



Colegio Americano de Torreón

ELEMENTARY

STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK
2018-2019

THE AMERICAN SCHOOL OF TORREÓN

VISION

Excellence for life

MISSION

Colegio Americano de Torreón is a bilingual educational institution based on the best North American teaching practices. Through a rigorous college preparatory curriculum, we are dedicated to educating socially committed leaders and responsible citizens who are successful in a global environment. Core classes are taught in English. Graduates earn a U.S. high school diploma as well as a Mexican “bachillerato” diploma.

SHARED BELIEFS

Every CAT student will:

1. Be prepared for university study anywhere in the world.
2. Be fully bilingual in English and Spanish with motivation to develop a third language.
3. Be highly qualified in the use of modern technology.
4. Be globally aware and respectful of diversity through a deep understanding of their own cultural identity.
5. Be socially proactive leaders and ecologically responsible global citizens.
6. Have the right to grow and learn in a safe and healthy environment.
7. Have parents who take an equal responsibility for being actively involved in their children’s education.
8. Have a staff who is highly qualified, compassionate and committed to their success.
9. Develop a love for learning.
10. Have diverse opportunities to develop their athletic and artistic talents.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Address and Telephone Numbers

Colegio Americano de Torreón, A.C.
Paseo del Algodón # 500
Fraccionamiento Los Viñedos
Torreón, Coahuila, México C. P. 27019
Telephones: 222-51-00 Fax – 222-51-01

School Year

August 2017 – June 2018

School Hours

7:15 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.

Elementary Directory

Elementary Principal	Brandon Rogers	Ext. 3010	brandon.rogers@cat.mx
Assistant	Adriana Becerra	Ext. 3002	adriana.becerra@cat.mx
Assistant Principal	Lorena Celis	Ext. 3001	lorena.celis@cat.mx
Assistant	Ixtla Rosales	Ext. 3000	ixtla.rosales@cat.mx
Counselor 1 st grade	Alicia Aramburu	Ext. 3017	alicia.aramburu@cat.mx
Counselor 2 th -6 th	Alma Delia García R.	Ext. 3036	alma.garcia@cat.mx
Assistant	Daniela Peralta	Ext. 3017	daniela.peralta@cat.mx
Community Relations	Berenice Orduña	Ext. 3008	berenice.orduna@cat.mx
Assistant	Karla Huizar	Ext. 3040	karla.huizar@cat.mx
Receptionist	Gabriela Valdez	Ext. 3025	gabriela.valdez@cat.mx

HANDBOOK OVERVIEW

This handbook has been prepared to aid elementary students and their parents in understanding the programs and rules of CAT. Parents are encouraged to discuss the contents with their children and to explain those points, which directly apply. It is the desire of the Elementary School to maintain open lines of communication with parents.

We want each child to have a highly successful educational experience. Therefore, it is our goal to give children a solid foundation for further education that will allow them to be useful to themselves, community, and their country.

We must have the cooperation of students, parents, and teachers, in order to achieve this goal. The curriculum at CAT is college preparatory and has limited resources to support students with special educational needs.

ENROLLMENT IN CAT

ELEMENTARY:

FIRST GRADE: Children who are six or will be six by December 31st of the present year, and have their preschool diploma will be considered for first grade. Children must have some knowledge of English to enter first grade.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Daily schedule 1st - 6th grades: 7:45 a.m to 2:20 p.m. Students in these grades will have one 40-minute recess/lunch period during the day. Administrative staff arrives at 7:15 a.m., teachers at 7:30 a.m. and the cafeteria is open from 8:00 a.m. 3:45 p.m. If you arrive before 7:15 a.m., you can access and stay in the parking lot, however we ask you to remain in your vehicle with your children until 7:15 a.m.

FLAG ASSEMBLY

Flag Assembly ceremonies will normally take place twice a month usually on a Monday at 8:00 a.m. Teachers will send a note home to invite parents if their child will participate in the ceremony.

CURRICULUM

The American School of Torreón is an English speaking school with an American curriculum. All students and English Program staff are expected to speak English throughout the campus from the time they enter the school gates to the time they leave.

ELEMENTARY

Students have the advantage of more than one instructor daily. Foreign teachers or local bilingual teachers team together imparting concepts and skill development in the American curriculum which consists of grammar/writing, reading comprehension, spelling/vocabulary, phonics, mathematics, social studies, science, computers, and music. The American curriculum is taught through the literature based integrated workshop approach with English language resources for reading, language arts, social studies, science and

mathematics. In grades 1, 2, and 3 students will have 20% of their learning time in Spanish grammar, reading, math, social studies, science and handwriting from a Spanish teacher; hence, 80% of learning time is in English. In grades 4, 5, and 6, students have 50% of their time learning from the Spanish Program curriculum and 50% of the time for the English Program curriculum.

Class sections lists are determined at the end of each academic year by teachers, counselors, and the principal, with priority given to students who are re-registering. Requests from parents for a specific teacher will normally not be granted. Any parent concerns regarding other grouping aspects should be made in writing and given to the principal when indicated on the form. A form for this request for the upcoming year is available with the receptionist at a specific time during the school year. Please note that students will not be placed in the system nor added to class lists until full payment is received.

EVALUATIONS

The evaluation procedure of the CAT is based on the student's daily work, class participation, teacher observation, projects, and exams.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards for grades 1- 6 are issued four times a year. Students who enter school with few or no skills in both the English and Spanish language will be placed in a non-graded American Program until such time as they attain gradable skills. These students will receive progress reports rather than report cards. Those English-speaking students who do not take Spanish classes for credit will receive a progress report rather than a graded report for their efforts in Spanish. As P.E. and music are participatory classes, all students will be graded in them if they receive grades in the English program

Progress Reports

Progress reports are sent home with the students at the middle of each grading period. The function of this parent communication is to advise students and parents of notable student progress (positive or negative) during the grading period. Teachers will send a progress report home for students who show academic or behavioral struggles.

