

# Aqsa School



## Celebrating 33 Years of Excellence in Islamic Education

**Mission: To see our students excel academically and  
grow socially and spiritually.**

This assignment notebook belongs to \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
Homeroom Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

## ELEMENTARY



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## **2018/2019 Parent/Student Handbook**

All information provided in this Parent/Student Handbook, including dates, times, and locations are current as of August 2018, and may be amended during the school year without notice. The most current document will be on the Aqsa School website at [www.aqsa.edu](http://www.aqsa.edu).

The student handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that student and parents may have during the course of a school year. This handbook contains important information for parents and students. It is the responsibility of all parents and students to become familiar with the contents of this handbook. Should you have any questions not addressed in this handbook, please contact the Aqsa School main office.

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## Mission Statement

Aqsa School is a community made up of board members, parents, students, staff and friends of the school who are dedicated to providing a comprehensive education in an Islamic environment which is well-equipped to serve the needs of students from preschool through high school, with grades six through twelve being exclusively for girls.

In addition to a college preparatory program of rigorous academics, Aqsa School and its partners are committed to introducing the true message of Islam, instilling an appreciation of Islamic history and values, and cultivating pride among Muslim American youth about their heritage and their place in American society. Charitable giving, good deeds, equality among the races, and a tolerance for the religions and values of others will also be stressed in an effort to prepare students intellectually, spiritually, physically and socially to be responsible and effective members of a diverse and changing world.

The Aqsa School Board members and the administration make it their top priority to seek and hire qualified educators who demonstrate a commitment to the values of Islam, and to excellence in education.

The following are school-wide objectives that we continuously strive to achieve with our students:

- To teach our students the love of Islam by example and through Islamic and Quranic studies, and the practice of Islam.
- To teach our students to strive for excellence at school and in their future academic and personal lives.
- To teach social awareness and responsibility through involvement in community causes.
- To teach the concept of faith with action through the example of our staff.

## School Schedule

Elementary students are offered seven periods of instruction, and one period for lunch combined with recess. Students participate in instructional periods that include specials (ex. PE, Library), ELA, Math, Arabic & Religion, Science, and Social Studies. As a 1:1 school, instruction includes the use of technology. Additional specials such as Art are offered when available and at the discretion of the school.

### *Sample Elementary Schedule*

PERIOD	Time	Elementary
0	8:20 - 8:30 am	Morning Assembly
1	8:30 - 9:10	Special
2	9:13 - 10:02	ELA: Reading
3	10:05 - 10:54	ELA: Writing & Spelling
4	10:57 - 11:46	LUNCH
5	11:49 - 12:19	Math
6	12:25 - 1:14	Arabic/Religion
7	1:48 - 2:38	Science
8	2:41 - 3:30 pm	Social Studies

## **Building Hours**

The building is open from 8:05 am each school day until 4:00 pm. Parents and guardians are responsible for students who arrive before or stay later unless given approval by school administration. The safety of students is a top priority. Unsupervised student access to the building is not permitted and will be reported.

## **Closed Campus**

Students are not permitted to leave the building for any reason during the school day without permission. Any student who leaves before the scheduled release time is required to have a parent/guardian officially come into the school building and sign him/her out for the day.

## **Drop-Off and Pick-Up Policy**

Parents, guardians, or approved adults should drop off and pick-up students. Student siblings attending Aqsa School or unapproved adults will not be permitted to pick-up students. Students not picked up by 3:45 pm will be seating in the main office and required to call their parent or guardian. Chronic early drop-off or late pick-up will be reported to school administration. The safety of each student is our top priority.

- *During drop-off*, elementary students should be dropped off at the west side doors near the circle drive. The west side door is monitored by teaching staff to ensure students enter the building safely and make their way to their classroom.
- *During pick-up*: Dismissal is based upon grade levels and teacher guided. Only elementary students are allowed to exit from the west side doors. Students should be picked up by and approved adult.

## **School Communication**

Aqsa school uses 4 forms of communication to contact and inform families in a timely and efficient manner. Communication includes the use of (1) one-call automated system, (2) Remind text App (3) Email, and (4) Aqsa School Website. In addition, teachers use Remind to send parents direct messages about classroom announcements and individualized student needs. It is important that each student have a valid parent or guardian contact phone number and email so that the school can communicate with families in the event of a student emergency and for general announcements.

## Emergency School Closing

If school is canceled because of weather or other unforeseen emergencies, Aqsa School staff will use contact information on file to call each household to notify parents of the closing. Families should submit updated contact information to the main office including any changes to home phone numbers, email addresses, and designated adults to contact. At times, an automated one-call will be used as a means of communication. Please listen to these very important messages in their entirety. For immediate responses to questions about the school, sign up for Aqsa School Remind and message a school leadership team member.

## Emergency Drills

During the year, emergency weather and safety drills will be conducted. Teachers will practice with students to ensure that students at all times are safe at school. Drills are mandatory and require teachers to stop instruction.

