



ALTAMIRA
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

TEACHER HANDBOOK

HANDBOOK

2023 - 2024



September 13th - 2023



“A GREAT PLACE TO BE”

Dear Teachers:

Welcome to the AIS family.

*This Handbook has been prepared to assist you in your orientation to our school by providing relevant information on school processes, procedures, and general information on your role as a teacher. We hope this handbook serves as a support for you in your work and helps you navigate the daily procedures and policies at our school. **AIS A GREAT PLACE TO BE**, counts with your integrity, leadership and sense of service for the teaching and learning to be a significant experience.*



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1. AIS Identity

"We shape the future one step at a time"

Mission

We create opportunities for discovery and reflection by engaging the minds, hands, and hearts of our students to inspire in them curiosity to learn, self confidence to lead, and compassion to serve

Vision

To become an inspiring, innovate, and welcoming school where our students are empowered to be comprehensive leaders at a global level, competitive, and prepared for university entrance, and where they can positively impact their local environment and the world

2. Our commitment as teachers

The AIS is united in educating the mind, heart and hands of children. To do this well, we must be willing to authentically enter into the same work on ourselves. We believe in holding onto a growth mindset each day, making mistakes and learning from them. We choose to understand kids with our hearts first, and our eyes second.

Mind

We capture the minds of children through engaging, interconnected expeditions. We refuse to provide students with drill & skill work that perpetuates the "memorize - test - forget" model that permeates much of education. Planning for a learning expedition is demanding, requiring intense collaboration and deliberation between colleagues. We are willing to contribute, to take risk, fail, and get back up again in order to successfully teach this way at Altamira

Heart

Joy and caring are at the heart of who we are at Altamira. We take our habits of character seriously, and weave them into all of our academic work. We hold ourselves to the same standard that we are asking of kids and commit to the institutional practice need for character to take a firm root in our students and ourselves

Hands

The work that students do at Altamira makes a difference within the greater community. We work hard to create learning opportunities that have impact on the community and transforms learning into action for our kids



3. Our logo



Learn • Lead • Serve
BE HUMAN

ALTAMIRA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Learn with Purpose (Mind)

Our students are **lifelong learners**, who possess a **quest for excellence, exhibit curiosity and a growth mindset**, adopt a global perspective, while effectively leveraging technologies in their learning. incorporating inquiry across multiple disciplines.

Serve with Passion (Hand)

Our students are concerned citizens, who imbibe the qualities of respect and gratitude, while actively contributing to the community.

Lead with Heart (Heart)

Our students are leaders with integrity and empathy, possessing the ethical courage to make the right decisions.



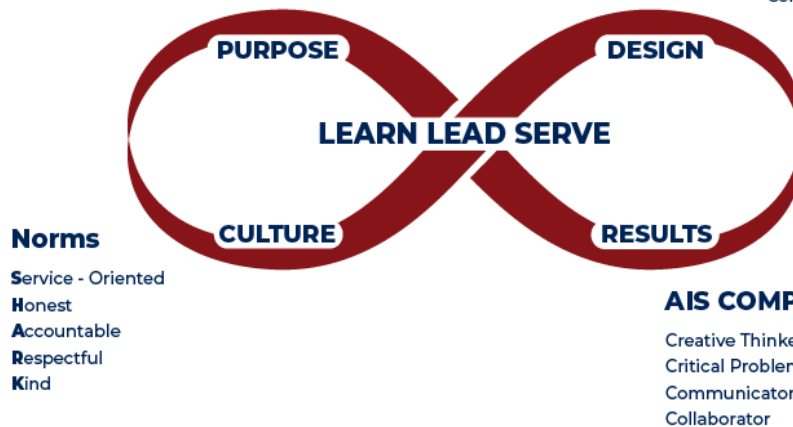
THE AIS CONTINUUM

Mission & Vision

Learn, Lead, Serve	Innovate
Mind, Hands, Hearts	Inspire
College Ready	Invite
Globally Competitive	Changemakers

