

AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF  
LAGOS, NIGERIA

GENERAL INFORMATION HANDBOOK

2008-2009



## Board Of Directors

The American International School of Lagos Board of Directors sets the policy and standards by which AISL operates. Board members must be parents of AISL students. Eight Board members are elected for three-year terms by parents who make up the Association of the American International School of Lagos. The ninth Board member is an appointee of the United States Ambassador. The Board elects its own officers and holds regular monthly meetings.

Board Members		Term Expires
Mr. Mike Bowen	President	2009
Mr. Eric Jackson	Vice President	2009
Mrs. Orietta Skarstein	Treasurer	2009
Mrs. Ekaba Davis	Secretary	2011
Mr. Joseph Lunsford	High School Project Executive	2011
Mrs. Aimee Edwards	Member	2010
Mr. Dan Smith	Member	2010
Mrs. Marionette Audifferen	Fundraising Executive	2010
Mrs. Vicki Hutchinson	Consul General's Appointee	
Mr. Thomas Shearer	Superintendent	

### Administration

Superintendent	Mr. Thomas Shearer
Secondary School Principal	Ms. Sharon Schauss
Elementary School Principal	Mr. Justin Smith
Admissions Director/ IB Coordinator	Mr. John Stewart
Business Manager	Mrs. Trudy Mafe

On behalf of the American International School, we are pleased to welcome those of you who are new to AISL and welcome back those of you who are returning. This year, 2008-2009 promises to be an exciting year for students, parent, and staff. We will continue to develop and implement an academic program, which enable all students to maximize their potential. We look forward to your support, input, and participation at AISL during the 2008-09 school year.

### Vision

The vision of the American International School of Lagos is to be recognized for our leading educational program, empowering students to achieve their highest potential.

### Mission

The mission of the American International School of Lagos is to deliver a quality American education to its diverse students in a nurturing environment which inspires a passion for learning, fosters a sense of wonder and curiosity, and teaches responsible citizenship through a partnership among school, home, and community.

## Principles/Beliefs

1. We believe education is a shared responsibility among parents, students, staff, administration, and the board.
2. We will provide an excellent education based on an American curriculum, using US National Standards and incorporating innovative teaching methods.
3. We will challenge all students to achieve their highest capability and potential; academically, physically, and socially.
4. We will attract and retain a highly qualified and motivated staff and will invest in their professional development and growth.
5. We will embrace our diversity by promoting an inclusive environment; one of dignity, respect, and tolerance.
6. We will promote continuous improvement in all areas of the school through regular assessment and evaluation.
7. We will embrace teamwork.
8. We will conduct ourselves with honesty and integrity.

## Background

The American International School of Lagos was founded in 1964 to meet the needs of American, Nigerian and international students living in Lagos who desire an American education. AISL was established in cooperation with the American Embassy and the Tacoma School District, a district of 32,000 students in Tacoma, Washington. It has the longest standing school-to-school relationship in the world. This collaborative venture has resulted in AISL being recognized as an International School of the highest standard. The school moved to its present location on Victoria Island in 1981 and has continued to expand in terms of facilities and student enrolment. AISL enrolls students from ages 4 through 16 in Pre-Kindergarten through grade 11. Grade 12 will be added in August 2009.

## Faculty

In the 2008-2009 school year, there are 65 full-time, including a full curriculum coordinator and 2 counselors. The faculty includes 42 U.S. citizens, 7 host-country nationals, and 15 third-country nationals, 70% of the AISL faculty members hold a Masters Degree. One faculty member holds a PH.D. *All* faculty members are certificated with a minimum of two years of experience.

## Calendar

AISL follows a school calendar based upon that of a typical U.S. school system. The school year is 181 school days in length beginning the last week in August and closing the first or second week in June. Significant holiday breaks include Christmas/New Year and Easter. The calendar for 2008-2009 is attached to this brochure.

## Enrollment

At the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year, enrolment is 753. Of the total, 234 were U.S. citizens, 91 host country nationals, and 428 third-country nationals, 19 students are dependents of the U.S.

government direct-hire or contract employee, 199 of U.S. business and foundation employees, and 18 other private U.S. employees.