## Attendance and Tardies

Regular attendance is expected every day. Habitual absences or tardies will affect a students' grade, credit or a student's ability to be promoted to the next grade level. Absences are considered unexcused until approved documentation is submitted and reviewed by administration.

### Excused Absences:

- Death in the family
- Authorized school activities
- Doctor/Dental appointments

Excused absences require a note from a physician or notification from the teacher due within three day after the student returns to school. Family emergencies will be handled case by case, and require both a phone call to the Dean and letter from the parent documenting the incident.

A parent or guardian should also call into the office by 8:30am to notify the office of a student's absence and the reason for the absence.

**Scheduled Medical Visits:** For any pre-scheduled appointment, students are to submit a note from a parent one day in advance. If a note is not received the day after the absence, the absence will be considered unexcused. Please make every effort to schedule appointments after school or on days when school is not in session to avoid your child missing important classroom information.

**Unexcused Absences:** All absences that do not fall under the excused absence category will be considered unexcused.

**Truancy:** Absences from school without valid cause are considered truancy. Students who are truant will immediately necessitate an administration and parent conference. The school will also establish an individualized student plan and provide counseling services in order to improve the situation. However, if the truancy continues, Aqsa School will notify the Bridgeview Police Department Truancy office and follow through on all necessary police recommendations or state laws.

**Tardy:** A student is tardy if he/she is not in the classroom by the time the second bell rings after assembly. Please notify the main office if your child will be tardy due to unforeseen events.

## **Student Health and Medication**

If a student has a fever or is feeling ill, please contact the teacher or main office, and keep your child home to prevent the spread of illness at school. If your child has an illness that is contagious such as flu, lice etc., please inform the school so that a generic family letter can be sent home with students and so that classrooms can be decontaminated.

Taking medication during school hours or during school-related activities is prohibited unless it is necessary for a student's health and well-being. When a student's licensed health care provider and parent/guardian believe that it is necessary for the student to take a medication during school hours or school-related activities, the parent/guardian must request that the school dispense the medication to the child by completing a "School Medication Authorization Form."

No Aqsa School staff members are allowed to administer to any student, or supervise a student's self-administration of, any prescription or non-prescription medication until a completed and signed School Medication Authorization Form is submitted by the student's parent/guardian. No student is allowed to possess or consume any prescription or non-prescription medication on school grounds or at a school-related function other than as provided for in this procedure.

## **Self-Administration of Medication**

A student may possess an epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen) and/or an asthma inhaler prescribed for use at the student's discretion, provided the student's parent/guardian has completed and signed a School Medication Authorization Form. Aqsa school shall incur no liability, except for willful and wanton conduct, as a result of any injury arising

from a student's self-administration of medication or epinephrine auto-injector or the storage of any medication by school personnel. A student's parent/guardian must agree to indemnify and hold harmless the school and its employees and agents, against any claims, except a claim based on willful and wanton conduct, arising out of a student's self-administration of an epinephrine auto-injector and/or asthma inhaler, or the storage of any medication by school personnel.

Students who are diabetic may also self-carry and self-administer diabetic testing supplies and insulin. Students who are diabetic must also have a Diabetes Care Plan on file with the school.

## **Student Storage Space**

Student cubbies or unlocked lockers within the classroom are offered as storage space for students to store belongings. Students should bring to school only what is needed to learn such as a backpack and supplies and a lunch. Student personal items such as toys should be left home unless approved by the teacher or school administration for activities such as share and tell or character day.

## **School Uniform**

As a private Islamic school we believe that an official school uniform helps to establish a sense of community, equality and modesty. The following are the uniform guidelines for elementary students in 1st grade to 5th grade. Preschool and Kindergarten students are not required to wear uniforms due to the nature of their play-based learning and nap times.

All official uniform pieces, including Physical Education uniforms can be purchased from the Schoolbelles Uniform Company 7661 Harlem Ave, Bridgeview, IL 60455. Contact Schoolbelles if you have questions regarding ordering or prices at (708) 929-4695. Families can also order online at <http://www.schoolbelles.com>. Enter the Aqsa School Code, S0963.

- **Girls Grade 1 - 4:** Plaid jumper, long or short sleeve dark green knit polo shirt, V-necked Aqsa sweater, Aqsa cardigan or fleece
- **Girls 5<sup>th</sup> grade:** Plaid uniform skirt with a long-sleeved, dark-green, knit shirt with the Aqsa School emblem, V-necked Aqsa sweater, Aqsa cardigan or fleece
- **Boys Grades 1 - 5:** Navy blue khakis, long or short sleeve dark green knit polo shirt, V-necked Aqsa sweater, Aqsa cardigan or fleece
- **PE Grade 1 - 5:** Long or short-sleeved, gray t-shirt with Aqsa logo, navy blue jogging pants with Aqsa logo.

## **School Colors**

Aqsa School's official colors are navy blue and white. During school assemblies and events, classroom teachers may assign grade level colors outside of the school colors.

