



American School Macedonia

Accredited by AdvancED

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15th August, 2017

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome back! The American School Macedonia staff is excited to begin another year with our dedicated and caring parents, students and community. We look forward to working with you in preparing our students for the future.

This document contains important information to both new and returning families so please do read it through carefully.

The **first day of the academic year 2017/18 is Friday 1st September**. This day will be an induction day whereby students and parents will come to the school to meet and speak with their child's teacher(s), meet other parents and students from their child's grade and receive information about the forthcoming year. The schedule for the first day's meetings is as follows:

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Kindergarten | 08.30am – 09.30am |
| First Grade | 08.30am – 09.30am |
| Second Grade | 08.30am – 09.30am |
| Third Grade | 08.30am – 09.30am |
| Fourth Grade | 08.30am – 09.30am |
| Fifth Grade | 08.30am – 09.30am |
| Sixth Grade | 08.30am – 09.30am |
| Seventh Grade | 10.00am – 11.00am |
| Eighth Grade | 10.00am – 11.00am |

For **High School grades (9, 10, 11 & 12)** the first day procedure is a little different. For **new students**, we ask that parents and students come to the school for a brief presentation about school procedure from 12.00pm. Welcome Packs containing all relevant information will be handed out at this time.

For **returning students**, we ask that parents come to school anytime from 2.00pm to 4.00pm to collect the school Welcome Pack. There will be no presentation for returning students.

On the first day of school, Friday 1st September, you will be given a Welcome Pack which contains an Application Form, amongst other things. This must be completed and returned to the school office by Monday 4th September, together with a copy of your child's passport.

Schedule for the first few days of school

Monday 4th September - The first full day of school for all students.

Tuesday 5th September – School will work until 12.30pm this day (grades K through 8) and we kindly ask parents to collect their children from school at this time. High School students (grades 9 through 12) will have regular afternoon classes.

Wednesday 6th September – Full school day for all students.

Thursday 7th September – Students will have classes until 12.30pm. From 1.00pm to 2.45pm there will be a Welcome Party in the school for all students and parents. There will be music, and food and drink available. We kindly ask that families bring a dish of their favorite food to the party, too.

Friday 8th September – Non-school day – Macedonian Independence Day.

Please find on page 3 of this letter the **School's Purpose** and its **Vision, Mission and Belief Statement**. Please do read these through carefully – the school holds great stock in these points and it is important that all members of the school community are familiar with and agree with these points. The American School Macedonia **school uniform** needs to be worn by all students in grades 1 through 12. Uniforms are available from the school office in two colors – blue and white. The complete pack of 2 polo shirts, one long-sleeved jumper is available from the school office at 1,500 MKDEN per pack. Student not wearing the school uniform will be sent home.

All **letters** from the school to parents are sent electronically. As such, please make sure that you give the school an e-mail address you use and check regularly when completing the application form.

You will be able to find a lot of up-to-date information about the school on our **website**, www.asm.edu.mk, so please be sure to bookmark our page and check the site from time to time. We also have a **Facebook** page, so be sure to follow us!

Parents will have access to our electronic roll-book, **SchoolTool**. This will enable parents to see their child's daily grades in each subject, their absences and tardies, see the title of each lesson taught and see assigned homework assignments and tests/quizzes. Further information regarding SchoolTool and how to access it will be sent to you shortly.

We have introduced **Bring Your Own Device (B.Y.O.D)** this year for grades 6 through 12. Detailed information regarding B.Y.O.D can be found in a separate document.

ASM administers **MAP testing** to students (Grade 1 through 11) in the school twice a year, with the first MAP testing session being mid-September.

Parents interested in involving themselves in the school through the **Parent-Teacher Association** should notify the the school principal.

Physical Education classes (Grade 1 through 8) begin on Tuesday 12th September. High School (grades 9 through 12) P.E. classes begin on Friday 15th September.

