



Primary school  
**Parent - Student  
Handbook**  
**2024-2025**



# Table of Content

## General Information

School Mission and Beliefs.....4

Accreditation .....5

ANS Organization.....6

Administration .....6

Admissions.....6

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO).....7

Business Office.....7

Uniform .....8

Emergency Preparedness Information.....9

Research and Reading Studio .....10

Healthy and Safe.....10

Lunch and Snacks .....11

Lost and Found .....12

Access to Campus and Classrooms.....12

In case of accident or injury.....14

Withdrawal from ANS.....14

Volunteer.....14

Celebrating Birthdays at ANS .....14

## Communication

Concerns .....15

Learning Letters.....16

Newsletter.....16

Tigers’ Home Base .....16

## Attendance

Arrival and Departure Times.....17

Attendance and Absences.....17

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Points .....19

Late Pick-UP .....19

## Academics

Learning at ANS .....20

Pathways.....25

Strong Start .....27

Moving-in-Day - All Grades .....27

New Student Welcome .....28

Friday Feedback Folders.....28

Parents School .....28

Academic Assistance .....29

Personalized Learning Appointments (K-2) .....29

Playgroups (Pathways) .....29

Distribution of Non-school Related Materials.....29

Private Tutoring .....29

Big Questions Day.....30

Social and Emotional Learning and School Counseling .....33

Student Led Conferences .....36

Grading, Reporting, and Classroom level practices .....37

Awards.....42

Official Documents Request.....44

## Discipline

ANS Student Behavioral Expectations: .....47

ANS Discipline Manual: Violations and Consequences/Formative Measures (Pathways & Kinder).....48

ANS Discipline Manual: Violations and Consequences/Formative Measures (First to Fifth Grade) .....49

## Student Services

Special Programs at ANS.....59

Specialized Learning Program .....63

## Technology

PlusPortals .....67

Responsible Use of Personal Electronic Devices .....67

Acceptable Use Policy .....67

Parent and/or legal guardians Events and Technology.....68

Phone / Smartwatch policy.....68

Unacceptable Network Use .....68

Consequences of Violations .....68

## Extracurricular Program

After-School Activities.....69

# General Information

The American Nicaraguan School (ANS) is a private, non-profit, co-educational, multicultural institution which offers an educational program for students from all nationalities from preschool through twelfth grade.

The American Nicaraguan School is duly accredited by Cognia (international accreditation) as well as by the Ministry of Education of Nicaragua (MINED) and is based on the Manuals and guidelines of MINED and the norms established by Nicaraguan law.

## School Mission and Beliefs

The mission of the American Nicaraguan School is to provide an innovative and dynamic education so that our students develop their full leadership potential, achieve academic excellence, and make meaningful and ethical contributions to a global society.

We define learning as the means to honor curiosity and engage with the rigor of authentic and complex problems, working together to find solutions in the community. We believe that when we have agency and discipline, our learning transcends time and space, taking us out into a future we create together.

### We believe in the following Core Values:



#### Intellectual Curiosity

Why and how do we create?  
What are the consequences?  
How do space and materials drive the process?



#### Innovation & Creativity

What am I curious about?  
What do I want to learn?  
How am I changing?



#### Global Awareness

How can I make a difference in the world?  
How does location impact universal problems?  
How can I make the world a more peaceful place?



#### Respect of Self and Others

How can we be a more inclusive community?  
How can we teach our community about important topics in adolescent development?  
How can character play a greater role in our community?



#### Environmental Stewardship

Where do we live?  
What resources do we have or need?  
How do I care for the natural resources?



#### Social Responsibility

How do we live in relation to others?  
How can I contribute to the community?  
How can I help others?  
Are my needs/wants impeding those of others?

## Our Student Traits

	 Curious	 Determined	 Compassionate	 Reflective	 Well-rounded	 Accountable	 Open-minded
Pathways & Kindergarten	●	●	●				
First & Second Grade	●	●	●	●			
Third & Fourth Grade	●	●	●	●	●	●	
Fifth Grade	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

[Click here](#) to view Tiger Traits Progression

## Accreditation

The American Nicaraguan School receives its accreditation from Cognia and the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education (MINED).

An accredited school is one which has available the anecessary resources to achieve its stated purposes through appropriate educational programs, is substantially doing so, and gives reasonable evidence that it will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. Accreditation by Cognia indicates that a school meets or exceeds criteria for the assessment of institutional quality.

ANS Organization

ANS Primary offers a program aimed at preparing students for success during their Primary studies, and beyond promotion. The American Nicaraguan School is committed to offering students a world-class education focused on a student-centered, constructivist approach to learning with a global lens. Our vision is centered on six key core values: Intellectual Curiosity, Innovation & Creativity, Global Awareness, Respect of Self and Others, Environmental Stewardship, and Social Responsibility. Students have an assortment of options to choose from to develop critical thinking and 21st century problem-solving skills.

The American Nicaraguan School offers programs organized as Primary School Pathways-Grade 5. Besides a rigorous academic program that includes personalized learning, students also explore arts through music, painting and sculpting and have the opportunity to participate in a variety of sports offerings.

Administration

The Primary Principal is responsible for the administration of Pathway-5th grade. His/Her responsibilities include the development and overseeing of policies, rules, programs, and procedures. He/She also works to resolve conflicts or problems, and students are encouraged to seek his/her advice. If a student has a conflict with a teacher, they should first try to resolve the issue with the teacher. If the problem cannot be resolved at this level, the principal or appropriate guidance counselor should be consulted.

When it is necessary for parents and/or legal guardians to meet with the Primary School principal, it is required that an appointment be pre arranged through the appropriate secretaries. In doing so, the reason for the visit should be disclosed so that the principal may have the necessary records and information.

Admissions

ANS students apply for admission through the Admissions Office. After the initial review of documents, the admissions process may include a visit to the campus, further assessment, and interviews with the student and family.

ANS is proud to support diverse learning pathways and within limits defined in Board policy, the School shall accept students with mild-moderate learning differences, provided that the school’s resources can reasonably accommodate such needs.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The ANS community encourages parents and/or legal guardians to become involved in activities at school. All parents and/or legal guardians and teachers are members of the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), which provides a forum for participation. The PTO annually elects its Board of Directors to handle the coordination and execution of its activities at ANS. To learn more about PTO activities or to express interest in joining, you may contact the PTO [pto@ans.edu.ni](mailto:pto@ans.edu.ni)

Business Office

The Business Director and Business Office staff are the responsible persons for administering the financial affairs of the school under the policies established by the Board of Directors. Any parent and/or legal guardian with questions about financial matters shall contact [boffice@ans.edu.ni](mailto:boffice@ans.edu.ni)

School Mascot



Our school mascot is the Tiger!

Tigers are adventurous, curious and exceptionally kind at ANS!

Tigers are leaders too!

Uniform

ANS is proud of our school, and we strive to promote a positive school climate. The school uniform represents our school and, as such, is worn with dignity and pride. All primary school students are required to wear the PE uniform on regular school days. The formal school uniform will be used for special events or when students are on school-sponsored field trips. The Principal will handle repeated uniform violations

Students are expected to wear ANS uniforms at all times. Please plan to purchase an ANS sweater or jacket. We no longer allow students to wear non-ANS sweatshirts or tops over PE uniforms.

Daily Uniform

Since students have daily PE classes, the daily school uniform will be the PE uniform. The Tigers shirt will also be accepted as part of the PE uniform on Fridays. Children are not allowed to wear jeans on any day.

ANS Sweatshirts and Jackets: ANS sweatshirts and jackets must be purchased from the Tiger Store.

Formal uniform guidelines

Shirt: White, collared, polo-style shirt. The school’s emblem is sewn on the pocket. If worn, undergarments must be white or match the color of the t-shirt. Undergarments must not show through.

Pants/Shorts/Skirts: Plain, solid, dark blue, dress- style pants, shorts, or skirts of uniform quality material.

Miscellaneous

Footwear: Athletic shoes and dress-style shoes are acceptable. Sandals, flip-flops, cleats, shoes with rollers, and Crocs are not permitted.

Hats are only permitted during PE or recess. Hats should not be worn inside classrooms.

ANS sweaters and jackets are considered part of the uniform. Students may ONLY wear an official ANS white sweatshirt (purchased at the Tiger Store)

Colored or printed t-shirts or leggings under the uniform must follow the school uniform colors. Uniforms must fit properly.

Daily Uniform



Formal Uniform



Emergency Preparedness Information

ANS has an emergency plan based on guidelines given by the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education (MINED) and international standards. The ANS emergency procedure manual details response steps for different emergency situations. The purpose of the manual is to ensure that school personnel respond to an emergency situation in a manner that will guarantee the safety of the students, faculty, staff, maintenance, parents and/or legal guardians, and visitors present at that time.

In all emergency situations, the school’s Emergency Management Team will assess the situation and decide on next steps to be followed. If a full evacuation of school is determined necessary, parents and/or legal guardians will be informed via email, social media, and/or other means. In all instances, it is most important to maintain calm and order.

The information below is given as a reference about emergency and/or evacuation procedures. The three main types of emergencies are: Earthquake, Fire and Imminent danger. The corresponding alarm, according to the type of emergency, will sound and indicate the type of emergency we are facing. Students, teachers, and the entire ANS staff continuously conduct emergency drills following the appropriate protocol for each type of emergency. Types of emergencies and evacuation procedures:

**Earthquakes:** During/after an earthquake, teachers keep students in a safe designated area. Teachers and school staff will remain with students at all times and await further instructions.

**Fire:** In the event that a fire starts inside any ANS area, an alarm will sound for students, teachers, and staff to vacate the premises and move to a designated safe area. The same basic procedure will be followed if a brush or field fire threatens the school from outside the school perimeter.

**Imminent danger:** The initial response requires that all students, teachers, and the entire school staff take shelter in the designated safe zone area. In this case, students will be led in an orderly manner to the designated safe zone; this will allow the coordination of evacuation procedures. Students should not leave the campus on their own or wander around the school. Please note that if the school’s Emergency Management Team determines an emergency lockdown, all access to the campus is prohibited.

Effective emergency management depends on the support of parents and/or legal guardians to ensure the safety of everyone on campus. The only place for information is through the school’s official means of communication: the ANS website, email, social networks, or others. It is requested to avoid saturating phone lines with external calls.



Research and Reading Studio

The library has a great collection of books for the purpose of research, class assignments, and recreational reading.

The library should be used for quiet activities related to research, reading, etc., and is not to be used for loud group activities. Playing, Eating, and Drinking are prohibited in the library.

Pathways, Pk4-Pk5 And Elementary Teachers may sign up at the beginning of the year for a weekly class period (30 minutes).

In addition to the class visit, primary teachers may send students to the library in small groups (up to 4 students) to return and check out books and work on assignments without having a teacher or paraprofessional accompany them, depending on the grade level.

Students may check out books for one week at a time, which can be renewed as needed. In case of lost or damaged books, a charge to their account will be made to replace the text.

Borrowing rights will be withheld until a student returns all books and reimburses the school for lost and damaged materials. At the end of the trimester, exams and report cards may be withheld until all library materials are returned and fines are paid.  
The ANS Library is open from 6:45 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. each day of the school week except for Fridays and any day before a school holiday, when it will close at 2:25 p.m.

- Website: <https://destinity.ans.edu.ni>
- Email: [anslibrary@ans.edu.ni](mailto:anslibrary@ans.edu.ni)
- Contact us: 2252-7327. Ext 2023/2024

Healthy and Safe

Clinic

There are two doctors and two nurses on duty in the school clinic from 6:45 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. on school days. It also has a nurse in the athletic area from 6:45 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and also a nurse from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Saturdays. The doctors and nurses are the only people authorized to administer any medication on campus. Parents and/or legal guardians have the responsibility of giving any medication that their child needs during the school day to the school doctor with proper instructions.

If your child needs medical attention or has a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit/37.8 degrees Celsius or above, we will call you to pick up your child. If your child hits their head at school, we will contact you so that you can monitor your child when they get home from school.

Primary students may not carry their medications. All medications must be brought to the clinic in the original container. The clinic must administer all prescription and nonprescription medications.

Parents of children with serious medical needs are asked to meet with the Principal and the Doctor at the beginning of the school year to develop a plan.

Immunizations

Except as provided by board policy, no child shall attend school unless they have presented to the appropriate school official an up-to-date certificate of immunization from a licensed physician or local health department stating that such a child has received required immunizations against infectious diseases.

Allergies

ANS takes all student allergies seriously. Necessary staff are trained to use an EpiPen and are informed of all student allergies. Parents must provide the school with the proper medical paperwork to develop a Care Plan for the child.