## **Field-trip Attire**

Educational field-trips are meant to enhance student learning outside of the classroom. Therefore, they are seen as an extension of the curriculum and for such fieldtrips the school uniform is to be worn.

School field-trips that do not require a school uniform due to the activity may require the gym uniform or other designated attire.

## **Textbooks and Supplies**

Students are provided workbooks for home and school use. Core textbooks are provided and used at school. Students are charged a small fee to purchase reading books for literature they are studying in their English/Language Arts (ELA) curriculum. A school supply list is available on the Aqsa School website for each grade level.

## **Lunch Room**

Aqsa School's lunchroom is open during lunch periods. Hot lunch is served daily as well as beverages and healthy snacks. A lunch menu for each month is available at the front office.

Students are not allowed to leave the lunch room without teacher supervision. Under no circumstances should students enter the kitchen. Students found in the kitchen without permission will be reported and parents or guardians will be required to meet with school administration.

## **Library**

Aqsa School's library is open to students during Library special. Students are able to check-in and check-out books under the supervision of the librarian. The school library contains books that have been selected by the librarian and school staff that meet the learning and developmental needs of students as well as being Islamically appropriate.

## **Hallway Behavior**

- Students are to remain on the right side of the hallway and stairway.
- Students are not to stop and crowd the hallways.
- No student should be found in the hallway after the second bell.
- There should be no running or excessive noise in the hallways.
- Students must have a hallway pass from a teacher if they are in the hallway during class time.

## **Attention Behavior**

During assemblies, events and prayer, staff members may need to communicate with the students. Aqsa students are expected to respond to a non-verbal cue when the staff is seeking student attention. The signal will consist of a raised right hand with the index finger extended. This reminds us that Allah is One, and when we see this signal, we should remember Allah. It also reminds us that we are one team and one school community. Students are also expected to do the following:

- Stop whatever they are doing and look up
- Immediately become quiet
- Remain silent and look at the signaler
- Return the signal as a reminder to themselves and others
- Remain silent until the staff member has finished talking

## **Assembly Behavior**

Assemblies offer opportunities to hear speakers, presentations or awards ceremonies. They are an important part of student life. During assemblies students should:

- Be respectful to all speakers and presenters
- Be quiet, actively listening and engaged
- Face the speaker
- All school rules and procedures apply during assembly times

## **Prayer Behavior**

Students pray in congregation in their grade level classroom from 1st -5th grade.

- Students should store a clean hijab in the classroom in a teacher designated area for prayers. 5th grade girls should wear their hijab all day on Fridays
- All students are required to pray if they are able to
- Students should remove their shoes and wear appropriate prayer clothing

- All students are to sit quietly during the entirety of the prayer

## **Lunchroom Behavior**

Good behavior is expected in the cafeteria, including the following guidelines:

- Do not cut in line, everyone must wait his/her turn to be served lunch
- During lunchtime all students are to be in the multipurpose room only
- Do not leave the lunch area during lunch without permission from the teacher
- Do not throw food or other objects
- All students must be seated at a lunch table with students from their grade level
- Students are not allowed to eat on the carpet or the stage
- Do not leave without cleaning up lunch tables and pushing in chairs
- No food or drink is allowed outside the lunch area
- Eating in classrooms is not allowed unless approved by the teacher
- No students are allowed behind the serving tables or in the kitchen

## **Classroom Behavior**

Students are expected to be:

- Respectful to their teachers
- Respectful to their classmates
- Attentive
- Be mentally prepared for learning
- Prepared with all learning materials
- No food or drink (other than water) will be allowed in the classroom

## **Elementary Discipline Policy**

The goal of Aqsa School is to promote a healthy school environment where each student will develop their character, strive for self-efficacy and achieve personal, academic and spiritual success. We believe for lifelong success and growth as a believer, we must seek tazkiyah, or continual self-improvement and growth in our character and faith. Aqsa School seeks to develop self-reflection and self-regulation within our students in order for them to give consideration to the impact their actions and words have on themselves and others.

Our discipline system is structured such that when students fail to demonstrate positive character or acceptable behaviors they will receive consequences which are timely and promote self-reflection, regulation and correction. The ultimate goal is the reinstatement of a harmonious learning environment that uplifts all who are in it.

## **Classroom**

A classroom discipline plan with classroom rules is developed and posted in the classroom by the teacher and/or grade level where students change classes. The classroom discipline plan includes a focus on the following student behaviors:

- Respect Self
- Respect Others/Respect Authority
- Respect Property

In addition, grade level discipline procedures are posted in the classroom by each teacher. A copy of classroom discipline plan is sent home to parents/guardians for signature during the first week of school.

### **Outside of the Classroom**

When students are not under the direct supervision of their classroom teachers and are in the lunchroom or on the playground, those who do not follow school rules will be redirected by the adult staff or supervisors. The first warning will serve as reminder and students will be counseled by their classroom teachers. If students receive a third warning the adult supervisor will report the incident to the school counselor, Principal or Dean of Students.