### **Accreditation**

AISL is fully accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. The accreditation self-study was successfully completed during the 2003-2004 school year and a certificate of accreditation was awarded on November 5, 2004. AISL will complete a five-year update before the next schedule reaccreditation. AISL has been recommended for reaccreditation in the spring of 2010. Much more comprehensive information about AIS Lagos can be found by accessing our World Wide Web Page. ([www.aislagos.org](http://www.aislagos.org)) AISL was authorized as an International Baccalaureate Diploma World school in December 2007. The IB Curriculum is recognized as a rigorous college preparatory curriculum at colleges and universities worldwide.

### **Facilities**

The main school building is situated on an 8 acres' campus, a 3-level structure with 40 teaching stations of about 800 square feet each and 7 smaller instructional areas. Specialist teaching areas include an Art studio, Drama classroom, Technology lab with Internet connectivity, and three science laboratories (for Elementary, Middle and high school). An additional annex was built to accommodate the secondary program. The building includes 9 additional classrooms with expansion planned for next year as well. There are two music instruction rooms with 2 adjacent private practice rooms. Each classroom has at least two networked computer workstations, and there are 6 portable computer carts containing a full classroom set of laptops with wireless networking capacity for different areas of the campus.

The library holds over 30,000 volumes and is approximately 2800 square feet in size and incorporate a group instruction area, individual reference and study areas, primary age student reading room, computer lab, periodical section and audio-visual resource facility. The sports and recreational facilities includes a full size gymnasium that is also used as an auditorium, 3 lighted tennis courts, an outdoor basketball court, a 100m x 55 m sports field with a 100-meter sprint meter sprint tract and long jump pit, aerobics and weight training rooms and extensive Big Toy play apparatus. The facility also includes a 25-meter swimming pool, and two conference rooms are also on the site.

### **Student Conduct**

At the American International School we recognize that learning is essential. The emphasis is to provide a positive learning environment for every child. The administration and staff promote responsible behaviours by stressing SELF-discipline, SELF-respect and RESPECT for the rights and safety of others.

### **AISL Student Expectations**

1. I will show respect for myself, others and property.
2. I will work and play safely.
3. I will help make AISL a good place to learn.

### **Student Body**

The enrolment at AISL is approximately 750 students in grades pre-kindergarten through 11. An effort is made to keep class size at or below 19 through grade six and below 25 in secondary school. Smaller classes are formed for Math and French at the secondary level. Teaching assistants are assigned to each elementary classroom.

There are 47 nationalities represented in our student population of which 33% are American, 21.4% are Host Country Nationals and the remaining 45.6% are Third Country Nationals.

### **Curriculum**

The American International School of Lagos, Nigeria, has established curriculum standards and learning outcomes in all areas. The curriculum is based on the US National Standards. In order to maintain high achievement, a curriculum coordinator is in charge of monitoring and revising the curriculum periodically. The revision, based on current research, follows a five-year cycle. Teachers, administrators, and parents are involved in the decision making process. Open forums are conducted to inform parents and gain feedback regarding curriculum. To prepare students to achieve at their highest levels, the curriculum is designed to promote integration with technology and other subject areas. Library and community resources and Internet access as well as hands on and cooperative activities are planned to encourage a positive attitude toward learning. AISL was authorized as an International Baccalaureate Diploma World school in December 2007. The IB Curriculum is recognized as a rigorous college preparatory curriculum at colleges and universities world wide. The goal of the American International School, Lagos is to ensure a rigorous, updated curriculum that meets the needs of an international body.

The student Learning Outcomes/Curriculum for Math, Literacy, Social Studies, and the Science are on our web site and can be accessed by our Web link. Examination of these documents along with the published calendar provides parents, students and interested parties with a thorough description of a student's year of study.

Formal conferences are held bi-annually while parents and teachers schedule informal meetings as necessary. Report cards are sent home three times a year.

