

Island Pacific Academy

Parent / Student Handbook

2009 - 2010

Grades 6 - 8



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Parent and Student Handbook
Grades 6 - 8**

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**MORE THAN A MODEL FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL:
LEARNING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY**

**“There are two lasting gifts that you can give a child . . . one is roots, the other,
wings.”**

Anonymous

We, at *Island Pacific Academy*, have had the rare opportunity to create something unique—a cutting-edge program built upon a working knowledge of adolescent development, psychology, and the very best educational precepts, theories, and practices. In organizing the middle school, we have endeavored to build a program from the ground up that blends challenge and support and where there is respect for the individual learning styles and needs of each student.

Middle school represents a major transitional period for its students intellectually, physically, emotionally, and socially. The middle school student might best be described as an adult-in-training who often experiences the world through the eyes and emotions of a child. Designing a program that meets the needs of every middle school student is a daunting task. Therefore, we, as a faculty, have sought to create a pragmatic model of education that addresses the range of learning styles, abilities, and problems associated with early adolescence which are witnessed daily in the middle school classroom. Additionally, we have endeavored to incorporate into our middle school program the most current research into adolescent brain development.

Utilizing what we know to be best practices for middle school learners, it is our explicit intent at *Island Pacific Academy* to model and inspire humility, personal accountability, service to community, and a life-long love of learning. Multi-disciplinary, inquiry-based and project-approach curriculum are hallmarks of the IPA middle school model. Writing and technology are emphasized across the curriculum. Benchmarks are set and conceptual understanding is the goal. The IPA model for middle school combines National Standards for curriculum and traditional forms of assessment, such as test-of-concept approach (i.e. quizzes) and objective essays, with eclectic-authentic assessment (experiential/real-world problem-based), such as portfolios, and the *Triangulation of Assessment* method. World language preparation, music, art, physical education, and character education are part of the integrated core. Spiraling (integrating and revisiting curriculum) and continuity are intentional and support transition from one grade to another. Homework is purposeful, not on purpose, and is given only when it is supportive of curriculum, not for its own sake.

As faculty, we place our trust in the intelligence in the room, and set no limitations on the abilities of our students. *Island Pacific Academy* recognizes not only the variety of “intelligences” and learning strategies, but gender differences in learning as well. We recognize that the products of education (papers, examinations, portfolios, etc.) are necessary, but not at the expense of the processes and value of individual learning. Therefore, our focus is on curriculum that emphasizes process-oriented learning. Our goal is to develop and nurture “win-win” programs and outcomes

that support the emotional and intellectual needs of all students, parents, and teachers at IPA.

IPA is committed to service-learning, with well-defined core, social, and service objectives and activities. Service-learning includes a balance between community and academic learning, is something more than community service, and includes the central role of reflection in the process of learning through community experience. Students are challenged to come to terms with complexity and uncertainty by participating in real-world problems, and to develop tolerance for themselves and of others.

As a faculty, we are committed to an evolutionary model of education that changes to meet the needs of our dynamic community. Our faculty remains active in our respective learning communities through continuing education and training.

It is with this in mind, that we welcome you to the 2009-2010 school year at *Island Pacific Academy*.

Daniel E. White
Headmaster

Phavana Silva
Middle School Principal

ISLAND PACIFIC ACADEMY

Mission Statement

Island Pacific Academy has grounded its educational program in a mission to provide an environment where students develop:

Strength of character, based upon such core values as respect for others, generosity of spirit and the power of human kindness, and become good citizens of their communities;

Commitment to become involved citizens of their communities and the world who understand and practice democratic values;

Confidence to maximize the use of their intellectual, academic, physical, artistic and creative gifts in preparation for college as life-long learners;

Recognition of each individual's value.

School History

Island Pacific Academy was founded in 2003 and enrolled its first students in September 2004. The concept of an independent, college preparatory, non-sectarian school in Kapolei had been advanced by the Campbell Estate for a number of years. In late 2002 Dr. Daniel White was retained as the founding headmaster to begin planning the curriculum and program elements of the school and establish the various systems necessary to open the school in 2004.

Under the leadership of Larry Caster, an organizing Board of Trustees was formed to develop and approve bylaws and the mission of the school as well as operational policies. The school achieved 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status in 2003. IPA exists as a completely independent non-profit corporation, governed by its board of trustees, with day-to-day operational supervision under the direction of the headmaster.

Founding faculty members were identified in the summer of 2003 and began meeting monthly with Headmaster White to plan a clear scope and sequence for language arts and mathematics instruction, as well as social studies and science curriculum. From the start a commitment was made to employ specialists for studio art, music, physical education, and foreign language instruction, beginning with Kindergarten.

Ground was broken in March 2004 for the first building, with a blessing celebration held on May 26. The school opened September 13, 2004, with approximately 200 students in grades pre-kindergarten through seven. The school opened additional sections in grades K through 7 in the 2005-06 school year, and added grade 8, increasing the school's student population to over 380. Work on the second phase of the campus began in August 2005. In July 2006, the second building opened, housing the Middle and Upper School programs. The Upper School opened offering grade 9 in the 2006-07 school year, and the Middle School grades were expanded.

Island Pacific Academy School Calendar 2009-2010

Wednesday, August 26	First Day of School for Elementary and Middle School
Monday, September 7	Holiday - Labor Day - School Closed
Tuesday, September 15	Back-to-School Night (Gr. PK-5)
Thursday, September 17	Back-to-School Night (Gr. 6-8)
Tuesday, September 22	Back-to-School Night (Gr. 9-12)
Monday, October 12	Holiday - Discoverer's Day - School Closed
Tuesday, October 13	Faculty Professional Development Day - School Closed
Saturday, October 17	PSAT for all Sophomores/Juniors (Mandatory)
Monday/Tuesday, October 26-27	Fall Parent Conferences for Elementary and Middle School Only - School Closed Upper School - Begin Fall Break - School Closed
Wednesday, October 28- Friday, October 30	Fall Break - School Closed
Friday, November 6	First Quarter Ends
Wednesday, November 11	Holiday - Veteran's Day - School Closed
Thursday, November 26- Friday, November 27	Thanksgiving Break - School Closed
Monday, December 21- Friday, January 1, 2010	Winter Break - School Closed
Monday, January 4	Instruction resumes
Monday, January 18	Holiday - M.L. King Day - School Closed
Tuesday, January 19- Friday, January 22	First Semester Final Exams - Upper School Only
Friday, January 22	First Semester Ends
Monday, January 25- Tuesday, January 26	Semester Break - Upper School Only - School Closed
Monday, January 25	Second Semester Begins - Elementary and Middle School
Wednesday, January 27	Second Semester Begins - Upper School
Monday, February 15	Holiday - President's Day - School Closed
Tuesday, February 16	Faculty Professional Development Day - School Closed
Thursday-Friday, March 18-19	Spring Parent Conferences for Elementary and Middle School Only - School Closed Upper School classes in session
Monday, March 22- Friday, March 26	Spring Break - School Closed
Thursday, April 1	Third Quarter Ends
Friday, April 2	Holiday - Good Friday - School Closed
Friday, April 23	Faculty Professional Development Day - School Closed
Saturday, May 22	1 st IPA Commencement
Monday, May 31	Holiday - Memorial Day - School Closed
Tuesday, June 1- Thursday, June 3	Second Semester Final Exams - Upper School Only
Friday, June 4	Last Day of School - School Day Ends at 11:00
Wednesday, June 9	Last Day for Faculty

Office Hours

The Upper School office will open at 7:30 a.m. on all days that school is in session and close at 4:30 p.m.