Should you have any questions regarding the information herein then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jason Brown
Principal

American School Macedonia

Purpose and our Vision, Mission and Belief

School Purpose

The purpose of the school is to provide a full-time educational program for any child (regardless of race, color, creed or religion) and 'American System Type' education with instruction in the English language. The goal is for the school to function as an educational institution for children in grades PreK – 12.

School Vision

ASM will be an indispensable contributor to the prosperity of Skopje and Macedonia, by providing school education in the English language for the eligible local and international population of the area. We aim to increase understanding, respect and cooperation between cultures and actions by educating young people to become active, responsible and compassionate members of the world community.

School Mission

As an academic institution, we actively encourage our students to embrace learning to the fullest extent and their individual talents. We aim to produce life long learners who will go on to become knowledgeable individuals, responsible and productive citizens, effective communicators and critical thinkers. Only with a wide range of skills and a mature attitude to learning are students ready for the world of tomorrow.

School Belief

- To provide students with a balanced curriculum;
- To provide students with a nurturing environment that is responsive to their educational needs, interests and abilities;
- To improve student educational achievement;
- To provide students guidance and experience with regards to their affective domain including, but not limited to, interests, tastes, appreciations, ideals and attributes.

General Schedule

The school day is divided into six teaching periods, each of forty-five minute duration.

The school day begins promptly at 9.00am and students are expected to arrive at least ten minutes prior to the start of the first class.

We kindly ask that parents/guardians **do not enter the classroom with their child once the class has begun**. Likewise, at the end of the school day we ask that parents wait in the school foyer for their child to be brought down from their class by the teacher at the end of the school day. If you wish to discuss a matter with your child's teacher we ask that you call the school office to make an appointment to do so.

Between each period there is a five-minute gap. This is not to be regarded as break time but preparation time for the next class. There is a twenty-minute mid-morning break after the second period where students may have a snack and a drink if they so wish. Lunch is after the fourth period and is forty minutes in length.

The school day ends at 2.45pm, and students are expected to leave their classes in a quiet and orderly fashion once dismissed by their teacher.

Students will be expected to **sign in on arrival at school and sign out on leaving school at the end of the day**. Students arriving after 9.00am will be sent to the office for a tardy slip.

School Schedule

| | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 8:45 - 09:00 | Arrival at school |
| 9:00 - 09:45 | Period 1 |
| 9:50 - 10:35 | Period 2 |
| 10:35 - 10:55 | Break |
| 10:55 - 11:40 | Period 3 |
| 11:45 - 12:30 | Period 4 |
| 12:30 - 1:10 | Lunch |
| 1:10 - 1:55 | Period 5 |
| 2:00 - 2:45 | Period 6 |
| 2:45 - 3:00 | Collection from school |
| 3:00 – 3:45 | After School Classes |

Student Planners and Weekly Letters

Each student from **Grades 1 through 6** will receive a **Student Planner** at the start of the academic year. The Student Planner allows students to write down, in diary form, what homework they have for each subject each day. Once the homework is written in the Student Planner, the teacher will put his/her signature next to the work.

It is vital that students bring the Student Planner to school each day and that parents also keep a check on the homework set and make sure that students complete all homework as appropriate.

Student Planners will be issued the first week of the school year. The first **Weekly Letters** will not be issued until Friday 15th September.

Grades K through **5** will receive a **Weekly Letter** from their home teacher. This will be e-mailed to parents, and will detail the class work of that week as well as information regarding upcoming tests, quizzes and alike.

Parents from grades 1 through 12 are able to follow their child's work/attendance/behavior through SchoolTool.

Supplies/Materials/Text Books

On the first day of school (Friday 1st September) each of your child's teachers will give you a **supply list** for each subject, listing required supplies/materials that students need to bring with them to class. Please make sure that your child has these supplies and brings them with him/her to the appropriate class.

Text Books are issued on-loan to students at the school. They will be issued by the teacher of each specific class and issuance of text books will take place during the first and second week of the school year.