The Iowa tests and the cognitive tests are administered to all students in first through eleventh. Test results provide grade level equivalents, national, international, private school, and high socioeconomic school percentile ranking. Parents are provided with a summary of their child's achievement, and the Child Study Team reviews individual and grade level scores. Students and/or areas

of concerns are identified, and plans are formulated to address deficits.

An integral part of the AISL program is the school library containing over 30,000 volumes in addition to computerized technology for use in research. It serves as a valuable resource and is staffed by professionals.

### **Elementary School**

The elementary school curriculum is comprised of various areas of study. These include Language Arts, Reading, French, Mathematics, Sciences, and the Social Sciences. The curriculum also provides for exploration in the Fine Arts, Performing Arts, Foreign Language, (Primary) Computers, Physical Education, and Swimming. An innovative elementary school organization allows each student to progress at his/her optimal learning rate.

### **Secondary School**

English, History, Mathematics, Science, Physical Education, Health, World Language (French and Spanish) are required courses in the secondary curriculum. Elective subjects include a variety of selections in Art, Music, Sciences, Language Arts Drama, life skills and Computer science.

### **Homework**

The American International School of Lagos has an established board policy on homework. Homework is viewed as "an integral part of the learning process and presents opportunities for practice or drill in those skills already taught, preparation for material to be presented or taught subsequently, extension or transfer of a skill or concept to a new situation, and completing assigned work not finished in class" (Policy 3.300).

The policy specifies daily averages for Elementary through Secondary and provides guidelines for absences and the role of the teacher, student, and parent. Daily assignment books are available and distributed to all students. An after school study table is mandatory for secondary students deemed as not making satisfactory progress.

In accordance with its mission and vision statements, AISL is committed to providing a quality American education to its diverse students. It seeks to challenge students to achieve their full potential and provide teachers and administrators opportunities to grow through association with an excellent curriculum. With an ongoing determination to improve, AISL remains an exciting place for students, staff, and parents.

### **Student Progress & Evaluation**

AISL is committed to continual assessment of student performance and to sharing all pupil appraisals with parents. Formal reports of pupil progress and performance are issued to parents three times a year. A Parent-Teacher conference with every parent is scheduled early in the first term of the school year and in the middle of the second term. Teachers communicate

continuously with parents regarding student progress, particularly if a student is experiencing difficulty. Parental cooperation and dialogue are encouraged and discussion of concerns is encouraged.

### **Attendance**

Students need to be in school. Time lost from class due to absence is irretrievable. The Board of Directors has adopted a strict Attendance Policy, Policy 3.700, which is available upon request.

### **Student Transfer or Withdrawal**

When a student transfers or withdraws from AISL to enter another school, the student's records will be forwarded upon written request by the parents or the receiving school. *Student records will not be forwarded unless they have been cleared by the administration and all financial obligations to AISL have been fulfilled.*

### **Dress Code**

AISL students are expected to follow the standard dress requirements. Students not meeting standard dress requirements will be in violation of student conduct policy 3.801.

### **Special Events**

We have some very special events that occur on an annual basis at AISL. They are planned and organized in a collaborative manner with administration, teachers, students and parents. The major events of the year are listed below:

Family Fun Day	Bingo Nights
Nigerian Culture Day	One World International Day
Winter Musical Program	Boy Scouts Pinewood Derby
Girls Scouts	Variety Show
Father/Daughter Day	
School Musical and Drama Performances	Spring Musical Program
Educational Fair	Drama Productions

### **Educational Field Trips**

Educational and Athletic field trips are available for students at AISL. They are designed to enrich our students in the areas of science and second language acquisition. We send students to a Sea Camp, on a Tour through France and another through Spain. Secondary students participate in music festival, athletic competitions, and student forums with an international focus and experiences that support the academic curriculum.

### **After School Activity and Sports Program**

We feel our school has one of the most extensive and comprehensive after school activity programs in the world. The AISL administration, staff, parents, and local professionals are responsible for this incredible array of offerings. We encourage all of our students to be a part of this program. It is a wonderful opportunity for them to explore and experience many new and exciting

activities that will truly enrich their total educational development. The entire program is outlined for you below.