The Administrative Offices are open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Daily Schedule for grades 6 – 8

Students in grades 6 - 8 begin each day at 8:00 am with a 25-minute extended homeroom/pu`u honua (advisory) period. Students in IPA's middle school program attend four 75-minute classes per day with one 30-minute lunch period beginning at 11:25 am. Students' seven classes are spread over a two day schedule, A day and B day. Days are grouped into 6-day cycles, with approximately 28 cycles comprising the school year. Dismissal is at 3:10 p.m.

8:00- 8:25	Pu u Honua (Homeroom)
8:30- 9:45	Period 1
9:45- 10:00	Break
10:05- 11:20	Period 2
11:25- 11:55	Lunch
12:00- 1:15	Period 3
1:20- 2:35	Period 4
2:40-3:10	Study hall in Homeroom

COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE SCHOOL

Regular communication between the school and parents helps to create an optimal learning environment for students. There are several formal means of communication available for school-parent contacts, and we encourage parents to feel free to e-mail, telephone or come to campus to talk about their child's progress.

Edline—Island Pacific Academy utilizes Edline, an internet access portal that enables parents to go online to read about their child's progress and other school information. IPA teachers regularly post information which is accessible only by password to parents and students. Information about how Edline works is shared with all families new to the school at the beginning of their enrollment at the school.

Telephone—All IPA teachers have voice mailboxes at the school. A list of telephone numbers will be provided separately. Teachers will endeavor to return phone calls as quickly as possible but generally not during the instructional day.

Conferences—Parent/student/teacher conferences are an important part of the school’s connection with families. Formal conferences, when school is not in session so as to permit more thorough conversations, are scheduled well in advance and occur twice yearly.* Teachers and parents may arrange individual conferences by agreement at any point in the school year. *See page 22 of the Parent/Student Handbook for more complete information on Parent/Student/Teacher conferences.

Back-to-School Night—Each September, the faculty host the parents of their students for Back-to-School Night, held two to three weeks after the start of school. At Back-to-School Night, the teachers present an overview of the academic program for the year in that grade or subject. Back-to-School Night is an opportunity to meet other parents and ask questions about the curriculum, teaching strategies, field trips or other topics related to each class for that year.

Visits to Campus and Classrooms—School parents are encouraged to visit the school, and volunteer help from parents is welcomed. However, we ask that parents and other visitors be mindful of the fact that their presence can be a potential source of distraction for students. So as to avoid circumstances where too many visitors are present at once, we ask that parents and other visitors arrange ahead of time with the classroom teacher regarding a time to visit. Even if you have arranged with the teacher to be present in the classroom, ALL VISITORS MUST stop by the school office to let the office staff know you are on campus, sign in the visitor book and get a visitor pass to wear while at school.

There will also be a number of special days or events during the school year when parents are especially encouraged to be part of special celebrations or other events in the classroom or as part of the whole campus community. We look forward to having all parents share those special times with us at IPA, and signing in as a visitor are not needed for those occasions.

SCHOOL PROGRAM INFORMATION AND POLICIES

Visitors to Campus

All visitors to campus, including parents or guardians, are expected to come first to the school office to check in with the Administrative Secretary, even if the visit is to a teacher on a pre-arranged basis.

Attendance Policy

Consistent attendance at school is important; long or frequent periods of absence may affect a child’s ability to progress academically. At IPA we assume that

students will miss school no more than 20 days in an academic school year. Instances where students miss school more than 20 days per year even if for serious illness or other unusual circumstances will be evaluated individually to determine whether the student is ready to advance to the next grade level in a subsequent year.

If your child is going to be absent, please let the school know as early in the day as possible. Call the Administrative Secretary and identify yourself as the parent and indicate the reason and probable duration of your child's absence. It is best if you can make routine doctor appointments early in the day or near the end of the school day, so as to disrupt the student's day at school as little as possible.

Whenever a parent or guardian picks up a child for a medical or dental appointment, the school parent and child check out at the office so that we can account for all of our children at all times. If a student comes late to school, or comes back after leaving for an appointment, the student must check in at the office.

Unexcused Absences

It is expected that unless a child is ill or there is a family emergency, parents will insure that students are in attendance. Reasons other than these for absence will be evaluated on an individual basis, but will generally be considered unexcused absences unless an exception is made by the classroom teacher or head of school. Students who miss exams or other in-class work because of an unexcused absence may not be allowed to make up the work and teachers will not be expected to provide tutoring or any special out-of-class time to present material missed by the student during the absence.

Arrival Time

For 6th – 8th grade students, school begins at 8:00 a.m. The school asks that students not arrive earlier than 30 minutes before the start of the school day as the upper school building will not be open to students until 7:30 am. In the event that a student does arrive before 7:30 am, he/she will be expected to sit in the lanai area quietly socializing, studying, etc. It is also expected that students will not be disruptive to the larger school community. **Please note that Island Pacific Academy will not be responsible for middle school students on campus prior to 7:30 am.** Additionally, after 7:30 am, middle school students will be expected to be on the lanai or on the second floor of the upper school building. This policy is to insure that all students are properly supervised once the building opens. Finally, **once students have arrived on campus, they may not leave until the close of the school day.**

For most families, most mornings, entering the parking lot, turning right and driving to the makai side of the lot, turning left into the traffic circle and unloading students then will be the normal routine which, if followed should insure a smooth drop-off process. In the event that a parent needs to park, spaces are available in the upper parking lot.

Dismissal

For students in grades 6 - 8, the school day ends at 3:10 p.m. The school asks that students be picked up within 20 minutes of the end of the school day if they are not attending After School Study Hall, attending after school classes, or participating in ILH sports . All 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students must be out of the building no later than 4:15 pm. **Island Pacific Academy will not be responsible for the safety or supervision of the students after 4:15 pm. Additionally, once a student leaves campus, he/she may not return to campus that day unless accompanied by a parent.**

Traffic at pick-up time will require much cooperation and good will. The school will establish a pick-up routine and publicize the expected process. **The process will break down quickly if parents arrive more than 10 minutes before pick-up time or try to maneuver around the queue that will form.** The school's system will involve the speedy identification of parents arriving for pick-up and the student(s) to be picked up and the prompt loading of the cars with students and their possessions. If all adults involved follow the proper procedure, the pick-up can be accomplished within 20 minutes most days with a minimum of frustration or wait-time.

Any younger sibling(s) of students in grades 6 – 8 who are not picked up by 3:20 pm will be sent to the drop-in after school care and parents will be billed on an hourly basis for after-school supervision.

After-School Study Hall

Designed to give added support to students, After-School Study Hall goes from 3:15 – 4:00 pm on Mondays and Wednesdays. Though optional, it is highly recommended that students take advantage of this opportunity for individual help. Students may go to any teacher during this time.

Students struggling with academics should attend After-School Study Hall. Students may be asked to join the After-School Study Hall at any time during the school year if his/her academic progress is in question.

Tardiness

It is very disruptive when students come in late to school. The school depends on parents planning commute time so as to have students to school at least a few minutes in advance of the designated time for school to begin each day. IPA keeps a record of all tardiness and that record will become part of the student's permanent record.

The school's agreement system includes responses to tardiness (p. 14 - 15). Excessive tardiness is indicative of an attitude about the importance of education to a family and cause for discussion with the school about whether or not Island Pacific Academy is the best fit for a student.

Lunch

It is expected that all students will eat a nutritious lunch each day. Students have two options for lunch: bringing lunch from home or signing up for monthly hot lunches available through an outside vendor. The vendor requires families to sign up for a whole month at a time, but not necessarily every day. Specific information about the menu offered by the vendor will be made available by the school on a regular basis. Additionally, Boston's Pizza will be on campus twice a week (days TBA). Students may bring cash on those days for purchase.

