagopanama.com/collections/balboa-academy>.

When determining the proper uniform size or selecting clothing for special school activities that do not require the use of a uniform, parents and students must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Underwear should be completely covered by outer clothing.
- Shirts must be of sufficient size to cover the midriff areas.
- Two-piece garments should overlap adequately to avoid any exposure of the midriff and/or backside at any time.
- All uniform garments must be well maintained to ensure their presentable condition.

## Physical Education (P.E.) Dress Code

During Physical Education (P.E.) classes, it is mandatory for students to wear the designated P.E. uniform. Adequate space and time are provided for changing, if necessary. Before entering the class, students are expected to adhere to the PE uniform code in a proper manner. Failure to comply with the uniform code may result in formal disciplinary action being taken against the student.

## Dress Code Requirements

Our students serve as representatives of our school, and it is important for them to uphold the appropriate image. To ensure this, we have established the following dress code guidelines:

- Students must arrive at school dressed in the designated Balboa Academy school uniform.
- Sweaters and jackets worn should be the authorized ones provided as part of the Balboa Academy uniform. Unauthorized sweaters, hoodies, sweatshirts, and jackets will be confiscated and held in the office until the end of the semester.
- Hats or other headgear should only be worn outdoors, unless specifically authorized by parents or guardians for medical or religious reasons.
- Sunglasses should not be worn indoors unless medically required, with a valid doctor's certificate.
- Students in grades K- 4 are **required** to wear tennis shoes (sneakers).
- Students in grades 5-12 are **required** to wear dark blue, black, or white tennis shoes (sneakers). Alternative footwear for medical reasons must be accompanied by a doctor's certificate stating the need.
- Hair color should be natural and well-groomed.
- Visible body tattoos are not permitted while in school uniform.
- Ear gauges or face piercings are not allowed.
- Jewelry, makeup, and nail polish should be appropriate for school and subject to the discretion of the administrator.

Students who do not comply with the dress code will be referred to the office. Refusal to follow the uniform codes may result in formal disciplinary action. Late arrivals or absences resulting from non-compliance with the dress code will be considered unexcused.



## Student Conduct

### Balboa Academy Policies on Student Behavior and Discipline

#### Balboa Academy Conduct Code

At Balboa Academy, we have established a set of norms that serve as our behavioral expectations. These norms are prominently displayed throughout the school, and our teachers continuously reinforce them throughout the academic year. They are as follows:

I will ACT RIGHT:

- Respect
- Integrity
- Good deeds
- Hard work
- Team spirit

One of the key objectives at Balboa Academy is to foster the development of self-discipline in our students. We believe that self-discipline and the ability to take responsibility are integral to the learning and growth process. When expectations and procedures are clearly communicated and understood, students are more likely to respond appropriately.

We strive to create an environment that promotes positive behavior, and we value the support and cooperation of parents in fostering their child's self-discipline. Our teachers and staff employ evidence-based practices to enhance student learning and minimize disruptions in the classroom.

At Balboa Academy, we adhere to the discipline procedures outlined in the policies set forth by MEDUCA (Ministry of Education of Panama). These procedures guide our approach to discipline and ensure consistency across our school community.

#### Honor code

The faculty and staff at Balboa Academy play a crucial role in upholding and advocating for the Balboa Academy Student Honor Code. Our school is a community of scholars and learners, dedicated to fostering principles such as honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, and respect for others.

We firmly believe that maintaining a climate of integrity and solidarity is a shared responsibility between students, faculty, and staff. As members of this community, students are expected to consistently uphold these core values in all aspects of their academic and non-academic pursuits.

By embracing and embodying the principles of the Student Honor Code, students contribute to a positive and supportive learning environment where everyone is valued and respected. Together, we strive to cultivate a culture of integrity and mutual respect at Balboa Academy.

## The Honor Code Pledge

At Balboa Academy, we hold ourselves to a high standard of conduct and honor as students. I am committed to behaving responsibly and with integrity in all aspects of my academic and personal life as a member of the Balboa Academy community.

We believe in the importance of acting RIGHT, embodying the following values:

- Respect: Treating others with courtesy, empathy, and consideration.
- Integrity: Upholding honesty, ethics, and moral principles in all situations.
- Good deeds: Engaging in acts of kindness, empathy, and service to others.
- Hard work: Demonstrating dedication, effort, and perseverance in our academic pursuits.
- Team spirit: Collaborating and supporting one another as a united community.

At Balboa Academy, we foster a positive and supportive environment where we treat each other with respect and compassion.

We encourage two important actions to promote a sense of camaraderie:

- Action #1: If you need assistance, do not hesitate to seek help. We are here to support one another.
- Action #2: If someone reaches out for help, be ready to offer your support without hesitation.

To help us remember and embrace these values, we use the phrase "WE ACT RIGHT." This serves as a reminder of our Five Core Competencies and Five Core Values that we strive to embody every day, both on and off campus at Balboa Academy.

## Bullying/Cyber Bullying Policy

### Bullying

Balboa Academy is committed to creating a safe and inclusive environment for all students. We acknowledge that every student has the right to feel secure, respected, and free from any form of bullying or harassment. Our school community stands united in promoting a culture of kindness, empathy, and mutual respect.

We firmly believe that no student should face bullying or harassment, and we are dedicated to taking proactive measures to prevent and address such incidents. We encourage all members of the Balboa Academy community to report any incidents of bullying or harassment without fear of retaliation. We assure students that their voices will be heard, and appropriate action will be taken to address the situation.

It is our responsibility as a school community to uphold the anti-bullying policy consistently and fairly. By fostering an atmosphere of respect and support, we can ensure that every student feels safe, valued, and empowered to reach their full potential at Balboa Academy.