**After School Activity Offerings:** Board games, Computers, Cooking, Kick ball, Wall Ball, Arts & Crafts, Videos, Story hour, Science, French, Choir, Instruments, Origami, Calendar making, Pottery, Calligraphy, Karate, Judo, Taekwondo, Gymnastics, Swimming, Computers, Ceramics, Ping Pong, Golf, Tennis, Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts, National Junior Honor Society, Drama, Student Government and Chess

### Competitive Sports

This is an opportunity for the students of AISL to experience serious, competitive athletics with their peers and other local schools. There are a limited number of sports available in many of the activities. Expectations and commitments are at a higher level than the activities offered during P.E., after school activities, and the Saturday Sports program.

Coaches Comments: Since improvement and success for all of us can come through different achievements, the following is a list of areas that we feel are most important and will be stressed throughout the season: Self-esteem, responsibility as a student and an athlete, work ethic, sportsmanship, preparing both mentally and physically for competition, goal setting, improving strength, speed, quickness, and commitment. All sports are interrelated and the more we participate and compete, the better athletes we can become both mentally and physically. There are P.E. dress requirements for secondary students: black or blue shorts and white T-shirts.

**Offerings:** Soccer, Basketball, Volleyball, Gymnastics, Tennis, Badminton, Track and Field, Swimming and Lacrosse

### Saturday Sports Program

This is a two-sport program, Baseball/Softball and Soccer, organized and run by the parents of AISL in conjunction with the school's assistance in facilities, ordering of equipment and general support. Student participation and sportsmanship is the essence of this program. The commissioners and parent volunteers of each sport handle registration, fees, league structure, coaches, sponsorship, equipment, uniforms, schedules, officials and rules.

### Community Recreation and Activity

Parents are given the opportunity to sign up for activities throughout the school year. We have regular activities that are available throughout the year. Some examples are: lap swim in the evenings, walking and jogging in the mornings before school, aerobics, yoga and weight lifting class taught by staff members, social games in basketball, softball, tennis and volleyball. The school is the center of the community.

### Parent-Teacher Organization

The PTO is an active participant in the growth and support of AISL. The parents, through this association, provide leadership, and direct support that would otherwise be non-existent. The Fun Fair, Bingo Night and Book sale are just some of the events that have brought the entire family together with the AISL community for fun and fellowship. The school store, operated by the PTO, stocks all supplies which students will need in their classes. The PTO also hosts a multitude of activities for students. Video nights, dances and picnics are examples of the great times provided by these dedicated parents.

### PTO Officers: 2008-2009

President	Anne Mathers
Vice President Primary	Paulette Sarghos
Vice President Secondary	Bonitha Trokis
Treasures	Annette Schrama
Secretary	Shirley Morello
Community liaison	Limor Rubin
Volunteer Coordinator.	Claire Wilson

### The Elementary School Year

The Elementary AISL school year is divided into three (3) trimesters running from mid-August to first week in November, then to first week in March, and then to second week in June.

### The Secondary School Calendar

The Secondary AISL school year is divided into two (2) semesters from mid-August to mid-January and then through the second week of June.

### School Hours

Pre-Kindergarten	9:30 am – 2:10 pm
Kindergarten – Grade 5	7:30 am – 2:10 pm
Middle and High School	7:30 am – 2:55 pm

### Vehicle Permits

A yearly vehicle sticker is issued to allow access through the 1004 Gate and school security. Parents must pick up their permits in person at the school. Please note that a vehicle sticker will not be issued until a student has been accepted for enrollment.

### Parents, Drivers, Nannies ID's

All visitors to AISL must present an ID to our security personnel at the front gate in order to gain entry to our campus. AISL parents will have an ID card that is issued by the school after a student is enrolled.

Parents need to complete an ID application form for themselves, drivers and nannies and have their photos taken in the main office.

### ID Photo Schedule

Monday and Wednesday  
7:30 am to 8:30 am  
1:30 pm to 3:00 pm