PROMOTION OR RETENTION

Retention Policy Grades 1-6

For the purposes of retention and probation, core strands are defined as the following:

READING (Comprehension)

WRITING (Writing Process)

MATHEMATICS (Number Sense)

MATEMATICAS (Sentido Numérico y Pensamiento Algebraico)

SPANISH (Literatura)

A student cannot be promoted to the next grade level and is not eligible for remediation, if that student ends Quarter 4 (Q4) in either of these two categories:

Category 1:

He or she receives grades of N in Q4 in any THREE of the core strands.

Category 2:

He or she receives a grade of N in Q4 in 5 or more of ANY of the academic strands that are on the Report Card.

Limits for Repeating Grade Levels

Students may repeat one school year during the time they are enrolled in grades First through Sixth.

Academic Probation

The rigor of the academic program at CAT requires an ongoing commitment and level of performance on the part of all students. The introduction of a second language and the complex reasoning skills that are part of the CAT methodology may pose a serious challenge to students with low effort, learning differences, and/or language processing problems. Due to the fact that the school uses standards based system for grading, academic achievement is measured against grade level benchmarks. Students who do not meet with success in CAT's academic setting, and who are consistently operating below grade level standards, particularly in language, will be placed on academic probation. In spite of all interventions, if the student continues to show low academic performance, poor effort and or other behaviors that are indicative of a lack of success in this system, a recommendation for withdrawal will be made to the academic committee.

Students who are retained will be automatically placed on academic probation for the following year, unless special circumstances apply. Students who receive N in the following scenarios for two consecutive years will be placed on probationary status:

Category 1:

A grade of N in the same core academic strand during Q4

Category 2:

A combination of two Ns in Q4 in ANY core academic strand

If a student shows considerable progress and raises his or her grades from Ns to Ps by Q4 of the third year (the probationary period), the student will be taken off probationary status. If a student does not show progress and receives Ns in the core academic strands mentioned above for three consecutive years, a recommendation for withdrawal will be made to the academic committee.

Any student who misses twenty or more school days in the year or constantly misses days on which tests (five or more such days) are given will be subject to special examinations and interviews at the end of the school year before it is determined whether or not to allow the student to continue on grade level.

The student's **Academic Committee**, formed by the Principal, Assistant Principal, Counselor, and the student's teachers, will meet when necessary to address specific academic situations.

Parents will be advised of the committee's decision at a conference.

At Risk of Failure

The Academic Committee or the student's teacher will identify students who, after first semester, are failing any core subject(s). The teacher (s) and the Principal or Assistant Principal will meet with the parents to notify them of the situation, and suggest what can be done to improve the student's academic situation.

Promotion Ceremony

There is a promotion ceremony at the end of sixth grade for students who are entering secondary school. The students are to be in the official school uniform:

Girls: Uniform: white shirt with blue collar and skirt, white school socks and black leather school shoes.

Boys: Uniform: white shirt with blue collar and gray pants, black belt, white socks, and black leather school shoes.

To take part in the promotion ceremony student fees must be paid up to the month of June.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Extracurricular Participation

Student participation in extra-curricular activities, during class time, or outside of class time is important to a student's total education. However, there are students who may be affected negatively in their studies by missing class. They may not be able to make up missed work, and this may cause them to get behind. Therefore it is necessary to establish guidelines for student participation in extra-curricular activities.

Any teacher who is planning to take students out of class for any non-academic reason (class or grade-level field trips not included) must have prior approval from administration.

Some students have real difficulty making up work missed because of being out of class. These students need to focus on their academic success until they show that they can participate in these activities and not let grades suffer.

Financial Responsibility

Any financial obligation implicit in student participation in co-curricular or extra-curricular activities sponsored or approved by CAT are the responsibility of the student and his/her parents.

Some extra-curricular activities offered to elementary students:

BAND, ORCHESTRA, and CHORUS

All CAT elementary students are required to take music classes. In grades one through four these are classes devoted to learning to read music, music theory, etc. In grades five and six students may choose between the options noted above. Though band, orchestra, and chorus primarily practice during music classes which are held twice weekly within the schedule of the school day, they also give concerts out of school hours in local venues. Preparing for these invitational concerts may require some extra-curricular practice times. Within school time, music groups prepare for various performances which may include Christmas and a Chorus Invitational held here at school.

CATtus CLUB (ecology club)

The purpose of this club is to guide students towards ecological awareness, to work towards the improvement of poor habits, and to help the community and the environment. Any 4th-6th grade student may join. Meetings are held weekly during recess. During these meetings student take part in various activities. For example, they coordinate the collection of recyclable material for Ver Contigo, an organization that helps blind children in La Laguna. The clubs members have the opportunity to visit the Ver Contigo center to learn about the problems of the blind by meeting and interacting with children in the center. Students plan and work on school campaigns to recycle dead batteries and cell phones. Meeting times are also used to discuss issues and share ideas that could help improve not only local ecological problems, but also those affecting other parts of the world, and to learn from guest speakers and/or videos. On occasion the club visits sites such as Cañón de Fernández to learn about the local environment first hand. Students plan and work at fundraisers to renew the club membership in international and national programs that help the environment such as Nature Conservancy and International Eco clubs. The CATtus Club members take what they have learned into their homes to modify habits of water use, electricity, etc. Of course, recycling of reusable materials becomes important in every CATtus Club household.

CHARITY CLUB

As an extra-curricular activity, the Charity Club invites students from 3rd through 6th grades to become more active socially by helping a home for the elderly in our vicinity. Meetings are held on a regular basis. At these meetings, students make posters for donation drives, and sort out donations like adult diapers, cleaning items, and personal hygiene items. Trips are planned for after school hours or Saturdays to deliver these items. On these visits students, teachers, and parents spend time socializing with the elderly and delivering the donations.

COLOR GUARD

Sixth and fifth grade volunteer students form the color guard, they commit to rehearse at recess time as needed. It is also sometimes necessary to call extraordinary practice times after school hours. Students in the color guard participate in flag assembly ceremonies. These students also take part in demonstrations of proficiency along with other schools designated by SEC as within our zone. The sponsoring teacher is generally the physical education teacher.