For lunches brought from home, the school asks that candy, soda pop, energy drinks, and other foods and drinks with high sugar/low food value not be included in the lunch.

Students will eat lunch either outside, on the Lanai, or in the multipurpose room inside the upper school building.

Uniforms

Families will be provided with information about ordering approved uniform items for school and physical education. The school has authorized a variety of uniform items, both in terms of colors and articles of clothing, to give students some choices each day. However, all students must have at least one combination of the official uniform (for trips and special events) which consists of khaki bottoms (skirts, skorts, shorts or slacks) and the green polo shirt with the school's crest. If the field trip will require alternative clothing, students will be advised well in advance.

All students are expected to wear approved Island Pacific Academy options for uniforms each day, and the items must be obtained from the designated suppliers. When a student does not wear the proper uniform, it is considered a breach of the agreement system, (see pg. 14).

Shoes: We recommend that students wear closed toed shoes even on non-physical education days; however, open toed shoes may be worn if the shoe is secured to the ankle and heel. In all cases, shoes must be as nearly single-color as possible and in a color which coordinates with the colors of the uniform (black, brown, tan, navy, red, forest green or white). Heels must not be higher than one inch.

Shirts: Only approved uniform shirts may be worn. Any undershirts worn should not be visible.

Slacks/shorts: Slacks and shorts should be worn on the waist such that no undergarments are showing. Students who wear their slacks/shorts in a “baggy” fashion will be considered out of uniform.

Skirts/shorts: The length of skirts and shorts should be no shorter than the length of the middle finger when arms are hanging at the side. Students who wear their skirts/shorts shorter than the allowable length will be considered out of uniform.

Belts: Optional. However, if worn they must be solid color and coordinate with the colors of the uniform.

Jackets and sweaters: The uniform company offers several navy outer wear options with the school crest. Other wraps will not be permitted, in order to maintain a uniform appearance.

Hats: Hats and other head coverings may not be worn inside of the building at any time. Hats may be worn at PE and must be worn facing directly forward. The school crest is the only permitted logo on hats.

Jewelry: It is preferred that students come to school without excessive jewelry. Only non-dangling earrings (“studs”) may be worn to school.

PE Uniforms

All students are required to wear to PE classes the IPA logo t-shirt and navy blue IPA PE shorts which can be purchased in the IPA bookstore in the Upper School building. Athletic shoes must also be worn. Students are required to change out of their P.E. uniform after class. Mixing one part P.E. uniform with another part of the regular uniform is considered “out of uniform”.

Out of Uniform

The IPA school uniform policy sets specific guidelines for dress that each student is expected to follow. If a student chooses to arrive to school dressed outside of these guidelines, he/she will be considered “out of uniform”, an action that will be deemed unsupportive of the learning environment. After 3 consecutive infractions of the dress code, the student will be required to meet with a middle school administrator and the student’s parents will be contacted. For each consecutive infraction thereafter, the student will be referred to the Dean of Students and/or Principal.

Personal Appearance and Hygiene

Students are expected to dress conservatively. For example, excessive jewelry, earrings for boys, excessive make-up for girls are not acceptable. Students are expected to keep their hair clean and in one of the colors provided by nature for hair. Boys should keep their hair no longer than the tip of the shirt collar. On days when students have physical education, students are expected to wear appropriate shoes (athletic shoes).

Class Parties/Special Events

Children in school together often want to invite their classmates to birthday parties and other special events. As we adults recognize, however, such invitations, if not extended to all students in a class, can also be a source of disappointment and hurt for any not invited. It is therefore incumbent upon us as adults to be sensitive to all the children in a class when holding special events for their child(ren) involving other children from the school.

Electronic Devices

Students are expected to keep all electronic devices including ipods, other music related devices, and PSPs at home. These instruments can disrupt the school's computer network system and hinder the effective use of student and faculty computers. Cell phones may be brought to school but must be turned off and left in student lockers. Failure to abide by these rules will result in confiscation of the item/s. Confiscated electronics will be given to the Principal or Dean of Students.

Parents As Collaborators With The School

At IPA, parents play an essential and positive role as a partner with teachers and administrators as we all work together to accomplish what is best for each child at our school. Parent comments, observations and questions are welcomed. We encourage parents to work productively with teachers by staying informed about their child's progress and events at school. Likewise, we encourage parents to keep the teachers and administration informed when there are situations in the life of a child outside of school that might affect his/her performance at school and of which it would be helpful to the child for the school to be aware.

In return, IPA teachers and staff are committed to frequent and open communication with parents regarding student progress and activities at school. There are several scheduled informational events and conference times throughout the year, and we urge parents to take advantage of those opportunities to meet with teachers and staff. Whenever a parent has a question or concern about their child's progress or other aspects of school life, the school encourages direct contact with the teacher by phone or email. Unless it concerns a quick informational question, an impromptu dialogue right after school as you pick up your child may not be the best or most convenient time to engage teachers in a conference. Teachers reserve the right to ask parents to make an appointment at a time that is more conducive to a productive conversation. Parents are always welcome to schedule an in-person conference with their child's teacher(s) or administrator.

When parents choose to enroll their child at IPA, they agree to subscribe to our mission, our general philosophy, procedures, and guidelines, and respect our educational decisions. At IPA the best interests of the student, in our professional experience, always comes first when we make decisions about placement, curriculum or approaches to children's needs. Parent information can be very helpful to that decision-making

process. Trust and mutual respect are essential underpinnings of an effective working relationship between parents and the school. Parents may not always agree with every decision made by teachers or the administration at IPA. In most cases, however, we will find sufficient common ground to continue a mutually respectful relationship.

Parents best support their child and the value placed on trust and respect at the school by bringing concerns directly to the teacher most closely involved in the issue and seeking a solution or information without involving other parents. If a parent feels they have not received a sufficient or satisfactory response from the teacher or other staff member, then an appointment with the teacher and division administrator can be scheduled to try to reach resolution. Only after other avenues have been tried should parents seek redress from the associate head and/or head of school. Rarely is that needed to resolve disagreements or concerns.

If, however, an impasse arises that we cannot resolve and the parents find they cannot remain a supportive and constructive member of the school community, it may follow that another school would be a better match for the family.

School Environment/Culture

The IPA community is grounded in the following Five Agreements:

1. Attentive Listening
2. Appreciations/No put downs
3. Mutual Respect
4. The Right to Pass
The Right to Participate
5. Take Care of Each Other / Take Care of This Place

These agreements help to create a school culture where all people, children and adults alike, recognize the power of human kindness and exhibit a generosity of spirit. Additionally, the school has articulated a Civility Policy which asserts that all interactions at the school must be characterized by civility or postponed until another time when all parties involved can be civil.

Our goal is to insure that all people connected with the school experience our community as safe, a place where people can express opinions, even disagree, but always hold others in the highest respect. Such a school environment will set itself apart from much of what we all experience in the outside world, idealist, to be sure, but an ideal worth pursuing.

Civility Policy

Toward the goal of encouraging all adults (teachers, staff and parents) to remember that IPA wants all adults to model civil behavior for children, the school has adopted a “Civility Policy,” which reads as follows:

“The school asks adults to model for students’ behavior based on kindness, trust, high ethical standards and a generosity of spirit. We are none of us perfect, but we can encourage in each other the highest of standards. Above all, and at the very least, IPA asserts that all members of the school community are expected to treat each other with courtesy and respect at all times - students and adults alike. All members of the school family share an obligation to keep our campus and our interactions on behalf of our students free from disrespect and disruption.