### School Commitment

Balboa Academy is dedicated to achieving the following goals in relation to bullying and harassment:

1. **Creating a Safe and Secure Learning Environment:** We strive to provide a learning environment that is safe, secure, and free from bullying and harassment. Every student deserves to feel protected and respected while they pursue their education.
2. **Fostering Open and Honest Communication:** We aim to foster a supportive environment where open and honest communication is encouraged. By promoting dialogue and understanding, we can address issues related to bullying and harassment effectively.
3. **Raising Awareness and Providing Skills:** We are committed to raising awareness about the detrimental effects of bullying and harassment. We provide students, staff, and parents with the necessary skills and strategies to recognize and prevent such behavior.
4. **Teaching Empathy, Respect, and Compassion:** We believe in promoting empathy, respect, and compassion among all members of our community. Interventions are implemented to educate and instill these values in those involved in bullying and harassment situations.
5. **Implementing Effective Procedures:** We have established procedures to address incidents of bullying and harassment promptly and appropriately. These procedures ensure that incidents are thoroughly investigated, and appropriate actions are taken to protect the well-being of all individuals involved.

By striving to achieve these goals, we aim to create a nurturing and inclusive environment at Balboa Academy, where every individual feels valued, supported, and empowered.

## Definitions

**Bullying** is the misuse of power, position, or privilege with the intention to intimidate, coerce, create fear, control, embarrass, exclude, or cause pain or discomfort. It is crucial to distinguish bullying from a mere disagreement between individuals.

At Balboa Academy, we define **bullying and harassment** as negative and intimidating actions that intentionally or unintentionally harm, upset, or compromise the physical, psychological, educational, or emotional well-being of a person or persons. This definition includes any bullying or harassing behaviors based on actual or perceived characteristics, such as sex, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, socioeconomic status, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, height, weight, marital status, expression of a mental, physical, or sensory disability or impairment, or any other distinguishing characteristic.

We strictly prohibit all forms of bullying and harassment. Examples of such behavior include, but are not limited to:

- **Verbal:** Name-calling, derogatory racial comments, gossip, taunting, insults, making threats, or intimidation.
- **Social:** Deliberate and malicious exclusion by an individual or group.
- **Material:** Theft, damage to possessions, or engaging in extortion.
- **Emotional:** Applying pressure to conform or manipulating social relationships.
- **Physical:** Hitting, kicking, pushing, pulling, impeding movement, physical assault, or any unwelcome physical contact.
- **Written:** Graffiti, text messages, websites, social networking sites, blogs, or any misuse of technology.

**Sexual harassment** is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. It becomes sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is explicitly or implicitly required as terms or conditions of a student's participation in school programs or activities.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for decisions affecting the student.
- Such conduct unreasonably interferes with a student's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile learning environment.

We also address **cyber-bullying**, which encompasses the misuse of technology, including but not limited to:

- Harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student or staff member through any technological tool.
- Sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs) that have the effect of:
  - Physically, emotionally, or mentally harming a student.
  - Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional, or mental harm.
  - Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property.
  - Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that interferes with a student's educational opportunities.

We are committed to maintaining a safe and inclusive environment for all members of our community. Any incidents of bullying, harassment, or cyber-bullying will be promptly addressed, and appropriate measures will be taken to ensure the well-being and educational experience of all individuals involved.

## Student Reporting of Bullying or Harassment

All incidents of bullying or harassment should be promptly reported to the staff or administration without any exceptions. If the incident involves physical threats or safety concerns, it must be reported to the administration immediately. We understand the importance of maintaining confidentiality during the investigation process and will make every reasonable effort to do so. However, it is essential to note that a thorough investigation may require the disclosure of names and allegations in certain circumstances.

It is the responsibility of students to report any instances of bullying or harassment to any staff member immediately. Similarly, witnesses to such incidents must notify a staff member promptly. When a bullying incident is reported, the classroom teacher or staff member involved will take immediate action to address the situation. Furthermore, appropriate follow-up actions will be undertaken as soon as possible.

## Role of the Staff in Responding to Incidences of Student Bullying or Harassment

Staff responses to incidents of bullying or harassment may include:

- Listening to the student and providing reassurance
- Offering help, advice, and support to the student
- Taking prompt action to address the situation.
- Clearly communicating that such behavior is unacceptable.
- Investigating whether the incident is part of a pattern or ongoing issue



Where appropriate, the following steps should be taken:

- Reporting the incident to the appropriate administrator for disciplinary action and/or threat assessment
- Referring the incident to the appropriate counselor for additional support and guidance

## **Consequences and Guidance Measures for Student Bullying or Harassment**

Consequences for students who engage in bullying or harassment will be determined on a case-by-case basis, with a focus on fostering behavior change, preventing future incidents, and ensuring the safety of the victims. Retaliation against individuals who report bullying or harassment is strictly prohibited. Any suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as bullying or harassment incidents. Intentional falsification of a bullying or harassment report is also prohibited and will result in appropriate consequences and guidance measures, which may include but are not limited to:

Potential Consequences:

- Reprimand
- Temporary removal from the classroom
- Denial of privileges
- Referral to the Disciplinary Action Committee
- Behavioral contract
- Classroom or administrative detention
- In-school suspension
- Conditional School Enrollment
- Referral to an outside agency
- Legal action
- Expulsion

Potential Guidance Measures:

- Student-Parent-School contracts
- Corrective instruction or relevant learning/service experiences
- Student study of anti-bullying or harassment materials
- Completion of a student self-reflection packet
- Participation in an educational support group focused on skill-building
- Development of a positive behavior support plan
- Mentoring by peers or adults
- Parent education and support

All forms of bullying, including cyberbullying, are considered unacceptable. Appropriate consequences and guidance measures will be implemented for cyberbullying incidents that disrupt the educational process and undermine the school's inclusive and safe environment.

