



# ABF Academy Family Handbook 2025-2026

# Principal's Message

Dear Cowboy Families and Students,

Welcome to an exciting year at ABF Academy. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to work with you and your children to create an enriching learning environment. This handbook is designed to assist you in understanding the policies and guidelines used at ABF Academy. Please read this handbook very carefully and discuss appropriate items with your child. After reviewing the handbook, please complete the back page of the handbook and return it to your child's teacher. Please remember that you will be responsible for all information included in this handbook. We look forward to working with you throughout the year. If you have any questions regarding the handbook, please do not hesitate to call the school's main number, 786-206-8197, so that you may be directed to the appropriate person to assist you further. We trust that you will keep this booklet handy and refer to it during the school year. Our partnership in providing educational excellence every time for all our students can only grow stronger with close communication between school and home. Once again, welcome to ABF Academy.

We look forward to a year of learning and growing that will enable our children to do and be their best.

Sincerely,

Manny Riera  
Chief Academic Officer

## **Administrative Directory**

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## Table of Contents

Our Story and Mission	4
Who We Are	5
School Goals	6-7
Registration Procedures	8
Attendance Policy	9
Communication	10-11
School Policies	12
Students' Rights	13
Grading Policy	13
Curriculum	14-15
Athletic Programs	16
Discipline Procedure	17-18
Health, Safety and Security	19-22
Acceptable Internet Use Policy Contract	23-24

# **Our Story & Mission**

## **Our Story**

ABF Learning Center and Academy is a private school registered with the Florida Department of Education. ABF was established in 2007 with 18 students. Just one year later, we expanded to more than 100 students, and, just a few years later, transitioned operations to a new facility. Immediately following the move, the learning center experienced another significant growth in size, expanding to over 200 students.

Because of the continuous success, ABF expanded once again and began offering K-8 services beginning in 2019. Just one year later, ABF began to offer high school classes, making us a K-12 institution. In addition to its neuro-typical schooling services, ABF Learning Center also provides behavioral and speech therapy to its students with special needs. The school is staffed with certified educators eager to provide a stage and intellectually stimulating environment in a setting that facilitates the student's individualized education. In June of 2021, ABF Learning Center launched ABF Athletics.

After great success in ABF Homestead, we opened another campus in Hialeah, FL in August 2022. ABF Academy Hialeah services students in Grades 6-12 and currently has elite baseball, basketball, and football programs.

## **Our Mission**

*Excellence for Every Student, Every Day.*

ABF Academy, in partnership with parents, offers a student-centered, college-preparatory program supported by a challenging and comprehensive curriculum that encourages each student from the Learning Center through Grade 12 to strive for excellence in mind, body, and human spirit.

## **Our Vision**

*Prepare and empower every student to thrive in and contribute to an ever-changing world.*

We foster our students' love for learning, encourage them to try new and exciting things, and give them a solid foundation to build on. Our vision is to develop well rounded, confident and responsible individuals who aspire to achieve their full potential. We will do this by providing a welcoming, happy, safe, and supportive learning environment in which everyone is equal, and all achievements are celebrated.

## **Educational Philosophy**

Classical education is a time-honored approach rooted in the traditions of ancient Greece and Rome. It emphasizes the cultivation of wisdom and virtue through the study of classical languages, literature, history, and philosophy. This educational philosophy is structured around the trivium and quadrivium, focusing on grammar, logic, and rhetoric in the early years, followed by arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. Classical education aims to develop critical thinking, articulate expression, and a deep understanding of human experience, preparing students to become thoughtful, informed, and active participants in society.

## **Who We Are**

ABF Academy Hialeah offers education for children 6-12, creating confident learners for life. The school is staffed with certified educators eager to provide a stage and intellectually stimulating environment in a setting that facilitates the student's individualized education.

Teachers encourage children to develop a spirit of independence, a sense of curiosity, and an intrinsic satisfaction with learning.

### **We offer:**

- Certified bilingual teachers
- Low teacher / student ratio
- Curriculum to meet students' needs
- Engaging self-paced bilingual (English & Spanish) curriculum
- Athletic Training
- Creative Movement

### ***The Learning Atmosphere***

- Physical Education
- Project Based Learning
- Coding & Digital Design
- Summer programs
- Work Study Programs

Students learn best in a school and in a classroom in which personal warmth and happiness prevail. The most successful classroom climate is composed of a combination of good planning, fair discipline, courtesy, respect, encouragement, genuine love, and a certain informality. It is important that in this atmosphere we consistently expect each student's best work.