Lunch and Snacks



The Hungry Tiger provides a comprehensive hot lunch program for primary school students. Our meals are thoughtfully designed based on the principles of the Harvard Plate, ensuring that each meal includes a balanced portion of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and healthy proteins. To adhere to these principles, water is served as the primary beverage with all meals, supporting our commitment to nurturing healthier Tigers, one colorful bite at a time.

Students have the option to purchase a nutritious hot meal from the Hungry Tiger Café or bring their own lunch from home. Parents can easily manage lunch payments and view the monthly lunch menus through our convenient parent portal, accessible [\[here\]](#). As Hungry Tiger is a private enterprise, any issues related to lunch payments should be addressed directly between Hungry Tiger and the parents. For assistance, please contact Hungry Tiger at +(505) 8283-0475 or via email at [hungry.tiger@ans.edu.ni](mailto:hungry.tiger@ans.edu.ni).

Dietary and Purchasing Restrictions:  
If your child has any dietary restrictions or specific purchasing limitations, please ensure that these details are included in the “Comments” section of your child’s account. This information will help us better accommodate your child’s needs and ensure a safe and enjoyable dining experience.

The ANS staff will supervise children during lunch. Students may not share food with others. Each grade level will have a snack time scheduled for the day. Students should bring a healthy snack from home. **Do not send soda, Gatorade, or candy.**



Lost and Found

All personal belongings, especially sweaters, should be labeled with your child’s name. There is a lost-and-found area in the E hallway and a drawer in the primary office for small items. Unclaimed items will be donated to a community service organization at the end of each trimester.

We will do our best to help with lost items, but the school is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen items while at school.








Access to Campus and Classrooms

All visitors seeking access to the ANS campus are subject to review by ANS security and must enter Gate 4. After 7:00 a.m., all students arriving late to school must enter through Gate 4 and sign in at the Primary Office. All non-students seeking admission to any part of the ANS campus must first check in at the security gate at the campus’s main entrance and then with the appropriate office. ANS does not allow campus access for paid academic tutors after school unless authorized by the Primary Principal.

All visitors must abide by the **Visitors Code of Conduct** described in the next page.

VISITORS CODE OF CONDUCT  
CÓDIGO DE CONDUCTA PARA VISITANTES

Visitors are expected to:  
*Se espera que todo visitante de ANS:*

-  Wear their visitor’s badge, (provided at Gate 4). The badge must be clearly displayed at all times.  
*Porte su identificación de manera que esté claramente visible en todo momento. (Esta identificación será proporcionada en el portón 4).*
-  Act and speak in a kind, respectful, and professional manner. (No hostility, threats, or verbal/physical aggression).  
*Muestre en todo momento una conducta amable, respetuosa y profesional. (Sin amenazas, intimidación, maltrato físico o verbal).*
-  Avoid any physical contact with students and never be alone with any student.  
*Evite cualquier contacto físico con los estudiantes, así como quedarse a solas con ellos en ningún momento.*
-  Use only designated adult facilities, not student facilities (e.g., toilets, changing rooms).  
*Haga uso de las instalaciones designadas exclusivamente para adultos y no las de los estudiantes (por ejemplo, baños, vestuarios).*
-  Obtain permission from a leadership team member before taking images and videos of any students.  
*Solicite autorización a un miembro del equipo administrativo de ANS antes de tomar fotografías y/o videos de cualquier estudiante.*
-  Respect the privacy and confidentiality of all students and staff, refraining from discussing or sharing any information about students with unauthorized persons.  
*Respete la privacidad y confidencialidad de todos los estudiantes y del personal de ANS, absteniéndose a compartir cualquier información sobre los estudiantes y/o el personal de ANS con personas no autorizadas.*
-  Refrain from consuming alcohol, smoking, or vaping on campus.  
*Se abstenga de consumir alcohol, fumar o utilizar vape en el recinto.*

Any visitor who violates the code of conduct will be escorted off the ANS campus immediately.  
*Cualquier visitante que no cumpla el Código de Conducta será escoltado fuera del campus de ANS inmediatamente.*

## In case of accident or injury

ANS parents agree not to hold the school responsible for any accident or personal injury that may occur to their child. According to the insurance policy, the school has insured all students, and the insurance company shall be the only one to settle claims of this nature.

## Withdrawal from ANS

To withdraw a student from ANS, please contact the Admissions Office ([admissions@ans.edu.ni](mailto:admissions@ans.edu.ni)) as soon as possible.

Please return borrowed school materials, such as library books, and resolve all financial matters. This will ensure that all paperwork and student transcripts will be complete and ready for your child's last day of attendance.

## Volunteer

Volunteers are welcome at ANS! Please talk with your child's teacher to schedule your volunteer time. All volunteers are asked to check in with security at Gate 4 and the Primary Office. Parent volunteers always work with students under the supervision of teachers.



## Celebrating Birthdays at ANS

We are happy to return to celebrating birthdays at school as a special tradition for students at ANS Primary School.

If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday in the classroom, please fill out a "[Birthday Slip](#)" found on our website at least one day in advance.

Your Birthday Slip will go to the Primary Office. This will help the teacher plan this special time. Security will be notified so you can enter the campus upon arrival— limit two persons for your birthday celebration.

Birthday celebrations can occur between 2:05 - 2:25 p.m. for Kinder through 5th grade and between 11:30 - 11:50 for Pathways.

Bringing cupcakes is a common way parents celebrate birthdays at ANS and are always appreciated. Please provide any plates and utensils needed to serve the cake.

Families are starting to celebrate in various ways considering environmental and healthy living factors. Other ideas include:

1. A parent reads a special book to the class or plans an outdoor game/activity.
2. Useful non-food items like stickers, pencils, bookmarks, and erasers are always fun to share.
3. A healthy treat.

Please plan with the teacher to accommodate students with food or peanut allergies to include all children in the celebration.

Be thoughtful about passing out birthday party invitations at school. If you do not have invitations for the entire class, please arrange to deliver them outside school.

# Communication

## Concerns

We value our partnerships with parents as we believe children do better in school and feel more secure when they see their parents and teachers working together.

If you experience difficulty with this relationship or other concerns within the school environment, we ask you first to contact the appropriate teacher.

Making an appointment allows the teacher to prepare for the meeting and prevents class disruption. Parents are expected to schedule meetings ahead of time to meet with the teacher. Teachers must schedule appointments during non-instructional times to avoid interrupting teaching time. Appointments with teachers can also be made by calling the Primary Office +505 2252-7310 extensions 2066 / 2016, or sending an email to [primaryoffice@ans.edu.ni](mailto:primaryoffice@ans.edu.ni)

If after communicating with the teacher(s) the problem has not been resolved, an appointment to talk with the principal and/or guidance counselor should be made.

Making an appointment allows the teacher, principal, or guidance counselor to prepare for the conference and prevents a disruption of class. Parents and/or legal guardians are not to seek a conference with a teacher without arranging for an appointment first. If the matter is not resolved by following the steps described above, the Director General may then be contacted.

ANS does not permit students to use cellphones/smartwatches during the school day (7 to 2:30). If parents need to communicate with students, they can call the Primary office at +505 2252-7310 extensions 2066 / 2016. If students need to contact parents, they will be directed to the Primary Office.



## Learning Letters

Parents will receive a weekly Learning Letter via email from their child's teacher on Friday. The Learning Letters keep you updated about what your child is learning and any special news for your child's grade level. The Learning Letters are also posted on the Tiger's Home Base.

## Newsletter

Parents will receive the ANS Parent Newsletter on Friday via email. The ANS Parent Newsletter includes updates on school events, celebrations of learning, and important notices from the school. Please keep your email address up-to-date to receive these messages.

## Tigers' Home Base

The Tigers' Home Base will become your very favorite website! You will find the weekly learning letter, links to important documents, and weekly learning goals. If your child is absent, you will keep your child on track with the learning goals and assignments for school and home. Here is what you will find on the Tigers' Home Base:

1. Links to the Parent-Student Handbook, Birthday Slip, Open Days Calendar
2. Weekly Learning Goals and assignments for school and home
3. Tools to support your learners at home
4. Important dates and calendars
5. Meet the team - pictures of your child's teachers



## Attendance

### Arrival and Departure Times

We want your child to attend classes every day because we care for his/her well-being, and we want him/her to have a sense of belonging and academic success.

Pathways: 7:00a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Kindergarten - 5th grade: 7:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Classroom doors open at 6:30 a.m. Students are expected to wait outside their classroom on the benches if they arrive early. Gates to campus open at 6:40 a.m.

Please note that the school calendar is online on the ANS website. Every school day counts, national and school holidays are clearly marked and we request that any and all trips adhere to these non-school days.

### Attendance and Absences

In case of absence, please email your child's teacher and ANS Attendance Office before 7:00 am. [attendance@ans.edu.ni](mailto:attendance@ans.edu.ni). Include your child's full first and last name, the date of the absence, and the reason for the absence.

#### Attendance expectations per year

**Good attendance <5 absences  
about 1-2 absences per trimester**

Satisfactory attendance <9 absences (3 absences per trimester)

Warning Signs 10-17 absences per year (4-5 absences per trimester)

Chronic Absenteeism >18 absences per year (6 absences per trimester)

We realize that particular circumstances may necessitate a student being absent from school for an extended period.

Vacations and extended absences (> 4 days) during the school year are discouraged since students miss valuable instructional time, which cannot be made up with homework.

To pre-arrange an absence (>4 days), please contact the Principal or the Assistant Principal for approval.

Following approval, the parents will access the Tiger's Home Base to receive their assignments during the extended absence. Packets are not prepared for extended absences, rather, parents are to access the Tiger's Home Base for weekly assignments and return the work when returning to school.

After returning to school from an absence, the student and parent's responsibility is to ensure that the work from [Tiger's Home Base](#) has been turned in on time.

## Types of Absences

The school administration determines whether an absence is recorded as excused or unexcused.

Pre-arranged and authorized excused field trips and school activities on or off campus such as MAP tests, authorized representation of ANS school or National events will not be counted in determining total absences.

### Excused Absences

The parent has reported the reason for the absence in a timely way. If the absence is four or more days, then the absence will require a legitimate absence with a doctor's note or other documents to excuse the absence.

### Unexcused Absences

Unapproved absence from school for non-health reasons or extended absences for illness without a doctor's note will be considered unexcused.



## Late Arrival/Early Dismissal

If your child is late for school, they are asked to stop at the Primary Office to get a tardy slip. Your child will be issued a tardy slip to enter their classroom.

After 7:00 a.m., all students arriving late to school must enter through Gate 4. If you need to take your child out of school early, please notify the primary office ahead of time to be prepared to have your child in the office - [ansprimary@ans.edu.ni](mailto:ansprimary@ans.edu.ni).

We only dismiss students for an early pick-up before 2:00 p.m. due to dismissal at 2:30. Any arrival after 11:00 a.m. or dismissal before 11:00 a.m. will be considered a ½ day absence.

### Attendance Warning Letters

If your child demonstrates chronic absenteeism (6 absences or more in a trimester), the Primary Office will send an Attendance Warning Letter. This letter is sent to notify you of excessive absences. Absences are considered excessive when a child is absent for six days in a trimester, whether the absence is excused or unexcused.

If your child continues to demonstrate chronic absenteeism, the Primary Office will reach out to set up an Attendance Support Plan. Parent partnership is expected to ensure regular attendance for your child(ren) in school. Research shows that regular attendance is critical for success in school.

## Drop-Off and Pick-Up Points

Youngest siblings: Drop off and pick up occur at the youngest sibling's gate.

### Pathways

6:45 – 7:00 a.m.  
Drop Off at Gate 1.

12:00 pm - Noon  
Pick Up at Gate 1

Please stay in your car and follow the Gate 1 pick-up lane, and staff will escort your child for safe and efficient drop-off and pick-up.

### Kindergarten - 5th Grade

6:45 – 7:00 a.m.      2:30 p.m.  
Drop Off                  Pick Up

#### Drop off and Pick up:

Gate 1 – Kindergarten  
Gate 2 – 1st – 2nd grade  
Gate 4 – 3rd grade  
Gate 6 - 4th - 5th grade

Parents and drivers are expected to stay in their cars and wait in the queue of vehicles for safe and efficient drop-off and pick-up. Please pull forward so that many cars can be available for children to get in or out of the car.

Students may stay after school only if they are signed up to participate in a supervised activity with an adult at ANS.