The school has, therefore, adopted a “civility policy,” the purpose of which is to promote mutual respect, civility, and orderly conduct among employees, students, parents and the public who visit the campus. The policy is not intended to limit freedom of expression. Rather we seek to maintain, to the extent possible, a reasonable, safe, harassment free workplace for our students and staff. It is meant to discourage volatile, hostile or aggressive actions or abusive language on campus or at school events.”

Island Pacific Academy Agreement System¹

Rationale

A student’s behavior, the personal and social actions that an individual takes, informs and shapes that student’s character and affects the community within which those actions are taken. The IPA agreement system is based on the notion that integrity, personal dignity, humility, and respect for one’s self, others, and the world are the cornerstones of personal responsibility and personal accountability, and thus effective action and right living.

Children need the opportunity to understand that choices have consequences, and that they have control over what happens to them. They need to internalize a lifelong ethic of cooperation, respect for themselves and others, and effective action, not merely “perform” appropriate behaviors only when direct supervision is present and a negative stimulus imminent.

IPA has an agreement system that involves the students in the consideration of their behaviors as they affect the school, others, and themselves.

¹ The IPA Agreement System is adapted, in part, from Ho’ala School, HI and River School, CA

School Agreements

There are five general areas covered by school agreements. They are **SUPPORT OF THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, RESPECTFUL CONDUCT, POSSIBLE HARM, OUT OF CLASS, and QUICKLY AND QUIETLY**. The agreements listed below each category are examples of expected behaviors and are not meant to be an exhaustive list.

1. Support of the learning environment

I agree to arrive each day

- On time
- Prepared for class
- With completed assignments
- With all necessary supporting materials including my binder, textbooks, and writing implements

I agree to

- Participate to the best of my ability
- Do my own work
- Be considerate of others during group activities
- Avoid distracting behaviors that undermine the ability of both myself and my fellow students to learn
- Show up in proper school dress and presentation
- Refrain from chewing gum while on school grounds
- Leave all electronic music devices at home and cell phones in my locker in the off position for the duration of the school day
- Properly shut down, store, and recharge my computer each afternoon

2. Respectful conduct

I agree to

- Treat others and the environment with respect
- Be respectful of myself
- Use IPA computers for school research and assignments ONLY

I acknowledge that

- Words and gestures can hurt
- We all have value
- Everybody has the right to feel accepted and respected at school

3. Possible Harm

I agree to

- Do nothing that could even possibly result in harm to myself, another person, or the school

- Be aware of the placement of my personal belongings (book bags in the hallway, papers on the floor, chairs left out in the main thoroughfare, drinks near electronics, etc.)
- Be aware of my personal body in space (running in the halls or classroom, big body movements in inappropriate areas, etc.)

4. Out of Class

I agree to

- Arrive to class on time
- Be ready for class (in my seat, pencil sharpened, etc.) at the proper time
- Be in class during class time, in the recess area during recess time, and within designated boundaries at all times

5. Quickly and Quietly

When I am informed of a broken agreement, I agree to

- Log in without delay
- Log in without argument or sound or any distracting behavior
- Wait until an appropriate opportunity (e.g. during recess or break) to discuss any disagreements I might have concerning a broken agreement

How Quickly and Quietly Works

1. A teacher may “point-out” a student for any behavior that, in the teacher’s judgment, results in minor disruptions of the learning environment. Point-outs are not intended to be punitive (i.e. time outs). Rather, they are intended to be an opportunity for the student to be made aware of unsupportive behavior (to have that behavior pointed out to them). Point-outs are given in such a way that neither the teacher nor the student engage in a contest of wills, invest inappropriate emotional energy in the moment (make it personal), or carry grudges.
2. After 3 point-outs, the student proceeds directly, and without delay, to log in to a designated computer terminal or logbook (as is age appropriate). Students are required to log in without any word, gesture, or noise, and without questioning or arguing with the teacher.
3. If the student questions a point-out or is unclear what behavior lead to a point-out, the student is required to wait until an appropriate time to talk with a teacher and to engage in this conversation in a respectful manner. Usually, classroom time is not an appropriate time to carry on this type of conversation. Rather, breaks between classes or recesses are preferred, so long as the teacher has no previous obligation, such as a meeting, and is willing to meet at that time.
4. If a student accrues a consistent pattern of point-outs without violating the 3 point-out rule, the teacher reserves the right to assign a broken agreement to the student.

When Agreements are Broken

IPA defines a broken agreement as any behavior, whether intentional or unintentional, that could possibly harm self, others, or the learning environment. Additionally, 3 point-outs given during one class period are equivalent to 1 broken agreement.

For **each broken agreement**, students will:

- Fill out a log-in slip on which they report, in their own words, the nature of the broken agreement, when it occurred, why the behavior was inappropriate, and what actions will be taken to avoid repeating the behavior.
- The student will have the log-in signed by a parent and returned to the teacher the next day.

After **3 broken agreements within the month**, students may:

- Complete a form on which they are asked to
 - Describe their behaviors and the results of those behaviors
 - Set a new goal or goals for modifying those behaviors
 - Create a plan to meet that goal(s)
 - Have the form signed by their teacher and parent
 - Return the form to school as soon as possible

After **4 broken agreements within the month**, students may:

- Complete a second form on which they will reflect upon their decisions regarding their behaviors
- Work with their teacher and parents to arrange a parent/student/teacher conference
- Complete a **“Giving Back”*** contract in which the student will devise a plan for one hour of school-related service (e.g. helping to clean and organize the art room, etc.) outside of scheduled classroom hours. This may include free periods during the normal school week depending on the age and schedule of the individual student. Students are responsible for creating and coordinating their service with a sponsoring teacher of their choice, provided that the teacher is willing and available at the time requested by the student.

** “Giving Back” provides an opportunity for the student to consider both their own specific behavior and how that behavior might take away from their relationships, their classroom, and the school community.*

After **5 broken agreements within the month**, students may:

- Meet with the Dean of Students and/or Principal* to talk about these problems
 - Brainstorm new goals and a plan to achieve these goals
- * The administrator will call home to inform the parents of the current issue and devise an appropriate school response.*

After **6 broken agreements within the month or a student’s accruing a consistent pattern of broken agreements over several months:**

- The headmaster, parents, Dean of Students and/or Principal, a student advocate (teacher) of the student's choice, and the student may meet to discuss behavioral issues and appropriate responses made. A consistent pattern of misbehavior may jeopardize a student's continuation at Island Pacific Academy.

Definite Harm

IPA defines "Definite Harm" as any behavior that results in harm to self, others, or the learning environment. Examples include fighting, vandalism, harassment of any kind, theft, swearing, computer misuse, academic dishonesty etc. Students who participate in any such behaviors will earn an immediate dismissal from the area and subsequent administrative action.*

* *see Behavioral Probation*

Harassment, Hazing and Intimidation

Harassment includes all forms of behavior that result in the intentional humiliation or intimidation of another person and is not acceptable at Island Pacific Academy. Such behavior violates the Five Agreements and the specific agreement system at IPA.

Harassment, such as bullying, can be verbal, non-verbal and may not necessarily involve physical contact or damage/loss of property. Whenever words or actions result in feelings of inferiority or inflict damage on the self-esteem of another, then there is strong possibility that harassment has occurred. Any faculty or staff member who suspects that harassment has occurred will investigate and report to the school's administration if he or she feels that further investigation is warranted. Any student who is found to have harassed another student will face disciplinary consequences.