### **Teacher Intervention Options for Correcting Behavior**

- Warning
- Student/Teacher Conference
- Phone Contact
- Parent/Teacher Conference
- Detention

### **Administrative Intervention Options**

- Warning
- Loss of Privilege
- Student/Teacher Conference
- Parent Notification or Conference
- Detention
- Suspension

### **Positive Behaviors**

Students, classroom and/or grade levels that exhibit good behaviors will be recognized by one of the following:

- Assembly
- Special Banner

- Special Treats
- Showcase

### **Detention: Loss of Privilege**

A detention area will be designated in assigned classroom.

- Students will be assigned detention during morning and/or lunch recess.
- Students will be expected to do classwork provided by their teacher or a book to read.
- Students are expected to work in silence.
- In some cases, student will complete a reflection sheet during detention that parents will be requested to sign and return to the teacher and/or Principal.

### **In-school Suspension Parents will be notified of in-school suspensions.**

- Students will be assigned to work in a detention room a full or half day.
- School work/assignments will be provided by his/her teacher to be completed accurately and neatly.
- Student will eat his/her lunch in the detention area and will not participate in outdoor recess with his/her peers.

**Out-of-School Suspension:** In rare situations, students may be suspended from school for any offenses that the Principal or Dean of Students believe to be a severe infractions such as jeopardizing the safety of students or staff.

## **Anti-Bullying Promise**

Supporting peace and kindness is Aqsa School's priority and follows the exemplary way of our Prophet Muhammad ( Peace Be Upon Him) and our faith. Staff, parents, students and our community will not accept bullying at our school! Our goal is to develop and support peace and friendship. We agree that it is everyone's responsibility to stop bullying.

### **Our student and staff promise is:**

- To treat others with fairness and kindness
- Find ways to help others join games and other activities
- Speak out against bullying
- Refuse to let others be bullied
- Report bullying to an adult
- Refuse to bully others
- Be responsible by not encouraging bullying

- Help others feel safe and comfortable at our school

## **Counseling**

A school counselor is available to all students who are in need of academic, social, or emotional guidance. The counselor is available to help students reach their full potential. If there is a barrier that is preventing a student from doing so, the counselor will link him/her with the necessary resources and supports. Students may be referred to the counselor by a teacher, parent, peer, or a student may seek services on his/her own.

At Aqsa, the well-being of every child is our priority. Therefore, in the event that a student is in need of long-term social-emotional therapy, the counselor may refer the student to a local agency or therapist. With the welfare, safety, and health of our students in mind, we may request consent for medical or social-emotional therapy releases of information. The school reserves the right to mandate counseling both in and outside of school if it is deemed necessary for the learning and social/emotional needs of the student. Failure to comply with the school commondations may result in the release of the student from Aqsa School. This information may be necessary to better serve and accommodate our students. All information received remains confidential and will only be used to serve the student.

Students wishing to see the counselor must make an appointment prior to going to the counselor's office. In the event that a student needs to see the counselor on a more immediate basis, permission must be given from the teacher whose class the student will be leaving or the administration. The counselor must notify the teacher with a formal pass and any work missed during the visit is the responsibility of the student to obtain from the teacher before of the end of the day and have it turned in on its original due date. In the event that the counselor is not available at that time, the student must return back to class immediately.

## **Diverse Learner Needs and Referrals**

Aqsa School students with diverse learner needs in our schools to the extent that the needs of such students can be met within the scope of the programs and available resources. The school board is aware that it is unrealistic to serve all categories of special needs students. However, Aqsa School understands that admission of diverse learner needs students must be considered and reviewed on an individual basis.

### **Legal References to Special Services**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that local school districts locate, identify, and evaluate all private school students suspected of having a disability or learning need. In IDEA, these children are often referred to as "parentally placed

private school children with disabilities,” and the benefits available to them differ significantly from the benefits for children with disabilities enrolled in public schools. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 educational section (frequently called “Section 504”), provides that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from participation in any program receiving federal assistance.

Aqsa School educators are committed to recognizing and addressing the needs of all those who seek an Islamic School education. Within the compass our resources, Aqsa School will offer services to eligible students with diverse needs, when possible. While private schools are not required to significantly alter their programs, lower or substantially modify their standards to accommodate a child with diverse needs, Aqsa School seeks to serve the best interests of all its students. Even though private educational institutions are only required to make minor adjustments to accommodate eligible students, Aqsa School aims to review these cases with compassion, fairness, and genuine effort to support the success of every student.

### **Records for Diverse Learner Needs**

All psychological and educational evaluations or reports regarding testing of diverse learner needs students, received from local public schools, persons, or agencies, are forwarded to Aqsa School, upon request. These records are kept in a secure file and in an area accessible only to the Principal, Assistant Principal/Dean, the Counselor, and any other staff member, as appropriate for their work with the student. Parents may view their child’s record at any time. These records may not be forwarded to any other individual or agency.