Jr. STUCO

Participation in student government promotes responsibility, citizenship, leadership, and camaraderie amongst our students. Jr. STUCO sponsors various activities throughout the year: dances, Valentine's Day and other holiday activities, and fund raisers. Jr. STUCO is open to all 4th-6th grade students, and elections are held in the fall.

Jr. STUCO officers and representatives generally meet weekly during recess time. They are also required to be at such events as dances, talent shows, etc. in order to oversee that the activity is well-organized and well-managed.

SPORTS

There are various sports activities and teams open to elementary students under the auspices of the CAT Athletic Department, which offers a sign-up period for students at the beginning of the year. This department has its own director; therefore, all issues related to after school sports practice should be dealt with him and not in the elementary office. If you have a concern with student or parent behavior you will need to address that with your child's coach or the director of the athletic department.

DESTINATION IMAGINATION

A program, which helps students, finds a creative release in acting, speaking, writing, and problem solving. Destination Imagination is open to all students from first grade through sixth. All students who are interested will be invited to participate in several activities after school once a week for at least two to three weeks. At these meetings students will be able to practice the same types of activities they would do in DI. The purpose is to give the students a chance to see if they would really like to commit to the DI program. It will also give the teachers who will be the team managers a chance to observe how the student interacts with others, takes responsibility, offers ideas, displays real interest, etc. Punctuality and attendance will be important. The ultimate decision for a student to be invited to a DI team will rest with the team managers. Teacher recommendations will also be taken into account as will the willingness of parents to commit to the program both in time and money. Students will be chosen for the DI teams in November, but will not begin meeting until January. This will allow time for student and parent meetings, contractual procedures, and payment for Monterrey trip or the festival at CAT.

Some things to be considered by students and parents:

Teams will meet one day after school in the team manager's classroom for one and a half hours weekly for approximately eight weeks to prepare for the instant challenge and to work on the central challenge. All meetings will be held at school. There will be no meetings in homes.

Teachers will work with students who are not in their grade level. Number of teams formed will depend on available team managers as well as student interest.

Being a team member requires careful consideration and full participation on the student's part. If each student does not contribute to the overall project, lacks responsibility, has poor attendance, etc. s/he is letting her/his teammates down. If a student misses two team meetings, a conference between team manager, DI sponsors, Principal, child, and parent(s) will be held to review the eligibility of the student.

Those teams formed with students from grades 3-6 will compete in Monterrey, if the trip is authorized. Though students from grade 1&2 will not attend the competition in Monterrey, they will have a festival/competition here on the school campus. All teams will perform before the student body to practice their central challenge.

All teams will perform their main challenge before sections of the student body.

Parents will be required to pay about a \$100 USD (the peso equivalent) as part of the contract. This money is for materials used, expenses for the trip to Monterrey or the festival for younger students, and for a final party. Any part of the money not used will be refunded after the final party. All expenditures will be openly disclosed. If a student decides to leave the program or is asked to leave because of disruptive behavior, poor attendance, etc. this money will not be refunded.

The Monterrey Trip: Students will be required to ride the bus with the teachers to and from Monterrey. In Monterrey they will be staying in hotel rooms by themselves (usually three to four children to a room) and be chaperoned by teachers from nearby rooms. Parents are only allowed to see their children at the competition on Saturday. Any interference at the competition or in the hotel from parents (such as visiting hotel rooms, calling hotel rooms, etc.) will mean that the student will not participate in DI for the upcoming season. Students will call parents, if it is requested, to say that they have arrived safely at the hotel. After the competition but before leaving Monterrey, team managers and students will meet to review the score sheet received from the judges to see how the team's work could have been improved. Parents will receive a copy of the scoring sheet from Monterrey and a brief summary of the team's discussion at debriefing to better understand the value of the program.

Parents will also be asked to return a written evaluation of the program after the final party to help improve DI for the upcoming year.

All teams will meet for one last time after the competition in Monterrey or the festival at school for a student party to celebrate the completion of the program for the year.

EMPHASIS ON READING

Reading is the means by which students learn. It is generally considered that students learn to read in grades one through three and by grade four must use their reading abilities to learn in other subject areas though their abilities continue to be refined. Reading has special emphasis not only in the curriculum but in the following three activities:

TARDIES AND ABSENCES

TARDY POLICY

Grades 1-6

A student will be tardy if he/she is not in the classroom at 7:45 a.m. ready to begin work. The principal will determine "excused" or "unexcused" tardies and absences, not the teacher or parent.

After the fourth unexcused tardy, the student will receive a before school detention from 7:15 to 7:40 a.m., where extra schoolwork will be sent by the teacher and given by the office staff. If the student doesn't stay for detention, he/she will receive two days detention. The process then starts over again. After two detentions for tardies in the same quarter the student will receive an in-school suspension (explained in under "Discipline") and the process will begin again. Previous tardies are canceled with the beginning of each new quarter.

ABSENCES

Teachers and office staff keep track of attendance. Excused absences count for making up assignments. Excused absences may be permitted when a written note is presented from the parent for the following reasons:

1. Illness
2. Serious illnesses or death in the family
3. Quarantine of the student or a family member.
4. Permission granted by the principal. A permission form is available from the receptionist.

If parents request permission to take their son or daughter away from school for 3 days or more, they should take in consideration the following:

1. The academic program the child will be missing.
2. It is not the teacher's responsibility to update the student.
3. Parents must get the missing assignments for the student.
4. Make-up homework, tests, and class assignments often lack the quality of class work done during regular class time.
5. The waste of money and resources as the result of a child not attending school regularly.
6. Any student who misses twenty or more school days in the year will be subject to special examinations and review to determine retention or promotion.

Time allotted to complete make-up work is two days for the first day missed and one day for each additional day missed. Therefore if five days of school were missed, a student would have six school days in which to complete his/her make-up work whether it is homework, exams, projects, etc.

Parents should inform the school of any absences in writing, three days **prior** to the absence.

No student will be allowed to leave the campus during the school day and cannot be sent on an errand outside the campus without permission slip from the receptionist.