Behavioral Probation

At *Island Pacific Academy*, students are expected to be diligent in their attention to personal responsibility and personal accountability. As members of the IPA community, they make daily behavioral decisions that reflect the five agreements of mutual respect, attentive listening, appreciation/no put-downs, the right to participate or pass, and taking care of each other and this place. While the Agreement System outlines consequences for minor infractions against those five agreements, the behavioral probation policy is geared toward those infractions that are deemed "Definite Harm". These include but are not limited to: fighting, vandalism, harassment of any kind, theft, swearing, computer misuse, academic dishonesty*, etc.

**Academic dishonesty is defined as any action in which a student submits work that is not his/her own. This includes but is not limited to plagiarism and copying another's work.*

Should a student choose to engage in any behavior that falls under the category of "Definite Harm", he/she could possibly be placed on Behavioral Probation. The term of the probation will last for no less than 3 months during which time the student will be

expected to more carefully monitor his/her behaviors. Additionally, the student will be required to meet with a middle school administrator on a regular basis. Should another incident of Definite Harm occur during those 3 months, the student will likely be eligible for suspension* in addition to a 3 month extension of the probation term. Further, the student's contract for the coming year may be withheld pending a behavioral review. A third infraction of Definite Harm may result in the student being asked to leave Island Pacific Academy.

** The number of days will be determined by the administration and will depend on the nature of the infraction.*

The purpose of behavioral probation is to encourage students who are not exhibiting responsible behaviors to carefully assess their role in the creation and preservation of a positive and safe middle school community and make necessary changes.

Suspensions and Expulsions

Some behaviors are so egregious that immediate separation from the school, either for a short, specified period of time, or permanently, may be appropriate. Such action will be taken by the principal and, if necessary, may involve the associate headmaster and/or headmaster with parents/guardians fully involved in discussions about the school's action. Sample behaviors that could lead to permanent separation from the school:

- Possession of weapons or explosives at school or school-related events
- Possession or distribution of illicit drugs or alcohol
- Theft
- Unauthorized use, or possession, of school property, equipment, materials or the willful damaging of such.
- Serious personal injury caused by willful action.
- Threatening harm to any individual in the school community.
- Harassment, hazing or intimidation
- Vandalism
- Behavior unbecoming an IPA student that occurs outside of school and brings disrepute to our institution including, but not limited to, any offense punishable by law.
- Misuse of a school computer
- Chronic absences
- Chronic occurrences of broken agreements

This list is not meant to be exhaustive.* The headmaster bears the responsibility of protecting the school, its people and reputation while at the same time collaborating in the education of individual children, including those who violate school rules. Separating a child from school is a drastic step but one that might be necessary to insure the health, safety and well-being of all within the school community. **The administration reserves the right to judge whether or not a behavior, including but not limited to those listed above) qualifies for a suspension or expulsion.*

Mediation

Situations can arise where administrative action is deemed necessary and behavioral probation and/or suspension is not appropriate. Most often, these situations involve words that may or may not have been said and/or have been misinterpreted. In these situations, administrative-led mediation is frequently successful in resolving such conflicts. In such cases, an administrator may mediate between participating students to assist in solving the problem. Additionally, students may also initiate mediation by asking a teacher or administrator to facilitate the process.

STUDENT HEALTH AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Immunizations

IPA requires that every student be immunized against polio, diphtheria, tetanus, measles, rubella, mumps, varicella, and hepatitis. It is required that a record of the child's immunizations be kept in the school files.

Contagious Conditions

Parents can help control outbreaks of contagious conditions such as chicken pox, flu or head lice. It is important that children be kept home when they are ill and infectious, so that they do not expose others.

Please notify the school immediately if your child has contracted any contagious condition, including head lice.

Pupil Medication

Any student who, during the regular school day is required to take medication (including over-the-counter medication) prescribed for him/her by a physician, may be assisted by a teacher only if the following is received:

- A written statement from the physician or pharmacist detailing the method, amount and time schedule by which such medication is to be taken (usually found on the container of the medication, but be sure it is complete).
- A written statement from the parent or guardian of the pupil indicating the desire that the school assist the pupil in the manner set forth in the physician's or pharmacist's statement. This form must be completed and

returned to the teacher before the teacher is allowed to dispense any medications.

- Teachers/Staff may not issue non-prescribed medication (e.g. aspirin, Tylenol, etc.) without specific parental consent.

A student may not keep medications in their personal possession on campus, except as specifically approved by school administration.

Emergency Drills

Fire drills (indicated by a continuous alarm) occur approximately once a month. They give students practice in taking the quickest, safest route from the school building.

The teachers will inform and practice with students the procedures to follow in the event of other emergencies, though typically the procedures follow much the same method of quick exit from the building as possible.

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Cycle Updates

Progress reports for all middle school students will be available on Edline on the last school day of each month. Both parents and students are encouraged to review the monthly progress reports. Students are especially encouraged to check their progress reports as a means of demonstrating self responsibility and accountability.

Mid-Quarter Progress Reports

Mid-quarter progress reports will be issued four times a year and will be issued to those students who demonstrate significant difficulty in their academic progress. These reports will be submitted by teachers to the middle school administration for review. Parent conferences will be scheduled as needed.

Report Cards

IPA issues report cards twice per year, at the end of each semester of the school year. Parents receive a copy of each assessment and a second copy becomes part of the student's cumulative folder, kept with other official school records.

Conferences

Parent/student/teacher conferences are scheduled routinely in the middle school at IPA generally right after the end of the first and third quarters. These conferences are teacher-initiated and priority is given to those students who are demonstrating significant academic and/or behavioral challenges. Teachers, administrators or parents may schedule additional conferences at mutually convenient times, whenever there are concerns that need to be addressed. Please contact your child's teacher to request an appointment for a conference, should you desire one.

Field Trips

Students go on classroom instruction-related field trips several times a year. Some of the trips may involve a small charge per child for transportation, entry fees, etc.

Parents will be asked to sign a Field Trip Permission and Emergency Treatment Authorization statement which gives general permission for their child(ren) to participate in field trips and for qualified medical personnel to provide emergency medical treatment even if a parent or designated agent cannot be located by phone. This authorization along with emergency medical information is kept on file in the school office, and copies accompany teachers on field trips.

Notification will be sent home in advance of each individual field trip, with information about the planned trip and the cost, as well as how and by when the field trip cost must be paid for the student to participate. The school hopes every child will participate in all field trips taken by his/her class. If a parent has questions about a child's participation, the parent should discuss those concerns with the classroom teacher.

Transportation to and from field trips will generally be by chartered bus. On occasions when parent drivers will be transporting children, parents will know of that arrangement in advance and the school will require evidence of a valid driver's license and good driving record before a parent may transport children.

When children are on a school sponsored field trip it is expected that they will conduct themselves according to general school rules, policies and expectations.

Attire for field trips: On days when classes are scheduled for a field trip, students are expected to wear a green school polo shirt and khaki colored pants, shorts, skorts or skirt. Students should wear comfortable footwear appropriate to the circumstances of the field trip.

Island Pacific Academy
6 - 8
Curriculum

*This section is designed to provide a snapshot of Island Pacific Academy's 6 – 8 curriculum. More comprehensive information including **grade-level benchmarks** will be available on our website.*

All classes are considered core classes in grades 6 – 8 at Island Pacific Academy. The core classes include: humanities, mathematics, science, world language, art, music, learning communities, and physical education. Science and math are year-long classes. Humanities, learning communities, art, and music are semester classes.

Student schedules will operate on a 6-day cycle with students attending four 85-minute classes each day.