### **Open Door Policy**

Our hours of operations are from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday. ABF Academy has an open-door policy available to all parents. Parents and visitors are welcome to visit between those hours.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

In accordance with federal and state anti-discriminatory laws ABF Academy will not discriminate based on race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, or marital status against a student in its school admission process. Students who are identified as needing ESE or ELL programs shall have an equal opportunity of being selected for enrollment in the school. Any eligible student, as described in Fl. Statute 1002.33(10), who applies shall be considered unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of the program, class, grade level, or building. In such a case, all applicants shall have an equal chance of being admitted through a lottery process

## School Goals

Core Values at ABF Academy, we embrace the following core values:

- **Excellence** -the pursuit of high quality, merit, and virtue.
- **Responsibility** – the attribute of being individually accountable, reliable, and trustworthy.
- **Integrity** – the discipline to adhere to a code of moral, honorable, and ethical standards.
- **Respect** – the positive and supportive consideration for oneself and others.
- **Personal Discipline** – the initiative to establish and achieve personal goals that demonstrate favorable character and conduct.
- **Compassion** – the willingness to be empathetic and understanding of others.

School Goals Beyond our curricular goals, ABF Academy students will learn to:

- respect themselves and others, and celebrate differences of faith, race, and culture.
- develop responsibility, integrity, dependability, and self-control.
- value the importance of taking responsibility for and developing balance in their own personal well-being.
- develop good citizenship through community service.
- value academic excellence and lifelong learning.

To realize our goals in a manner consistent with our philosophy, the faculty, administration, staff and trustees are committed to the following objectives:

- the faculty be professional, caring, and an integral part of program development.
- small sections and a low student/faculty ratio be maintained.
- A rigorous and evolving academic curriculum be the core of the school program.
- students are exposed to a variety of traditional and innovative learning experiences.
- time be devoted to programs which address personal awareness, interpersonal skills, and community needs.
- physical and artistic development be a part of the total school program.
- ethnic and economic diversity in the student body and faculty be encouraged.
- family involvement and communication be fostered; and
- ABF Academy is a community in which everyone is treated with dignity.

In a structured, nurturing environment, ABF Academy seeks to instill a lifelong passion for learning and a strong work ethic. Beyond our curricular goals, ABF Academy students will learn to:

- respect themselves and others, and celebrate differences of faith, race, and culture.
- develop responsibility, integrity, dependability, and self-control.
- value the importance of taking responsibility for and developing balance in their own personal well-being; develop good citizenship through community service.
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- family involvement and communication be fostered; and
- ABF Academy is a community in which everyone is treated with dignity. In a structured, nurturing environment, ABF Academy seeks to instill a lifelong passion for learning and a strong work ethic.

# Registration Procedures

All students enrolled at ABF Academy must meet the following requirements and be provided with the following information.

## Documents:

1. Copy of Birth Certificate
2. Parent(s) License
3. Parent billing information (athletes and fee-based tuition)
4. Previous transcripts and records from last school(s)
5. Completed registration packet
6. Signed parent contract
7. Health and Immunization forms (blue and yellow forms)
  - Florida Certifications of Immunization DH 680
  - DH 681 (Religious Exemption Form)
  - School Entry Health Form DH 3040
  - Scoliosis Test (Grade 6)

## Arrival

Arrival times are from 8:15 am – 8:30 am. Students must be in their seats at the commencement of class in the morning. Any student arriving after the bell of school will receive a tardy pass. Please be advised: ABF Academy is not responsible for students who arrive more than thirty (30) minutes prior to the start of school.

## Tardies

All tardies are unexcused. If students arrive after the commencement of school, please do not send the student to class. Students arriving after the commencement of school must report directly to the school's designated office/area. Students with excessive tardies will be referred to the administration.

## Dismissal

Dismissal is at 3:25pm. Students departing outside of the school's designated times may be enrolled in an after-care program. Please be advised that ABF Academy is not responsible for students remaining on campus after the school's dismissal times.

## Early Dismissal

No child may be removed from the school by a person who is not approved to do so. Only individuals stated by the parent on the application form will be permitted to take the child. Proper ID will be required. Telephone consent may not be given. Students with excessive early dismissals will be referred to the administration/Attendance Review Committee. Students will not be dismissed 30 minutes prior to dismissal time without previous written notice.