PLEASE TELEPHONE

We ask that parents call the school prior to 9:00 a.m. to report their children's absences. Your cooperation will help us keep a more accurate record. The next day a note must accompany the student to school in order to excuse that absence even though a phone call was made.

SPECIAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

A student will be allowed to leave school if he/she brings a note from a parent or guardian. If the parent comes to pick up the student, a pass to leave will then be issued. If another person is picking up the student, he/she must identify himself/herself and bring a note from the parents.

DISMISSAL TIMES

DISMISSAL SCHOOL WIDE BEFORE REGULAR HOURS

Parents will be notified in advance of early dismissals in order to make proper arrangements to pick up children on time.

****Students are not allowed to leave the school campus without adult supervision and the permission slip.**

REGULAR DISMISSAL HOURS

2:20 p.m. 1st grade through 6th grade

All other children should not be left in school after 2:35 p.m. unless they are participating in an extra-curricular program. There is no other adult supervision after 2:35 p.m. After this time, elementary staff is not responsible for students. If students stay for after school academic activities, they are under the supervision of the teacher responsible for that activity. If students stay for after school sports, parents are supervising them. Coaches are not responsible for students before or after their practice sessions. Students should not be wandering in the school facilities; they are to remain in the areas where they practice a sport.

REGULAR DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

Parents are asked to remain outside the main entrance area until the dismissal bell sounds. Parents are not allowed inside the gates as this interferes with dismissal procedure. If the parent wants to go to the cafeteria, he/she could do it and wait for his/her child there, not outside the classroom. For students' physical well being, entrance to the school is not allowed while the Early Childhood students are seated by the gates/dismissal areas. Parents should come in earlier or after dismissal schedule is over for students in ECH.

Grades 1-6 dismissal will be at 2:20 p.m. from the following areas:

Grades 1 & 2 will leave from the gates near the Early Childhood classrooms.

Grades 3 & 4 will be dismissed from the area in front of the entrance to the elementary office.

Grades 5 & 6 will be dismissed from the gate in the area beside the elementary dome.

After 2:35 p.m. all remaining students, with no sibling in high school, will be dismissed from the area in front of the elementary offices.

We ask parental cooperation with this dismissal procedure: it is planned with the security of your children in mind. Do not tell your child to go to a different gate to be picked up. Students who have younger siblings should go to the gate where their younger brother or sister is being dismissed. Grade level teachers along with other staff are outside during the dismissal procedure to support the process, please do not interfere with it by trying to have a conference with the teacher in that moment. All teachers are responsible for students' well being and they have the right to talk to any student who is not showing good manners during dismissal time.

Students with siblings in high school or who take the bus by gate 1, should concentrate by the elementary library until 2:35 p.m. High school students are not dismissed until 2:35 p.m. so there is no reason to take our students to the high school area until that time; otherwise, they are often the cause of disruptive behavior in the hallways. A special teacher will be assigned to take students to the high school area so our students meet their older siblings or walk to the bus area at 2:35 p.m.

FIELD TRIPS

A class field trip is one in which the entire class participates, not just some students. Classes may go on local field trips one time each semester. The principal must give prior approval. Teachers are to write a permission slip and have the parents sign and return it before the day of the trip. Field trips will require written parental permission even when they are conducted during class time. Parents will be notified in advance of all field trips.

Fieldtrips are planned by the grade level teachers, and the teachers are responsible for all facets of the trip; hence, making the school responsible. Therefore, it is teachers (with the approval of the principal) who establish the rules governing the trip. The teachers determine which students may attend, and if any parental supervision is required, which parents will be invited to help with supervision. No parent is allowed to self-select. The number of parents helping must per force always be limited so as not to prejudice one of the primary purposes of field trips: the emotional and social bonding between classmates.

All local field trips, other than those within walking distance of the school, require the use of the school bus. The school bus is only available for teacher planned field trips within the regular school schedule.

Customarily, the 6th grade students take an annual class trip outside the city. A sixth grade parents' committee does the planning and the actual field trip. School administrators are not responsible for this trip. This field trip could be done after the school year is over. Sixth grade students will not be granted an early dismissal from the school year to go on this field trip. School administrators authorize the use of school facilities to have grade level planning meetings or fundraising activities. A planning committee representative will be in touch with the principal to ask for the facilities and to set dates for these meetings.

IDENTIFICATION BADGES

All cars picking up children from elementary dismissal must have the identification badge in the driver's windshield in view for the personnel in charge. CAT will provide the badges at the start of the school year. The cost for a replacement will be \$100.00 pesos.

IDENTIFICATION CARDS

Colegio Americano will provide identification cards for students in all grades at the beginning of the school year. There is a replacement fee for any lost ID card.

PARENTAL COOPERATION

Parents can contribute to their child's educational success in the following ways:

1. Provide a suitable place for home study.
2. Notify the school immediately of a change in address, occupation, or telephone number.
3. Give prompt attention to any notice or school papers sent home.
4. Help develop a sense of responsibility for taking notes or information to and from school.
5. Encourage regular school attendance and punctuality.

Development of self-discipline will help ensure students getting along with others, promote ambition, provide opportunities for advanced education and /or for better jobs, and prepare students for a positive future.

LOST OR DAMAGED LIBRARY OR RENTAL BOOKS

Any student who loses or damages a library or rental book will pay the total cost to replace the book. All outstanding fee payments will be made before final report cards will be dispensed.

SCHOOL MATERIAL AND BOOKS

Students should treat their school materials and books with respect. Books and notebooks should be covered and identified. Do not cover rental books with contact paper. If done, parents must pay a fee in the office. When books are stored, contact paper causes books to stick to one another resulting in damage to the covers. Please cover books carefully so as not to tear or damage the cover or inside pages. Proper use of all materials is requested. Writing on school uniforms, books, or other items not designated for writing will not be tolerated.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Any student who is withdrawn from school must follow the Withdrawal Policy established by the Community Development Office as this office takes care of registration and withdrawal. A form is given for signatures to ensure the return of all books and materials.