## Late Pick-UP

### Parents responsibilities:

- Parents must arrange to pick their children up on time to help them feel safe and cared for.
- Regular pick-up for Pathways students is from 12:00 - 12:10 and for K-5 students from 2:30 - 2:42.
- Late pick-up is after 12:15 (Pathways) and after 2:45 (K-5).
- All K-5 primary students picked up late will be asked to wait inside the gate at Gate 4, regardless if they have older siblings. Pathways students will wait in the primary school office.
- Parents or other adults picking up students late will alight their car to walk to the gate and sign the late pick-up log.
- Parents who pick up K-5 students late will be charged a \$5.00 late fee for any portion of the first 15 minutes after 3:00 and an additional \$5.00 after 3:15. Pathways students will be charged accordingly after 12:30 and 12:45.
- Late pick-up charges will be processed through student accounts in the billing office.

### Did your child forget something at home?

If you bring something to school that your child needs during the school day, you may leave the item at Gate 4 with Security. Office staff will deliver items at 8:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

# Academics

## Learning at ANS

### Science

We are Scientists! Classroom teachers engage students in a dynamic science program that emphasizes being a Scientist using the 3D Model of the NGSS Standards. Students practice the real work of being a Scientist in this inquiry-based model of learning and teaching:

#### 1) Ask questions and define problems

Scientists ask each other questions about the features of the phenomena they observe, the texts they read, and the conclusions they draw from their models or scientific investigations.

- Ask questions based on observations to find more information about the natural and designed world(s).
- Ask and identify questions that an investigation can answer.
- Define a simple problem that can be solved by developing a new or improved object or tool.

#### 2) Develop and Use Models

Modeling can begin in the earliest grades, with students' models progressing from concrete "pictures" and physical scale models (e.g., a toy car) to more abstract representations of relevant relationships in later grades, such as a diagram representing forces on a particular object in a system.

- Distinguish between a model and the actual object, process, and events the model represents.
- Compare models to identify common features and differences.
- Develop and use a model to represent amounts, relationships, relative scales (bigger, smaller), and patterns in the natural and designed world(s).
- Develop a simple, evidence-based model to represent a proposed object or tool.



#### 3) Plan and Carry Out Investigations

Scientists share their new understandings and evaluate their skills, knowledge, and abilities. Scientists make posters, write articles, participate in debates, take tests, and prepare multimedia presentations.

- Plan and conduct an investigation collaboratively to produce data as the basis for evidence to answer a question.
- Evaluate different ways of observing and measuring a phenomenon to determine which way can answer a question.
- Make observations (firsthand or from media) and measurements
- to collect data that can be used to make comparisons.
- Make observations (firsthand or from media) and measurements of a proposed object, tool, or solution to determine if it solves a problem or meets a goal.
- Make predictions based on prior experiences.

#### 4) Construct Explanations and Design

Once collected, data must be presented in a form that can reveal patterns and relationships, allowing results to be communicated to others.

- Record information (observations, thoughts, and ideas).
- Use and share pictures, drawings, and writings of observations.
- Use observations (firsthand or from the media) to describe patterns and relationships in the natural and designed world(s) to answer scientific questions and solve problems.
- Compare predictions (based on prior experiences) to what occurred (observable events).
- Analyze data from tests of an object or tool to determine if it works as intended.

[Next Generation Science Standards](#)







## Social Studies

ANS students explore social studies concepts through the 3C Framework – College, Career, and Civic Life. Students practice the work of being a Historian, Geographer, Economist, and Citizen in this inquiry-based model of learning and teaching:

### 1) Develop questions

Pose compelling questions about real-world problems like “Why do we need rules?”

### 3) Evaluate sources and using evidence

Gather information from various sources and evaluate the relevance of that information.

### 2) Apply disciplinary tools and concepts

Study the problem through the four core disciplines of social studies - civics, economics, geography, and history.

### 4) Evaluate sources and using evidence

Share their new understandings and evaluate their skills, knowledge, and abilities.

[AERO Standards and C3 Framework](#)

## Literacy

### We are readers and writers!

Our literacy program is designed to get students thinking, talking, reading, and writing in a way that supports learning and fosters a love of reading and writing. We integrate the best practices of literacy instruction using the following curricular approaches.

### Balanced Literacy framework

Balanced Literacy values that students have ownership of their learning with engaging and student-centered literacy instruction. On a typical day, each class has a Literacy Block for reading and writing instruction.

### Reading

Reading instruction includes a Mini- Lesson, Shared Reading, Read Aloud, Guided Reading, and Independent Reading in the Balanced Literacy Model. Explicit instruction of foundational skills ensures mastery of essential decoding and comprehension skills. In whole group instruction, teachers teach and model strategies that good readers use, guiding the reader to apply this skill to their reading work. Using the workshop model, students spend most of the class engaging in purposeful and accountable reading.

### Writing

The writing process is taught through modeling writing in whole group lessons, collaborative writing in small groups or pairs, and independent writing with teacher support. Using the workshop model, students spend most of the class engaging in purposeful and accountable writing. Teachers have opportunities for writing conferences with students to personalize their work to apply the skills from the mini-lessons to their writing work.

### Phonics

The phonics program taps into students’ skills and energy to tackle the fabulous challenge of learning to read and write. Children learn phonics concepts and strategies to keep pace with their reading and writing and help them understand when, how, and why they can use phonics. Our phonics program builds these skills:

- Concepts About Print
- Phonological Awareness
- Letter-Sound Knowledge
- Word Knowledge and Word Solving
- High-Frequency Words - SNAP words

### Vocabulary and Spelling

Word studies actively engage and motivate students to creatively explore words and their patterns throughout meaningful reading and writing lessons.

RESOURCES: [Units of Study for Writing](#), [Units of Study for Reading](#), [Guided Reading Groups](#), [Word Study \(K-2\)](#), [AERO Literacy Standards](#)



## Mathematics

### We're Mathematicians!

Our ANS math program focuses on developing students' deep understanding of mathematical concepts, proficiency with essential skills, and solving complex and novel problems.

The Bridges math program is a comprehensive K–5 curriculum that equips teachers to fully implement the AERO Standards for Mathematics in a rigorous, coherent, engaging, and accessible manner to all learners.

The Bridges math program blends direct instruction, structured investigation, and open exploration. It taps into the intelligence and strengths of all students by presenting material that is as linguistically, visually, and kinesthetically rich as it is mathematically robust.

### Eight Mathematical Practices for Students

- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
- Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
- Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
- Model with mathematics.
- Use appropriate tools strategically.
- Attend to precision.
- Look for and make use of structure.
- Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

[Bridges in Mathematics, 8 Mathematical Practices for Students, AERO Mathematics Standards.](#)



## Pathways

Pathways is a model for learning where we, as a community, honor natural curiosity as the driver for all early learning. In Pathways classrooms, children learn in a nurturing environment for play-based learning. Our experienced teachers personalize learning for each child through careful observations of each child's development. They then partner with parents to work together at school and home to help our youngest learners grow.

We believe that children and parents benefit from a two-year relationship with their Pathways teacher, so our classrooms include 3 and 4-year-olds. With a family approach to learning, all children benefit from helping each other.

We also believe that children have important work at this age to grow their brains to be thinkers and doers and that they learn best through play organized around these three components:



### Sunshine

Children at this young age thrive in a joyful, fun-filled environment where their days are filled with laughter, song, and love.



### Barefoot

Children connect best with genuine and authentic learning experiences grounded in nature, family, and community.



### Outdoor mapping

Children at this young age are fascinated with nature, and how the world works, so we want them to explore, discover, question, and research their world.

We believe that children at a young age have the inherent ability to learn a new language through real and meaningful experiences. Most of the child's day is in English, where our language learners are immersed in an English environment with poems, songs, books, and playful experiences that give our children natural ways to learn the new language. Part of the day, children are in Spanish to experience this same immersion experience.

Especially in the youngest school years, we believe that parent engagement should be personalized to ensure partnership in an asset-based understanding of the developmental progressions. With StoryPark as our communication tool, teachers and parents contribute to telling each child's story as a learner. Parents receive ReadyRosie videos that are tailored to the modeled moments that help parents learn how to support their children at home.



### Strong Start

Strong Start is designed to help our children and families have a smooth transition to getting the new school year started.

All children come together with their parents on Moving In Day. With 1-1/2 hour appointments, our children and parents have a special time to come together to meet the teacher and set up the learning space.

For the first two days of school, Pathways children come with their parents for one or two 1-1/2 hour playgroups to meet their teacher and make some new friends. Pathways start their full-day schedule on the third day of school.

For the first two days, children in grades K-2 attend one 1-1/2 hour personalized learning appointments to work with their teacher so she can get to know them before school starts. K-2 children start their full-day schedule on the third day of school.

Students in grades 3- 5 get classes started on the first day of school with team building to grow a positive classroom community as our core values leaders of the school.

### Moving-in-Day - All Grades

On Moving-In Day, parents and children come together for 1-1/2 hour appointments to unpack their school supplies and meet their new teacher. Parents can help set up learning spaces and even go book shopping to get the book bin ready. You can also visit the studio spaces, Observe & Wonder Lab, Hungry Tiger, PE teachers, and the Tiger Store.



New Student Welcome

New families come together for a Family Fair, Tour, and Parent Coffee to meet our team and get to know the school. New Family Orientation Day is designed to give a thorough introduction to ANS, including the team, our academic programs, extracurricular activities, and ways to get involved. Meanwhile, children will take part in a Welcome Party, where they will do activities that aim to help them connect with their new classmates and feel supported by our counselors, ensuring they start the year with a strong sense of belonging.

Friday Feedback Folders

We know that parents being able to see their child’s work with teacher comments can help support a rich dialogue at home about their child’s learning. To establish a routine, all teachers in grades K - 5 will be sending Friday Feedback Folders with at least two work samples in literacy and math.

You can expect teacher comments on your child’s work that helps you and your child take a look at how they are doing.

- Comments about their thinking and reasoning
- Application of skill or strategies
- Question that prompts students to think more and see more

Feedback on math work should not focus on right/wrong answers, as we want children to see that their thinking, modeling, and explanations are the most important part.

Please spend some time over the weekend to review the work with your child. You can keep the work at home and be sure to have your child bring the folder back on Monday.

Parent Engagement

Parent Engagement is a series of workshops, seminars, and resources offered by our school to help parents and/or legal guardians understand the curriculum, teaching methods, and developmental milestones their children are experiencing. The goal is to create a collaborative partnership between educators and families, ensuring that students receive consistent support both at school and at home.

Parents interested in participating in Parent Engagement should look for information on the ANS website or in the weekly learning letters. We offer these programs throughout the school year, and parents are encouraged to attend as many sessions as possible to gain the full experience.

Academic Assistance

All classroom teachers provide academic assistance during “Teacher Table Time,” a 45-minute block during the regular school day.

This extra instructional time allows students to receive the benefit of specialized instruction that is tailored to the child’s needs. These services include Reading Support, Math Support, English Language Learning, Spanish Language Learning, Skills-based Counseling, and Enrichment.

Personalized Learning Appointments (K-2)

Parents will sign their child up for a personalized appointment (1-½ hour) with their teacher. Your child’s teacher wants to know their students as readers, writers, and mathematicians. Parents do not stay for these appointment sessions.

Playgroups (Pathways)

In the spirit of our play-based learning model, we invite parents to sign up for 1 or 2 playgroups. The parents and the children come together for small playgroups to meet some new friends and build a playful community where parents and teachers work together to support learning at school and home.

Distribution of Non-school Related Materials

Parents, students, and teachers must receive authorization from the principal before distributing non-school-associated materials, including birthday invitations that don’t include every student in a class. Sales and exchanges between students or adults are not permitted on campus. Likewise, solicitation of any kind is not allowed on school grounds.

Private Tutoring

We believe that children benefit from time to play, read, relax, and interact with family to have a happy and balanced life when they get out of school. That is why ANS teachers are working to help students get the help they need during the school day and limit homework to reading and a few math activities a week.

We also notice that students who receive private tutoring often feel less ownership in their learning during the school day since these students often see learning as the job of the private tutor. In addition, private tutors often utilize other strategies that conflict with how your child is taught at ANS. Therefore, we do not believe private tutors are always helpful or necessary.

At times, a parent may want to request the services of a private tutor to help their child in an academic area. The Assistant Principal can provide parents with a list of interested individuals who have expressed interest in working as a private tutor. Teachers are asked not to make recommendations for tutoring.

Teachers or Paraprofessionals cannot work as private tutors for any students they work with during the school day.

## Big Questions Day

Big Questions Day provides space and time for students to lead their learning through agency. The power of choice becomes the foundation of this program, opening up millions of possibilities for students to explore their passions and interests. Their day encompasses the importance of mind-and-body wellness, creativity, curiosity, and building community through a personalized experience for each student. By having agency, the student's learning can transcend the traditional classroom environment and allow them to build their future.