## Hazing Policy

Hazing is defined as the act of coercing a group or individual with less perceived power, which includes initiation practices into classes, groups, teams, or organizations that may cause physical, verbal, or emotional harm. Forms of hazing can manifest in various ways, such as:

- Physical punishment or causing physical pain
- Humiliation or embarrassment
- Engaging in dangerous or illegal activities
- Activities that induce mental or psychological stress
- Confining someone against their will in a particular area

## Child Protection Policy

Child abuse and neglect are increasingly concerning issues in schools worldwide. They violate a child's human rights and hinder their education, physical well-being, emotional development, and spiritual growth.

As custodians of children, schools hold a special responsibility to ensure a safe and secure environment for their students' growth and development. Educators, who can observe and interact with children over time, are uniquely positioned to identify those in need of help and protection. Therefore, educators have a professional, legal, and ethical obligation to identify children at risk of abuse or neglect and take necessary steps to ensure that they receive the required support and services.

At Balboa Academy, all staff members are required to report any suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect if they have reasonable cause to believe that a child has been or is at risk of being harmed. Reporting and follow-up procedures will be conducted according to the administrative regulations governing this policy. Additionally, cases of suspected abuse or neglect may be reported to the appropriate employer, the respective consulate in Panama City, the relevant child protection agency in the child's home country, and/or local authorities.

Balboa Academy upholds the Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which Panama, the host country, is a signatory. The school aims to be a haven for students experiencing abuse or neglect in any aspect of their lives. This policy will be distributed annually to parents and applicants, communicated yearly to students, and ensure that staff members receive annual training. Furthermore, the school will strive to implement hiring practices that prioritize the safety of children. If a staff member is reported as an alleged offender, Balboa Academy will conduct a comprehensive investigation following a carefully designed course of due process.

It is important to define abuse and neglect clearly:

**Abuse:** Abuse definitions can vary across cultures due to differences in child-rearing practices, gender roles, and societal expectations. The primary factor in determining abuse is the existence of a relationship wherein the more powerful individual exploits the needs of the child, such as a family member, teacher, or friend. Research informs the understanding of abusive behaviors.

Abuse includes, but is not limited to:

- Causing physical injury to a child through non-accidental means, resulting in bruises, burns, disfigurement, impairment of physical or emotional health, loss or impairment of bodily functions, or death.
- Creating a substantial risk of physical harm to a child's bodily functioning.
- Committing acts that are cruel or inhumane, irrespective of observable injury. This may involve extreme disciplinary actions that disregard a child's pain and mental suffering.
- Assaulting or mistreating a child according to the criminal code or school policy.
- Engaging in actions or omissions that cause injury or pose a substantial risk to a child's physical, mental, or emotional health or development.
- Failing to take reasonable steps to prevent any of the above occurrences.

Possible indicators of physical abuse include unexplained bruises and welts, injuries of various ages and colors, injuries reflecting the shape of objects used, burns with distinctive patterns, rope burns, lacerations, abrasions, or fractures inconsistent with explanations provided by the child.

**Neglect:** Neglect refers to the failure to meet a child's basic needs within their own environment.

Neglect can manifest in various ways:

- Physical neglect, such as failing to provide necessary food, shelter, or appropriate supervision (including leaving children unsupervised for extended periods) and not ensuring proper adult guardianship.
- Medical neglect, involving a failure to provide necessary medical or mental health treatment.
- Emotional neglect, characterized by inattention to a child's emotional needs, failure to provide psychological care, or allowing the child to use alcohol or drugs. Examples may include verbal humiliation, ignoring the child's presence, invasion of privacy without.

Sexual abuse refers to any sexual offense committed against a child, as defined by the criminal code of the host country or school policy. It includes intentional touching, either directly or through clothing, of a child's genitals, anus, or breasts for reasons other than hygiene or childcare.

Sexual abuse has distinct characteristics that require special attention. Unlike physical abuse, which often stems from immediate stress, sexual abuse involves premeditation and grooming. This grooming process manipulates victims into accepting blame, responsibility, guilt, and shame for the offender's sexual behavior. Sexual abuse necessitates a higher level of secrecy, making it more difficult for victims to report.

Many victims, influenced by grooming, may perceive the sexual acts as a form of love, leading them to develop affection towards their abusers. Consequently, they may appear happy and well-adjusted, exhibiting no negative symptoms due to their distorted perception of being loved.

It is essential to note that school counselors should not engage in working with sexual offenders.

Indicators of sexual abuse include:

- Displaying sexual knowledge, behavior, or language inappropriate for their age.
- Exhibiting unusual patterns in interpersonal relationships.
- Contracting venereal diseases at any age.
- Showing signs of physical trauma or bleeding in the oral, genital, or anal areas.

- Experiencing difficulties in walking or sitting.
- Refusing to change into physical education (PE) clothes or displaying fear of using bathrooms.
- Running away from home without specific complaints.
- Expressing discomfort or avoidance of being alone with a particular individual.
- Teen pregnancy, especially at a young age.
- Overprotective parenting.

When a teacher has reasonable cause to believe that abuse or neglect has occurred, they should follow specific reporting procedures. The teacher should consult the grade level counselor within 48 hours, who will then notify the school-based response team and the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The response team consists of the building administrator, counselor, school nurse, and additional individuals as determined by the principal. All reports of abuse and neglect are treated as confidential.

After a report of suspected abuse or neglect, the school follows a series of steps:

Step 1:

- Conduct interviews with staff members and document relevant information.
- Review the child's history within the school with the assistance of school personnel.
- Report the case status to the School Director.
- Determine the appropriate course of follow-up actions.

Step 2:

- Develop a plan of action in collaboration with the Child Protection Team to support the child and their family.
- Engage in discussions with the child, utilizing techniques such as drawing pictures and playing with dolls to gather more information about the incident.
- Observe the child's behavior in the classroom.
- Arrange meetings with the family to address the school's concerns.
- Provide referrals to external professional counseling for the student and their family.