HEALTH SERVICES

The infirmary at CAT will give emergency attention to all students who become ill or have an accident during school hours. These services include:

1. First aid
2. Visual and auditory screening
3. General health screening
4. Counseling students, parents, and teachers concerning individual health problems
5. Aid in identification of children with physical, mental, and/or emotional deviations who might require special services
6. Discussions and conferences over health issues

Parents must update health information at the beginning of each school year with the Community Relations Office and infirmary staff.

DISPENSING MEDICATION TO STUDENTS

Medication is administered only if written permission and instructions from the parent or legal guardian are given. The nurse is the only person authorized to administer such medications, no medicines are allowed to be kept by students or taken into the classrooms. (Shots are not given). If a physician prescribes medication it must bear a prescription label. Parents are urged, if possible, to administer medicine at home. Students must come to the infirmary to receive any medication. At no time will the nurse go to the classroom to administer medicine. Medicine cannot be given on a schedule that interrupts the general flow of the school day. Medication should be timed by the doctor and parent so as not to be disruptive either to the child receiving the medication or his/her classmates.

ILLNESS

If a child becomes seriously ill during school hours, the parent or legal guardian will be contacted. In the event the school is unable to locate a parent or guardian, the student's doctor, or person indicated on the student's personal data card, will be contacted.

ACCIDENTS

A school accident is one that occurs when the student is in school, on a field trip, or any school activity authorized by this institution. Parents or guardians will be contacted and, if necessary, the family doctor will be called. The student will be taken to the hospital indicated on the student's personal data card. The student's insurance will cover these costs. The school also has coverage by a special ambulance service (AR: Immediate Medical Attention Service), which will be called to campus for any emergency.

HOW SICK IS TOO SICK FOR SCHOOL

When a child wakes up with a sore throat and runny nose, parents may wonder whether to keep him or her home from school. Although sometimes it seems very inconvenient and impractical for working parents, there are times when you have to keep your children out of school to protect them and others. Experts tell us that children should stay home when they don't feel well enough to participate in normal activities or play. A child definitely should be kept home when he or she:

- Vomits twice or more over a 24-hour period.
- Has an oral temperature higher than 100 degrees.
- Coughs almost constantly or has difficulty breathing.
- Has repeated bouts of diarrhea or bloody stools.
- Exhibits abdominal pain for more than two hours.
- Has an open sore on the mouth.
- Displays a skin rash or red eye, and you don't know why.
- Is infested with lice or scabies.
- Shows symptoms of contagious diseases such as chickenpox, flu, hepatitis A, impetigo, measles, mumps, shingles, strep throat, or whooping cough. Children can have vaccinations against some but not all of these.

Children with colds can go to school unless their symptoms prevent them from participating in normal activities. Colds are most contagious very early in the illness, sometimes even before the symptoms appear. Keep children home early in an illness if they're wheezing or sneezing. Often, a runny nose is not significant.

POLICY ON LICE INFESTATIONS

When a child is detected with lice, s/he will be taken to the infirmary, and the parents will be called to come and pick up the child. The entire class will be examined for lice as will the classes of any siblings, close relatives, or playmates of the infected child. After treatment at home or by a doctor, the child cannot be returned to the class room without the approval of the school nurse: the child is to be taken directly to the infirmary for examination upon arrival at school. Children cannot be returned to the classroom without clear evidence of the infestation's eradication.

HOMEWORK

Homework is valuable. It has a measurable impact on academic achievement, teaches responsibility and organizational skills, fosters study habit, and shows children that learning takes place outside the classroom. The value of homework increases with age. Homework for our students is considered an extension of work in class and may be assigned daily. Friday homework will generally be reading or an on-going project. It is important to have students read for at least 15 to 20 minutes daily (including weekends) as reading is the means by which so much else is learned.

Time allotted for written homework for the combined Spanish and American curriculum programs is as follows:

1st and 2nd grades. 20 to 30 minutes
3rd and 4th grades40 to 50 minutes
5th and 6th grades.....60 to 70 minutes

It is the student's responsibility to hand in homework at the designated time. At times some students may have more homework than others in their class because they have not finished class work on time and the teacher has sent the class work home to be done. If this occurs often, or if you feel that your child seems to be doing an inordinate amount of homework, please send a note to the teacher. If not resolved, call counselor to set up an appointment with your child's teacher. Some times the teacher will assign extra homework to those students who require special remediation.

MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) Standardized Testing for Third through Sixth Grades

MAP is a standardized test used in grades three through six. There are several advantages to this exam procedure over that of other standardized exams:

This is a computerized exam, which is adaptive to the individual student's level. With the student's answer to the first question the difficulty of the test is adjusted. The student proceeds towards easier or harder questions depending on his/her first answer. When a student can no longer answer questions at a higher level the test is automatically stopped and the student gets an instant read out of his/her score.

The test can be given two or three times a year. The exam results for each student are converted into a percentage grade. The teachers enter grades into their appropriate subject areas: math was a test grade in math, language arts in grammar, and reading in reading comprehension. Each grade counts as an exam for those particular subjects and is averaged with the rest of the quarter grades for the final quarter grade.

Results are immediate. Within moments of the individual student finishing the exam, the results appear on the screen. The test is automatically built for each separate student so each student is really only competing against his or her own best answers or scores.

LOST AND FOUND

Reasonable efforts will be made to find and return to owners all articles lost at school which have been properly labeled with the child's full name.

Parents can help by continuously checking children's school bags, materials, and clothes. If something is lost, it should be reported immediately or, if the child has something that does not belong to him/her, it should be returned to the teacher or directly to Lost and Found bin found in the office.

We understand that children at times take things home without noticing if it belongs to them or not. Parents, as well as teachers, should discourage this careless behavior. There will be occasions when the retention of the group, backpack searches, or locker searches will be necessary to find a lost article. All personal items as well as food or drink containers must be marked with the child's full name in permanent marker to facilitate the return of lost articles to the owner.