Students experience one Big Questions Day every eight days at school. It is a break in their routine from their day-to-day homeroom schedule. The whole class gathers at the Mango Tree Cafe, an open common area, and they attend the different studios and wellness activities that make up the day. The following is a summary of each of those moments of the day:

### Wellness

The students sign up per trimester for a short period of activity focused on sharing in learning activities that promote their mental and physical health. For example, the wellness activities may be based on: drawing, painting, singing, yoga, embroidery, card games, Zumba, etc. The idea of this period is to have small groups of students interact with faculty/staff members while performing an activity that relaxes and motivates them for the rest of the day. In the upper grades (4th and 5th grade), some students may choose to lead one of the wellness activities during the 2nd and 3rd trimesters. With the focus on taking a risk to learn something new and building relationships, students are not allowed to change their wellness activity.

Since daily physical activity is essential for the student's well-being, students also attend P.E. class, recess, and lunch at their usual schedule.



### Observe & Wonder Lab

All students schedule one block of time in the Observe & Wonder Lab, where students are exposed to phenomena- based learning to enhance their natural curiosity. They are encouraged to think and act like real-world scientists, collect data, experiment, observe, and interact with phenomena. This allows them to practice active learning skills. This is part of a more extensive school- wide program aimed at growing scientific thinking in primary school.

### Art Studio

The Art studio exposes students to various media and techniques to maximize their creative expression.

- Creative expression
- Collaborative projects
- Inspiration - wall, iPads, mini- lessons
- Studio skills: material care and storage, organization and techniques

### Music Studio

The Music studio exposes students to various instruments and musical theories (rhythm, beat, melody) basics) to maximize their creative expression.

- Visual learning for lower grades of basic music theory
- Montessori-inspired tools - scaffolding for getting students familiarized with instruments
- Band set up - collaborative learning
- iPads for independent learning to play piano or guitar

Research and Reading Studio

Where reading is valued, children set big questions to seek independent reading projects. The Library motivates students to read genres outside their comfort zone, such as non-fiction, science, biographies, history, wellness, etc. There is also time designated for them to enjoy independent reading in a comfortable environment.

Besides this, the students who visit the library on Big Questions Day also get guidance and mini-lessons on how the library works to make the most out of this valuable resource. Students learn how to find their favorite books by navigating the categories and numbers on the shelves.

They also have the opportunity to use the updated reference center for research, online resources, and internet access. This may help them expand the projects they are working on in other studios on Big Questions Day.

Drama Studio

The Drama Studio provides a dynamic space for students to explore creativity, storytelling, and self-expression, aligning with the National Core Arts Standards. Through activities like puppetry, improvisation, dance, and scene creation, students develop confidence, communication skills, and teamwork. They engage in theater games and collaborative projects, learning the power of narrative, production, performance, acting, directing, and design and technical skills, while fostering empathy and active listening. This studio nurtures a love for the performing arts, encouraging students to share their unique voices and ideas.

End of Day Reflection

At the end of the last block, or studio visited, some minutes are reserved for reflection on everything learned on the day. Kindergarten students may practice reflection skills with something as simple as sharing their favorite part of the day; upper grades may go deeper into assessing their project progress. The Big Questions Journal supports these reflective practices and prepares the students for their next steps. Additionally, these last few minutes of the day allow students to share some of these reflections with their peers.

Additionally, students are exposed to small reflection activities focused on culture and learning topics. This is presented as a mini-lesson and may address world concerns such as the environment, specific holidays, use of maps, literary awards, biographies, cultural diversity, etc.

These last few minutes of the day are also reserved for students connecting with their friends. Big Questions Day ends with a sense of community and well-being to keep our students inspired to learn.

Social and Emotional Learning and School Counseling

Social and Emotional Learning Classes

Using the CASEL Framework, the social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum teaches essential skill sets that provide learners and friends with ongoing, supported opportunities to learn and interact with peers with self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making about issues related to the classroom community. The counselors teach once a week SEL class in grade K-5 classrooms.

Everyday Practices

- Relaxation Station
- Peace Place
- Community Time
- Circle of friends and Cooperatives Games

Community Time

Is a student-centered forum in which the class gathers in a circle to establish and monitor expectations for how to treat one another, share experiences, solve problems, and build community. Ideally, Community Time takes place at the same time every day, for about 10 to 15 minutes. This everyday practice contributes to an increased sense of belonging and compassionate community.

Peace Place

It is another ongoing routine where the learners gather to learn and practice how to solve problems in a respectful and constructive manner. Students have the opportunity to share and feel validated about how they feel, to discuss what didn't work, and to empower them to be the authors of their own solutions, to make responsible decisions with others, and to build agreements and commitments to maintain positive relationships within the community. Peace Place steps to solve problems:

- **Pause:** Use a relaxation strategy to turn on your thinking brain.
- **Talk:** Tell your side of the story and then listen to your classmate. Take ownership for your part.
- **Think:** Brainstorm solutions to fix the problem.
- **Try:** Try the solutions.



Relaxation Station

Sometimes students need time to calm down, process their feelings, and organize their thoughts before they are ready to learn. At the beginning of the year, students will be introduced to the purpose of a Relaxation Station. They will help set it up, including selecting tools and strategies for relaxation, and learn how to recognize when their minds feel organized again. The Relaxation Station should always be a positive space, never used as punishment. Students are encouraged to self-advocate when they feel the need to use the Relaxation Station. Every classroom will have its own Relaxation Station area.

- I am Ready to Learn when:
- My brain feels organized.
  - I know what to do.
  - I am aware of my feelings.

Circle of Friends and Cooperatives Games

This everyday Practice, counselors can visit weekly lunch or recess to empower all students to appreciate differences, build genuine friendships through meaningful group activities and peers learn about their new friends, how to play kindly at school, and kids are able to explore creativity and leadership.

Skills-Based Small Group Counseling Sessions

Small group counseling sessions support students in developing the essential skill sets that provide learners and friends with ongoing, supported opportunities to interact with peers with self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making about issues related to the classroom community.

In small counseling groups, the counselor provides explicit instruction on specific social-emotional skills based on the needs previously discussed by the homeroom teacher, school counselor, and primary administration. The goal is to reinforce these skills for the student’s academic and behavioral success. These small groups will be conducted during TTT or Content Time, lasting 25 minutes. Before starting the group, the school counselor will inform parents about the purpose and objective of the group and the number of sessions. The school counselor will provide follow-up, feedback, and tools to parents once a month to support and involve them in the development of these skills at home.

Skills-Based One-on-One Counseling Sessions

In situations of social and emotional crisis or emergency, the student will receive support immediately from the school counseling team through empathetic listening and techniques or strategies that promote emotional regulation.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

As students develop social emotional learning, and the first seven of the ten ANS Tiger Traits (see page 5), faculty implement scaffolding strategies to support students to regulate undesirable behaviors. The previous section describes the Relaxation Station and Peace Place, which become routines that children can activate independently. It also describes the proactive teaching during skills-based counseling sessions, which foster the development of Tiger Traits and positive classroom community. Restorative practices ensure that there is: **clarity** of expectations, **accountability** to expectations and **re-engagement** and integration into the class, to promote a positive school community.

When a classroom community, a group of students or an individual student is demonstrating repetitive behaviors that impede the learning environment, teachers implement additional restorative practices to ensure clarity and accountability with the class. On the playground, staff members on duty are also trained to activate restorative practices to support the students. These practices include: problem-solving process, which is a conversation between students, facilitated by a teacher. If a classroom or playground conflict includes a violation of the Behavioral Expectations, a disciplinary process will ensue (see page 49).

A **Tiger Way Plan** is the final strategy facilitated by teachers to re-engage a student in the classroom community. Below is the description of the [Tiger Way Plan](#). While any disciplinary violations will be reported through the behavioral referrals (see page 49), the [Tiger Way Plan](#) seeks to provide partnership at home and in school for the child to improve. If there are repeated disciplinary violations, administration will develop a Behavior Improvement Plan (see p. 49).

- Meeting with teacher, student and parent
- Three steps:
  - Set a goal
  - Make a plan
  - Reflect
- The student feels ownership when they get to set their own goal.
- There is clarity on expectations and timing for accountability.
- The plan includes daily reports, and a meeting is scheduled for 3 weeks later to check on progress.

Parent Engagement

The Parent Engagement are workshops where the school counseling team teaches ANS families to learn, practice, and reinforce the social-emotional strategies at home that the children are learning at school. Active parent participation is crucial for the child’s behavioral and academic success.

Student Led Conferences

Student-Led Conferences are held at the end of the First, Second, and Third Trimester. Plan to attend your scheduled meeting with your child. At ANS, we expect teachers to meet with 100% of the parents during conferences because we believe ongoing communication with parents is essential to your child’s success in school.

Goals for SLC Conferences:

- For parents - see and hear from their child and teacher about what the child is already good at and what they are working on to keep growing as a learner.
- For students - take an active role in talking about their learning and set a goal to keep growing as a learner.
- For teachers - partner with parents by showing what we are teaching and how you are supporting their child’s learning at school.

K - 5th grade - The SLC conference will be structured like this:

- 10 minutes - child shares their portfolio
- 10 minutes - teacher discusses the child’s learning and how learning is supported at school
- 5 minutes - review goal from previous SLC; write a new goal for learning

Pathways - The SLC conference will be structured like this:

- 10 minutes - child shares their portfolio
- 10 minutes - teacher discusses the child’s learning and how learning is supported at school
- 5 minutes - review goal from previous SLC; write a new goal for learning

Pathways - The SLC conference will be structured like this:

- 5 minutes - What have you noticed about your child’s development? (parents)
- 5 minutes - Developmental celebrations
- 10 minutes - Developmental next steps
- 5 minutes - Review goal from previous SLC, Feedback/ goal setting

Grading, Reporting, and Classroom level practices

Grading Periods

The Primary School year is divided into three trimesters (ending November, February, and June). In addition to the report cards published at the end of each trimester, the Primary School hosts Student-Led Conferences three times yearly (November, February, and May).

These conferences enable students to develop ownership over the learning process and communicate their goals and strategies for the next steps in becoming self-led learners.

Grading Scale

The report card communicates the level of mastery of the ANS Learning Standards. ANS uses the Project AERO Framework to design standards-based learning. Those standards are communicated out through the domains of a subject area. Mastery grading takes into consideration the process and the products of student learning. No grades are averaged across time or standards. The mastery of grade- level standards at the reporting time is communicated on a 1 – 4 scale.

- 4- Masters Standard
- 3- Meets Standard
- 2- Approaches Standard
- 1- Not meeting Standard

Report Card

The purpose of the report card is to communicate with parents and students about achieving specific learning goals.

It identifies students’ levels of progress toward those goals, areas of strength, and areas where additional time and effort are needed.

Process & Product

Learning is a natural process that is dynamic for each learner. Grading and reporting practices seek to formalize the communication around benchmarks in student learning. Learning Galleries (digital & physical) allow students to tell the story of their learning journeys. The products compiled in the Learning Galleries are touchstones that represent the learning process. Each student’s voice, paired with the teacher’s anecdotal observations and formative tracking, allows the whole picture of student mastery of standards. Triangulating these various data points determines the level of mastery in a given domain and subject at reporting time.

Language Development

ANS students develop biliteracy in Spanish and English. Students begin this journey as speakers, listeners, readers, and writers with different language levels. Language development will be reported on the report card, as explained below.

When a student qualifies for the ELL specialized services and is in their first year of enrollment in ANS, students will not receive a literacy grade, as their language skills are still developing. However, they will receive an ELL narrative report. If a student qualifies for the SLL specialized program they will receive a Spanish Language Development grade on the report card. This grade is based on their growth at their current language level. When a student exits SLL, they will receive a Spanish Literacy grade.

After the first year at ANS, students in the ELL specialized services will receive literacy grades.

Language levels for ELL and SLL students

At ANS, we assess language proficiency using the WIDA screener and summative assessments for ELL students and the K-12 WIDA Proficiency Level Descriptors for SLL students. Students in the ELL/SLL specialized program will receive a narrative report each trimester, which shows their language development and proficiency levels using these scores.

WIDA Language Proficiency Level

- Level 1: Entering
- Level 2: Emerging
- Level 3: Developing
- Level 4: Expanding
- Level 5: Bridging
- Level 6: Reaching

Student Traits

ANS students develop college readiness skills across subject areas and learning habits that allow them to realize their leadership potential through meaningful contributions to society. In a mission-driven school like ANS, Student Traits are essential to student development.