In severe cases or when external authorities are necessary, the Multi-Disciplinary Team may be involved. This can include notifying the sponsoring employer, consulting with the consulate of the involved family's country, seeking legal advice, or involving local authorities for further investigation.

If the allegations of abuse or neglect involve a staff or faculty member of Balboa Academy, the building principal will follow board policy in addressing ethical professional behavior.

Step 3:

- Maintain contact with the child and family to provide appropriate support and guidance.
- Support the child's teachers and the principal through ongoing communication.
- Provide resource materials and strategies for teachers.
- Coordinate with external therapists to ensure the child's progress in school is monitored.
- Conduct follow-up meetings between the administrator and counselor to evaluate progress and debrief.

All documentation related to the investigation will be kept in the child's confidential file. Confidential records can only be released with parental consent unless there are concerns for the ongoing safety of the child.

Most cases of suspected abuse or neglect will be handled by school counselors, addressing issues such as student relationships with peers, parenting skills, student-parent relationships, and mental health issues like depression, low self-esteem, and grief.

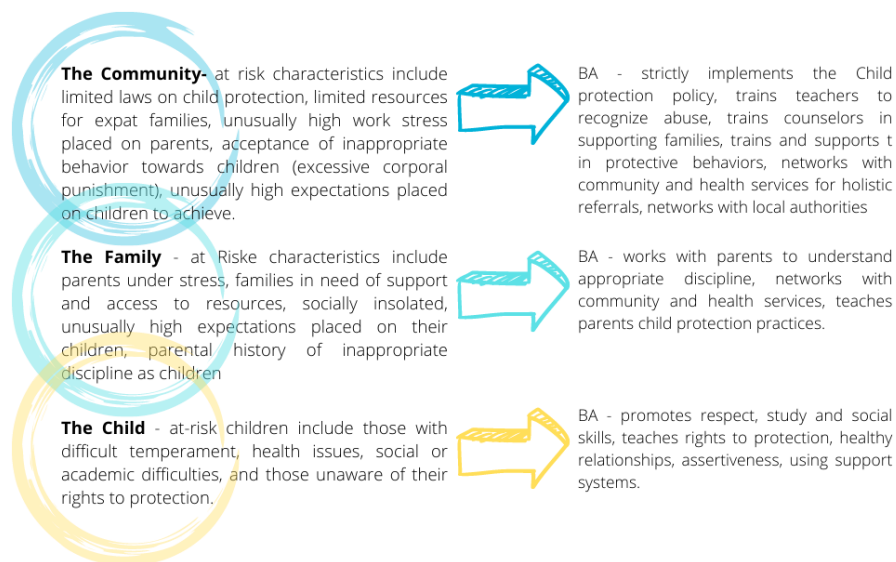
Certain cases may require referral to external resources, particularly for mental health issues such as depression, psychosis, dissociation, and suicidal ideation.

Reports involving severe and ongoing physical abuse or neglect, as well as sexual abuse and incest, will be investigated and referred to outside resources.

In extreme cases where the abuse persists or concerns for the child's safety remain, reports may be made to the consulate of the involved family's country, the sponsoring employer, or local law enforcement.

The Balboa Academy child protection policy is designed to support the child, the family, and the community.

Child abuse is a complex issue involving the child, the family, and the community. In international communities, it is important to acknowledge that child abuse occurs, that certain factors in such communities make expat children vulnerable to abuse, that international schools often lack access to support resources, and that the well-being of our students and their families is of utmost importance.



## Behavior Management Guidelines

Balboa Academy adheres to the discipline procedures outlined in the policies established by MEDUCA (Ministry of Education of Panama). In addition, the school has implemented a standardized set of rules for students in kindergarten through 4th grade. These rules serve as a clear framework that defines our behavioral expectations within the school.

### PK – 4th Grade Behavior Management Guideline

When a student violates a rule at Balboa Academy, the following steps are taken:

1. The rule that was broken is discussed privately with the student.
2. A verbal warning is issued to the student, emphasizing the importance of adhering to the rules.
3. If the misbehavior persists, the student may be relocated within the classroom to a quiet area where they can reflect on their actions. After a designated time period (not exceeding 10 minutes), the student has a private conference with the teacher to reestablish classroom expectations.
4. If the student continues to exhibit inappropriate behavior, they may be asked to complete a "Think Sheet." This sheet can be filled out in class or outside of class, as determined by the teacher's discretion.
  - a. A conference between the student and the teacher is held at the end of the period to discuss the Think Sheet.
  - b. The teacher notifies the parents on the same day, and if necessary, a Parent-Teacher conference may be scheduled to address the situation.

Certain actions warrant immediate involvement of the principal, including:

- Engaging in a physical fight.
- Causing or threatening harm to oneself or others, including the use of social media.
- Carrying dangerous items.
- Disrupting the learning environment to the extent that other students are unable to be taught.

In such cases, the teacher completes a Discipline Referral Form and submits it to the principal, who will determine the appropriate disciplinary measures to be taken. This may include school detention, or the parents may be requested to immediately come to the school to pick up their child.

### 5TH - 12TH Grade Behavior Management Guideline

Balboa Academy adheres to MEDUCA policies and internal regulations in determining consequences for student behavior, ensuring a fair and impartial process. Our school holds the following general expectations for all students:

1. Follow directions promptly when given by teachers and staff.
2. Refrain from engaging in actions that could cause harm or injury to oneself or others.
3. Avoid behaviors that disrupt the learning environment for oneself or fellow students.
4. Take responsibility for preserving and protecting school property, refraining from any actions that could cause damage or destruction.

These expectations serve as guidelines for maintaining a safe and conducive learning environment at Balboa Academy.