### **Criteria for Acceptance of Students with Diverse Learner Needs**

In making a determination regarding the admittance of a particular student, Aqsa School will review the child’s ability to meet the School’s academic, behavioral, and physical qualifications. Consideration will be given to the student records that demonstrate his or her ability to:

- meet grade level requirements;
- follow school rules and regulations; and
- meet the physical requirements of attendance.

### **Aqsa School Services for Diverse Learners**

*New Students* – When the school leadership team is notified that an incoming student may have *special* learning needs, the Counselor, Principal and Assistant Principal/Dean and other appropriate school staff review current academic, social, medical, and psychological evaluations to determine if the applicant is qualified to enroll, with or without his or her disability. If the applicant is qualified for enrollment, the Counselor and Assistant Principal/Dean will then determine if reasonable adjustments can be made to the educational program which will accommodate the student’s needs. If an admission

is determined the school will begin the procedures with parents to discuss an accommodation plan.

*Currently Enrolled Students* – If a teacher or parent is concerned about a child’s academic, behavioral, or emotional progress and feels that testing may be needed, he or she will discuss concerns with the parent or family and the Counselor, and then meet with the Assistant Principal/Dean as soon as possible. Our aim is always to work as a team to do what is best for the child. Because this is a critically important and individualized process, we will review and discuss:

- The student’s current educational status, including attendance records, grades, assessment data, and classroom observations;
- Previous educational efforts and strategies provided for the student and the results;
- Documentation of any recent vision and hearing screenings;
- Updated general health history inventory; and
- Other information provided by parents or teachers.

Parents will be expected to disclose any pertinent information that may assist Aqsa School in educating the student. The Counselor and staff are responsible for recommending educational alternatives and/or referrals to the local school district and/or private agency of the parent’s choice for further evaluation. In some cases, the campus may not have the resources necessary to help the child be successful. The Counselor or Assistant Principal/Dean will then assist the family to locate an appropriate educational program for the child.

Aqsa School will keep documentation for all referrals on file. This documentation will be included in the student’s records. If an evaluation determines the student requires minor accommodations the school will begin the procedures with parents to discuss an accommodation plan at Aqsa School. Accommodations for a child will be noted both on the report card and in the child’s permanent folder.

### **Student Success Expectations for Special Needs Learners**

Aqsa School will deploy all available school resources to promote student success. We are committed to keeping the lines of communication open and informing parents about student progress in all areas. The classroom teacher and parent will first discuss any concerns about a student’s progress. School success is the outcome of a strong academic partnership between parents and faculty, and Aqsa School strives to maintain strong collaborative ties with all our families. In order to provide the greatest educational benefit to our students, parents are expected to disclose any pertinent information from private resources (diagnoses and recommendations) that would be of specific educational value in Aqsa’s efforts to adequately support their children. If it is

determined that the School's resources cannot meet the needs of a student, or if parent(s) or guardian(s) fail to act on the School's recommendations for remediation or diagnostic evaluation, the Principal may request withdrawal of the student or deny admission for the following year.

### **Accommodations for Diverse Learners**

The purpose of an accommodation of any type is to provide the appropriate instruction according to the individual student's special needs. As a result of a diagnostic evaluation, a student meets certain criteria to qualify for accommodations to his or her schoolwork. In many instances, accommodations (changes in methods of instruction) can be made in the classroom for students with special needs or for struggling students. Students who are diagnosed with a learning difference or who are diagnosed with a special need through the public school system, private doctors, or through special agencies may be referred for special assistance with the Counselor and Assistant Principal/Dean after the administration has verification of the student's recommended accommodations (curricular modifications are not provided because modifications require alterations of curricular learning objectives). The number of intervention sessions per week, length of sessions, and goals will be determined by the Counselor, Assistant Principal/Dean, and classroom teacher after all available information has been reviewed.

### **Standardized Assessment for Students with Diverse Learner Needs**

Standardized assessments are one of several means of evaluating student performance. All students participate in a standardized assessment program. Students with disabilities identified through IDEA may require assessment accommodations. These accommodations should be provided through the classroom teacher. These testing arrangements must be planned for in advance through a meeting with the Counselor and the Assistant Principal/Dean.

## **Homework Policy**

Home assignments are necessary to provide enough time for students to master subject matter and complete long-term projects. Homework should be purposeful, adjusted to the level of the individual child, and related to specific subject objectives. Assignments should provide practice on skills already taught or prepare students to begin a new topic or part of the course.

At Aqsa School we believe that homework assigned must meet the following criteria:

- Sufficient explanation must be given so that students know what they are to do, understand how to do it, realize why they are doing it, and are

motivated to complete the assignment.

- Homework must be evaluated in an appropriate and timely manner by the teacher.
- Homework should not be recorded and placed as a grade in the gradebook unless the student has already received ungraded practice work and/or has had a sufficient amount of time to grasp the new material, ask questions, and receive feedback from the teacher.
- Homework assignments should be avoided immediately before holidays or major special events, within the week of standardized exams or midterms and final exams, and at the end of the quarter.
- Homework should be evenly distributed across the quarter to ensure student mastery of the content.
- Homework should not exceed 30 minutes per night for grades K-2 and 60 minutes per night for grades 3-5.
- Additional homework practice should be agreed upon between teacher and parent.