Principles and Practices

High Expectations for All	Deep Learning through RPBL
Supportive Learning Environment	Evidence Based Teaching Strategies
Coherent Curriculum	Global Citizenship
High Quality Assessment	Community Partnerships



Norms

Service - Oriented
Honest
Accountable
Respectful
Kind

AIS COMPETENCIES

Creative Thinker	Citizen
Critical Problem Solver	Character
Communicator	
Collaborator	

In the heart of our school lies a continuum that transcends education: the AIS Continuum. It is our collective 'why', the narrative that binds us. Our mission and vision — Learn, Lead, Serve—are more than words; they are a call to action. We equip minds to innovate, hands to inspire, and hearts to invite change. Our culture is our foundation, built on norms of respect, honesty, and kindness. As we embark on our educational journey, our principles guide us to foster high expectations and a supportive environment. Through design and results, we cultivate competencies that shape not just scholars, but global citizens and changemakers. Together, we are not just part of a school; we are the architects of the future.



4. General Guidelines For All Faculty

All faculty members are required to follow the guidelines in the teacher handbook, and are expected to comply with and enforce all policies and procedures included in this.

4.1 School Hours

School begins at 7:00 a.m, teachers must be here no later than 6:50 a.m. all teachers must be in their posts at 6:55 a.m. Homeroom time begins at 7:00 a.m and ends at 7:20 a.m. Dismissal is as follows:

Preschool Teachers:

- **Monday and Thursday:** 4:00 p.m
- **Tuesday and Wednesday:** 3:00 p.m
- **Friday:** 2:30 p.m

Elementary and Secondary Teachers:

- **Monday and Wednesday:** 4:00 p.m
- **Tuesday and Thursday:** 3:00 p.m
- **Friday:** 2:30 p.m

4.1.1 Tardiness

Teachers who are late to class or who leave campus before the end of the day without the Section Principal's authorization may be subject to sanctions, especially if tardiness becomes a pattern. The teacher will be notified in writing each time he/she arrives late or leaves early without proper justification. The third time the employee is so notified, without a justifiable excuse, he/she will be subject to suspension without pay for one day..

5. Dress Code for Teachers

AIS staff believes in projecting a strong, positive, professional image to students, parents, and the community. Neat and professional attire is the norm. For women this includes dresses, skirts, blouses, sweaters, slacks. For men, this includes shirts with collars and slacks.

AIS expects all staff members to dress in a professional manner. The school community places a great deal of importance on a teacher's personal grooming and appearance.

Blue jeans are not allowed due to the fact that it is very important that teachers look professional at all times. The usage of blue jeans on Fridays will be accepted, maintaining a professional look. Distressed jeans, short T shirts, strapped shirts and flip flops are not permitted under any circumstance.

➤ Examples of Inappropriate Attire

Blue jeans, workout clothes, tights, short shorts, sundresses, miniskirts (any skirt more than 10 cms. (4 inches) above the knees, tennis shoes, T-shirts ,piercings of any sort, visible tattoos



and beach type sandals distract from the personal image of the staff and the desired standard of dress. Unusual, fad-like, torn or provocative styles are considered inappropriate.

➤ **Exceptions**

Appropriate exceptions will be made for P.E. and Art staff and for individuals when conducting special activities that call for more informal attire. An official uniform can be obtained by faculty members, and may be worn by teachers throughout the year. (For example, Nido and Pre Primary Section).

6. Teacher Absences

All teachers must register their arrival and departure at school at the designated places using their ID cards. All teachers are required to inform their principal and human resources of any justifiable absence. All staff members are expected to remain on school grounds, during their work hours established in the 1.1 numeral of this document.

6.1 Sick Leave

The school will assume financial responsibility paying the percentage recognized by the Colombian Law for up to two days for emergency absences due to sickness, under the following conditions:

- The teacher calls and emails the Section Principal and Section Assistant, as early as possible, at least 30 minutes before the beginning of the school day-
- The teacher provides the Section Principal with a plan for each of the day's classes before the beginning of the school day.
- The teacher provides the school with an official sick leave certificate duly signed by teacher's E.P.S. (Government-mandated health – care provider).
- Absence beyond two days will result in a deduction of the monthly salary according to the Colombian current regulation.