In the event of a serious infraction, it is mandatory for a student to be referred to the principal at Balboa Academy. These serious infractions include, but are not limited to:

- Engaging in a physical fight
- Causing harm or posing threats to oneself or others, including through the use of social media
- Carrying prohibited or dangerous items
- Engaging in acts of bullying
- Significantly disrupting the learning environment
- Displaying defiance or making threats towards members of the school community, whether verbally, in writing, or via social media
- Possessing or using tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, inhalants/vapes, lighters, matches, or any related drug paraphernalia, as well as unauthorized prescription medications, on school grounds or during any school-sponsored function.
- Violating school rules or engaging in serious misconduct during school-related activities such as field trips, athletic events, lunchtime, or cultural activities

To address these incidents appropriately, the teacher responsible will complete a Discipline Referral Form and submit it to the principal. This form ensures that the necessary details are provided for the appropriate disciplinary action to be taken. It is important to note that the referral may lead to action by the Disciplinary Action Committee (DAC), the details of which can be found in the Appendix.

At Balboa Academy, we are committed to maintaining a safe and conducive learning environment for all students. By enforcing these measures, we aim to address serious infractions effectively and uphold the well-being and welfare of our school community.

## Weapons Policy

At Balboa Academy, we have implemented a strict policy of zero tolerance regarding student possession of weapons. This policy extends to replicas of weapons, including toys, as well as any other items that can be used as weapons or pose a risk of causing harm. Examples of such items include air guns, laser pointers, matches, cap guns, water pistols, and similar objects. Students found in possession of these articles or engaging in their use will face disciplinary consequences.

Our commitment to maintaining a safe and secure learning environment necessitates that we take immediate action in response to such violations. Any student who brings such articles to school or participates in their use will be subject to disciplinary measures.

By strictly enforcing this policy, we aim to ensure the well-being and safety of all students and staff members at Balboa Academy.



## Detentions

As part of our disciplinary measures, teachers at Balboa Academy have the option to assign detention to students because of their behavior. Detention serves as additional time spent in class after regular school hours and is aimed at addressing and improving student conduct.

To ensure consistency and fairness, teachers are required to have well-defined detention protocols that align with our school's behavior policies. These protocols must be approved by the principals to ensure they meet the standards set by the school.

We value open communication with parents, and it is our policy to provide them with at least a 24-hour written notice before assigning detention to their child. This advance notice allows parents to be informed about the situation and make any necessary arrangements. We understand that exceptional circumstances may arise, and parents have the right to request a rescheduling of the detention in such cases. Additionally, parents can also discuss alternative consequences with the school if they believe it to be more appropriate or effective.

By implementing these guidelines, we aim to maintain a transparent and collaborative approach between teachers, parents, and students when it comes to addressing disciplinary issues. It ensures that all parties involved are aware of the process, have an opportunity to be heard, and work together towards the improvement of student behavior.

## In-School Suspensions

In-school suspensions at Balboa Academy are conducted exclusively on school grounds in accordance with the established procedures outlined by the Disciplinary Action Committee (DAC). It is important to note that during this time, academic performance should not be negatively impacted. The following guidelines ensure that students can continue their learning:

- Teachers are responsible for furnishing students with the necessary schoolwork and homework assignments that will be missed while they are out of the classroom.
- Teachers are required to collect and provide feedback for the completed work that students submit during their in-school suspension.
- Teachers are responsible for scheduling assessments that align with the detention period.
- Students have the right to receive grades for the assignments they complete during the in-school suspension without any penalty.

By adhering to these measures, we aim to ensure that students' academic progress is not compromised, even during disciplinary actions. It is our priority to support their educational development while also addressing behavioral concerns effectively.

## Selling Items at School

Unauthorized selling of items at school by students is strictly prohibited at Balboa Academy, unless prior approval has been obtained from the school administration.

# Inspired Education Group Parent Code of Conduct

## 1. Commitment to working with parents.

We are proud at Inspired schools to have excellent relationships, based on shared beliefs and common goals, between students, staff, and parents – this partnership is key to the success of our schools and ensuring students can continue to flourish in a positive and supportive environment.

We encourage and welcome parents' full participation in the life of our schools, as part of a mutually supportive community that embodies the ethos and values of the school, in the best interests of the students; we are committed to listening to parental feedback to support our schools in being the very best they can be - this code of conduct clarifies our expectations of this relationship.

The school's philosophy and values should be considered as being shared by all members of the community, including parents, and hence parents are expected to uphold these values in all of their interactions with the school and its community.

Every member of our community deserves to be treated with respect, dignity, and tolerance; they are also cornerstones of the Inspired philosophy. We demand it of all our students and expect all adults, including parents, to abide by these standards and set a good example in their own speech and behavior.

## 2. Communicating with school.

We understand that there will be occasions when parents and guardians wish to raise concerns or complaints – we ask parents to share these with school leadership through the appropriate channels and/or following the school's complaints policy, so these can be quickly resolved for the best interests of our students.

We expect behavior and communications between parents and school to be always respectful and mindful of the modelling of best behaviors we expect of our students, whether at school events, in person, on the telephone or online.

In the event of disagreements between school staff and parents, these should not be worked through in sight of the parent's children or, indeed, any other students in the school. We believe that when home and school can present a shared opinion or decision to children/students, this is ultimately beneficial as part of the student's learning and development process.

We expect parents to follow and uphold all procedures outlined in the school's published policies.

### **3. Behaviors and communication that are unacceptable.**

We will always do all we can to facilitate communication with parents that is consistent with the above principles in resolving the concern or the complaint, but we will not tolerate communication or behavior we consider disrespectful, abusive, or threatening.

Behaviors that we consider to be unacceptable include, but are not limited to:

- Communication or behavior that is disrespectful, offensive, aggressive, abusive, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, or otherwise considered unacceptable, whether this is at school events, in person, on the telephone, by email or on social media.
- Behavior or communications that breach school policies, safety, or procedures.
- Disruptive behavior including offensive language or displays of anger which interferes or threatens to interfere with the normal, daily operation of the school.
- Inappropriate posting of libelous, defamatory, malicious or threatening messages on emails and on traditional and social media about the school or individuals connected with it, including creating or joining private groups or chats that victimize or harass an individual connected with the school or the school in general, or potentially damage the school's reputation.