# Attendance Policy

## Absences

1. Your children must be in school every day as mandated by state law (FS 1003.24).
2. Parents will call the office to notify the school if the student is going to be absent. Please call the school to report the absence by 8:30AM. Parents have two days to excuse the absence. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence.
3. When absences become a concern (3 or more unexcused absences in a calendar month/10 or more unexcused absences in a 90-day period), the attendance clerk will first confirm medical excuse notifications received and recorded for absences.
4. The office will contact the parents regarding excessive absences (5 or more unexcused absences in a calendar month/15 or more unexcused absences in a 90-day period) or early dismissals, via phone conference, email, teacher/parent conference or letter.
5. If absences continue, a formal referral letter for attendance will be sent to administration with supporting documentation of parent contact and non-medical absences stapled to the referral and proper district and school procedures will follow.
6. A student must be present for a minimum of 2 hours of instructional time to be considered present.
7. Students with excused absences will have 5 days to complete make-up work.
8. If a student is picked up early, they will be marked absent for any classes they miss.
9. When a student returns to school after an absence, a note **MUST** be brought from home.

## Excused Absences

Students must be in school unless the absence has been permitted or excused for one of the following reasons. Please note that vacations are considered unexcused absences.

1. Illness of student
2. Illness of immediate family member
3. Death in the family
4. Required court appearance or subpoena by a law enforcement agency
5. Special event (public functions, competitions, exceptional cases of family need)
6. Scheduled medical appointments, dental appointments, and absences for treatment of medical diagnosis.  
*We encourage you to schedule appointments after school hours to limit instructional disruptions.*
7. Students who have or are suspected of having a communicable disease.

## Excused Tardies

A student will be considered as excused only if a parent/guardian personally escorts their child to the front desk and has a viable reason. The reasons for excused tardies are as follows:

- Doctor appointments with notes from the doctor/orthodontist or
- Extreme emergencies approved by administration

Excused tardies will not count toward the student's tardy record.

## Unexcused Tardies

A tardy will be considered as unexcused due to alarm clock failures, "parent's fault", car trouble, and inclement weather conditions. Unexcused tardies will count toward the student's record. Your children must be in school and **ON TIME** by state law.

## Communication

Communication is essential for success in any human endeavor. The administration and staff recognize this and will strive to always facilitate open and frequent communication with parents.

Report cards and progress reports (sent home during the middle/end of each grading period) allow parents opportunities to review student work and progress. Parents may also view their child's current academic status through Edgenuity and Jupiter. Usernames and passwords will be sent home at the beginning of the school year, or you can call the front office to receive login instructions.

Please feel free to communicate with your child's teacher regarding any problems or questions that concern your child. Teachers cannot accept phone calls during the school day. The preferred method of communication during the school day is through email or calling the front office.

Parents are asked not to meet with a teacher unless a conference has been scheduled. Impromptu conferences with teachers at the classroom door and during arrival and dismissal before or after school are not permitted as this may distract the teacher from supervision of students during a crucial time of movement.

### ABF Social Media

We encourage students and parents to follow the school's social media accounts, Academy and Athletic, to stay up to date with daily events, activities, games, and more.

### Communication/Parent Partnership

Our mission clearly states: ABF Academy, in partnership with parents, offers a student-centered, college-preparatory program supported by a challenging and comprehensive curriculum that encourages each student from the Learning Center through Grade 12 to strive for excellence in mind, body, and human spirit.

Please read this parent partnership carefully to understand the commitment expected of each other.

### What are the expectations of communicating about our students enrolled at ABF Academy?

We, the **ABF Academy faculty and staff**, will:

- Distribute quarterly reports; in addition to "early warning" for students in academic or disciplinary difficulty.
- Return calls or emails within 24 hours.

### What are our responsibilities to ensure our students' academic success?

We, the *ABF Academy faculty and staff*, will:

- Encourage our students to strive for excellence. We will set high expectations for our students.
- Continually strive to fulfill the mission of the school.

- Develop, when appropriate, an individualized education plan to help meet specific needs of our students to the extent of our available resources and expertise.
- Make time to meet with parents and discuss their child's progress.
- Maintain a low student-to-teacher ratio.

### **What are our responsibilities to contribute to our students' understanding and development of core values?**

We, the ABF Academy faculty and staff, will:

- Model and teach our core values of excellence, responsibility, integrity, respect, personal discipline, and compassion. While we will push our students to pursue excellence, we will do this in a compassionate and respectful manner.
- Engage our students to pursue these values outside the classroom as well.
- Host assemblies, organize field trips, and provide opportunities for other extracurricular activities.
- Value and foster an appreciation of the fine and performing arts.
- Set a tone in our classroom which allows our students to feel that his or her contribution is valuable.

### **What are our responsibilities regarding concerns or complaints?**

We, the *ABF Academy faculty and staff*, will:

- Commit to hearing from you.
- Realize that improvements to any institution often come because of a willingness to listen.