6.2. Emergencies

Teachers will be able to ask for leave of absence if any emergency occurs, the deductions will be established by the school board of directors discretion.

6.3. Personal Leave of absence.

When a teacher considers an absence extremely necessary he/she should present a written request addressed to the Section Principal, at least 7 days before the expected period of absence. This letter should include:

- A detailed plan for each of the days during which the teacher expects to be absent.
- The name of a substitute, previously approved by the Section Principal that will be in charge of the teacher's classroom during their absence.



- In the case a leave of absence is approved, the teacher understands that he/she will not receive salary during such a period.

6.4. Personal Appointments

Personal appointments including doctor's appointments are to be made after school hours. If a teacher needs to leave before dismissal time, he or she should contact the section principal for a special permission. This permission slip needs to be presented at the exit gate to the guard and it must be signed by their principal and human resources.

6.5. Death of a Family Member

In the event of a death in the immediate family (spouse, child, parent, sibling, father or mother-in-law, grandparents) personal leave will be granted according to Colombian law. If other family members are involved, time will be granted to attend the funeral after asking previous permission to the Principal.

6.6. Unjustified Absences

Any unjustified absence by teachers is considered a breach of the contract and will be subject to the sanctions contemplated by Colombian Law.

7. Resignations

Resignations will follow the procedures and processes determined by Colombian law. However it is encouraged that the teachers recognize the special difficulties of recruiting substitute personnel, especially in the course of the school year. It is also expected that teachers will carefully consider their professional responsibility to both the school and their students.

8. Use of working hours

All teachers are expected to use working hours for the development of the duties and responsibilities established by their contracts. Teachers will not employ their working hours in the development of personal activities or projects.

9. Confidentiality Policy

Teachers must uphold a strict confidentiality policy and must refrain from divulging sensitive information regarding the school, students, and any other stakeholders to any person that should not be privy to the information at hand. Failure to comply with this policy will be considered as a breach of contact.



10. Tutoring for Pay Policy

Tutoring is a service that should be used only in cases where the teacher has exhausted all strategies in the classroom to attempt to help the student achieve instructional standards. When a teacher considers referring a student for tutoring, it will be discussed in Equipo Docente or Level Meeting with Section Principal and Counselor.

Teachers are permitted to work as tutors of Altamira International School students subject to the following conditions:

- At the beginning of the school year, teachers interested in tutoring students may submit a written request to the Section Principal.
- Once a student has been authorized to be tutored, the Section Principal and the Counselor will meet in order to assign the most suitable tutor for the student.
- Tutoring must not interfere with regular school and classroom duties.
- Tutoring for pay must not take place during the regular school day.
- A teacher may not work as a paid tutor to one of his or her own students or students in the same grade level.
- Teachers cannot recommend special services for students without prior authorization of Section Principal and/or counselor.

11. Personal Cell Phone Usage

- Cellular phones must be turned off or put away in silence during duty and instruction time.
- Calls may not be received or made when not in class time.
- Conversations must not take place in front of students or parents. Discretion is advised when using cellular phones so that coworkers are not disturbed.
- Teachers are recommended not to give parents their personal cell phone numbers.

12. Social Media Presence Policy

Teachers are discouraged from accepting students and parents to their social media platforms. In case teachers decide to accept students or parents to their social media accounts they must uphold Altamira's values in their posts and what they share.

13. Teacher's Lounge Policy

Each section has a space provided to work and interact professionally. It is requested that no item be removed from the room and it's requested that every teacher is responsible to maintain it in the best conditions (clean, neat, and professional).



Teachers are encouraged to use their work hours wisely (snacks, coffee, individual time), so no work is needed to take home.