### **4. Consequences of breaching parent code of conduct.**

Where behaviors are displayed by parents that breach the parent code of conduct, the school will attempt to facilitate more effective lines of communication, investigate, and seek to resolve these issues.

Where that is not possible, the school reserves the right to take any actions to ensure that members of the school community are not subject to abuse. Actions the school can take are, but not limited to include:

- request for a meeting to resolve the issue.
- issue a warning regarding the behavior and how that breaches this code.
- withdraw the right to be on school premises or at school events.
- give notice to parents to that the enrolment contract with their child/ren has been rescinded and an alternative school will need to be found.

## Appendix

### 1. Five Core Competencies in WE ACT RIGHT

W = Worldview

Worldview represents a comprehensive perspective that is shaped by a deep understanding of current global issues and a recognition of individual responsibility at the local, national, and international levels as a global citizen. Learner Understandings:

- The increasingly interconnected nature of our world introduces new complexities, realities, responsibilities, and opportunities.
- Everyone carries a responsibility as a global citizen in addressing the 20 Global Issues.
- The preservation of cultural diversity is essential, as all cultures hold value.
- Collaboration plays a vital role in finding solutions to global problems.
- Globalization yields both positive and negative impacts.
- There is a common thread that unites all human beings.

E = Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence refers to the capacity to perceive oneself and others as unique and valuable contributors to the world. It encompasses five domains: self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, empathy, and assisting others in managing their emotions. Learner Understandings:

- Internal motivation and self-direction are crucial for personal growth.
- Empathy and respect for others are fundamental values.
- Everyone holds the responsibility of self-care and caring for others.
- Developing self-discipline, self-assessment, and effective social skills is essential.
- Embracing self-awareness and self-acceptance is key.
- Self-expression plays a significant role in nurturing emotional intelligence.
- Respect manifests along a continuum, ranging from adapting behavior to valuing differences, accepting other viewpoints, and practicing tolerance.
- One's level of emotional intelligence directly impacts the quality of relationships.
- Insufficient emotional intelligence can lead to social and personal challenges.

A = Academics in balance

Academics in balance encompass project-based learning experiences that foster the development of multiple intelligences, shaping lifelong learners who are inquisitive, knowledgeable, and compassionate individuals striving to make the world a better place. Learner Understandings:

- Personal success and the ability to contribute positively to society require a broad range of knowledge and skills.
- Knowledge and skills can be acquired through diverse approaches.
- Differentiated learning accommodates various learning styles and needs.

- The human mind encompasses a combination of intelligences.
- Education is an ongoing, lifelong journey.

#### C = Creativity

Creativity represents a mindset characterized by a willingness to generate new ideas, possibilities, and outcomes. It encompasses various dimensions, from cognitive to aesthetic. Learner Understandings:

- Nurturing creativity involves asking novel questions and generating innovative ideas applicable to different situations and challenges.
- Every individual possesses the potential for creativity.
- The environment significantly influences creativity.
- Creative abilities may vary across different domains.
- Self-assessment and self-motivation are essential for fostering creativity in all aspects of education.
- Creativity manifests as applied imagination, leading to the creation or realization of something new.
- Creativity takes diverse forms, including abilities, attitudes, and processes.

#### T = Technology

Technology serves as a tool that empowers individual learners to enhance and facilitate their educational journey. Learner Understandings:

- Technology expands our communication capabilities through a wide range of media.
- Technology enables efficient access, storage, and utilization of information.
- Technology supports self-directed and differentiated learning.
- Technology should complement human intelligence rather than replace it.

## 2. Bus Contract and Bus Behavior Report

Balboa Academy

### INFORME DE COMPORTAMIENTO EN EL AUTOBUS COLEGIAL

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Bus #: \_\_\_\_\_ (circle school) PK ES MS HS Grado \_\_\_\_\_

Problema(s):

	Desabrochando o no usando cinturón de seguridad
	Comiendo en el autobús
	Poniendo los pies en los asientos o respaldares de los asientos
	Lanzando objetos
	Usando lenguaje inapropiado o haciendo gestos inapropiados
	No querer seguir instrucciones del conductor o monitor(a)
	De pie o moviéndose mientras el autobús esté en movimiento
	Cabeza, brazo, mano o otra parte afuera de ventana
	Poniendo en peligro la seguridad de si mismo u otros
	Daños al autobús
	Daños a la propiedad privada de los demás
	Falta de zapatos o ropa seca
	Usando el servicio escolar del after school cuando no participan en una actividad escolar
	Otros:

Nombre de monitor(a) o conductor \_\_\_\_\_

Todos los informes deben presentarse a la oficina principal, ser grabados en el sistema Admin + y se le darán al edificio apropiado para consecuencias y remedios.

Balboa Academy responderá al informe de comportamiento en el autobús en un período de 24 horas y compartirá una copia de la respuesta con Alexis Escudero de Tranes S.A.

Nivel de gravedad	Respuesta sugerida (pero no limitado/a)	Comentarios y firma
1 <sup>er</sup> informe de comportamiento en el autobús	Reunión con un maestro de Balboa o alguien de la administración	
2do informe	Notificación a padres y posibles consecuencias de parte de la escuela	
3er informe	Pérdida de privilegios de autobús	
Informes adicionales	Suspensión del uso del autobús si es necesario	
Intimidación o acoso	Por nuestro manual para padres-estudiantes, cualquier intimidación o acoso se tratarán con firmeza sobre una base individual	

## Balboa Academy

### BUS BEHAVIOR REPORT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Bus #: \_\_\_\_\_ (circle school) PK ES MS HS Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Problem(s):

	Not using or unbuckling seatbelt
	Unauthorized eating on bus
	Putting feet on seats or seatbacks
	Throwing objects
	Using inappropriate language or making inappropriate gestures
	Refusal to follow instructions given by the driver or <i>monitor</i>
	Standing or moving around while the bus is in motion
	Head, arm, hand, or other body part out of the window
	Endangering safety of self or others
	Damaging bus
	Damaging private property of others
	Lack of dry clothing or shoes
	Using after school bus service when not participating in an established after school activity
	Other: _____

Monitor's or Driver's Name/Nombre de monitor(a) o conductor \_\_\_\_\_

All reports should be filed with main office, recorded in Admin+ then given to the appropriate building for consequences and remediation.