## **Progress Reports**

Interim Reports (Progress Reports) grades share a student's progress for grades pre-k -5. Progress reports are issued to students mid-quarter approximately the fourth or fifth week of each grading period. Supplemental progress reports may be issued at the teacher's discretion at any time to ensure students are completing assignments and mastering content.

## **Make-Up Work and Tests**

A student will be allowed to make up missed class work, assignments or tests. It is the responsibility of the student to secure the assignments from the teacher and make up the work. The student should contact the teacher to make arrangements to obtain the assignments on the day he or she returns to class. The two day period will begin at the point the student receives the assignments from the teacher. The make-up work and testing date shall be determined by the teacher based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course and the needs of the individual student in mastering the essential knowledge and skills or in meeting subject or course requirements. Any extenuating circumstances or delay in completing the missed work must be approved by the Principal, School Counselor or Dean of Students.

## **Standardized Testing**

Students in grades K - 5 will participate in various forms of standardized testing throughout the school year. Data from these tests will be used to track a student's

growth, to determine class placement and to give insight into a student's areas of strengths and weaknesses in order to better accommodate his/her needs.

The following is a listing of tests given throughout the year:

- NWEA Measuring Academic Progress (MAP) – Fall, Winter, and Spring
- IOWA – Spring

## **Report Cards and Parent Teacher Conferences**

In grade K - 5, students are issued report cards. Report cards share both standards-based and grade earned achievement for each student per content area. Parents are invited to counsel with teachers.

Twice a year, parents or guardians will be scheduled in advance for parent teacher conferences to ensure a parent or guardian is offered time to discuss a student's progress in the class and on standardized tests. In addition to parent teacher conferences, conferences may be requested by a teacher or parent as needed.

### **Partners in Progress**

An additional report accompanies report cards and addresses the following:

- Strengths/positive attributes of child
- Academic grades/review of report card
- How the student can improve
- Evaluation of social relationships with classmates/others
- Evaluation of student behavior in and out of the classroom
- Plan for special provisions/specific suggestions/future plans

## **Awards**

Throughout the year, students will have opportunities to be recognized for their Islamic character and academic success. Students in 5th grade who are graduating from elementary are also eligible for the Presidential Award of Educational Excellence awarded for academic success.

Aqsa School schedules assemblies to celebrate students. At the end of the year, an award ceremony accompanies the last day of school activities and a promotion ceremony for grades 1 - 5. The last day of school is a half-day with a specific time per grade level for awards. For more information, please contact the Aqsa School main office.

## **Kindergarten Graduation**

Graduation is a special time to celebrate the great accomplishments of our students especially our Kindergarten class. Graduation is a school sponsored ceremony held at Aqsa School in May. Additional information will be shared with parents regarding student participation and exact date and time of the event.

## **Student Promotion**

The following factors shall be considered in promoting, retaining, or advancing students:

- Academic achievement
- Attendance
- Age
- Effort
- Maturity
- Long-term effects of repeating the work
- The teacher's decision on passing or failing the course
- The Principal's decision on passing or failing the course
- Student's effort to attend and successfully complete any extended day, week or year programs to meet grade level requirements

## **Elementary Criteria for Promotion**

To be promoted from one grade level to the next in Grades 2-5, a student shall attain for the year an overall average of 70 or above in the core subject areas and satisfactory achievement on standardized testing. The overall average shall be derived by averaging the final numerical score for reading/language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. In addition, a student shall attain an average of 70 or above in reading/language arts and in mathematics. Below Grade 2, Aqsa School may grant promotions using assessment methods other than numerical scores.

## **Grade Level Acceleration**

Aqsa School Leadership will consider special cases for grade advancement without prior instruction per parent request. In addition to an acceleration examination, a student may be promoted to advance their current level on the basis of academic achievement, demonstrated proficiency of the subject matter of the course or grade level, maturity and ability to succeed in the advanced grade level. Grade level acceleration is considered prior to the start of the school year to ensure the social emotional well being of the student and adjustment period needed.

## **Extracurricular Activities and Clubs**

Students are offered opportunities to participate in fee-based clubs after school during the fall and spring. These clubs are teacher run and typically run from 3:45 pm - 4:30 pm after school. Fees are generally less than \$20 for a 5 - 10 week club experience. Club activities are age appropriate and student-inspired. Past clubs have include Debka, Baking Club, STEM Club, Chess, Tajweed, Reading Club, Girls on the Run, and Fitness Club.

Students also have the opportunity to participate in extra-curricular activities such as Spelling Bee and the Math Bowl. These activities require a teacher's recommendation when available. A general announcement will be made about the activity to ensure students are able to consider the opportunity to participate.