### **Confidential Information**

Student education records are official and confidential documents protected by one of the nation's strongest privacy protection laws, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA, also known as the Buckley Amendment, defines educational records as all records that schools maintain about students.

### **Emergency Contact Information**

Student Data/ Emergency Contact Cards are expected to be carefully completed and then returned to the school. The information provided on the Student Data/ Emergency Contact Card will enable school staff to contact the parent/ guardian immediately in case of an emergency. Students may only be released from school to the persons listed on the emergency contact card after presenting picture identification/ If at any time your information changes, please visit the main office to update your information. No persons other than school staff will have access to your information. Submit in writing any changes to your child's transportation via email, letter, or fax.

# **School Policies**

## **Care of School Property**

Students are expected to respect the school buildings and property. Receptacles are provided throughout the buildings and grounds for proper disposal of waste. Marking or defacing school property is a serious offense and will result in disciplinary action. Any student who damages/vandalizes school property will be required to make full restitution for damages. All food must be consumed in the cafeteria or area designated by the Administration. Students are not permitted to play in bathrooms. Any student who disregards rules pertaining to the care of school property may be subject to disciplinary action.

## **Cell Phone Policy**

The use of a cell phone by a student during instructional time is not allowed. Students who use cell phones in the classroom will have the cell phone confiscated and the phone will only be returned to the parent/guardian. If a cell phone is brought to school and is lost or stolen, the school is not responsible for the loss.

## **Character/Citizenship**

Students are expected to demonstrate superior character and citizenship. Character education provides a focus on developing the whole child. We encourage students to always do the right thing and seek the assistance of staff members when a troublesome situation arises. Follow the golden rule: Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you. Lend a helping hand whenever possible, always make good choices and act responsibly.

## **Dress Code/School Attire**

A higher standard of dress encourages greater respect for individuals, students and others, and results in a higher standard of behavior. Our dress code guidelines indicate appropriate school dress during normal school days for every student. ABF Academy reserves the right to interpret these guidelines and/or make changes during the school year. Students are expected to follow these guidelines. If a student comes to school without the proper uniform, they will be kept/sent to the front office and remain there until a parent/guardian brings a proper uniform for the student.

## **Lost and Found**

Throughout the school year, items which have been lost are turned in. Many of our problems would be solved if clothing and personal belongings were labeled with the student's name. Anytime a student loses an item, he/she may go to the "Lost and Found" to claim it. *ABF Academy is not responsible for students' personal belongings.*

## **Report Card Distribution**

Report cards will be sent home with the student for Quarters 1, 2, 3, and 4 (see the school calendar for report card issue dates). If students are not present when Quarter 4 report cards are sent home, they can be picked up in the front office during the summer

## **Students' Rights**

Students have the right to feel safe from threats and bodily harm. Disruptive behaviors are never acceptable, and when they occur, they will result in exclusion from participation in class activities, detention, suspension or expulsion or other disciplinary action. Parents who have a conflict with a student other than their own child and/or parent are requested to speak to the Administration. At no time may parents approach the student or their parent directly. All students and employees will be treated with respect. Slurs, innuendoes, hostile treatment, violence or other verbal or physical conduct against a student or employee will NOT be tolerated. Police will be called when necessary.

### **Grading Policy**

Academic grades reflect student mastery of the standards being taught. Students' academic work is not graded based on behavior. Students will receive a behavioral consequence if caught cheating, and will be required to take a new, different assessment to measure mastery. Grading a student's work solely on the standards taught allows teachers to have a true indicator of the proficiency level of the student since grades are not skewed by non-academically related aspects. Parents will have access to grades in the electronic grade book, and teachers will frequently communicate with families before a report card with final grades is issued to address any concerns about students who are failing their assignments.

### **Grading Scale**

Academic grades are to reflect the student's academic progress. The grade must provide for both students and parents a clear indication of each student's academic performance as compared with norms that would be appropriate for the grade or subject.

The following grading scale applies to all students:

- A - 90%-100% Outstanding Progress
- B - 80%-89% Above Average Progress
- C - 70%-79% Average Progress
- D - 60%-69% Lowest acceptable Progress

### **Conduct Grades**

Conduct grades are to be used to communicate clearly to both students and their parents the teacher's evaluation of a student's behavior and citizenship development. These grades are independent of academic and effort grades. The conduct grade must be consistent with the student's overall behavior in class and should not be based on a single criterion.

### **Effort Grades**

Effort grades are utilized to convey both to students and their parents the teacher's evaluation of a student's effort as related to the instructional program. These grades are independent of academic and conduct grades. In assigning an effort grade, the teacher must consider the student's potential, study habits, and attitude.