14. Relationship with Stakeholders

All teachers are expected to maintain a strictly professional relationship with all stakeholders. Failure to do so will be considered as a breach of contract and will be resolved in the terms established by the employment contract and Colombian Law.

14.1 Relationship with students

Teachers are encouraged to maintain a close, nurturing relationship with students whilst maintaining a professional attitude at all times. Teachers are not authorized to socialize with students outside of school hours, unless it is a school sanctioned activity.

14.2 Relationship with parents

Teachers are encouraged to maintain a professional yet approachable relationship with parents and an open communication about what pertains to school and students matter. Socializing with parents outside of school hours is highly discouraged, unless approved by the school.

14.3 Relationship with peers

We encourage all teachers to embrace a spirit of teamwork, empathy, and mutual respect in their interactions with one another, as we believe that strong teacher-to-teacher relationships are the foundation of a thriving educational community. Teachers are expected to maintain a professional relationship with peers, putting students well being first at all times.

15. Use of school's material and property

It is the responsibility of every teacher to ensure the proper use and care of school property. This includes textbooks, classroom supplies, technology, and any other resources provided by the school. We kindly request that teachers treat these items with respect and use them in accordance with their intended purpose. If any damage or loss occurs, please report it promptly to the appropriate personnel so that repairs or replacements can be arranged. Teachers cannot subtract material and property from school grounds without prior authorization from school administration or use them for personal purposes.

16. Communication with Stakeholders

Teachers should communicate with stakeholders using the school's authorized means of communication which are Control Academic and gmail. Teachers shouldn't communicate



important or sensitive information through non authorized means of communication such as whatsapp or text messages.

16.1 Parent-Teacher Communication:

Teachers should be open and available to listen to any parent concern relating to their child. The section counselor can be present in any Parent-Teacher informal meeting. A record of agreements made and issues discussed must be completed and kept in the student's folder. Teachers are encouraged to practice active listening and make the parents feel that their comments and concerns are appreciated and will be addressed. The teacher should not be defensive, but should let the parents know that their concerns are being taken seriously. If the situation cannot be satisfactorily resolved, the parent can bring the concern to the attention of the respective Principal.

16.2 Teacher-Teacher Communication:

If a teacher has an issue or concern regarding a colleague, he/she is advised to try to resolve it between themselves. If the situation cannot be satisfactorily resolved, either teacher can bring the concern to the attention of his/her Principal and Human Resources Department.

16.3 Teacher-Administration-Board Communication:

If a teacher has an issue or concern regarding the school, she/he should speak to the respective Principal. Only if the issue cannot be resolved at the Principal level should it be elevated to the Director.

17. English Usage on Campus

English is the main official language at A.I.S. Teachers who were hired as English Speaking teachers are expected to speak in English at all times, inside and outside of the classroom. Failure to comply with this will be considered as a breach of contract.

18. In-service days

Several In-service days are allotted during the school year, where teachers can attend P.D, work on curriculum and planning, and do clerical work related to the teaching position. Teachers will attend three (3) in-service Saturdays during the school year, the dates for these Saturdays are informed at the beginning of the school year by the section principal.

19. After School Hours

Teachers might be required to attend after school hours events such as forums, get together, plays and more as supervisors or assistants.



20. Staff Recognition

Staff recognition, whenever possible, should be based on the core values of A.I.S. Teachers may be recognized in the following ways:

- Positive letters, notes, and messages.
- Plan book notes recognizing specific examples of excellent planning and teacher dedication.
- Early dismissal for teachers on Teacher's Day.
- Teacher's Day Lunch.
- Verbal recognition.
- Teacher Spotlight in Principal's News

21. Assemblies

Assemblies will be held regularly in all sections. Students are to report to the designated area with their homeroom teacher as a group, as soon as the bell rings. All faculty and student attendance at assemblies is mandatory, and participation is encouraged. At the end of the gathering, the Section Principal will dismiss students. Homeroom and assistant teachers should return to their classrooms leading their groups. Teachers should be actively engaged during assemblies, walking around and helping maintain proper behavior. Teachers should not be on their phones during this time.