Balboa Academy will respond to a Bus Behavior Report in a period of 24 hours and share a copy of the response with Alexis Escudero, Tranes S.A.

Level of severity	Suggested response (but not limited to)	Comments and signature
1 <sup>st</sup> Bus Behavior Report	Conference with Balboa teacher or administration	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Report	Parent notification and possible school consequences	
3 <sup>rd</sup> Report	Loss of bus privileges	
Additional reports	Suspension from bus if necessary	
Bullying or harassment	Per our Parent-Student Handbook, any bullying or harassment will be dealt with firmly on an individual basis	



### 3. Permission Form for Medications



#### Permission for Medication

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician: \_\_\_\_\_ Physician Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Medication and Usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Duration of the Treatment: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of the Day Medication is to be given: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Medications Taken: \_\_\_\_\_

Possible Side Effects: \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated Number of Days to be given at School: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Physician's Signature

I hereby give my permission for the School Nurse to administer the above prescribed medication to my child. I understand it is in my responsibility to furnish this medication

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

## 4. Home Plan B

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Homeroom Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

All families should have an action plan in the case of emergency, unexpected early release from school, or unexpected delay for parents. It is imperative that children and parents sit down, discuss, and outline a “Plan B” *just in case*.

**Please return a copy of this to the homeroom teacher and keep a copy for your family records.**

**1. Children should always be able to explain the location of their home**

My house is located in the area of \_\_\_\_\_ near to \_\_\_\_\_.

My building/street name is \_\_\_\_\_

and my apartment number/ house number: \_\_\_\_\_.

**2. Children should always know who to call**

Order	Who I call:	Relationship to me	Cell #	Work #	Home #
1st		Father / Mother			
Email					
2nd		Father / Mother			
Email					
3rd					
4th					

Children always need a Plan B *Just in Case*... “If I get to my house and no one is home, I will go to”

Name	House #	Cell #	Home phone #

## 5. Parent-Student Athlete Contract

### Parent/Student-Athlete Contract

Purpose: Balboa Academy recognizes that student-athletes selected to be part of a competitive team or squad should uphold their responsibilities as representatives of the school. It is expected that team members adhere to the Parent/Student-Athlete Contract, failure to comply may result in disciplinary measures. All parents and student-athletes are required to sign this contract, which outlines the "code of conduct" and expectations for both parties.

#### Parent Code of Conduct:

1. I will show respect towards the coaching staff and their decisions, acknowledging the competitive nature of the sport.
2. I will refrain from entering the court/field of play during games, scrimmages, or practices unless instructed to do so by the coach.
3. I will not engage in verbal or physical abuse, confrontations, taunting, harassment, or demeaning behavior towards coaches, student-athletes, opposing student-athletes or coaches, or referees at any time.
4. I understand that parents are not permitted to coach their child or other student-athletes from the sideline or any other location during scrimmages, practices, or games.
5. I will follow the established "chain of command" for filing a complaint: a. Players will first communicate their concerns directly with their coach. b. If the player-coach discussion does not resolve the issue, a meeting involving the parents, player, and coach will be scheduled. c. If necessary, the Athletic Director will hold a meeting with all parties involved to find a resolution.
6. I will not conspire with other parents to undermine the authority of any coach, the program, or the club.
7. I will make every effort to ensure my child can attend all practices, games, tournaments, and team functions.
8. I will provide support to my child and their team to the best of my ability.
9. By signing this contract, I acknowledge my commitment to fulfill all financial obligations and pay all required fees.

#### Student-Athlete Code of Conduct:

1. I recognize that my academic responsibilities take precedence, and I must maintain passing grades to remain eligible for participation in sports. a. I understand that if I earn 2 "D's" or 1 "F," I will not be allowed to practice or compete in official games until my grades improve. b. This process may take a week or longer.
2. If I am removed from or voluntarily leave a competitive team without the coach's approval, I understand that there will be a probationary period during which I will not be able to join another team for the remainder of the season.
3. I acknowledge that smoking, vaping, using alcohol, drugs, or steroids are strictly prohibited. Any violation of this policy will result in immediate suspension from the team and possible expulsion, in addition to any disciplinary actions imposed by Balboa Academy's administration.
4. I understand that unexcused absences from scheduled or rescheduled athletic contests are not acceptable, including during school vacations. The first unexcused absence will result in a warning, while a second unexcused absence will lead to a loss of playing time, as determined by the coaches. Individual coaches may have additional regulations, and I will accept the penalties imposed by the coach.

5. I am aware that missing practices will result in a reduction of playing time at the coaches' discretion. The more practices I miss, the less I will play on game day.
6. I will demonstrate good sportsmanship towards other teams, teammates, coaches, parents, and officials at all times.
7. As a visible representative of Balboa Academy, I understand that I must uphold the school's ethics and values both on and off the field.
8. I am responsible for taking care of the uniform and equipment provided to me.
9. I am responsible for all school supplies and personal items (e.g., phones, laptops) brought to practices or games.
10. While participation in extracurricular activities is encouraged, if conflicts arise due to involvement in multiple activities, competitive team sports take priority. Being selected to represent the school in a competitive capacity means that my teammates rely on me.
11. Hazing, bullying, or any other form of initiation ritual is strictly prohibited and may result in immediate suspension from the team.
12. Student-athletes are required to participate in at least one fundraiser and/or one clinic/camp related to their respective sports.