## Curriculum

ABF Academy focuses on a classical approach to education, a traditional curriculum that focuses on core subjects and teaches students how to think and learn, will appeal to those students and parents interested in the *School's Mission: Excellence for Every Student, Every Day*.

ABF Academy offers:

- Rigorous and relevant advanced curriculum.
- An emphasis on mastery of the content of core academic areas (language arts, math, science, social studies)
- Target instruction to meet the needs of all students.
- ABF Academy's program is aligned to the Florida B.E.S.T. Standards in ELA and Math and Next Generation Sunshine State Standards Curriculum encompasses the subject areas of Science and Social Studies.
- The school's curriculum promotes college readiness and will encourage your child to attain rigor in their curriculum.
- Middle school students are eligible to take high school credits.
- High school students are eligible to take Honors Courses.

## Cheating Policy

Anyone who uses improper assistance to complete assigned work and/or tests has cheated. Examples of improper assistance are:

- Copying/scanning papers or pages of homework assignments or turning in any project that belongs to another person.
- Giving or loaning assigned work to another student to be turned in or copied.
- Using papers/reports/projects or any portions thereof without appropriate citation, that are posted on the Internet or taken from other sources.
- Using any form of a cheat sheet during a quiz/test.
- Giving information about a quiz/test to any other students and/or receiving information about a quiz/test from anyone other than the teacher.
- Using the internet and/or "Google Translate" to copy work or post work for other students to copy.

## Consequences for Cheating

Consequences for cheating will be progressive and student discipline record will be considered when students are referred to administration for cheating offenses.

*First offense:* Copying papers or homework assignments that belong to another student/source. The student will receive a zero on the assignment, assigned an administrative detention and parents contacted.

*Second offense:* Student will be suspended, and a parent conference is required.

- Any student stealing, taking or illegally obtaining an examination, assignment, or essay will be suspended. A parent conference to follow. The student will receive a zero on the essay or exam.
- Students caught cheating will not be eligible for academic awards, and participation in school sponsored sports teams or clubs may be limited or revoked.
- Any student caught altering or attempting to alter a teacher's roll, gradebook, or cheating on a final exam will receive an "F" for the quarter.

## **Internet Policy**

Access to the Internet has been provided to ABF Academy community for the benefit of the organization and its students. It allows for connections to information resources around the world. Everyone has a responsibility to maintain and enhance the public image of ABF Academy and to use the Internet in a productive manner.

### **Acceptable Uses of the Internet**

Anyone at ABF Academy accessing the Internet is representing the school. All communications should be for professional and educational reasons. The students, faculty and staff are responsible for seeing that the Internet is used in an effective, ethical and lawful manner.

### **Unacceptable Use of the Internet**

The Internet should not be used for personal gain or advancement of individual views. Solicitation of non-school business, or any use of the Internet for personal gain is strictly prohibited. Use of the Internet must not interfere with your productivity, or the productivity of other students, faculty or staff. There is no acceptable reason to access, view or download pornographic material. Such action will be severely sanctioned up to and including termination of employment or enrollment at ABF Academy.

### **Social Networking**

With respect to Instagram or other social networking sites, it is unacceptable and prohibited for employees of ABF Academy to be listed as "Friends" of current students. Likewise, it is unacceptable and prohibited for employees of ABF Academy to have students as their "Friends" on these sites. This policy does not apply if the employee of ABF is an immediate family member of the current student. Employees should use good judgement when accepting "Friends" who are current parents.

### **Security**

All messages created, sent or retrieved over the Internet are the property of ABF Academy, and should be considered public information. ABF reserves the right to access and monitor all messages and files on the computer system as deemed necessary and appropriate. Internet messages are public communication and are not private. All communications including text and images can be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or the receiver.

## Athletic Programs

ABF Academy offers several athletic sports programs, which operate after school. Some of these programs, which occur throughout the school year, are as follows: baseball, basketball, cross-country running, flag football, and soccer. Student athletes must maintain proper behavior and conduct. Any type of disciplinary action could jeopardize the student's participation during the intramural sports. Student athletes must maintain proper academic status (C average or above) to participate. Please request a copy of the ABF Academy Athletic Handbook from the Athletic Director for more detailed information.

### Adult Conduct at Athletic Events

We expect all adults to always model appropriate behavior at all athletic events. If inappropriate behavior occurs the following steps will be taken.