## **Electronics**

Unless otherwise permitted by the Principal and Dean, all electronic devices must be kept powered-off and out-of-sight during the regular school day unless: (a) the supervising teacher grants permission; (b) use of the device is provided in a student's individualized education program; or (c) it is needed in a life threatening emergency. The electronic device or cell phone will be taken from the student, and given to administration. At that time, the content of the phone will be checked by the administration. If the cell phone is password protected, the student will be required to unlock it in the presence of a member of the administration. If the student, whose cell phone or other electronic device was taken, reveals texting/calling another student, and the other student is responsible for the initial text or replies then that student will also receive detention. Phones will not be returned to the student but rather a parent must come into the school and pick it up from an administrator. Continual abuse of the rules for cell phone or electronic use will result in the student having to check the phone into the office during school hours or the inability to bring a cell phone to school.

## **Technology**

Aqsa School uses Chromebooks in grades 3 - 5 and iPads in grade K - 2. Students in PreK use desktop computers to improve their gross and fine motor skills. The focus of providing Chromebooks or iPads at Aqsa School is to provide current tools and resources to the 21st Century Learner. Excellence in education requires that technology be seamlessly integrated throughout the educational program. Increasing access to technology is essential, and the individual use of Chromebooks and iPads is a way to empower students to maximize their full potential and to prepare them for the future.

According to studies and school reports, students who use a computing device in a one-to-one {1:1} education environment are more organized and engaged learners,

advance their knowledge and understanding of technology, and become constructors and designers of information and ideas. The Chromebook and iPad is a "next generation" device that makes learning more engaging and accessible. Learning results from the continuous dynamic interaction among students, educators, parents/guardians, and the extended community. However, technology immersion does not diminish the vital role of the teacher but transforms the teacher from the director of learning to a facilitator of learning. Effective teaching and learning with Chromebooks and iPads integrates technology into the curriculum anytime and anywhere.

### **Why use iPads in grades K - 2?**

- Students are using familiar touch screen devices they may use at home.
- iPads offer a range of learning apps that students in younger grades and easily use to extend their learning.
- iPads offer applications that can be used for early and emerging readers such as the Camera for art, Pages for presentations, and iBooks for create reading experiences.

### **Why use Chromebooks in grades 3 - 5?**

- Chromebooks represent a new "space" in technology: This space is between the mobile space (phones and iPods) and the portable space (laptops and netbooks).
- This "space" is expanding every day.
- Personalize learning: It is widely recognized that the 1 to 28, one-way knowledge-transfer, model is fast becoming redundant. As teachers and lecturers begin to create new ways of tackling this issue, the Chromebook could play a useful role in this transformation.
- Low maintenance: The Chromebook needs little, if any maintenance. It is a completely web-based device so there is no need for downloading or installing. There is less need for technical support.
- It is a blank canvas: The Chromebook is an engaging device that could transform the way young people learn.
- Instant-on and all day battery: It is possible to get on the internet instantly.
- Auto-save: Student work on the Chromebook saves automatically to the Google Cloud. No more excuses like "I forgot to save my homework!"
- Contextual Learning: The Chromebook is an "anywhere anytime" learning device. This makes it ideal for projects and learning which take place in and out of the classroom.

- Personal Learning Studio: The Chromebook can be a science lab, literacy tool, research station, history archive, language lab, art canvas, video editing suite, and library.

### **Purchasing Chromebooks or iPads**

If parents prefer to purchase instead of having their child borrow a Chromebook or iPad, parents are welcome to purchase a Chromebook or an iPad for their student's individual use during school. Aqsa School is able to make the purchase without incurring tax or shipping costs. The cost of a Chromebook Lenovo N-23 or above is \$229. iPad 5 or above is used in K-2 classrooms. Contact the Aqsa School Main Office if you would like to place and order for your child. Parents who choose to purchase a Chromebook or iPad do not receive a reimbursement since students are able to borrow devices.

### **Taking Care of a Chromebook or iPad**

Students are responsible for the general care of the Chromebook or iPad they are borrowing from Aqsa School during and after school. Chromebooks or iPads that are broken or fail to work properly must be returned immediately to the teacher supervising the class. Care must be taken to protect the screen, keyboard, camera, and body of the Chromebook or iPad as well as the charger. Chromebooks are the property of Aqsa School, and all users will follow the procedures listed in the Aqsa School Acceptable Use Policy for media and electronic equipment.

### **Chromebook and iPad General Precautions**

- While the device is considered scratch resistant, the Chromebook or iPad will scratch. Avoid using any sharp object(s) on the device.
- Devices do not respond well to liquids. Avoid applying liquids to the Chromebook or iPad. The Chromebook or iPad can be cleaned with a soft, lint-free cloth. Avoid getting moisture in the openings. Do not use window cleaners, household cleaners, aerosol sprays, solvents, alcohol, ammonia, or abrasives to clean the Chromebook or iPad.
- Do not attempt to gain access to the internal electronics or repair of a Chromebook or iPad. If a Chromebook or iPad fails to work or is damaged, report the problem to an Aqsa School teacher.
- There is no "jail breaking" of this device.
- Never throw or slide a Chromebook or iPad.
- Cords and cables must be inserted carefully into the Chromebook or iPad to prevent damage.