Lost items will be taken to the office and put in special plastic bins available for this purpose. Items not claimed during the day will be taken to Lost and Found room to be stored. The Lost and Found room opens

once a week after school for parents and students to go look for their lost objects. Lost and found items not reclaimed will be sent (every semester) to charity institutions.

PETS AND ANIMALS

Pets and animals are not permitted in school unless they are required by the teacher for which there has been prior permission given by the principal. In this case the parent will bring the animal, be responsible for it at school, and take it home at the designated time requested by the teacher. The parent must stay with the animal. Only small animals confined to a tank, cage, or aquarium will be allowed to stay for a full school day, prior permission by principal.

TOYS AND OTHER PLAYTHINGS

In elementary only a few specific toys or games are allowed at school unless the teacher requires them for a specific project or activity. Traditional toys such as balls, jump ropes, tops, marbles, or yo-yos can be brought to school, but the student takes the risk of loss, etc. Items such as wrestling areas, tennis rackets, baseballs and/or bats, and American footballs should not be in school. Electronic devices (including cell phones) are considered in this category. If such an item is brought to school, the school is not responsible for it, and it will be confiscated and held until the parent requests it in person from the principal. (Reference- "Code of Conduct" # 12.)

Selling toys, collector cards, or any other item is prohibited for all stakeholders; parents, teachers or students. A student found selling any items would have the items confiscated and be subject to the discipline code.

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

1. PHILOPSOPHY

The Library is the heart of the school. It is an integral part of the Educational Program that takes place within the school. The Elementary Library goals are to:

1. Promote literacy and the enjoyment of reading, viewing, and listening.
2. Provide leadership and expertise in the use of information and instructional technologies.
3. Provide resources and materials that support the curriculum.
4. Provide resources and activities that contribute to lifelong learning.

2. HOURS

The library hours are Monday through Friday: 7:15-3:15.

3. RULES

- a. Respect the books, staff and each other. It is important that all patrons are able to use the library without being distracted by others.
- b. No food or drink is permitted in the library.
- c. Those that are not following the rules will be asked to leave the library.

4. SERVICES

- a. Books: The Elementary Library has a growing collection which currently stands at around 10'441 books, including fiction, easy reading, non-fiction, biographies and a smaller collection of Spanish books
- b. Computers: The library has a computer lab with computers for research. From these computers you can access the Internet. Students may print materials that they find on the computers for a fee. Students who come to research with a class may print five pages for free.

5. ONLINE SERVICES

- a. Destiny: The school has its very own online library catalogue. <http://library.cat.mx/>
- b. Destiny Quest: A "Destiny Quest" App is also available for use on tablets and smart phones.
- c. Nat Geo: National Geographic is a great resource for both teachers and students at all grade levels. It contains a complete archive of National Geographic magazine, a cross-searchable collection of hundreds of books, maps, videos and images, there's simply no substitute for the depth and quality of National Geographic Virtual Library. <http://infotrac.galegroup.com/itweb/cameto>, username: cameto0213
- d. Ebsco Data Base: The school subscribes to the Ebsco Data Base system which can be accessed from school or home by any student or parent. "Ebsco host" contains information from magazines, books, encyclopedias, etc. To access this system go to <http://search.epnet.com>, User ID: cat, Password: cat.

All school library links may be accessed via the CAT homepage. While on Campus "destiny" may be typed into the address bar of any computer.

6. PHOTO COPYING

For a small fee students may ask for copies of materials at the library front desk. A fee card must be purchased from the cashier.

7. PROCEDURES

- a. Checking out material: Students may check out a predetermined number of books depending on grade level at a time for a period of one week. Due to the popularity of some book collection (Clifford, Garfield, Arthur, etc.) only one book in the series may be checked out at a time.
- b. Renewal: When a book is due, it may be renewed two times. (Special Considerations are given when needed.)
- c. Overdue books: Fines are charged for overdue books, students with overdue books may not check out any more books until fines are paid and materials returned or paid for. The student's final report card is held by the school until all materials are returned or paid for.
- d. Lost and damaged books: Students are responsible for materials checked out in their name. If a book is lost or damaged, the student must pay the cost of the book plus processing and shipping costs.
- e. Modified Library Hours: Library services to elementary students will be reduced at the end of May. Neither more books nor materials may be checked out after this time. Limited hours may be posted. Sufficient time is needed to collect overdue books and reorganize the library.

Donations to our library collection are kindly accepted and may either be used here in CAT or passed on to HECAT.

CAFETERIA SERVICES

The cafeteria provides daily service during recess and after school hours to those students who stay for extracurricular classes. The cafeteria management operates under very strict guidelines of nutrition and cleanliness established by the Cafeteria Committee, a committee made up of the school nurse(s), administrators, and interested members of the health community. Any complaints or suggestions about the cafeteria service or fare should be brought to the attention of the nurse(s) or the Assistant Principal.

Parents are urged to make sure that their children eat a nutritious breakfast. If your child brings food from home, please make sure it is safely packed and is of nutritional value. Nourishing food is very important to the child in all daily activities, and especially, in being able to focus attention on learning. Also, please mark all containers with the child's name.

We suggest limiting spending money and sending only the amount the child will need to buy lunch. Lunch time is the only time for student snacks. The children do not eat at any other time during the school day. Students are to eat only in the cafeteria, not in the recess area or any other part of the campus.

Rules of Conduct in the Cafeteria

CAT offers both hot food and healthy snacks to all students who wish to purchase something to eat at school. Students may purchase snacks during the lunch break in the cafeteria or after school during training or practice sessions. Food items may not be purchased before, during or after any regular class.

All food items are to be consumed in the proper areas assigned.

1. Students are to wait their turn in line when purchasing food and should not make purchases for others.
2. Students are to bring their own money for purchasing food and not rely on the goodwill of classmates.
3. All paper and leftovers are to be cleared from the eating area and deposited in a corresponding container before leaving the cafeteria.
4. Parents using the cafeteria at the end of the school day, should show good manners, throw their trash in the corresponding containers, and leave a clean table. Remember, you are a role model to your child and his classmates/friends.
5. The cafeteria is not the best place to do homework. Let your child rest and do not ask him to do homework while she/he eats.
6. Teachers in each grade level have the same goal, but could have different activities to reach it, it is not a good idea to compare your child's class work or homework with other students in the cafeteria. Children have different learning styles, therefore different needs, not everything is the same always.