Humanities - Language Arts Strand (6 – 8)

The goal of *Island Pacific Academy's* language arts strand is for all students to recognize that language is the vehicle by which we acquire, assess, and communicate information which we then use to construct meaning and generate ideas.

The study of language arts at *Island Pacific Academy* will focus on expression of voice and identity at a time when youngsters are beginning to develop their unique world-views. Through the examination of others' opinions as they emerge through literature, essays, editorials, poems, speeches, etc., students will begin to critically assess their own views of the world. By reading good literature, students will strengthen their imaginations, unlock the doors of possibility, and learn the value of empathy as connections with well-developed characters remind them that they are not alone, that others have endured and survived conflict and turmoil, experienced triumph and celebration. Additionally, students will create and revise original text that is structured appropriately, uses precise language, has voice and style that engages the reader, and offers new insights about a topic. Students will also strengthen their speaking and listening skills as they utilize the power of oral communication. Finally, the language arts curriculum will encourage students to begin contributing in meaningful ways to the larger community. Students will be asked to thoughtfully scrutinize media communication as a means of making informed decisions, thereby encouraging their confidence as active members in the larger society.

Humanities – History Strand (6 – 8)

The goal of *Island Pacific Academy's* 6 - 8 history strand is for all students to develop an understanding of the various social, cultural, political, and economic forces that have shaped human and institutional beliefs, actions, and relationships over time. Students in the 6 - 8 history strand will explore the interplay between culture and geography, the tenets of culture and its evolution, and the historical development of structures of power, authority, and governance. In addition to acquiring historical facts, students will examine

differences in historical perspectives, recognizing that interpretations are influenced by individual experiences, societal values, and cultural traditions. Students will be introduced to a variety of historical media beyond the traditional emphasis on written documentation, including art, music, language, film, and literature. Students will also become familiar with an assortment of primary and secondary sources of information as well as strategies for interrogating the validity and value of those sources. Further, students will relate their personal experiences to happenings in other cultural contexts as a means of analyzing human behavior in relation to its physical and cultural environment. By examining the evolution and expansion of power in different global contexts, students will improve their civic competence. Finally, students will learn to draw on their knowledge of history to make informed choices and decisions in the present.

Mathematics (6 – 8)

The goal of *Island Pacific Academy's* 6 - 8 math program is for all students to develop proficiency in mathematical concepts and skills equivalent to a first-year, high school algebra course and to be able to apply those concepts with understanding. In order to prepare students for the rigors of Academy math, *Island Pacific Academy* will use *College Preparatory Mathematics (CPM)*. *CPM* is a comprehensive program that includes number and operations, proportional reasoning, geometry, probability, and data, with a focus on the development of algebraic thinking. The strength of the program lies in its ability to successfully blend conceptual understanding with the acquisition of mathematical skills presented in a variety of contexts including real-world applications. Further, the sequencing of the units provides for spiraling of mathematical ideas such that new ideas are continually connected to those that have already been developed. During this program, students will have had the equivalent of a full, first-year, high school algebra course with the added benefit of having the algebra strand interwoven with and related to the other mathematical strands. The evolution of this program over a three-year period allows for students to develop a more enduring familiarity with necessary mathematical ideas and skills.

Science (6 – 8)

The goal of *Island Pacific Academy's* middle level science program is for all students to develop a balanced understanding of a variety of concepts in physical, chemical, geological, and biological sciences. To accomplish this goal, students will rigorously engage in the process skills of science through inquiry-based, hands-on laboratory science and real-world applications. Because good science instruction recognizes the natural wonder students bring to the classroom, students at *Island Pacific Academy* will be given the opportunity to weave this curiosity into learning experiences via open-ended inquiry. The curriculum will promote student-generated questions that result in children thinking and acting as scientists. Students will recognize that methods of scientific inquiry involve asking testable questions, making critical observations, conducting controlled experiments, and forming summaries and analyses that often lead to further questions.

Instruction will emphasize laboratory and fieldwork, critical analysis, and the understanding that students can contribute new ideas to science. Students will synthesize knowledge in real-world, problem-solving situations that deal with local and global issues and decision-making. Reading, writing, and mathematics are an integral part of science instruction and shall be used for the purpose of making connections and seeing relationships between text, concepts, and laboratory experiences. Technology will be used to enhance data collection, access and process information, form conclusions, and communicate results. Finally, all middle school students will participate in a school level science fair. Those projects deemed exceptional will be entered in the district level, and, if appropriate, state level science fair.

World Languages (Spanish: 6-8; Spanish 6-8; Japanese 7-8)

The goal of the 6 – 8 world language program at *Island Pacific Academy* is for students to develop confidence and proficiency in the acquisition of a world language. Thus, most students will complete the equivalent of high school Level I Spanish over the course of three years with some students opting to study Japanese I in their 8th grade year. The design of this three year program recognizes that middle level students are younger, more energetic, and less experienced than high school students. As such, students will utilize a variety of resources and techniques for language acquisition that will build their confidence in using a foreign language and will more successfully prepare them to continue their language studies in high school. In addition to learning necessary vocabulary and the rules of language structure, students will be exposed to various cultural mores that frequently exist in the countries where the studied language is spoken.

Knowing that language acquisition becomes increasingly difficult as students get older, the middle level foreign language program at *Island Pacific Academy* successfully incorporates technology as an instructional resource in order to enhance students' foreign language experience. By utilizing the latest technologies including Smartboards, electronic textbooks, multimedia vocabulary flashcards, online self-quizzes, and multimedia cultural projects, students will be able to practice their foreign language anytime and anywhere, experience multiple activities related to the same content, obtain current cultural information, and bring the global experience into the classroom in real time. Perhaps the most significant benefit of incorporating these technologies is that attention is given to multiple learning styles, preferences, and intelligences.

For 8th grade students wishing to engage in more rigorous academic language instruction such that they may be eligible to take the AP examination in that language in their junior or senior year, Spanish I and Japanese I are offered.

Pu'u Honua (6 – 8)

Pu'u Honua refers to a place where or person to whom individuals may go where they feel safe from threats or punishment. The goal of *Island Pacific Academy's* Pu'u Honua program is to establish such an environment by providing both a place and a person to which each middle school student feels connected. Early adolescents enter the middle grades seeking to establish their unique identities as well as hoping to develop both competence and confidence that will carry them into their late teen and early adult years.

Coupled with this is the physical, social, and emotional turmoil that is often associated with the middle level years. Thus, students in the Pu'u Honua program at *Island Pacific Academy* will develop a nurturing, trusting relationship with an adult advisor; will strengthen their sense of belonging, both to their peer group as well as to the larger school community; will develop effective academic and social skills; will enhance their self-confidence and self-esteem; will work to develop cooperative group skills; and will join in opportunities for community service. Students at *Island Pacific Academy* will be assigned to a peer group consisting of no more than 20 students and an adult advisor. Pu'u Honua meets each morning for 25 minutes.

Learning Communities (6 – 8)

It has long been postulated that children possess an innate curiosity for knowledge and a strong inner desire to problem-solve. Coupled with this is the thought that each child is gifted with unique talents. It is, therefore, logical to conclude that when a child is given freedom to explore, examine, experiment, and interact with tasks that engage an intrinsic desire for specific knowledge, he/she will be stimulated and motivated, and develop a sense of personal power that will lead to self-creation. Additionally, potential remains largely underdeveloped unless it is used to better the lives of others. Based on these assumptions, *Island Pacific Academy* has set aside time in which students will be given the freedom to explore their passions and interests in an effort to identify, develop, and share their individual gifts. Examples of learning community courses include Slide-show and Movie-making, Leadership, Martial Arts and Puppetry.