Discipline Guide

The following activities will generally result in an incident report being filed with the Principal with suspension from school by the Principal for a variable period of time should the activity be repeated:

- Harassing or demeaning any student or member of school staff.
- Repeated failure to adhere to classroom rules as laid down by any member of the teaching staff.
- Causing damage to school or private property.
- Vandalism and graffiti.
- Throwing or dropping any object from an elevated site or position.
- Fighting in school.
- Persistent tardiness (*for further details see Tardy section*).
- Possessing fireworks at school.
- Engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity at school.

The following actions will generally result in expulsion by the principal:

- Physically injuring another person.
- Possessing or using a knife or firearm.
- Robbery or extortion.
- Possessing, selling or using alcohol and drugs or drug paraphernalia.
- Failure to obey the terms of warnings, counseling, detention or suspension.
- Three suspensions, for any reason, will result in immediate expulsion from the school.

General Attire and Appearance

American School Macedonia asks that all students in grades one through twelve wear the ASM uniform. Wearing the school uniform is mandatory and students not wearing the uniform will be sent home.

Students may wear their own shorts/trousers/jeans/skirts, etc and comfortable/appropriate footwear.

In the event that a student is waiting to receive an ordered school uniform, that student may wear clothing of their choice, that is appropriate for school.

Physical Education Dress Code. Appropriate sneakers for use ONLY at P.E., sport's shorts and an ASM T-shirt. The school will provide students with one T-shirt (for new students to the school) for P.E. and they are expected to wear this for all P.E. classes. Should parents wish to purchase extra shirts, they may do so from the school office for 200MKDEN.

In the event that a student is waiting to receive an ordered P.E. shirt, that student may wear clothing of their choice, that is appropriate for school P.E. classes.

We expect all students to attend school in a clean, well-groomed fashion. Likewise, **Boys** are expected to be clean-shaven, with short hair, not dyed, and are not to have any piercing or tattoos. **Girls** are expected to appear with no make-up and are permitted to have only one piercing per ear, no nose piercing and no tattoos.

Mobile Telephones (please read carefully)

Mobile phones are **NOT** permitted in the school for all students in grades k through 5. With the introduction of B.Y.O.D in grades 6 through 12, mobile phones will be permitted but must be turned off and given to the teacher at the start of each class. Phones may be collected at the end of each class. Parents need to be aware that they may not be used within the school premises and that if the phone is lost or damaged whilst in school, the student alone takes full responsibility for the loss/damage.

Attendance Policy and Procedures

Leaving Early

- When leaving early, or for a portion of the day, the parent must first inform the school office **before** the beginning of the school day.
- All students must sign out if leaving the school before the final bell.

Absent or Late

- It is the parent's responsibility to notify the office (3063-265) to report that the student is absent or late.

If a student has been absent from school, they must follow this procedure before going to class:

- On the first day back after an absence, go to the school office to ask for an 'Absence Slip'. This must be shown to each of the student's teachers.

POLICY:

Students who are consistently present and on time do the best in school. Students are to attend every scheduled class, on time, each day unless there is a legitimate reason for an absence. The school day begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 2:45 p.m.

American School Macedonia uses a system of three types of absence in school roll-books, and in all school report cards:

Type 1 – Absent due to health reasons (a cold, a dentist's appointment, etc.). Parents need to inform the school office of this type of absence, and should the student be absent from school for more than three consecutive days, a doctor's note will be required.

Type 2 – Absent due to reasons other than health. Parents need to inform the school office of this type of absence.

Type 3 – Unexcused absence. When a student is absent from school without a legitimate reason and when parents have not contacted the school regarding this matter.

It is the students' responsibility to gather any assignments they will be missing in the event of absence from school.

Tardy

Being late for class has serious implications for students including:

- Missing part of the academics of their class.
- Requiring special attention from teachers that cuts into class time and hinders the speed and progress of the class as a whole.
- Behavior problems – Tardiness is undesirable in school and later in the workplace.