SCHOOL VISITS

No parent may interrupt his/her child's classes at any time. If a parent needs to talk with his/her child's teacher, s/he should ask for a conference with the teacher by calling the Counseling Office for an

appointment. If a parent should feel the need to take care of the problem right away, s/he is welcome to send an e-mail to the teacher(the teacher might not respond immediately, but will do so at some point during the next two school days). Due to our dual curriculum, time is a very important factor; parents must avoid interrupting classes. Also, if one does interrupt a class or discuss something important in a hurried manner, one is likely to receive a less than satisfactory communication, which may well lead to misunderstandings and/or confusion.

Students can use wheeled backpacks so that they can handle all their school materials and books on their own. Except for the rare occasion on which they might have an unwieldy project, please allow them the independence of entering and leaving the classroom on their own. Parents should leave their children by the main gate/side gates and pick them up at the dismissal area.

To remove a child from school at any time other than normal dismissal, a permission slip must be obtained from the attendance office; otherwise the security guard at the gate will deny the student's leave from campus.

Deliveries to students during school time

In the continuing effort to foster good work habits and independence in our students, we ask that they become responsible for their own materials, homework, etc. For this reason, students are not allowed to use any of the school phones to request a forgotten item to be brought from home.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES-Three Way conferences

It is of great benefit to schedule parent/ teacher conferences whenever they are necessary. Parents should not try to confer with teachers at the beginning or ending of the school day as such conferral interferes with procedure.

1. In order to arrange an appointment with your child's teacher call: 222-51-00 ext. 3017 and the Counseling office will schedule your appointment for you.
2. Three Way Conferences are scheduled in October and during the second semester after semester grades have been sent home at which time no classes are held. Parents are given a specific meeting time with teachers to discuss information pertinent to the child's academic standing. It is very important that parents attend these conferences since it is the only time when teachers are scheduled to speak to all parents.
3. Future conferences will only be held upon request (through the Counseling Office) by teacher or parent. Final retention conferences will be held prior to the end of the school year. Final decisions about retention will not be made until final grades are available from the computer system.

PARENT/PRINCIPAL CONFERENCES

The principal's office is open to any parent who wishes a conference, to avoid unnecessary waiting, it is best to make an appointment ahead of time with the principal's secretary. The principal and assistant principal will meet with parents who have requested a meeting, most of the time both of them have a daily planned schedule.

If there is a concern about academics or classroom performance or procedure, the parent should first conference with the teacher. Often a conference with the school counselor can help a parent intervene with a teacher before the problem needs to be brought to the principal's attention.

Please respect the time of your scheduled conference with administration. If for any reason a parent is unable to attend a scheduled meeting within 10 minutes of the starting time the meeting will be cancelled.

VALUES PROGRAM

The Values Program in elementary is a yearlong course taught by volunteer parents who come once a month for a twenty-five minute session in each classroom. Each grade level has a coordinator who meets with the Values Program Coordinator (counselor) on a monthly basis to plan and develop the lessons. Then, the grade level coordinator organizes her parents to come and implement the lesson.

Your child has a specific notebook for the Values class. This notebook is sent home the day of the lesson. It usually has work done by your child during this class. Most of the time, there is a follow up activity to be done at home with parental support.

UNIFORMS

Students have two uniforms. Exaggerated hairstyles (no dyed or fake hair, please) or use of make-up or painted nails are not appropriate for elementary children and are discouraged. Girls should not wear ribbons or hair ornaments except those in school colors. Kerchiefs are not part of the school uniform. It is recommended that children do not wear expensive jewelry to school. Boys are to have a traditional school haircut.

UNIFORM ABUSE: The use of a school uniform was mandated by parents years ago, but is up to teachers and administrators to enforce. The use of a school uniform is really to make life easier at home: less decision making on a tight schedule and fewer discussions about what to wear, can help parents get their children to school on time. Students who abuse the uniform policy will receive a note from the teacher to take home and sign. If this continues, then the student will be sent to the office and parents will be called in.

Students at CAT are required to purchase both the regular school uniform and the Physical Education uniform and wear them properly to school on a regular basis.

On some occasions, however, students may be permitted to come to school without the regular uniform. On these occasions, we expect our students to dress in good taste, in keeping with the occasion, the weather, and community standards. No clothing is allowed to have obscene drawings or phrases, or any which might suggest the recommendation of a prohibited substance.

ROOM PARTIES

There are four designated classroom parties each school year. Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Children's Day are celebrated during the regular school day. A special schedule for the day allows time for games, and other social activities to take place at grade level. These special occasion parties are arranged by the teachers and room mothers and scheduled by administration.

No other dates are to be celebrated without the permission of the principal. The teacher or receptionist has the right to return any items for a party outside of these specifically designated dates.

Birthdays are to be celebrated in at all grade levels (first-sixth) only at the end of the month (or as already scheduled in the elementary calendar). The teacher is in charge of these celebrations and will coordinate the bringing of cake and beverages. Parents or family do not attend these parties, as they are for students only. These celebrations will take place before dismissal time or during the lunch/ recess break so as not to

interfere with the academic program. Cakes and drinks should be taken to the office in the morning before classes begin.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

All teachers have instructions for emergency procedures including, but not limited to, evacuation and lock-down procedures. Routes of evacuation have also been given plus there will be at least one evacuation drill and one lock-down drill involving all students and school personnel during the school year. A procedure has also been established for abandoning the school campus if that should become necessary.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline Rationale

The development of our students into mature adults is a slow and sometimes painful process. Because this development takes place at school as well as in the home, the professional educators at CAT share in the responsibility of assisting your children in the maturation process.

The staff and administration of CAT believe that the young people we serve are capable of maintaining a high level of personal integrity and self-discipline. We also recognize that, from time to time, a basically good student will run afoul of the rules of good conduct.