Pathways - Kindergarten

Curious, Determined, Compassionate

First Grade - Second Grade

Curious, Determined, Compassionate, Reflective

Third Grade - Fourth Grade

Curious, Determined, Compassionate, Reflective, Well rounded, Accountable

Fifth Grade

Curious, Determined, Compassionate, Reflective, Well rounded, Accountable, Open-minded

The ten ANS Student Traits are gradually introduced from Pathways through tenth grade. We believe that all students can develop mastery of these traits in their journey as learners. Their demonstration of these traits follows the same scale, except for level 1, since we believe these traits are indeed in development for all students. 4- Masters 3- Meets 2- Approaches

Narratives

The narrative is a qualitative description that serves as a sketch of the holistic portrait of the child as a learner. It is not meant to be informative in isolation; instead, in conjunction with the standards-based grading section, the story of the child’s learning is communicated as a snapshot in time.

Grading Scales & Conversion to National System

The ANS Report Card is the official record of student achievement, published each grading period and retained during the student’s learning journey at ANS. For external purposes, the Report Card communicates the student’s achievement. For clarity to communicate with external systems, it should be accompanied by the ANS Assessment Philosophy and these Primary Grading & Reporting Practices documents to be interpreted by other methods.

The ANS Report Card is translated into the grading scales established by that authority for communication purposes with the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education. In that way, the Certificado de Notas should be interpreted as an approximation rather than a literal translation. Mastery will be approximated as 100%. Meeting will be approximately 90%. Approaching will be approximated as 75%, and Not Yet Developed will be approximated as 59. These percentages are only applicable for the MINED translation of reports and are not applied within the school grading criteria that value standards-based grading.



Pathways Trimester Reports

Pathways is a learning model where we, as a community, honor natural curiosity as the driver for all early learning. In creating an environment where children interact, explore, and learn with each other and their environment, the teachers use observations and feedback from parents to make the child’s learning visible along a developmental continuum. Teachers seek to understand “What does this child know? What is he or she able to do?” to support the child’s continued growth and development.

The Pathways program uses the Development and Learning Report as the child’s trimester report. The Development and Learning Report highlights a child’s strengths in particular areas of development and learning. Parents can see the areas where their child can demonstrate their abilities and highlight the next areas of growth and learning.

The seven areas of development and learning include:

- Social-Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Language Development
- Cognitive Development
- Early Literacy Skills
- Early Numeracy Skills
- Second Language Acquisition - English or Spanish

The Development & Learning Report does not communicate achievement of pre-defined indicators, as this practice does not align with a growth-based assessment philosophy, adaptable to the wide range of ages and development in an early learning population. For external purposes, Pathways Faculty and administration prepare required documentation as needed.

Assessment

Teachers use a variety of classroom-based assessments to help inform instruction and evaluate individual student progress and whole school achievement. These tools also give us an external perspective to assess whether or not our program is on track to prepare our students for ongoing success in their school careers.

- **BAS** - Benchmark Assessment System is administered to students 3x a year.
- **NWEA MAP** - Northwest Education Coalition, Measures of Academic Progress is administered 3x a year to students in grades 3, 4, and 5 (Reading, Math)
- **WIDA** - Language proficiency testing to measure English language skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Teacher and Class Assignments

Teachers take great care in building new class lists for the upcoming school year. This requires teachers to consider many factors to have balanced classrooms to promote a successful school year, including:

- Balance of student strengths and learning needs
- New friendship opportunities for students

Please know that the previous grade level teachers create new groups with input from counselors and support services in the Spring. In the summer, the administration assigns the teachers to groups.

Class lists will be shared the week before “Strong Start.” The class lists cannot be released before this event, given that groups may still be adjusted to accommodate new students.

We work diligently to ensure that every classroom is a positive place for learning. To build a collaborative community, we ask parents and teachers to not make requests for preferred teachers. A student’s placement may need to be changed rarely and will only be considered in serious circumstances. The confidentiality of these matters will be respected, and the administration reserves the right to deny a request.

Promotion

ANS teachers are committed to your child’s academic success. In a linguistically diverse school, we understand that children are developing language skills that can affect literacy development. Still, we are determined to create an effective program that meets this literacy goal.

Our goal is for your child to demonstrate grade-level English literacy skills by the end of 3rd grade.

We do not believe that retention is the solution to academic struggles. Instead, we think high-impact teaching, effective targeted skills instruction, and goal-setting with students are the most effective ways to help support every student’s success in school.

High-impact teaching methods used at ANS:

- Systematic phonics program, Writing Workshop, Reading Workshop, Guided Reading, Literacy in English,
- Literacy in Spanish, Bridges Mathematics Program, Science, Social
- Studies, Immersion language model, SEL instruction.

Targeted Skills instruction:

Guided Reading (small group twice a week), Writing conference (weekly), Extra Instruction (TTT daily small group instruction during the school day), ELL and SLL, Inclusion, Executive Functioning intervention, Skills-Based Counseling groups.

Goal-setting with students:

Goal-setting in all grades based on areas of improvement in reading, writing, language, and math.

Appropriate topics for writing

Authentic and meaningful writing experiences give students more reason to be thoughtful, organized, and expressive in their writing.

Writing about inappropriate topics is never acceptable. Such inappropriate topics might include violence, blood, weapons, sex, and crime. It is a teacher’s responsibility to guide students in knowing when they have crossed the line.

All adults and students are responsible for providing a safe learning environment, and no student has a right to scare others by writing or drawing violent or scary images.

Awards

President’s Award for Educational Excellence

The President’s Award for Educational Excellence recognizes outstanding achievement in the classroom when students graduate from 5th grade. Since 1983, this prestigious gold-seal award has honored the outstanding academic achievement of students in the U.S. and International Schools.

Students receiving the President’s Award for Educational Excellence will have met the following requirements:

- Grades: The student will have received Meets Expectations (3) or Mastery (4) in all academic areas – English Literacy, Spanish Literacy, Math, Science, and Social Studies throughout fifth grade.
- Attendance: The student will have “Good” attendance, defined as < 5 excused absences per year in fifth grade. The student will have no unexcused absences. The student will also have < 5 tardies per year. Documented illness and medical absence will not affect the good attendance standing.
- Tiger Traits: The student will be recognized in their class as an example of the Tiger Way. They will have received Meets Expectations (3) or Mastery (4) on all seven Tiger Traits throughout fifth grade and have no major referrals for behavior throughout fifth grade.
- MAP tests: The student will have > 85%ile on both the MAP math and reading test on two data points during fifth grade.

President’s Award for Educational Achievement

The President’s Award for Educational Achievement recognizes 1-3 students who show outstanding growth, improvement, and unusual commitment to academic progress when they graduate from 5th grade. Its purpose is to encourage and reward students who give their best effort, often in the face of special obstacles which may have kept them from earning the Award for Educational Excellence.

Students receiving the President’s Award for Educational Achievement will have met the following requirements:

1. Tremendous growth: Based on MAP tests, BAS tests, WIDA tests, and grades, the student will have shown remarkable growth in literacy and math but, due to special obstacles, did not meet all the criteria for the President’s Award for Educational Excellence.
2. Distinctive commitment: The student demonstrates exceptional commitment and hard work to learning in academics despite obstacles such as illness, personal crisis, or special needs.
3. Attendance: The student will have “Good” attendance, defined as < 5 excused absences per year in fifth grade. The student will have no unexcused absences. The student will also have < 5 tardies per year. Documented illness and medical absences will not affect the good attendance standing.
4. Tiger Traits: The student will be recognized in their class as an example of the Tiger Way. They will have received Meets Expectations (3) or Mastery (4) on all seven Tiger Traits throughout fifth grade and have no major referrals for behavior throughout fifth grade.

Award for Youth Empowerment

The Award for Youth Empowerment – AYE recognizes outstanding commitment to improving the world. The AYE Award is presented when students graduate from 5th grade. With an exceptional demonstration of our core values of Social Responsibility, Environmental Awareness, Innovation, Creativity, and Intellectual Curiosity, students earning this gold-seal distinction will have demonstrated a commitment to a personal and important cause that has relevance to their lives’ well-being of the Nicaraguan community. The service work earning this distinction will be known and recognized in the school and community through awareness building, collaboration, service learning, and activism and is expected to be student-led.

Students receiving the AYE award will be chosen based on the following criteria:

1. Cause: Student(s) have selected an important cause relevant to the lives and well- being of the Nicaraguan community.
2. Knowledgeable: Student(s) have studied the issues, data, and history related to this cause to demonstrate expertise about the cause.
3. Awareness building: Student(s) will have raised awareness by educating others about the cause in our school or community.
4. Collaboration: Student(s) will have found ways to connect with others who join in the work about the cause.
5. Service-learning: Student(s) will have an active role in learning and serving.
6. Activism: Student(s) will have organized others to help with joining the work.



Students interested in being considered for this award will give a ten-minute presentation to the Principal and AYE selection committee in May. The award will be granted to 1-3 individuals or small groups each year. The awards are given at the Principal's discretion based on the criteria.

### Official Documents Request

Parents and/or legal guardians or ANS alumni who need to request Transcripts and/or Transcripts of Records and/or Official Records must complete the [Official Records Request Form](#) found on the ANS website.

All fees related to the request for official documents must be paid prior to obtaining the requested documentation.



## Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

### Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

An MoU is a document that establishes formal agreements and commitments between the administrative team of the American Nicaraguan School, students, parents, and/or legal guardians. The objective of the MoU is to reaffirm expectations in support of the student's holistic development in areas in which he/she is presenting difficulties such as: discipline, absences/late arrivals to class, poor academic performance, learning and/or social-emotional difficulties, and/or medical conditions.

#### MoU Areas

A student will receive an MoU when teachers, the specialized learning team, counselors, the Dean of discipline, and/or area directors observe and document that the student has consistent difficulties and high levels of risk in the following areas:

#### I. Discipline

An MoU is written when the student has received in:

1. Multiple discipline offenses were reported by teachers through the Behavioral Report Form (BRF) and communicated to parents and/or legal guardians.
2. Multiple classroom incidents related to engagement that were communicated to parents and/or guardians.
3. Received a Behavior Improvement Plan as determined by the ANS Discipline Committee and presented to parents and/or guardians.

#### II. Absences/Tardies

An MoU is written when:

##### Primary

1. The student has excessive absences that approach the limit established in the Primary Parent-Student Handbook.
2. The Primary Principal and/or Assistant Principal has sent Attendance Warning Letters to the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s).
3. The administrative and counseling team has held follow-up meetings with parents and/or guardians to present the Attendance Support Plan.

#### III. Low Academic Performance

An MoU is written when:

1. Teachers and/or the specialized learning lead, have notified parents (through email and/or meetings) of their concern about the low performance that the student has been obtaining in his/her classes during the first weeks of the school year prior to the 1st evaluation cut-off.
2. The Primary or Secondary Principal and/or Assistant Principal has sent a warning letter to the student (if applicable), parents and/or legal guardians reflecting a grade lower than 60/100 in one or more subjects after the 1st evaluation cut-off.
3. The academic team, specialized learning lead, counselors, and/or area directors have held a follow-up meeting and presented an academic improvement plan to the student (if applicable), parents, and/or legal guardians after the end of the first semester.



**IV. Learning and Social-Emotional Difficulties**

- 1. An MoU is written when a psychoeducational evaluation is required due to documented prior observations by teachers, the specialized learning lead, counselors, and/or area directors of learning difficulties and other factors affecting the student’s academic performance.
- 2. An MoU is written when a psychological evaluation is required due to documented prior observations by teachers, the specialized learning lead, counselors, and/or area directors in order to identify and address mental health issues that may be affecting the student’s behavior. The assessment will help to understand the student’s needs and provide the appropriate support needed at school.

**V. Medical Condition**

An MoU is written to provide support to a student with a health condition that significantly impacts his/her learning process. The medical information requested will allow the ANS academic team, counseling department, and administrative team to understand the student’s needs, and thus determine an appropriate support plan for the student’s medical needs.

**VI. Admission**

An MoU is drafted in cases in which parents and/or legal guardians must provide the necessary documentation to complete the permanent record of their child entering ANS. These documents include: Transcripts/Certificates of Grades, letters of recommendation, letters of conduct, apostilles, and any other documentation that requires compliance within the guidelines established by the Ministry of Education (MINED).

An MoU may also be drafted after the admissions committee has analyzed and identified below-average scores on standardized assessments for incoming students. These students are accepted into ANS on a provisional basis with the understanding that they and their parents and/or legal guardians must follow the academic guidelines and expectations established by ANS.