Physical Education/Health (6 – 8)

While many physical education programs devote much of their curriculum to reviewing skills and rules of organized sports, the goal of *Island Pacific Academy's* middle level physical education program is for all students to develop a better understanding of how their ability to coordinate movement changes during puberty and how an appropriate fitness program will contribute not only to a successful physical transition to adulthood, but will also aid in maintaining appropriate levels of physical health throughout life. Just as children's emotional and intellectual development must be nurtured through age-appropriate instructional tasks, so, too, must development of physical movement.

The 6 - 8 physical education program, therefore, will emphasize the components of physical fitness to include cardiovascular health, muscular strength and endurance, and flexibility. Additionally, students will learn the skills needed to effectively participate in organized and modified sports as a means of enhancing a life-long program of physical fitness. Joined with this will be an exploration of alternative forms of physical movement to include dance, pliometrics, aerobics, etc. Finally, students will appreciate the role physical activity plays in enhancing and sustaining mental health, promoting self-expression, and strengthening social interaction. All grade levels will be required to participate in a PE uniform.

Additionally, the *Island Pacific Academy* PE program incorporates health issues that are developmentally appropriate at each grade level as part of regular instruction.

Middle School Art (6 – 8)

The goal of *Island Pacific Academy's* general art program is twofold: to create an atmosphere and provide projects that encourage experimentation and stimulate creativity; and to assist students in developing fundamental art skills and techniques. These goals are accomplished through assigned projects that are open-ended enough to spark innate creativity and that focus on specific principles of drawing, painting, and ceramics. Through exposure to a broad art experience, students will study basic art elements including line, shape, pattern, texture, space, and color. Assigned projects will utilize a wide variety of media ranging from pencil to clay and will require students to demonstrate the evolution of their skill development as each project builds on its predecessor. Throughout the year, students will be encouraged to sketch in a daily sketchbook which, combined with self-evaluated projects, will form an art portfolio.

In addition to acquiring familiarity with a variety of art production techniques, students will study how art and artists record history and culture; will respond to works of art by developing perceptual and critical thinking skills; and will learn to intelligently critique works of art based upon a solid foundation of knowledge and experience. Essentially, students in *Island Pacific Academy's* 6th grade general art program will be making art, reading about art, responding to art, discussing and critiquing art, and writing about art.

All 6th graders will be required to take a general art class while 7th and 8th graders will choose from Drawing, Painting, and Ceramics.

Music (6 – 8)

Resting on the knowledge that music is an integral part of a child's education, the goal of *Island Pacific Academy's* middle level music program is for all students to develop skills and interest in music concepts, knowledge, and performance.

Throughout the year, students will learn to read, create, and notate music within specific guidelines. Further, students will decode music through aural training and demonstrate accurate intonation via vocal development. Students will acquire musical performance skills as they apply their understanding of notation to various instruments, both individually and in groups. In order to strengthen their appreciation of music, students will delve into the history and theory of music and will, likewise, enhance their cultural awareness as they study the importance of and use of music in various world cultures. Additionally, students will explore the physical relationships between music and other disciplines through creative movement. Finally, as a means of authentically assessing achievement in musical skill, students will be required to use musical terms as they evaluate their own and their classmates' performances.

Grades 6-8 will be required to take a music class, either Choir, Show choir or Piano/Guitar.

Island Pacific Academy

6 - 8

Homework Policy

The relationship between homework and scholastic achievement, especially concerning the scale and appropriateness of the daily workload and its subsequent toll on students and their families, has been the subject of considerable debate among educators and researchers in recent years. A review of roughly 100 major educational research articles published between 1988 and 2001 exploring this often divisive issue suggests that there is a positive relationship between the time spent on homework and scholastic achievement, particularly for older students. This is especially true provided that the workload is “moderate”, novel, and does not contribute to patterns of sleep deprivation. At *Island Pacific Academy*, we believe that success in the classroom is derived in part from the completion of well-defined, moderate homework loads that serve to provide opportunity for individualized practice of critical skills, and that reinforce key curriculum content without undue repetition. As faculty, we place a premium on the quality, not quantity, of homework completed.

Students in grades six through eight will receive, on average, roughly 2 hours of homework per night, Monday through Thursday. Parents should expect less than two hours of assigned homework on some nights. On other nights, particularly if a major project is due, there may be more than two hours of homework, and weekend time may also be needed for the completion of these longer assignments. Students will often be given the opportunity to complete daily assignments, or some portion of an assignment, during normal school hours. This is especially true of larger assignments such as essays and science projects, and both students and parents will be notified of target dates for such projects well in advance. Parents should not expect homework for each course each day. For example, while it is likely that students will be given daily practice in mathematics, laboratory reports in science are a collaborative effort that take a few days to complete and will have clearly articulated due dates. While a good portion of the daily homework load will consist of reading preparation and reflections focused on what was understood in class that day, students are also expected to strengthen their study skills. Essentially, this involves daily reviews in each subject area ranging from solidifying vocabulary to completing self-assigned math problems to ensure accuracy in conceptual understanding.

It is imperative that students complete their homework to the best of their ability and with limited parent assistance. This allows teachers to have a more accurate representation of what and how students understand the academic concepts. If your child is struggling with understanding the concepts addressed in the homework, please encourage him/her to seek extra help with an appropriate teacher.

Students will be given 2 days to complete schoolwork-homework missed for each day of excused absence. Policies for late work vary by teacher. Information pertaining to late work will be sent home via class syllabi. In the case of missing assignments*, teachers will be in contact with parents.

**Please see the section on Academic Probation for information related to continuous unexcused missing work.*

The middle level faculty recognizes that students learn and complete their homework at different rates. We also recognize the fact that, like adults, students have already devoted a considerable portion of their day to their work, and that evenings are rightfully a time for family, relaxation, and recuperation. If the completion of daily homework becomes prohibitive for your child--if two hours stretch into three or four on a regular basis, focus is lacking, and frustration reigns supreme on all fronts, you are encouraged to contact us as soon as possible. It is our goal that your child's experience at *Island Pacific Academy* is one of sustained intellectual and personal growth resulting in a lifelong love of learning, and that your child views homework as opportunity, not punishment.

Island Pacific Academy
6 - 8
Classroom Assessment

At *Island Pacific Academy* we understand several purposes of assessment. We want to discern what and how each student is learning, and we want to communicate this knowledge to parents in a way that gives specific feedback as to what the student has accomplished and what the next learning goals are. We believe the student is central in this process of assessing his/her learning progress, as he/she is the person most able to improve the learning. Another important purpose of assessment is to guide teachers in monitoring the effectiveness of teaching strategies and adjusting those strategies to meet the needs of the students.

Our objective with assessment is also to teach students to take responsibility for their learning, and **not to use evaluations of their learning as punishment or labels of their identity.** In *Testing, Motivation, and Learning* (2002), The Assessment Reform Group of Britain reports the results of a research study into the relationship between testing (summative evaluation) and motivation to learn. Based on the research findings they identify key classroom assessment actions that enhance motivation for learning. These actions are included in our assessment process.

The assessment process begins with the teacher examining the curriculum and learning benchmarks, and then summarizing the learning that students are expected to accomplish. Together the teacher and students review samples and models that show what the learning looks like for a particular age range, and they think through what kinds of evidence could demonstrate their learning. This summary guides both student and teacher and helps them to articulate clearly the learning destination.

Once the learning targets are set, the reflections of the student as well as the teacher are pivotal in the assessment process. Our focus is individual improvement, comparison to

the student's "previous best", and progress toward clear learning goals. We will talk about the learning, examine work samples, set criteria with students, have them self-assess, and give them sufficient time to learn.