The goal of CAT's discipline procedure is to create a system which ensures that all students study in an environment which is conducive to learning and which develops students who are **responsible for their own behavior**. This goal implies the creation of a set of behavioral standards that are in keeping with a sense of responsibility, integrity, and respect for self and others.

Achieving this goal requires the cooperation of students, parents, and teachers. Students need to be aware of their responsibilities in the school. Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the policies and regulations of the school, and to be supportive to ensure the success of these policies. It is only through consistent enforcement of classroom and school rules [both at school and in the home] that an overall positive environment can be created and maintained.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE

After teachers have implemented preventative and proactive community building procedures, such as Morning and Class Meetings, to help students take responsibility of their own learning and behavior, if a student continues to misbehave in the class, disrupting his or her own learning process and the learning of others, the following steps should be taken for the misbehavior:

Step 1: Classroom consequences (natural consequences for the action. For difficult cases, begin to fill out the "Discipline Referral Form" like a running record, with dates of classroom consequences and interventions to help justify office consequences.

Step 2: Office detention or warning as deemed necessary by the principal, vice-principal, or disciplinarian.

Step 3: The loss of a special privilege such as attending a class celebration or party.

Step 4: Suspension, either in or out of school, as deemed necessary by administration.

Step 5: In repeated cases of discipline infractions a student's future enrollment in the school may be suspended. A review of the student's behavior will take place in May by a committee involving the principal, vice-principal, counselor and teachers. The general director may take part at his discretion. The purpose of the committee is to review the behavior history of the child and make a decision regarding the enrollment status of the student.

The administration at Colegio Americano de Torreon retains the right to skip over the above steps in cases of severe infractions of the rules. Typically skipping over a step would result in a consequence from step three or four. Examples of severe infractions of the rules are listed below.

1. Bullying

2. Posting inappropriate videos, pictures, or comments alluding a third party on the internet without the permission of others
3. Possession of any item that could endanger the welfare of others.
4. Physical or verbal abuse directed at a staff member or fellow student.
5. Theft
6. Fighting
7. Excessive number of detentions
8. Inappropriate behavior during school sponsored activities
9. Disrespect
10. Choking or biting

Parent Responsibilities

- Communicate to the student values of moral and ethical behavior
- Refrain from placing undue pressure for high grades
- Be aware of a student's need for a quiet time and a place to study
- Support the student's efforts, but will not edit, type, or in any other way do the student's work

Encourage the wise use of time

The governing body of CAT encourages close links with parents and the community. It believes that students benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one. Parents are welcome to school and staff is expected and instructed to be courteous with them. The vast majority of parents and others visiting our school are keen to work with us and are supportive of the school and respectful of its staff.

Types of behavior that are considered serious and unacceptable and will not be tolerated:

- shouting at members of the school staff, either in person or over the telephone;
- Physically intimidating a member of staff, eg standing very close to her/him;
- The use of aggressive hand gestures;
- Threatening behavior;
- Shaking or holding a fist towards another person;
- Swearing; • Pushing; pulling
- Hitting this is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behavior.

The consequences for these behavior can range from a written warning to a suspension from school grounds. It may also result in school filing a suit with the legal authorities. Staff is instructed to hang up the phone, leave a meeting and search for a senior administrator when parents demonstrate aggressive behavior.

**Parents are considered to be at the forefront of their child's education and assist C.A.T. in the process of the education of their children. Please don't offer teachers and staff gifts that are excessive (over 200 pesos). Payments of money and gifts create a conflict of interest between the teacher, student and parent.

** **In addition to academic responsibilities, Parents are expected to be a role model for their children when conducting business at the school. Should a parent be rude, make threats to any C.A.T. employee, use profanity, or make the school unsafe, they will be escorted from the building and banned from the campus.

POWERS AND DUTIES

The Board of Directors exercises full control and direction over the business and affairs of the Civil Association and/or of the school. When legally convened and with a quorum present, the Board of Directors has all the powers and governs all the acts with which the Civil Association and the school may legally exercise and perform.

1. INDIVIDUAL AUTHORITY

Individual Board members have no authority to act except in meeting of the assembled Board, or by specific designation by the Board.

2. POLICY OF BUYING OR SERVICE OF EMPLOYEES OR BOARD MEMBER

The Board of Directors prohibits the school buying of merchandise or service of a Board member or employee with financial interests. And exception to this policy requires the recommendation of the Director General and an affirmative vote of at least seven members of the Board of Directors without the affected member in question being able to participate in the discussion or vote.

3. STUDENT EXPULSION.

The Board of Directors will have the following powers:

- a) The Board of Directors will have the power to impose on students, as well as parents, teachers and employees, disciplinary measures to those persons that show behaviors contrary to the good order and respect that should prevail inside the school campus, as in the surrounding neighborhood, those behaviors being limited to respect, morals and good habits.
- b) Those disciplinary measures that General Director or his designee may impose according to the gravity of the offense are:
 - 1. Verbal warning
 - 2. Written warning
 - 3. Temporary suspensión
- c) The disciplinary measures that the Board of Directors may impose according to the gravity of the offense are:
 - 1. Prohibition of access to the school campus and administrative offices
 - 2. Expulsion
 - 3. Denied enrollment or re-enrollment in future school terms.

The Board of Directors remains the exclusive arbiter in the application of these disciplinary measures based on the recommendation of the General Director. The commission of any offense or inappropriate behavior upon the school campus or school activity off-campus will result in the application and imposition of the required disciplinary measures.

In all cases where the Administration of the school is recommending a student expulsion, The Director General shall present to the Board of Directors, documentation supporting such recommendation. Any student expelled may not be re-admitted.

WE HAVE READ THIS HANDBOOK. WE ARE AWARE AND AGREE WITH ALL THE RULES IN

THE AMERICAN SCHOOL OF TORREÓN

Nombre y Firma del Padre / Parent's Name and Signature

Nombre y Firma de la Madre / Mother's Name and Signature

Nombre y Firma de los Alumnos / Students' Name and Signature

2018-2019