Attendance problems correlate directly to achievement and as such we feel that it is imperative that students are prompt and ready for each and every class. As such the school has certain measures in place which aim to prevent persistent tardiness:

- For elementary students in Grades 1 - 8, continual tardiness will result in parental contact.
- For High School students, **six tardy slips** in **one semester** will result in a day **suspension**, that day being the first school day after the sixth tardy was given.

Homework

The homework assigned is directly related to classroom instruction and provides an opportunity to either reinforce understanding and skills taught in the classroom, or to independently and appropriately prepare subsequent classroom activities. We believe homework helps students take responsibility for their own learning. It provides an opportunity outside the classroom to develop constructive study habits. Homework also provides an opportunity to reinforce basic skills.

The actual time required for assignments may vary with the study habits, skills of individual student and course load. Students are encouraged to pursue non-assigned leisure reading at all grade levels as well. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher if they observe either excessive or insufficient time being spent on homework or if they have questions concerning the appropriateness of specific homework assignments.

The following information is to be used as a **guideline**:

- 1. Kindergarten** students are not required to have daily homework; however, kindergarten teachers shall provide approximately **10 minutes** of daily homework. This will help students establish a study routine and reinforce concepts and skills being taught in the classroom.
- 2. First graders** shall be responsible for school related homework activities designed to be completed in no more than **25 minutes** per school day.
- 3. Second graders** shall be responsible for school related homework activities designed to be completed in no more than **35 minutes** per school day. Additional independent reading is also assigned.
- 4. Third graders** shall be responsible for school related homework activities designed to be completed in no more than **40-50 minutes** per school day. Additional independent reading is also assigned.
- 5. Fourth graders** shall be responsible for school related homework activities designed to be completed in no more than **50-60 minutes** per school day. Additional independent reading is also assigned.
- 6. Fifth graders** shall be responsible for school related homework activities designed to be completed in no more than **60-70 minutes** per school day. Additional independent reading is also assigned.
- 7. Sixth graders** shall be responsible for school related homework activities designed to be completed in no more than **60-90 minutes** per school day. This time also includes self-review, self-preparation, self-reflection, study, memorization, and independent projects. Additional independent reading is also assigned.
- 8. Seventh graders** shall be responsible for **8-10 weekly** hours of school-related homework activities (based on an average of approximately 20 minutes per subject per day). This time also includes self-review, self-preparation, self-reflection, study, memorization, and independent projects. Additional independent reading is also assigned.
- 9. Eight graders** shall be responsible for **8-14 weekly** hours of school-related homework activities (based on an average of approximately 25 minutes per subject per day). This time also includes self-review, self-preparation, self-

reflection, study, memorization, and independent projects. Additional independent reading is also assigned.

10. **Ninth through twelfth graders** shall be responsible for **12-20 weekly** hours of school-related homework activities. This time also includes self-review, self-preparation, self-reflection, study, memorization, and independent projects. Additional independent reading is also assigned.

ASM always encourages good communication between teachers, students, parents and administrative staff. The school must work together with parents to ensure that we keep our standard high in order to ensure that our children get the quality education they deserve.

Policies on Homework and Tests

- Any work missed while your child is absent may be made up once they return to school. If you know of the absence ahead of time, they may get their assignments beforehand. Please let your child's teacher and the school office know in advance.
- Consistently missed homework will result in the school contacting the parents.
- Plagiarism is severely frowned upon at ASM. Work submitted by a student which is considered plagiarized will automatically receive a zero grade.
- Cheating on tests is a serious offense at ASM. It will always result in school contacting the parent. The tests or assignment will not be graded, and if the behavior fails to improve, the student may be suspended.
- As a general guideline, make-up tests or work for extra credit may be assigned by the teacher only due to illness or legitimate absence, not to improve a poor mark. Teachers have no responsibility to provide make-up tests without legitimate reasons.

Grading System

1. This school uses only a grading system based on a letter system along with a percentile;

A=90-100, B=89-80, C=79-70, D=69-60 and below 60 is an F or fail.