As students become involved in assessment, they learn to become partners in a continuous cycle that supports their learning. In this cycle, students receive and give themselves descriptive feedback as they learn in relation to criteria. They discuss their own learning in relation to what needs to be learned, they self-assess, and set goals. They revisit and reset criteria as they learn more. They collect evidence of their learning, present the evidence to others and receive feedback. This leads to more self-assessing, goal-setting and learning.

In an effort to avoid the needless competition and poor self-efficacy that often surrounds the traditional A-F grading scale, we have opted, instead, to adopt a rubric-based format that more thoroughly identifies student progress. Our four-tiered scale includes *mastery*, *accomplished*, *progressing*, and *beginning* as ways of defining student achievement. Each stage is outlined below:

- ☞ **Mastery** – The student consistently demonstrates accurate conceptual understanding and skill utilization. The student consistently applies concepts and skills to new situations with success. The student is able to successfully teach the concepts learned to others.
- ☞ **Accomplished** – The student frequently demonstrates accurate conceptual understanding and skill utilization. The student usually applies concepts and skills to new situations with success. The student begins to successfully teach the concepts learned to others.
- ☞ **Progressing** – The student occasionally demonstrates accurate conceptual understanding and skill utilization. Application of concepts and skills to new situations often proves difficult.
- ☞ **Beginning** – The student demonstrates much difficulty with required concepts and skills and is unable to apply them in any situation.

Grade Level Advancement

All students in Island Pacific Academy's middle school program will be expected to earn a minimum of a **P/A** in at least **85%** of their skill sets by the second semester report card for all classes in which the student is enrolled. While each case will be evaluated individually, students failing to achieve this expectation may be asked to enter the subsequent grade on academic probation (see below). In some cases, students may be asked to repeat the grade level. In extreme cases, it may be determined that Island Pacific Academy is not the right school for the student.

Academic Progress Check

At *Island Pacific Academy*, students are expected to be dedicated to their academic progress. Students are also expected to demonstrate initiative and self-advocacy by seeking teacher help in those subjects with which they are struggling.

The purpose of the academic progress check is to encourage students who are not exhibiting responsible academic choices to carefully assess their role in their academic progress and make necessary changes.

Students who have 3 or more unexcused missing homework or other assignments within a ONE month period will be placed on an academic progress check. Likewise, students who have earned 3 consecutive "Beginning"s in any class and have not taken the initiative to seek out extra help in that class will be placed on an academic progress check.

Students on Academic Progress Check will be required to complete and submit to the Principal or Dean of Students a weekly progress check to be completed by the student's teachers. The progress check will be tailor-made to fit the needs of the individual student and will encourage the student to demonstrate personal accountability and responsibility in the areas of difficulty highlighted in the progress check. Mandatory attendance in the after school study hall program will be decided on a case by case basis.

The duration of the progress check will be for no less than one month. Extension of that time will be determined after a review of student progress.

Academic Probation

Should a student on Academic Progress Check continue to show less than desirable dedication to his/her growth as a student, the student may be placed on Academic Probation.

Students on academic probation will, in addition to continuing with the academic progress check, be required to attend after-school study hall with a sponsoring teacher twice a week for no less than 40 minutes each day. Students may choose which two days they wish to attend and who their sponsoring teacher will be. Students will attend the study halls until such time as said student regularly demonstrates a minimum of a "Progressing" understanding on assignments or until the student has successfully completed his/her assignments for 2 consecutive months.

Students on academic probation are **not** permitted to represent the school in any extra-curricular activities for a minimum two-week period. At the end of that two-week period, student progress will be evaluated by the student's teachers and Principal/Dean of Students to determine whether or not the student may resume participation in school-sponsored extra-curricular activities.

Students who continue to remain on academic probation are evaluated at the end of each grading period in order to review student progress and effort.

Students who continue to have difficulties and/or show little evidence of trying to improve may either be required to enter the following school year on academic probation or, in some cases, be asked to leave IPA.

Athletics

Island Pacific Academy is a member of the ILH (Interscholastic League of Honolulu) and, as such, is eligible to compete in inter-school sports competitions.

Sports in which IPA MS students compete are:

Fall

Football (B)
Cross Country (B/G)
Volleyball (G)

Winter

Basketball (B/G)
Swimming (B/G)
Tennis (B/G)
Soccer (G)

Spring

Baseball (B)
Softball (G)
Golf (B/G)
Water Polo (G)
Track and Field (B/G)

*B = Boys; G = Girls

Academic Eligibility

As an academic institution and in keeping with the by-laws of the ILH, students must be in good academic standing at Island Pacific Academy in the grading period immediately preceding the season and during the season in which they wish to compete.

At IPA, good academic standing is defined as earning a minimum average grade of "Progressing" in **each** subject. Should a student's progress in any subject fall below "Progressing" or should the student fall below standard with regards to academic responsibilities including completing and turning in homework/assignments, getting extra help when needed, and positive class participation and focus, he/she will be ineligible to practice and/or compete until appropriate academic progress has been re-established.

Each athlete will be required to submit a weekly progress check on Monday afternoon to the Middle School Dean of Students as a means of monitoring student academic progress.

Should an athlete fail to complete this responsibility, he/she will be ineligible to practice and/or compete during that week.

All student-athletes are expected to make up any missed work due to early athletic dismissal within two school days of that early dismissal.

Athletic Study Hall

Because we recognize how difficult it can be for student-athletes to balance their academic and athletic commitments, we have made available an additional supervised study hall period for all student athletes competing for IPA in ILH. This study hall will take the place of the student- athlete's PE class during the season in which the student-athlete is training and/or competing. It is expected that all student-athletes will use this 85 minute class period to complete homework assignments, study for any upcoming assessments (quizzes and/or tests), or make up work missed due to early athletic dismissal. Should a student-athlete fail to utilize this time appropriately, he/she will lose the study hall privilege and resume instruction in PE.

Behavioral Eligibility

In keeping with our Agreement System and Five Agreements, all athletes will be expected to maintain the highest of behavioral standards both during the school day and while participating as a member of an IPA athletic team. Students who consistently violate the behaviors outlined in the Agreement System and Four Agreements to the point where a student/parent/teacher conference has been deemed necessary will become ineligible to practice and/or compete for a minimum of two weeks.

Any student placed on Behavioral Probation may be deemed ineligible to practice and/or compete with any IPA athletic team for the duration of the probation.

Non-Athletes Athletic Event Participation

From time to time, the athletic department will arrange for a “cheer bus” to attend athletic events. Non-athletes who wish to join the “cheer bus” will be required to have permission slips signed by parents indicating that the student may ride the bus with the athletes to and from the athletic event. In order to ensure that valuable class time is not missed, non-athletes will not be excused from class prior to 3:10 pm.

Non-athletes may not ride the athletic bus to or from sporting events except on the pre-arranged “cheer bus”.

ISLAND PACIFIC ACADEMY

2009-2010
Student and Parent Handbook Acknowledgement

By signing below, we acknowledge that we have read, fully understand and support the policies outlined in the 2009-2010 *IPA Student and Parent Handbook*.

We understand that the expectations of students which IPA outlines in the *Handbook* are considered important to the learning and social environment which the school seeks to establish for the benefit of all members of the school community.

We understand that we are expected to support school rules and policies, and maintain a respectful attitude toward faculty and staff at the school.

Print Student Name

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parents: Please discuss the contents of the *Handbook* with your child and be sure he/she understands the policies contained in each section. **It is expected that this acknowledgement will be signed and returned to the Homeroom teacher by September 2, 2009.**