- Any school-provided carrying cases and sleeves must remain free of any writing, drawing, stickers, or labels that are not the property of Aqsa School
- Devices have the ability to be remotely located. Modifying, disabling or attempting to disable the locator is a violation of the Aqsa School acceptable use policy for electronic devices and grounds for disciplinary action.
- Devices have a unique identification and at no time should the numbers or labels be modified or removed.
- Devices should be placed in the appropriate carrying case to avoid putting any pressure on the screen.
- Devices must not be left in a vehicle or a location such as a bookshelf near a window or heating vent that is not temperature controlled.
- Chromebooks and iPads must be charged for school each day. This is the student's responsibility to ensure that after use the Chromebook is returned and properly charging in the charge cart.
- Chromebooks may be assigned to individual students and the responsibility for the care of the Chromebook solely rests with that individual. Students should not lend their Chromebooks to another person.
- If you have any problems with the Chromebook or iPad, please do not attempt to contact service directly for repair questions.

**Screensavers/Background Photos:** Personalized screensavers or backgrounds are not permitted on the Chromebooks.

### **Sound, Music, Games, Software/Apps**

- Sound must be muted at all times unless permission is obtained from the teacher for instructional purposes.
- Students should provide their own headsets.
- All software/apps must be school provided.
- Data storage will be through apps on the Chromebook, i.e., Google Docs, Notepad, etc. and itunes for the iPad.
- Internet games not approved by Aqsa School are not allowed on the Chromebooks or iPads.

### **Network Connectivity**

Aqsa School makes no guarantee that the school's network will be up and running 100% of the time. In the rare case that the network is down, the school will not be responsible for lost or missing data. It is highly recommended students are

knowledgeable of how to use their Chromebooks offline to complete assignments and projects.

## **Social Media Guidelines**

Educational Purpose: In order to help our students develop their reading and writing skills, cultivate understanding of different people and cultures, share information and collaborate safely and effectively via the Internet, and learn through experiences, our students participate in using a variety of social media applications (blogs, wikis, podcasts) and content creation sites (Animoto, Glogster, Blogger). To protect student privacy and ensure safety, the following guidelines are to be followed:

### *Teacher Responsibility*

- Ensure suggested sites are age-appropriate for student use.
- Monitor student creation of accounts within the classroom and student use of Internet and social media sites.
- Be aware of and adhere to the federal Children's Online Privacy Protection Act laws and School Policies.

### *Student Responsibility*

- When creating accounts, provide full first names and only the first letter of the last name.
- Students will not share personal, identifiable information. (i.e. school name, location, etc.)
- Students will use group pictures of students and/or individual pictures, which do not identify individuals by name.
- Students will agree to use social media and content sites responsibly.
- Protect the Chromebooks and iPads from damage and theft per the 1:1 technology student expectations.
- Understand the user agreements including acceptable use policy, building-specific student handbook rules, 1:1 technology student expectations and parent permission agreements.

### *Parent/Guardian Responsibility*

- Monitor student Internet and social media website use at home.
- Contact teacher who has assigned the project if any questions or concerns arise.

- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to obtain their child's log-in and password in order to monitor the student's computer usage at home. If parents have any difficulties receiving this password, they should contact the Aqsa School Main Office for assistance.

### *School Responsibility*

- Aqsa School staff, teachers and administration ensure that students are protected online and when using electronic devices for educational purposes.
- Aqsa School ensures the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) is upheld.
- By participating in Google Apps for Education, student information may be collected and stored electronically and shared with Aqsa School staff, administration and teachers. Aqsa School use of student information is for educational purposes only.
- For more information on COPPA compliance, see the Federal Trade Commission's website at [www.ftc.gov/coppa](http://www.ftc.gov/coppa).

## Elementary Student Technology Parent Permission Form

As the parent or legal guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ grade, I grant permission for my child to access networked computer services and school computer hardware and equipment including Chromebooks, iPads, Tablets and other electronic devices used during school hours for educational purposes.

\_\_\_\_\_ (initial) I acknowledge receipt of the Technology Acceptable User Agreements contained in the Student Handbook and hereby agree to comply and support my child's use of electronic devices for educational purposes.

\_\_\_\_\_ (initial) I approve the creation of an email address and the use of email by my child in grades 3 to 5 for communication with Aqsa School staff, teachers, and students for educational use only.

\_\_\_\_\_ (initial) I approve the use of apps for student writing, creation of ibooks and other education related apps by my child in grades K - 5.

Parent/Guardian Name (PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Please submit this agreement to your child's teacher. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to the Aqsa School Main Office during office hours at (708) 598-2700 or email ([info@asqa.edu](mailto:info@asqa.edu)).**