**Phases of the MoU Process**

- 1. Identification of the Situation: After the teacher, specialized learning lead, counselors, Dean of Discipline and/or area directors provide support, apply the formative measures aligned to the Parent-Student Handbook, send written communication and conduct meetings with parents and/or legal guardians, the team will analyze and assess of the situation the student is facing in any of the above-mentioned areas.
- 2. Writing the MoU: The Student Intervention Coordinator drafts the MoU in collaboration with the specialized learning program lead, counselors, Dean of Discipline, and directors of the corresponding area. The MoU is then reviewed by the ANS Ministry of Education (MINED) representative.
- 3. Then, the Student Intervention Coordinator, specialized learning lead, counselors, Dean of Discipline, and/or area directors present the MoU to the parents and/or legal guardians, as well as to the student (if applicable).
- 4. Presentation and Signing of the MoU: The document is presented for signature by the ANS team members mentioned above, as well as the student (if applicable) and their parents and/or legal guardians.

This process provides the student with the opportunity, guidance, and support tailored to their needs, to ensure their academic and personal growth.

**Signatures of the Involved Parties**

By signing the MoU, the participants agree to the terms, commitments, and requirements outlined in the document.

**Validity of the MoU**

The MoU becomes effective on the date it is signed by all parties and will remain in effect throughout the current school year, until all terms are fulfilled, the proposed objectives are achieved, and it is demonstrated that the difficulties faced by the student have been overcome.

**Follow-up of the MoU and Drafting of a Second MoU**

The Student Intervention Coordinator will follow up on the agreements, commitments, and requirements established in the MoU, both with the academic team, the specialized learning lead, counselors, and school administration, as well as with the students, parents, and/or legal guardians.

In the event that the Student Intervention Coordinator identifies non-compliance of the agreements, commitments and requirements established in the first signed MoU, another meeting will be requested with the ANS team, student, parents and/or legal guardians, to proceed with the implementation of a second MoU. The second MoU will be attached to the first previously implemented MoU.

**Important Notes**

- In the event that parents and/or legal guardians decline to sign either the first or second MoU, ANS reserves the right to not renew the student’s enrollment for the following school year.
- In the event that parents and/or legal guardians or the student do not comply with the agreements, commitments, and requirements signed in the second MoU, ANS will reserve the right to not renew the student’s enrollment for the following school year.

# Discipline

- 1. Compliance with ANS Dress Code:** Adhere to the school’s dress code.
- 2. Compliance with ANS Attendance/Punctuality:** Arrive on time to school (before 7:05) and class.
- 3. Upholding the ANS Academic Honor Code:** No lying to ANS teachers or staff, cheating, plagiarism, forgery, or theft/stealing.
- 4. Classroom Conduct:** No behavior that disrupts the teaching process or hinders other students’ ability to learn. This includes:
  - No phone and/or smartwatch is allowed in ANS campus during school hours (7:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.) and/or school-sponsored activities.
- 5. Respectful Behavior:** No actions that may cause psychological or emotional harm to fellow students or other members of the ANS community.
- 6. Safety and Well-being:** No behavior that threatens or causes physical harm to fellow students or other members of the ANS community.
- 7. Privacy and Consent:** No recording or posting of photographs/videos of students, teachers or ANS community members during school or school-sponsored activities without their explicit written consent.
- 8. Zero Tolerance for Prohibited Substances and Weapons:** Possession, use, distribution or sale of weapons/tobacco/vapes/alcohol, or illegal substances on school property or during school-sponsored events is strictly forbidden.
9. No leaving class without a Hall Pass.
10. Comply with all ANS’ Primary Parent-Student Handbook/ANS Discipline Manual/ Guidelines/Manuals/and any other regulations issued by ANS.

Violations of these behavioral expectations will be thoroughly investigated by the Dean of Discipline and Engagement and the ANS Primary Discipline Committee, which includes, but is not limited to: Dean of Discipline and Engagement, Primary Counselor, Child Protection Lead, Primary Lead and Primary Principal. Depending upon the case being reviewed, the Discipline Committee will also include: the Athletic Director. Appropriate Consequences/ Formative Measures, as outlined in the ANS Discipline Manual, will be applied.

## ANS Discipline Manual: Violations and Consequences/Formative Measures (Pathways & Kinder)

At American Nicaraguan School, we recognize that the developmental stage of children between the ages of 3 and 6 is different from that of Primary School. For this reason, we address each disciplinary incident individually, considering the unique needs and characteristics of this developmental stage. We ensure a continuous process of collaboration between the school and the family to provide the best support for each child.

In incidents related to misbehavior, the following process is implemented:

- 1. Communication:** The teacher will inform:
  - Parents and/or legal guardians of the incident via email and phone call.
  - Preschool counselor.
  - Primary Principal and/or Primary Lead.
- 2. Internal Collaboration:** The Primary Principal, The Primary Lead and the Preschool counselor will assess the incident comprehensively with the student and determine the next steps.
- 3. School Support Plan:** Depending on the incident and the student’s needs, a support plan will be implemented, which may include a Tier 2 or Tier 3 intervention with the support of the counselor.
- 4. Meeting and Agreement with parents and/or legal guardians:** An in-person meeting will be held with the parents and/or legal guardians to agree on the next steps, which may include recommendations for additional support from external specialists.

This process ensures that each student receives the appropriate support, taking into account their developmental stage, and guarantees the best possible collaboration between the school and the parents and/or legal guardians.

## ANS Discipline Manual: Violations and Consequences/Formative Measures (First to Fifth Grade)

### ANS Discipline Violations

The following behaviors are violations of the ANS mission and values and will not be tolerated:

#### Level 1 Disciplinary Violations

- Inappropriate/Disruptive Classroom Behavior. This includes, but is not confined to:
  - Receiving four (4) or more ones (1s) in engagement in one (1) week
  - Interference with classroom instruction.
  - Defiance/Disrespect/ Noncompliance.
  - The following electronic devices are banned on the ANS campus for all students: mobile phones, smartphones, smartwatches, video games consoles, laser pointers.
  - Possession, or use, of other personal electronic devices such as laptops or tablets without the consent of the teacher.
    - Individual teachers have the authority to determine which electronic devices are allowed in their classrooms.
- Inappropriate language (cursing, expletives, lewd/curse expressions) anywhere on the school campus (i.e., classrooms, hallways, lunch areas, playground, athletic fields).
- A misbehavior that causes circumstantial physical harm to an individual(s) and/or groups that are part of the ANS community.
- Leaving the classroom without the teacher’s authorization. Skipping class for unjustified causes.
- Failure to comply with the dress code.
- Hiding alone and/or in groups in any place within ANS campus during school hours.



- Littering or leaving trash after break/lunch/outdoor activities on campus or in school-sponsored activities.

Level 2 Disciplinary Violations

- Three (3) or more Level 1 Disciplinary Violations over a semester.
- Disrespect National Symbols.
- Noncompliance with ANS’ Manuals and/or written orientations.
- Not attending/showing up for an assigned detention and/or assigned formative measure without a written, valid justification provided from parents and/or legal guardians.
- Disrespect of teachers, classmates, educational authorities, administrative personnel and/or members of the educational community in general.
- Voluntarily interrupting other classrooms.
- Lying to ANS academic authorities while the incident is being reviewed.
- Threats, insults and/or slander to teachers, classmates, educational authorities, administrative personnel and/or members of the educational community in general.
- Displays of affection in unsuitable settings.
- Spitting anywhere on campus and/or directly on people.
- Any behavior-- speech or writing (online or in print) – cyberbullying, intimidation, hateful language, emotional abuse among others, that:
  - Causes physical, emotional or psychological harm to individuals and/or groups that are part of the ANS community.
  - Hiding of a student, teacher, ANS member’s private property and/or causing damage as a result.
  - Communicates to individuals and/or groups that are part of the ANS community that they are not valued/respected based on their race, color, gender, religion, national origin, language proficiency, sexual orientation, physical appearance, disability or socioeconomic status. Make comments of hateful speech, for example: anti-Semitism, sexism, and homophobia.  
*This behavior is not permitted on school grounds, during school sponsored events, activities, trips, or competitions, or online when directed at certain student(s), teachers, faculty, or members of the ANS community.*
- Use/possession/distribution/sale of cigarettes/electronic cigarettes (vapes).
- Students are prohibited from placing delivery service orders of any kind (e.g., food or other items) to campus, whether using their own devices or those of others.
- Engaging in behaviors that are irresponsible to his or herself, as well as put at risk the health and safety of a student and/or other students or members of the community.
- Committing academic fraud.
- Forgery of parent and/or legal guardian/ANS staff /teachers and/or administrative personnel’s signatures, either manually and/or electronically.
- Violation of the security of computer system (destroying, altering, or damaging information, data or processes) of ANS students/ANS staff /teachers and/or administrative personnels’ electronic devices, such as computers, laptops, cell phones, tablets.
- Placing propaganda and/or making drawings harmful to morals and ethics or any other material that is not previously authorized by the school principal anywhere on the school campus.
- Covering up one’s own and others’ misconduct.
- Violating the ANS Discipline Manual for school sponsored events, including but not limited to ANS’s Kermesse, Fall Festival, field trips, sports and/or academic competitions

(national or international).

Level 3 Disciplinary Violations

- Three (3) or more Level 2 violations occur over a semester.
- Recording and/or sharing video recordings, audio or pictures of any students, teachers, staff or members of the community without their express and written consent while they are on campus or at ANS activities outside of campus.
- Creation of (but not limited to) accounts, websites, documents, banners, flyers, or forms in digital or written form using the logo, brand, or name of ANS partially or in full without written authorization by administration.
- Peer-to-peer harmful behavior. Any act by which a student says sexually inappropriate, lewd, or lascivious things to another student, teacher, or member of the ANS community without his/her consent.
  - Refer to [ANS Child Protection Handbook](#)
  - Protocols established by Nicaraguan law will be followed.
- ANS students will not provide services of writing essays, completing tests, writing summaries in exchange for any type of compensation.
- Direct or indirect threats to the safety of the school community as a whole or individual members of the school community.
- Physical aggression and/or verbal aggression against classmates, teachers, staff and/or members of the school community:
  - May involve hitting (with hand/foot or other object), punching, slapping, pushing, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, scratching, pulling hair, biting, burning, puncturing, spraying, choking, drowning, or any other sustained physical activity/restraint that causes intentional physical harm and/or verbal insults.
- Craft/use/possession/distribution/sale/trade of firearms and/or Craft /Use /Possession of Weapons, whether or not they are handmade (sharp objects, objects with any kind of blade attached), arson related material (lighters, matches, fire starters, firecrackers) and all kinds of explosive material (solid, gel or liquid).
  - Protocols established by Nicaraguan law will be followed.
- Use/possession/distribution/sale of arson related materials.
  - Protocols established by Nicaraguan law will be followed.
- Use/possession/distribution/sale of nicotine, tobacco, vaping (electronic cigarettes).
  - Protocols established by Nicaraguan law will be followed.
- Carrying, promoting and/or sharing the use of pornographic material of any kind and by any means.
- Bribe and/or blackmail to other students, teachers, and ANS members.
- Vandalism -- Intentional damage to school property (building, material facilities, furniture, and/or equipment) or others’ private property.
- Damage to and/or misuse of property including, but not limited to, instructional materials.
- Misuse of ANS Network Policies.

Notes:

- The school reserves the right to review violations that occurred within the ongoing school year.
- Level 1 referrals need to be communicated to parents and/or legal guardians within 48 hours.
- Level 2 and Level 3 referrals will be communicated to parents and/or legal guardians within 24 hours.

Consequences of ANS Disciplinary Violations

Formative Measures

After witnessing and/or learning one or more of the above disciplinary violations, the teacher/paraprofessional/bus chaperone/counselor/staff completes a Behavioral Report Form (BRF):

- If it is a student who witnessed/learned the discipline violation, the student reports it to either a teacher, paraprofessional, bus chaperone, counselor, Primary Lead, Dean of Discipline and Engagement or Principal who then completes the BRF.
- If the incident is Level 2 or Level 3, and it involves a safety concern, the student (s) will be sent to the Primary Office or Discipline Office. The Primary Lead, Primary Principal, Counselor or Dean of Discipline and Engagement meets with the student accompanied by the counselor.

The Discipline Committee is formed by:

- Dean of Discipline and Engagement
- Primary Counselor
- Child Protection Lead
- Primary Lead
- Primary Principal
- Depending upon the case being reviewed, the Athletic Director. The Discipline Committee will elect among their members who will be the chairman of such a committee, who will serve for one academic year. Afterward, a new chairman will be elected.

If parents and/or legal guardians do not agree with the decision made by the Discipline Committee, they can submit a written appeal via email to the Director General and ANS MINED Liaison.

Level 1 Disciplinary Violations: Formative Measures

The below listed consequences, when applied, will be notified to parents and/or legal guardians via email.