**Balboa Academy**

**Parent/Student-Athlete Contract**

I have read, completely understand, and agree fully to abide by the Code of Conduct set forth by the Parent/Student-Athlete Contract.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Student's Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student's Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Parent's Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent's Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Coach's Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Coach's Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Competitive Team Sport)

***\*\*\*Please keep the Code of Conducts page for your reference. Return ONLY this page.***

## 6. Responsible Computer, Network and Internet Use Policy

### Responsible Use of Computer, Network, and Internet Policy

#### Introduction:

Balboa Academy recognizes the importance of technology and the internet for educational purposes. We aim to provide a safe and responsible environment for students to use computers and access information online. This policy outlines the guidelines and expectations for responsible use of technology resources by students, teachers, and staff. It is essential for parents to review this policy with their children as it also applies to home computer usage.

#### Digital Citizenship:

Digital Citizenship encompasses four main principles:

1. Self-Respect: Users will choose appropriate online names, exercise caution in sharing personal information, and respect privacy.
2. Respect for Others: Users will not engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or any form of online abuse towards others.
3. Protection of Self and Others: Users will report abuse and refrain from sharing or forwarding inappropriate content.
4. Respect and Protect Intellectual Property: Users will acknowledge and cite any use of external sources.

#### Expectations:

The responsible use of technology resources at Balboa Academy is expected to be ethical, respectful, academically honest, and aligned with the school's mission. Every user must show respect towards others, both within the school community and on the internet. Electronic devices and digital storage used for school purposes should be treated as extensions of the physical school space.

#### Prohibited Activities:

While using Balboa Academy's technology resources, the following activities are strictly prohibited:

1. Sharing, accessing, or creating defamatory, inaccurate, offensive, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually-oriented, or threatening materials or messages.
2. Engaging in illegal, harassing, vandalizing, inappropriate, or obscene activities or supporting such actions.
3. Use of the computer system for illegal activities, dissemination of pornographic or discriminatory material, or engaging in discriminatory or harassing conduct.
4. Using computing resources for commercial purposes, product advertisements, or religious or political lobbying.
5. Users are personally and financially responsible for any intentional damage caused to the network software, data, user accounts, hardware, or any unauthorized costs incurred.
6. All files stored on the school's network may be inspected at any time and should not be considered private.

7. Materials published electronically must be for educational purposes and may be monitored by school administrators, teachers, and staff to ensure compliance with content standards.

#### Use of Personal Telecommunication Devices:

Balboa Academy allows students to bring personal telecommunication devices (PTDs) for educational purposes within specific guidelines:

- High School and Middle School students may bring PTDs that can access the Internet as determined by the classroom teacher. Proper digital responsibility is expected during device usage between classes and in designated areas.
- Elementary School students in grades 2-5 may bring PTDs for academic classroom use as determined by the classroom teacher.

#### Policy Violations:

Balboa Academy reserves the right to refuse internet access to anyone. Violating any part of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including temporary or permanent bans on computer or internet use, suspension, or dismissal from school.

Please retain the attached information for your reference and return this sheet. Failure to do so may result in denial of computer use and internet access.

**\*\* By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and accept Balboa Academy's Responsible Use Policy. I understand that any violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary consequences.**

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Print Student Name Grade

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Student Signature Date

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Parent/Guardian Signature Date



## 7. Disciplinary Action Committee( a multi-disciplinary team that is referred to as the DAC)

At Balboa Academy, we adhere to the policies and regulations set by MEDUCA (Ministry of Education of Panama) when determining consequences for misbehavior. Our Disciplinary Action Committee (DAC), consisting of a multi-disciplinary team, is responsible for handling cases that may warrant suspension or expulsion.

Before imposing a sanction of suspension or expulsion, a fair and procedural hearing is conducted following these guidelines:

1. **Written Notification:** The school will provide written notification to the student and their guardian, clearly stating the infraction(s) committed.
2. **Right to Representation:** The student has the right to choose whether or not to testify during the hearing. If they opt not to testify, their representative or guardian may be present. However, the student may choose to provide a written statement to clarify the incident(s) leading to the infraction, if desired.
3. **Notice of Hearing:** The student must receive a written notice specifying the date and time of the hearing. This allows them to attend the hearing with their representative or guardian.
4. **Designated Advocate:** In situations where the student's guardian cannot attend the hearing, the school's director or principal may appoint a teacher or counselor to act as the student's advocate.

At Balboa Academy, we ensure that disciplinary proceedings are conducted in a fair and transparent manner, respecting the rights of the student, and providing opportunities for their perspective to be heard.

## Searches and Drug Testing

Balboa Academy maintains the right to conduct searches of students and their belongings on a reasonable basis. Such searches are warranted when a student's behavior raises suspicion of an offense. To ensure the privacy and dignity of the student, all searches will be conducted by two adults of the same sex as the child.

Administrators or teachers, under the guidance of the building principal, are authorized to search the following items:

- Book bags or any items used for carrying or holding materials.
- Purses and wallets.
- Shirts and trousers.
- Pockets.
- Shoes and socks.

Additionally, if there is a reasonable basis, the student's guardian may be requested to provide their child's blood and/or urine samples for analysis to determine the presence of drugs, narcotic substances, or psychotropic substances. The guardian will be given a period of five (5) days to arrange for the requested examination. In cases where the student and their guardian are unable to cover the cost of the exams, the school will assume the expenses and provide information regarding the laboratory where the examination will take place.

We emphasize that all searches and examinations are carried out with the utmost care and respect for the student's rights, privacy, and well-being. Our goal is to maintain a safe and secure environment for all members of the Balboa Academy community.