*1st Occurrence* - Warning or possible suspension from attending athletic events

*2nd Occurrence* – Suspension from attending athletic events

*3rd Occurrence* – Adult cannot attend any athletic events for the remainder of the year

### Payment Policy

Failure to pay all outstanding fees may result in the loss and/ or suspension of the athletic program. We accept cash, checks, money orders and credit cards. The first of your 10 annual payments is due September 1<sup>st</sup>, the last payment is due on June 1<sup>st</sup>. All subsequent payments are also due on the 1st of every month. Any parent paying after the 3rd of the month, your account will be charged a \$50.00 late fee. We will be strict on this policy as delinquency on accounts has become an issue. Should an emergency arise where you are not able to pay on time please contact the school's Office Manager. Parents who give checks that are returned for Non-Sufficient Funds will be charged \$35.

**\*\*MONTHLY ATHLETIC OBLIGATIONS MUST BE PAID, ON TIME, IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE\*\***



## **Discipline Procedure**

Discipline is the process of changing a student's behavior from inappropriate to exemplary. We are never satisfied with merely stopping poor behaviors; we desire to teach the student to do what is right. We do not discipline a student out of anger or for the sake of convenience. Though few students desire discipline, they often need structure and clear expectations to reach their full potential.

Each teacher will establish appropriate procedures for discipline in his/her classroom based on these guidelines. The following list is not all-inclusive:

- Students are expected to respect the authority of school personnel which includes but is not limited to administration, teachers, staff and substitutes.
- Malicious destruction of school property will result in the replacement, repair or payment for damages by either the student or his/her parents. The placement of stickers on school property is forbidden.
- Use of improper assistance to complete assigned work and/or tests.
- Items such as water pistols, matches, iPods, skateboards, handheld game devices, toys, weapons of any sort, etc. are not permitted on school grounds.
- No items will be permitted to carry pictures or slogans referring to drug culture or alcohol. No profane, abusive or slang language is to be used.
- There is zero tolerance for aggression, profanity, drugs and alcohol on campus. Students that push, hit, bite, kick, harass, bully, threaten School Safety or use the internet in a negative way will be assigned an appropriate consequence, up to and including suspension or dismissal from the school.

### **Levels of Disciplinary Actions**

There are three (3) levels of disciplinary action, and the levels are determined by the seriousness of the act and the ABF Academy Code of Conduct:

#### **Level I Actions**

In order to resolve Level I discipline problems, the following options are available:

- Conference with teacher
- Parent Contact
- Conference with teacher and parent(s)
- Conference with Principal or designee
- Detention (lunch)

#### **Level II Action**

In order to resolve a Level II offense, more formal disciplinary actions should be used. Formal actions include, but are not limited to:

- Detention (after school- teacher or administrative)
- Conference with Principal or designee
- Out of school suspension if repeated offense

### **Level III Actions**

In order to resolve Level III offenses, the options available are expulsion from ABF Academy.

### **Suspension and/or Expulsion**

The principal has the right to suspend or to expel a student for any of the following in accordance with the ABF Academy Code of Conduct. Prior to suspension or expulsion, the student has the right to a fair conference as outlined by the Code of Conduct.

Offenses include but are not limited to the following:

- Fighting or other dangerous and/or disruptive behavior (hitting, kicking, harassing, safety threats, pushing or biting)
- Possession or use of drugs and tobacco
- Being under the influence or having alcoholic beverages on school grounds
- Stealing
- Defacing or vandalism of school property
- Igniting any flammable substance
- Continual disruption of class
- Emotional outburst
- Insubordination
- Cheating
- Peer conflict

### **Drug-Free School Policy**

ABF Academy is committed to maintaining a safe, healthy, and drug-free learning environment. The use, possession, or distribution of illegal drugs, controlled substances, or drug paraphernalia on school grounds or at school-sponsored events is strictly prohibited. As part of our efforts to promote student safety and wellness, the school reserves the right to administer random drug tests to students. By enrolling at ABF Academy, families acknowledge and consent to this policy as a condition of continued enrollment.

### **Zero Tolerance Policy (F.S. 1006.13)**

Policy of zero tolerance for crime and victimization. ABF Academy shall promote a safe and supportive learning environment in schools by protecting students and staff from conduct that poses a threat to school safety. Please go to the following link for full policy.

[http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&URL=1000-1099/1006/Sections/1006.13.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=1000-1099/1006/Sections/1006.13.html)

ABF Academy policy is consistent with F.S. 1006.147 where Bullying and Harassment is prohibited. This statute may also be cited as the “Jeffrey Johnston Stand Up for All Students”. Please go to the following link for full policy.