22. Distribution of outside communications

Distribution of literature of any kind by out-of-school organizations to students or parents must have prior approval from the Director. Staff members are not to send parents any type of brochures advertising their businesses and/or services without the permission of the school Director.

23. Duties

All teachers are required to follow a supervisory duty schedule stipulated by Section Principal. Everyone is to arrive promptly to his or her assigned area. If this is not possible, it is the teacher's responsibility to arrange for a substitute and notify the Section Principal or Assistant Principal.

To ensure maximum supervision, the teacher on duty is asked to move around the area at all times in order to be noticed by students and must always be the last one to leave the playground.

Teachers are encouraged to actively supervise students while recess takes place in different areas. Playground duty should be used to evaluate social interaction.

In the pre primary section, teachers need to accompany their students to recess to make sure that other teachers on duty are already on the spot.



24. Fundraising, Money Collection, and Gift Fees

At the end of the school year, teachers are required to fulfill all responsibilities with their Section Principal, the Administration Office, the Library, and the Maintenance Manager.

An updated checklist of end-of-the-year procedures will be distributed to each teacher during the month of May to be handed in with required signatures.

25. Payroll

The payroll is prepared by the Administration Office. Teachers are paid through a bank account, on a monthly basis at the end of the month.

26. Uphold School Discipline

All teachers are required to help uphold discipline in school, if any teacher sees an infraction of any kind they must act according to what is stated in the student handbook.

26.1. Guidelines for Subject Teachers

- Plan and organize learning experiences in such a manner as to best meet the needs of the group and individual students; universally design and differentiate instruction, assignments, and assessment as necessary for our diverse student body. Follow AIS teaching and learning handbook.
- Participate in the planning and evaluation of school programs.
- Attempt to provide maximum learning opportunities for all students.
- Supervise, direct, guide and evaluate the learning experiences of the student.
- Provide guidance to the students which will promote his/her welfare, educational development and citizenship.
- Maintain up-to-date discipline and academic anecdotal records for each of their students.
- Participate and become responsible for updating curriculum guides.
- Participate in PTS Conferences with parents and students who require it every term.
- Work and cooperate with other members of the professional team to promote the educational, social and emotional development of students.
- Keep records of students' grades updated in the student information system.
- Provide timely feedback during the learning process as well as any evaluation result no later than **4 days** to students and parents.
- Attend level meetings with other grade level colleagues, counselor and the Section Principal.
- Prepare and submit mid-term reports and report cards with individual comments according to the schedules given by the Administration.



- Provide opportunities for students with special needs or any academic, socio emotional difficulty or medical condition that might be presenting any risk of failing a subject during every period and inform parents on a timely matter.
- Complete and submit documents requested by the Administration, including but not limited to assessment plan, discipline plan, lesson plans, reteaching, among others.
- Teachers are responsible for the ongoing assessment of their students through a variety of evaluation tools.
- Maintain the teacher's desk, student desks, bulletin boards, floor space, lockers and cubbies in an updated, neat and orderly manner.
- Ensure that the students receive maximum benefit from the use of all equipment, materials, supplies and utilities used under his/her direction.
- Assist in the Administration of the Standardized Testing Program (NWEA MAP)
- Teachers are ultimately responsible for classroom management. They are to reach out and seek to know and use appropriate strategies for maintaining a disciplined, well-functioning, and respectful classroom.
- Plan, organize, and participate in parent/student/teacher partnership conferences as required by the Administration and arrange for any other conference that may be necessary; arrange conferences to accommodate the parents' schedule.
- Maintain classroom bulletin boards updated per unit in basic subject areas with guidelines present in the teaching and learning handbook and what is required by your section's principal.
- Teachers should make full use of the counseling services for students provided by the counseling department in the school.
- Upload lesson plans to the school's platform with prior feedback and approval from the instructional coach on the designated dates by administration.
- Teachers may begin summer vacation after completion of the requirements stipulated in the Section Principal checklist at the end of the year.
- Teachers are responsible for documenting their students' progress by keeping up-to-date files that show evidence of every student's progress throughout the school year.
- All teachers will be evaluated using the Teacher Effectiveness Performance Evaluation System (TEPES). Guidelines on TEPES can be found in the Teaching and Learning Handbook.