For cooperation and behavior, we use another system with letter grades:

E=Excellent, VG=Very good, S=Satisfactory, N=Needs improvement, U=Unsatisfactory

2. In order for this system to work it is mandatory there must be at least two grades assigned per week noted in the roll book for each student. There should be also a regular test at the end of each chapter of the book, as well as end-semester tests.

3. For the 10 and 20 week report cards, before a grade can be assigned to any student, the total points to be considered as maximum (100%) up to that point must be totaled.

Advance Placement Courses (High School)

More and more universities require Advanced Placement (AP) as entry to their courses. American School Macedonia is pleased to announce that our syllabi for a selection of high school courses have been designated AP status.

Advanced Placement courses offer students the opportunity to earn college credit by taking rigorous courses in high school. Students who demonstrate mastery of the material on a standardized end-of-course exam - a score of 3 or higher out of 5 – may be eligible for college credit for the course.

Research suggests that students who complete AP coursework are:

- Better prepared for college-level work
- Stand-outs in the college admissions process
- More likely to continue beyond their freshman year in college
- More likely to graduate within 4-5 years
- More competitive in qualifying for scholarships

With AP, students can get a feel for the rigors of college level studies while they still have the support of a high school environment. When students take AP courses, they demonstrate to college admission officers that they have sought out an educational experience that will prepare them for success in college and beyond.

Performing well on an AP Exam means more than just the successful completion of a course. Research consistently shows that students who score a 3 or higher typically earn higher GPAs in college and have higher graduation rates.

Students who are interested in AP and in taking AP designated courses should speak with the school principal for further information about courses available, costs and schedules.

Report Cards

Parent/Teacher meetings are held every ten weeks and are a good opportunity for the parents and teachers to discuss the progress of the child. Prior to the meeting the parents are given a copy of their child's Report Card. On it parents may find the student's grade for each subject and a comment by your child's teacher

This procedure will take place on the following dates and days:

Friday 03rd November

Friday 26th January

Thursday 29th March

Friday 15th June

Please note that the above dates are non-teaching days (*with the exception of Kindergarten*).

Physical Education Classes

Physical Education classes are to be held in the **Boris Trajkovski Sports Sala** (www.salaboristrajkovski.gov.mk), on **Tuesdays** and **Thursdays**, beginning on **Tuesday 12th September (Elementary School) & Friday 15th September (High School)**.

Students will be taken to Boris Trajkovski Sports Sala by bus on both Tuesdays and Thursdays with physical education classes ending at 2.30pm, with parent collection being required from 2.45pm. Elementary grade students must be collected from Boris Trajkovski Sports Sala by a parent/guardian. High School students may leave the facility unaccompanied.

Physical Education Dress Code

- Appropriate sneakers for use ONLY at P.E.;
- Sport's shorts;
- ASM Physical Education (orange) T-shirt.

Issuing of School Books

The school provides all students with textbooks. Their teacher(s) will give students their books during the first and second week of the school year. Books will only be issued to students who have paid the first semester tuition payment. It is the student's responsibility to look after the book throughout the academic year. All school textbooks are to be returned to the teacher who issued them at the end of the academic year. Damaged or lost books will require that the student pay 50 euros (per book) to the school.

After School Activities

The after school activities we would like to offer our students this year are:

- **Art**
- **French Language Classes**
- **German Language Classes**
- **English Cambridge Examination Classes (PET, FCE, CAE & CPE).**
- **Advanced Placement Exam Preparation Classes**
- **Music**
- **Swimming**
- **Chinese Language Classes**
- **Arabic Language Classes**
- **Yoga for Kids**
- **English Classes for Parents**

If you are interested in any of the above classes, please contact the school office. **These classes will begin on or after the 15th September.**

If there is an activity you would like your child to take part in but it is not mentioned in the above list, please let us know and we shall see what we can do.

How to Reach Us

It is our goal to meet the educational needs of your child. You can contact us by phone at school on **3063-265**.

If you would like to discuss a particular matter with the principal or any of the teaching staff we kindly ask that you call to make an appointment *prior* to visiting the school.