- The Dean of Discipline and Engagement issues a verbal caution/warning to the student. The student (if applicable), the Dean of Discipline, Primary Lead and/or Primary Principal, and the counselor sign the warning note in order to acknowledge it was received.
- In the event of inappropriate classroom behavior, after school detention for one or two hours will be applied, depending on the behavior reported and reviewed by the Dean of Discipline and the Counselor.
- Current privileges will be suspended based on the nature of the violation:
  - Playing during recess
  - Big Question Day participation
  - Classroom celebrations
  - Participation in a class game
  - Participation in field trips
- (1st - 2nd) After receiving four (4) or more ones (1s) engagement in a week, a 60-minute in-school detention will be applied the next designated day. During this time, he/she will do

assigned schoolwork and reflection in the Primary Office and/or, miss a privileged activity (see above).

- (3rd - 4th - 5th) After receiving four (4) or more ones (1s) engagement in a week, 90-minute after-school detention will be applied on the next designated day. During this time, he/she will do schoolwork and reflection assigned throughout their school day.
- In the case of a device removal, in addition to the verbal warning, a 60-minutes after school detention is applied on the next designated day. During this time, he/ she will do schoolwork assigned throughout their school day.

Student (if applicable), Dean of Discipline and Engagement, Primary Lead and/or Primary Principal, and counselor signs a printed copy of the BRF, acknowledging: a) comprehension of the disciplinary violation and b) commitment to changing behavior. The BRF Form is entered into the student’s permanent file.

Level 2 Disciplinary Violations: Formative Measure

The Primary Lead, Primary Principal, Counselor or Dean of Discipline and Engagement meets with the student accompanied by the counselor.

Following the meeting with the student, and one or more members of the Discipline Committee, the Dean of Discipline and Engagement meets with the Discipline Committee to determine the applicable formative measures.

The Discipline Committee is formed by:

- Dean of Discipline and Engagement
- Primary Counselor
- Child Protection Lead
- Primary Lead
- Primary Principal
- Depending upon the case being reviewed, the Athletic Director. The Discipline Committee will elect among their members who will be the chairman of such a committee, who will serve for one year. Afterward, a new chairman will be elected.

Formative measures for Level 2 Violations include one or more of the following:

- In-school suspension (during this time he/she will engage in reflection and complete schoolwork assigned throughout their school day).
- Out-of-school suspension (up to five (5) days).
  - During suspension, the school will provide the necessary study materials that will allow the student to keep up to date without affecting the student’s academic performance.
  - During suspension, the student must keep up to date with the class material and/or homework required during this period of suspension.
- If the incident involves a safety concern, the Discipline Committee will require a psych evaluation from a professional outsider referral in no less than two weeks.

Once the BRF is received and assessed, the Discipline Committee reaches consensus, determines the appropriate formative measures, and members sign the minutes of the meeting, indicating that there is agreement with the decision.

Afterward, parents or/legal guardians will be contacted via email and phone call to arrange an in-person meeting. At the end of the meeting, the Discipline Committed members, student (if present) and/or parents and/or legal guardians sign a printed copy of the BRF and ACTA BOOK acknowledging:

- Comprehension of the disciplinary violation.
- Compliance with submitting requested documentation.
- Agreement with the formative measure assigned.
- Commitment to changing behavior in the future (this will include follow-up counseling and/or a Behavioral Improvement Plan).
- Comprehension that if the behavior continues, it will determine a possible consequence and manner in which the student will finish the academic year
- (without interrupting his/her studies) and/or non enrollment for the following school year.

The signed BRF along with the copy of the minutes written in ACTA BOOK of the meeting signed by all present is entered into the student’s permanent file.

If parents and/or legal guardians do not agree with the decision made by the Discipline Committee, they can submit a written appeal via email to the Director General and ANS MINED Liaison.

**Level 3 Disciplinary Violations: Formative Measures**

The Primary Lead, Primary Principal, Counselor or Dean of Discipline and Engagement meets with the student accompanied by the counselor. Following the meeting with the student, and one or more members of the Discipline Committee, the Dean of Discipline and Engagement meets with the Discipline Committee to determine the applicable formative measures.

**The Discipline Committee is formed by:**

- Dean of Discipline and Engagement
- Primary Counselor
- Child Protection Lead
- Primary Lead
- Primary Principal
- Depending upon the case being reviewed, the Athletic Director. The Discipline Committee will elect among their members who will be the chairman of such a committee, who will serve for one year. Afterward, a new chairman will be elected.
- 

**Formative measures for Level 3 Violations include one or more of the following:**

- Out-of-school suspension (up to five (5) days), which depending on the seriousness of the case, this period of time may be extended while the review is conducted.
  - During suspension, the school will provide the necessary study materials that will allow the student to keep up to date without affecting the student’s academic performance.
  - During suspension, the student must keep up to date with the class material and/or homework that must be completed during this period of suspension.

- Withdrawal from after school programs.
- Depending upon the disciplinary fault incurred by the student, as well as the school period at the time (I Semester or II Semester), it will be determined the manner in which the student will finish the academic year (without interrupting his/her studies).
- Non participation in promotion.
- In the case of vandalism/damage to the school, the student, parents and/or legal guardians will be obligated to repair and/or pay for the damage.
- In the case of damage to and/or misuse of property, including, but not limited to, instructional materials, students, parents, and/or legal guardians will be obligated to repair and/or pay for the damage.
- Non-renewal of enrollment:
  - Non-renewal of enrollment is defined as the non-renewal of a student’s permanent enrollment in the school.
    - The non-renewal of enrollment applies when:
      - The student fails to comply with the agreements signed in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).
      - The initial infraction is deemed sufficiently serious; the student may be removed from on-campus learning for the remainder of the school year (without interrupting his/her studies), and the student won’t be invited to re-enroll in the next school year.
  - After reviewing the disciplinary violation, the Disciplinary Committee could recommend non-renewal or continued enrollment to the Primary Lead, Primary Principal, and Student Intervention Coordinator. The Director General will be informed and will make the final decision on the student’s status at the school.
  - Any appeals of decisions regarding non-renewal or enrollment will be handled by written appeal via email to the Board of Directors.

Once the BRF is received and assessed, the Disciplinary Committee reaches consensus, determines the appropriate formative measures, and members sign the minutes of the meeting, indicating that there is agreement with the decision.

Afterward, parents and/or legal guardians will be contacted via email and/or phone call to arrange an in-person meeting. At the end of the meeting, the Discipline Committed members, student (if present) and/or parents and/or legal guardians sign a printed copy of the BRF and ACTA BOOK acknowledging:

- Comprehension of the disciplinary violation.
- Compliance with submitting requested documentation.
- Agreement with the formative measure assigned.
- Commitment to changing behavior in the future (this will include follow-up counseling and/or a behavioral improvement plan, and/or a Memorandum of understanding [MoU]).
- Comprehension that if the behavior continues, it will determine a possible consequence and manner in which the student will finish the academic year.

**Note:** Actions that are illegal in Nicaragua will be reported to authorities and tried under the jurisdiction of corresponding authorities under country laws. If parents and/or legal guardians do not agree with the decision made by the Discipline



Committee, they can submit a written appeal via email to the Director General and ANS MINED Liaison.

In the event where by the student committed an illicit act, the matter will fall under the jurisdiction of the corresponding authority as determined by applicable law.

**Note:** ANS reserves the right to communicate Level 3 violations to external educational entities.

Behavior Improvement Plans

Students may be placed on a Behavior Improvement Plan as a result of one (depending on the incident) or multiple disciplinary violations Level 2 or Level 3 over a semester.

The policy on Behavior Improvement Plan is established to provide students with the opportunity to return to the ANS Student Behavioral Standards. Students who are placed on Behavior Improvement Plan are in danger of losing their enrollment privileges at the American Nicaraguan School. Parents and/or legal guardians will be informed in writing when their child is placed on a Behavior Improvement Plan and will be required to attend a meeting with the Primary Lead, Primary Principal, Dean of Discipline and Engagement and Counselor.

A Behavior Improvement Plan will be prepared indicating the steps to improve his/her behavior. Violations of this agreement will result in the implementation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), a document of commitment, collaboration and follow-up between the Discipline Committee and the parents and/or legal guardians.

**Note:** *Students placed on Behavior Improvement Plans are only able to participate in sports or extracurricular programs and activities as recommended by the counselor and approved by the Primary Lead, Primary Principal, Dean of Discipline and Engagement and/or Athletic Director.*

Academic Honor Code

In keeping with our ANS mission to educate students to be ethical individuals, the school will guide its students along the path of honesty and integrity in their academic endeavors. For this purpose, students are expected to comply fully with the Academic Honor Code.

ANS students will not engage in lying, stealing, cheating, or plagiarism and, through their actions, will encourage others to comply with the Academic Honor Code as well.

Lying

Encompasses, but is not limited to, the following:

- Willful and knowledgeable telling of an untruth or falsehood as well as any form of deceit, attempted deception, or fraud in an oral or written statement.
- Lying or failing to give complete information to school staff members or faculty members; feigning illness to gain extra preparation time for tests, quizzes, or assignments due.
- Forging signatures on any document.

Plagiarizing

Encompasses, but is not limited to, the following:

- Presenting as one’s own, the works or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgements.
- Using the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of materials, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgement.
- Present works as their own, the source of which has been the result of the use of artificial intelligence programs known as AI. ANS will make use of specialized programs to identify information that has unauthorized use of study aids, notes, books, data, or other information; computer fraud; sabotaging the projects or experiments of other students.

Cheating

- Encompasses, but is not limited to, the following:
- Willful giving or receiving, or any attempt to gain or provide, of an unauthorized, unfair, dishonest, or unscrupulous advantage in schoolwork over other students.
- Deception; the use of talking, signs, and/or gestures during an evaluation; copying from another student or allowing the copying of an individual assignment; submission of pre-written work at times when the assignment calls for work to be written in class; been improperly obtained through the use of such resources (AI).

Stealing

Encompasses, but is not limited to, the following:

- Taking or attempting to use, without the right or permission to do so, and with the intent to make the wrongful use of, the school work or materials of another student or the instructional materials of a teacher.
- Taking or attempting to take somebody’s personal property without their knowledge and expressed permission and/or knowingly possessing stolen property.

This code will be reviewed and discussed with primary students. The process of reflection when Academic Honor Code Violations arise is the same for both formative and summative assessments. Academic Honor Code Violations are included in the student’s permanent file.

Habitual behavior(s) with repeated offenses are reported to external programs or educational institutions.

**First Offense:**

- A disciplinary letter or note will be placed in the student’s permanent record, and the student’s parents and/or legal guardians will be notified via email.
- When the student commits academic fraud, the assessment will be marked as invalid, and it will be reflected in the Tiger Traits Card.

**Second Offense:**

- A disciplinary letter or note will be placed in the student’s permanent record and the student’s parents and/or legal guardians will be notified via email
- When the student commits academic fraud, the assessment will be marked as invalid, and it will be reflected in the Tiger Traits Card.
- The Primary Administration will issue an automatic in-school suspension.
- The student will be placed on a behavior improvement plan and a meeting will be convened with the parents and/or legal guardians in order to sign the Behavior Improvement Plan. See section Behavior Improvement Plan.

**Third Offense:**

- A disciplinary letter or note will be placed in the student’s permanent record, and the student’s parents and/or legal guardians will be notified via email.
- When the student commits academic fraud, the assessment will be marked as invalid, and it will be reflected in the Tiger Traits Card.
- With the third offense, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will be issued.

**Smoking, Alcohol, and Drugs**

Students, teachers, or any visitors to the campus are not allowed to consume alcohol, drugs or smoke on school premises. The buying, selling, giving, or receiving drugs or other illegal/controlled substances on school grounds or school events is strictly prohibited.

# Student Services

## Special Programs at ANS

**Teacher Table Time - TTT**

(daily 45-minutes)  
Did you know that a student achieving proficiency in reading by third grade is the most important predictor of high school graduation and career success? ANS is working to ensure that all students are proficient in their reading skills by third grade. We also believe that competency in math is essential for school and career success. These are the steps that our school takes to identify and diagnose any gaps in your child’s reading and math skill development:

**1) Screening**

- **Reading:** All students are tested with a brief assessment three times a year. In Kindergarten and 1st grade, we use the Early Literacy Benchmark Tests to monitor a child’s progress in reading. In Kindergarten - 5th grade, we use the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Achievement Test - BAS Reading Test. The BAS is individually administered and helps your child’s teacher know what target skills your child might need to enable them to progress to the next level. In 3rd - 5th grade, we use the NWEA Map test to measure your child’s reading skills.
- **Math:** A 5-question screener at the beginning of every unit informs the teacher if your child has mastered the standards from the previous grade level that will be essential for accessing the learning in the current unit. For grade-level standards, teachers use checkpoints and assessments to determine if your child is mastering the math skills they need for grade-level competency.