26.2. Guidelines for Homeroom Teachers

The homeroom teacher should be in permanent contact with his/her students, watching for their academic and emotional welfare. To follow each student's individual progress he/she should be kept updated by the other teachers involved with his/her group to be able to transmit any pertinent information to the section Principal.



The following are duties of the homeroom teacher:

- Program homeroom time to develop inclusion, values, and group coherence, leadership program or any particular class need and taking also individual needs into account, following the guidelines and activities sent by the section's counselor.
- Take attendance on a daily basis and register in the school information system before 7:30a.m.
- Keep a systematic follow up of students' academic progress and report to the sectional counselor any emotional issue observed.
- Keep and revise students' discipline records on a regular basis to be able to do the corresponding follow up.
- Keep in touch with all the teachers who give class in his/her group and hold frequent meetings with them.
- Keep the Principal informed of any situation concerning students (academic, disciplinary, emotional, social).
- Attend level meetings with other grade level colleagues, counselor and the Section Principal.
- Be in charge of giving parents feedback on students' progress during Parent-Teacher- Conferences or at any other time that parents request it.
- Be in charge of issuing mid term reports on the assigned dates making sure that comments from different subject areas teachers who have given a student a low score, write a comment on the given report.
- Make appointments with parents when it is necessary and fill out the correspondent form of Parent's Meetings and turn it in to the office to be filed.
- Request counseling services when there is a student with a problem that requires special attention and follow up on his/her behavior.
- Be responsible for collecting the money of different activities and fill out the correspondent form and render the money to the Administrative office.
- Prepare the assemblies of his/her class when these are programmed.
- Attend meetings or events in which all his/her group participates.
- Keep an up-to-date record on usage of school uniform by students, assistance, tardiness, discipline notes, circulars, slips, etc. and inform the Dean of students and Principal when the student is not following the corresponding process.
- Keep track of student's absences and contact home if more than two days have passed by and the student has not come to school.

26.3. Guidelines for Assistant Teachers

The Assistant Teacher reports to the Homeroom Teachers and Principal. Their job purpose is to support students/teachers and the educational program of AIS. Their duties may vary or

be amended from time to time without changing the level of responsibility associated with the duty post.

The following are the duties and responsibilities of Assistant Teachers

- Assist in the educational and social development of students under the direction and guidance of the Homeroom teacher and administrators.
- Provide support for individual students inside and outside the classroom to enable them to participate fully in the school activities.
- Assist Homeroom Teachers with maintaining student records.
- Support students with emotional or behavioral problems and help develop their social skills.
- Complete assigned daily duty.
- Escort and supervise students to special classes and assist specialist teachers.
- Work with small groups of students as instructed and supervised by the Homeroom Teacher.
- Organize students at the end of the day with homework assignments, school bags, etc.
- Maintain bulletin boards and classroom walls updated as directed by the Homeroom Teacher or Principal.
- Assistant teachers need to speak English to students at all times.
- Prepare and present displays of students' work.
- Support class Homeroom Teachers in photocopying, having ready lesson materials and other tasks in order to facilitate teaching.
- Undertake other duties from time to time as the Homeroom Teacher requires.
- Substitute in the event of Homeroom Teacher absence (teach classes, emotional procedures, discipline, arrivals, dismissals, play time, among others).

Assistant Teacher's Duties and Responsibilities DO NOT include:

- Report on student academic performance or disciplinary development to parents.
- Make decisions regarding major disciplinary measures.
- Introduce to students new curricular objectives.
- Respond in writing to parents' notes without first consulting with the Homeroom Teacher.