[http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&Search\\_String=&URL=1000-1099/1006/Sections/1006.147.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=1000-1099/1006/Sections/1006.147.html)

## **Health, Safety, and Security**

The school prohibits attendance of a child during an illness. If your child is sent to school sick, you will be called to pick him or her up immediately.

As per the Department of Health, your child is to be kept at home (we cannot accept him/her at the school) if he or she shows any of the following symptoms and should not return to the school until symptoms have subsided for at least 24 hours. We cannot make any exceptions as we will not jeopardize the health of the children at ABF Academy.

- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Green nasal discharge
- Discharging or crusty eyes or ears
- Rash
- Conjunctivitis (Pink eye)
- Lice/Nits
- Ringworm

If a child has been exposed to a contagious disease, he/she should be kept at home and his/her condition should be reported to the school for us to observe the other children and notify parents.

We realize there are special cases where a child may have an ongoing allergy. In such cases, we ask that the child carry a personal pack of tissues in their pocket for hygiene purposes. We also require a doctor's note stating the child is not contagious and his/her symptoms are only allergy related.

In case of an accident or any of the above-mentioned illnesses at the school, you will be called immediately. If you cannot be reached, an authorized person indicated on your application will be called. If that person cannot be reached, then 911 will be called.

### **Monitoring the Environment**

Any potential hazards will be removed before children are allowed access to space. children will be always supervised by a staff member.

### **Hand Washing Procedures**

Hand washing is the first line of defense against infectious disease. Staff, parents and children are required to wash their hands at the following times:

- Upon arrival at school
- Before eating or handling food
- After going to the bathroom or assisting in toileting

## **Sanitation Guidelines for Infection Control**

The following items are disinfected daily and frequently:

- Toilets and Toilet Seats
- Sinks and Faucets
- Floors & Tables
- Countertops
- Light switches

## **Health & Enrollment Forms**

Every August before your child can attend school, we must have on file your child's updated Immunization record and student physical which can be obtained from your child's pediatrician and updated Enrollment forms. The forms must be updated each time your child receives more immunizations or when they are due to be given. The physical expires each year. Check the date on the form. These forms must be signed by the doctor. If your child's forms expire, they may not return until the forms are updated by your doctor. You will be given advanced warning of this important information. The Department of Children and Families requires records must always be up to date. Any child not having their forms up to date may not attend.

## **First Aid to Students**

If a student needs First Aid, he/she should report immediately to the administration. If administration is unavailable, bandages, Band-Aids, and other first aid items are kept in the front office. If a student is ill, he/she should be sent immediately to administration. The administration will then evaluate the situation and determine what treatment is necessary and if the parent/ guardian needs to be notified to pick up their child.

## **First Aid Equipment**

The main first aid kit at ABF is kept in the school office and in the kitchen. In addition, each classroom has a small first aid kit. The Maintenance Director is responsible for keeping the kit's supplies at all times, which include the following items: adhesive tape, Band-Aids, compresses, gauze pads, rolled gauze bandages, disposable latex gloves, instant cold packs, ice pack, scissors, tweezers, and a thermometer.

First Aid equipment may be used by ABF staff members trained in emergency first aid by an approved instructor in an FDC&F approved first aid course. Volunteers should not administer first aid. The First Aid kit must be always kept out of reach of children. When administering first aid for cuts and abrasions, latex gloves should be worn.

## **Medication**

According to FDC standards, only prescription medication may be brought to the school by the parent. It must be in the original container with a label which includes the name of the doctor, the name of the

child, and the name of the medication. *Faculty and Staff are not allowed to administer any other medication (i.e. Motrin, Tylenol or Neosporin).*

A written authorization signed by a parent or guardian should accompany medication stating the name of the medication, along with the time and number of dosages to be administered.

### **Students Who Sustain Injury at School**

When a student is injured, he/she should be sent/taken to administration who will evaluate the situation, and if needed, will call 911. If necessary, there should be an adult to accompany the student to the hospital. The administration should be contacted to come to the student if the student can't be safely sent or taken to the office. Administration or front office will contact the parents immediately.

### **Accident/ Incident Report Form**

At ABF Academy, an accident/ incident report form is completed after all incidents or accidents. A staff member will speak with a parent or guardian about each incident or accident their child experienced in the day. If the Incident is urgent, the school will call the parents to notify them of said event. One copy is given to the parents; one copy is kept on file. If you have any concerns with an incident or do not receive an Incident report as soon as you pick up your child, contact the front office.

### **Self-Harm**

The safety and security of our students is fundamental to their growth and learning. As a school, we realize that early recognition of students displaying behaviors of self-harm is key to prevention and effective treatment and that faculty/staff are in a unique position of recognizing students with these behaviors through frequent observation and the inevitable bonds of trust and confidence formed between students and school adults.