**2) Home Communication**

- After getting to know your readers and mathematicians at the Beginning of Year (BOY) and Middle of the Year (MOY) testing, teachers will let you know how your child is doing and how they will be supporting them to keep growing.
- Parents will receive the Home Communication Plan via the Parent Portal.

3) Extra Instruction

Students who need to work on a target skill may receive the following intervention:

- TTT – Teacher Table Time – Students who will benefit from extra instruction to achieve reading and math proficiency by the end of the year.
- All ANS Students participate in TTT for diverse types of instruction. Some of this instruction is explicit, systematic instruction for a specific learning gap, which is considered our Tier II instruction.
- When teachers, administrators or parents observe a persistent need for additional support or suspect a potential learning need, there will be a parent meeting, in alignment to [this process](#).
- **Specialized Learning** – Students in the Specialized Learning Program receive specialized instruction based on an annual plan. These services are outlined in the Specialized Learning Handbook This helps support the student’s goals and coordinate the efforts to help reach them.

4) Progress Monitoring

All students in Tier II or Tier III instruction will be tested every 4-6 weeks to ensure they are on track to achieve proficiency.

Stepping Stones to being Kindergarten Ready at ANS

Your child has already been getting ready for Kindergarten! In these early years, a developmentally appropriate way to learn through play is the most valuable way for younger children to grow strong brains and hearts. All that joy, language, and thinking work will be so important as they enter Kindergarten.

While Kindergarten has plenty of choice and playful learning opportunities built into our program, children will need new skills for the learning work to start to learn how to read, write and do mathematics.

Kindergarten children now have the ability to listen to instruction for short periods of time and then practice that new skill in their own work. As they begin to unlock the code of print and the patterns of how numbers work, they take their first steps toward becoming readers, writers, and mathematicians. They are growing a strong identity as thinkers and problem-solvers.

Like stepping stones, a child’s developmental readiness skills give them a solid pathway as a learner. Children develop and grow at their own pace, but parents and teachers give them the opportunity to practice and develop these skills.

With more stepping stones in place, children will find more joy in their learning to be readers, writers, problem solvers, and friends.





### How will parents and teachers share observations about the stepping stones?

When a child masters a new developmental skill, it is a celebration! Teachers and parents will share what they notice about the Stepping Stones so that we can collaborate around the opportunities each child needs or give guidance about what to work on next.

Rising Kindergarteners in Pathways will get an early start on the Stepping Stones with parents during SLC conferences in May.

Kindergarten teachers will include a Stepping Stones update in Friday Feedback folders for the first trimester of kindergarten. Then in the second and third trimesters, teachers will send home your child's work with teacher feedback about how your child is growing as a reader, writer, and mathematician.

### What is the right step for your child to enter full day?

These Stepping Stones help parents and teachers make each child's readiness visible so they can make choices about their child's readiness for the full day (7:00- 2:30).

By giving choice and flexibility, children and parents will feel supported to make the choice that feels right for their child. All children start school on August 9 with a 12:00 dismissal.

Parents and teachers can make a choice when their child starts full day - Step 1 (September 4), Step 3 (October 2), or Step 3 (November 6).

By November 6, all children will have joined their class for the full day.

Stepping Stones to being kindergarten ready - [here](#).

### Rating:

- Not yet — We rarely or never see the child demonstrate this skill.
- Emerging — We are starting to see the child demonstrate this skill.
- Consistently — The skill is one that the child has mastered and demonstrates consistently.

## Specialized Learning Program

Our specialized learning team is made up of specialists in various fields. They provide services to those students requiring specialized attention. Some students qualifying for support services may receive special accommodation in one or more classes but are required to meet Board established minimum academic standards and the Ministry of Education of Nicaragua (MINED).

### Specialized Learning Program

Specialized Learning Program serves children with mild and moderate needs who require small group or individualized instruction to meet grade-level standards. These services may be provided in the classroom or a small group instructional setting.

### Data Wall Meeting

A data wall meeting will drive the review of data and the design of extra instruction intervention. The administration facilitates these meetings, in which all teachers take part in prioritizing students for inclusion support and extra instruction intervention time.

### Student Support Meeting

Suppose a student has academic or social difficulties that are not being addressed through the Data Wall or the TTT process. In that case, a teacher can work with the team to arrange a Student Support Meeting, including the classroom teacher, Spanish teacher, and the Specialized Learning Lead. This meeting aims to set a goal for improvement and design a plan to support the student in achieving this goal.

### Specialized Learning Team Meeting

A meeting to create a partnership with the classroom teacher, inclusion lead teacher, and the parent to review a student's inclusion plan, celebrate progress or problem-solve. A parent or teacher can request a Specialized Learning Program Team Meeting by contacting the administration.



**STAR Support**

The STAR (Students Transitioning to Academic Readiness) Support is designed to support the academic and social success of our currently enrolled ANS students on the autism spectrum. We believe that students on the autism spectrum will learn best when they learn and play with their classmates in the regular classroom for most of the day. Still, we also believe that our students with autism will benefit from receiving specialized instruction for part of their day. In a setting with reduced sensory input and social demands, we can better support students to learn to self-regulate their emotions, actions, and attention to ensure that they are growing in their communication, social, literacy, and math skills.

**Language: Immersion and ELL/SLL Services**

ANS values academic bi-literacy! At ANS, all students grow and learn language and literacy skills in English and Spanish. If your child is new to our school or still learning English or Spanish, your child will benefit from the immersion experience of learning the language in our program. Immersion is the most powerful way for a child to acquire a new language. We will support children to succeed in the immersion model with ELL or SLL classes.

You can help your child open their hearts and minds to this new immersion experience by encouraging them and letting them know it's expected that they won't understand much at first. But over time, they will begin to understand more and more.

**Here are a few common questions that children and parents have about immersion:**

**Why is the teacher speaking only Spanish or English when all students haven't learned the language?**

We believe that when children feel a powerful purpose in using their new language, their brains will progress faster in making sense of the new language.

That's why teachers will be faithful to the language of instruction because we know that immersion is the best way to help your child learn and take risks with their new language. We will also support your child in learning new vocabulary and language structures to take full advantage of this immersion process.

**Will my child receive ELL and SLL support?**

The Language team will test students to determine eligibility for language learning services. ELL and SLL support will give your child lots of opportunities to practice the new language, learn important vocabulary and get a chance to practice their speaking and listening skills within a context that slows things down and gives more contextual clues to figure out new words with more repetition.

**How does the school determine who needs ELL or SLL support?**

We use the WIDA language assessment for ELL to measure your child's language skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. For SLL, we use the language proficiency rubrics from the WIDA assessment to determine a child's proficiency level in Spanish.

**Is my child required to receive ELL or SLL support?**

If your child is identified as being eligible for ELL or SLL services, it is required that the student receives this service to support their language acquisition needs. ELL or SLL services cannot be waived to participate in our ANS program.

**Is there an additional charge for the ELL or SLL program?**

Yes, there is an additional charge for specialized language services, and the Business Office will notify parents of the amount. Students receiving ELL or SLL during TTT will pay a semesterly fee. For students who are both ELLs and SLLs (other first language dominance), they will pay one fee for language services.

**When do ELL or SLL classes take place?**

ELL and SLL classes take place during the TTT time (45 minutes). Your child will not miss any classes since the TTT is designed for academic support classes. If your child needs reading or math support, your child's teacher will utilize another part of the school day.

**Can ELL or SLL classes take place after school?**

No, the Language team works with students across six grade levels, and their schedule is designed so that students attend class with other language learners at their grade level. This allows the Language team to plan instruction that is relevant for each grade level and to group students according to their proficiency levels to personalize your child's language instruction.

**Gifted Education**

While ANS does not have a formal program or designated personnel to provide gifted services at this time, we can develop collaborative plans that provide higher learning incentives in the classroom as needed for students who demonstrate qualifying criteria for accelerated learning. Please see this description for ANS's [accelerated learning plans](#).

Peer Partnerships

In areas of exceptional skill, we can support the student in having experiences to share their work with peers as thinking partners. These partnerships may include students from other classes—for example, writing partners or reading clubs.

Curriculum Extension

This allows students with ALPs to apply the classroom curriculum at a challenging and enriching level. Curriculum extensions can be completed individually or in small groups.

Goal Setting

The ALP can support the student in setting goals related to an academic area that reflects a skill or talent that the student would like to explore or improve. Such goals may include learning or service activities that may take place during TTT or Big Questions Day.

Technology

All grades will access technology in the classroom or the computer lab for specific academic purposes, as determined by the classroom teacher.

PlusPortals

Used to display attendance and grades. Your child’s report card and other important documents can be accessed through the parent portal.

Responsible Use of Personal Electronic Devices

Personal electronic devices (cell phones, iPads, iPods, game devices, smart watches) are the individual’s responsibility. They are not permitted for use at school by primary students at any time during the day. If a student decides to bring a personal electronic device, it must be turned off and kept in their backpack. If a teacher or administrator sees or hears the personal device, then it will be held in the primary office until a parent can come to the school to pick it up.

Unauthorized use of a phone or any personal device will result in confiscation of the phone or personal electronic device. The following procedures, including immediate loss of device privilege, can be taken:

- The device may remain confiscated, a notification sent home, and a meeting with parents scheduled.
- At which point the device will be returned.

Repeated violations will result in disciplinary action, including losing the right to bring these devices to school.

Acceptable Use Policy

The ANS network has been implemented to provide Internet access for educational activities such as research, collaboration, lectures, projects, etc. ANS students, teachers, and staff have access to the Internet in computer labs, mobile labs, libraries, offices, and classrooms where the wireless signal is covered.

Using the school’s computers, network, software, Internet access, electronic mail, and related resources is a privilege and is intended for educational purposes only. All users’ web activity on the school network is kept in a log for auditing. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the network may lead to the discovery of violations of this policy. Parents and administrators have the right to request to see the contents of a student’s school email at any time.

**Note:** *Parents may only ask to see the school email’s content and their children’s electronic folders, and just for the email account the school provided.*

Electronic mail (email) is a primary means of communication on campus. Many official communications are emailed to parents, faculty, and staff.



Students in grades Pathways through 5th grade are assigned a @ans.edu.ni email account. The account holder is responsible for all activity from that account. This account should be used only for school-related activities. To safeguard identity and privacy, students must not share or give their passwords to anyone. Parents are provided full access to their child's accounts. The school reserves the right to monitor the electronic activity of all users connected to its network.

**Parent and/or legal guardians  
Events and Technology**

We ask parents to be fully present when they are visiting the school by putting their phone away. Posting photos of other children is not allowed on your personal social media. Also, parents are not allowed to take videos of children at school or post them on any social media site.

**Phone / Smartwatch policy**

No phone and/or smartwatch is allowed in ANS campus during school hours (7:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.) and/or school-sponsored activities.

**Please note:**

The school is not responsible for any inappropriate behavior incurred while using electronic means and devices outside the school hours and premises. In such cases, parents or legal guardians are fully accountable to addressing these issues.

The school reserves the right to investigate off-campus activities using electronic means and devices when there is a concern for the safety or well-being of students at ANS. ANS community members are expected to abide by our Core Values.

**Unacceptable Network Use**

- The network may not be used to annoy, threaten, or offend other people.
- Files may not be downloaded without the authorization of the Technology Department of the School.
- Vandalism of computer equipment, unauthorized access to information, computer piracy, hacking, and any tampering with hardware or software will be subject to disciplinary action.
- Passwords should not be shared with anyone. Any actions carried out under an account will be the account holder's responsibility.
- Users may not use the resources to view or send offensive messages, pictures, or files. If a user accidentally or unknowingly accesses this information, the user should notify a teacher, the Primary office, or the Technology Department.
- The initiation or continuation of chain letters is prohibited.
- ANS reserves the right to limit the resources and time allocated to each user, including, but not limited to, computer usage, Internet access, printing, etc.

**Consequences of Violations**

Consequences of violations of the expectations described above include, but are not limited to:

- Suspension of Network privileges
- Suspension of computer access
- School suspension



**Extracurricular Program**

**After-School Activities**

The Primary Extracurricular Program (PEP) offers various enrichment and educational opportunities on Wednesdays. ANS after-school sports offer a variety of sports activities throughout the week. Vida Católica provides religious classes for interested students on Fridays.

The ANS Parent Newsletter will inform parents when these activities are being delivered and how to sign up for them.



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