Students returning to school after committing an episode of self-harm must provide documentation from a physician or mental health professional stating that a mental health evaluation has been performed and it is safe for the student to return to class.

### **Child Abuse Policy**

Child abuse is defined as mistreatment or neglect of a child by a parent or guardian or other adult who causes injury or harm. Abuse can be physical, verbal, emotional or sexual. Law requires guardians, including teachers, to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect occurring in the home or other surroundings. It is the person's responsibility only to report the suspected abuse or neglect and not to verify the facts.

### **Fire Drills**

When the warning system is sounded throughout the school, teachers will lead the students quickly and silently out of the building according to the evacuation route/direction posted in each room. Fire drills will occur at least once each month.

## **Emergency Evacuation and Hurricane Policy**

In case of emergency the children will be evacuated to the playground area. We will notify all parents as soon as possible. Emergency closures due to hurricane threats or warnings will follow the same mandates Miami- Dade County Public Schools and recommendation by county officials announced on news stations across Miami-Dade County. Please check your email and/or call the school daily to get an updated status of school closure and reopening. Missed school days due to a hurricane will be made-up as per Miami-Dade County School schedule and an updated school calendar sent home to parents. ABF reserves the right to cancel after school care in the case of an emergency such as a tropical storm or hurricane.

## **Visitors**

Visitors, INCLUDING PARENTS, are NOT permitted to go to their child's classroom unannounced during school hours because this disrupts normal routine and instruction. For the safety and protection of all students, visitors (including parents) must report to the front office and present a valid Florida Driver's License. Parents must also sign in and out, state whom they are visiting, state the purpose of the visit, and obtain a visitor's pass before proceeding to their designated location. Violators are guilty of trespassing. Students are not allowed to bring visitors to school.



# Responsible and Ethical Use of Technology

## *Student Expectations*

To foster a responsible and respectful digital environment, students should adhere to clear expectations regarding their use of technology and the internet. Here are key expectations for students to ensure responsible use:

### **1. Respect and Courtesy**

*Respect Others:* Interact politely with peers and teachers online, avoiding hurtful or inappropriate comments.

*Digital Etiquette:* Follow proper etiquette in digital communications, including emails, chats, and forums.

### **2. Safety and Privacy**

*Personal Information:* Keep personal information (such as addresses, phone numbers, and passwords) private and never share it online.

*Stranger Interactions:* Be cautious when interacting with strangers online and report any suspicious behavior to a trusted adult.

### **3. Academic Integrity**

*Original Work:* Submit original work and properly cite sources when using information from the internet.

*Avoiding Cheating:* Refrain from using technology to cheat on assignments, tests, or quizzes.

### **4. Appropriate Use**

*Educational Purpose:* Use school-provided technology primarily for educational purposes and follow school guidelines for appropriate use.

*Content Access:* Avoid accessing inappropriate, harmful, or illegal content and report any accidental access immediately.

### **5. Digital Footprint**

*Think Before Posting:* Be mindful of what you post online as it can have long-lasting consequences. Avoid posting anything that can be considered offensive or harmful.

*Responsible Sharing:* Share information responsibly, ensuring it is accurate and not harmful or misleading.

## **6. Cyberbullying**

*No Tolerance:* Do not engage in, support, or condone any form of cyberbullying. Report any instances of cyberbullying to a trusted adult.

*Support Victims:* Support peers who may be victims of cyberbullying and encourage them to seek help.

## **7. Balance and Well-being**

*Screen Time Management:* Manage screen time effectively to balance online and offline activities. Take regular breaks to rest your eyes and mind.

*Healthy Practices:* Practice good ergonomics, and ensure you are using devices in a way that does not harm your health.

## **8. Critical Thinking**

*Source Evaluation:* Critically evaluate the credibility of online sources before accepting information as true.

*Avoiding Misinformation:* Be vigilant about misinformation and fake news and verify information from multiple reputable sources.

## **9. Collaboration and Contribution**

*Teamwork:* Use technology to collaborate effectively with classmates, contributing fairly and respectfully to group work.

*Positive Contributions:* Make positive contributions to online discussions and collaborative projects.

## **10. Legal Awareness**

*Copyright and Fair Use:* Understand and respect copyright laws and fair use policies when using online resources.

*Avoiding Illegal Activities:* Avoid engaging in illegal activities online, such as hacking, pirating software, or downloading illegal content.

By adhering to these expectations, students can contribute to a safe, respectful, and productive digital environment.