



Independence Middle Magnet

2017-2018

300 West 2nd Street Independence, LA 70433

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Donnis Casanave

Acting Principal

Welcome to Independence Magnet School!! The faculty and staff are thrilled to have you as a part of our Tiger family. Our staff of professional educators and support personnel is committed to providing our students with many opportunities both inside and outside of the classroom. The home-school partnership is vital and plays an integral role in each student's success. We encourage you to contact us whenever a concern or question arises.

At IMS, TIGERS are Timely, Independent, Geared-Up, Enthusiastic, Respectful/Responsible, and Safe. As we work to achieve success, our goals are to build relationships with parents and students, create a safe environment that is conducive to learning, establish a positive school culture and climate, encourage students to become more effective communicators, and provide lessons that are engaging, rigorous, and reflect real-world applications.

This handbook was designed to inform parents and students about the policies and procedures at Independence Magnet School. Parents, please continuously check the calendar for educational events throughout the school year.

We extend a special, yearlong invitation to our families to join us at school activities and events whenever it is possible. We believe in the **TEAM** approach, Together Everyone Achieves More. We look forward to working with you and your child to ensure that we are doing our best to make this a successful year!

Sincerely,
Donnis V. Casanave

Mission Statement

“Providing a technology-based learning environment that will prepare all students to meet the challenges of education, work, and life in a global community”

School Vision

“To create a learning environment using rigorous technology and communication styles, where all students are motivated to finding their full purpose”

School Hours

The school day begins at 7:00 A.M and ends at 2:35 P.M. No school business will be conducted prior to 7:25 A.M. Breakfast begins at 7:00 A.M. and ends promptly at 7:25 A.M. Students leaving breakfast late will receive an unexcused tardy. Students who arrive after 7:30 will be deemed tardy.

Attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential to learning. While we recognize that children get sick and family emergencies arise, we encourage our students to be present at school each day. The attendance policy is explained in detail in the parish handbook. You should read it carefully. However, a few key points are as follows:

- A student missing more than 13 days in a school year or semester will automatically be retained, regardless of grades or excuses. If this policy is violated, the Pupil Progression Committee has the option to promote depending on the circumstances.
- Only ten parent notes are accepted for tardies or absences for the entire school year.
- Perfect attendance is defined as attendance at school from beginning bell to ending bell every day. A student who is tardy or checks out early will not have perfect attendance, regardless of the reason **except** for school-related activities.
- If a student arrives after 7:30 he/she is tardy. Tardies are **only** excused with a medical statement from a doctor, parent notes or extenuating circumstances. Parents must sign their child in at the office when he or she is tardy and obtain a tardy slip so the child may enter class. The first time a child is tardy and the parent does not sign him/her in, the child will receive a warning and the parent will be called. If this happens a second time, the child will be assigned one day in PAC and Central Office will be notified.
- Early check-out is considered a tardy. Only persons whose names are listed, on the student’s information card will be allowed to check students out of school. **Picture identification is required for all check-outs.**

- Habitual absences and tardies will be referred to the Child Welfare and Attendance Officer and/or the 21st Judicial Court and FINS (Families in Need of Services)
- Make -up work will **only** be given with a valid, written excuse. It is against state law to excuse students for vacations, trips, etc.
- Students excluded for lice are only allowed three days of absences.
- Students will not be allowed to check-out after 2:00 P.M. This policy ensures that all students are accounted for and notified of any changes in transportation. The safety of your child is our primary concern.
- Whenever your child is absent, you should send a valid, written excuse explaining the specific reason(s) for the absence. Please include your signature. This should be done for each absence and must be done within ten days following the absence.
- When an absence is excused, make-up work will be given. When an absence is not excused, make-up work will not be given.
- Students are responsible for making up all work missed during an absence. Students will be given three days make up work.

Tardy to School

Students that arrive after 7:30 are to report directly to the office, with a parent or guardian, to receive a tardy admit slip. The student, parent, or guardian should present a note indicating the reason for tardiness. After 3 unexcused tardies students names should be submitted to Mrs. Randolph, the School Counselor.

Tardy to Class

Each student should report to class on time. If a student has to use the restroom between classes, he or she should get written permission from the teacher. If students are tardy without a note, parents should be contacted. If the student receives 3 tardies, an afterschool detention will be issued, and 4 or more tardies, the student will be issued 2 days in PAC. The student will be given a written notice of detention, and failure to return the signed formed or to attend the detention will result in a PAC referral or may lead to out of school suspension (OSS).

Transportation

All students have been assigned a bus by the transportation department. In order for students to ride another bus to a friend's or relative's house, parents must send a note and obtain permission from the office. If a child who usually rides the bus must be placed in a carpool, a note must be sent to the office during homeroom. If a child must be placed on a bus instead of in carpool, a note must be sent during homeroom as well. Children without

notes who are requesting a change in transportation will be placed on their normal mode of transportation. **Do not tell your child to wait in carpool or ride a different bus unless you send a note and permission has been granted through the office.**

Car Riders

Students who are car riders should not arrive on school grounds before **7:00 A.M.** Students should be picked up in the afternoon between 2:40 and 2:55 P.M. Parents must come into the office to pick students up after **2:55 P.M.** Parents and students are expected to obey safety procedures when arriving to school or leaving school. Cars must proceed through the circle drive in a single file line. For safety reasons, drivers are not permitted to drive around waiting cars or buses.

School Uniform Regulations

PANTS: All students' pants must be khaki or navy color twill "slacks" with or without pleats, with or without belt loops, with or without pockets. Pants must be worn at the waistline. No sagging, over-sized, wide-legged, bell bottom, cargo, safari, joggers, or carpenter pants will be allowed. Pants must be bought in the child's appropriate size. If pants have belt loops, students must wear a belt. No jeans of any color will be allowed.

SHORTS: Students (Pre-K-12) may wear khaki or navy color twill, loose-fitting, knee-length walking shorts.

SKIRTS or SKORTS: Students may wear khaki or navy color twill skirts or skorts.

JUMPERS: Students may wear basic khaki or navy twill A-line or bib jumpers.

SHIRTS and BLOUSES: Shirts may be long or short sleeved (no sleeveless garments) polo (pull over) style or oxford (button up) style, white or navy color shirts. Turtleneck shirts, sleeveless shirts, or shirts with a zipper are not acceptable. Elementary girls have the option of wearing a white, button up blouse with a "Peter Pan" collar. Each school shall have the option of a school color shirt to wear at the discretion and approval of the school principal in lieu of a regular school uniform shirt. Solid white, long or short-sleeved T-shirts may be worn under regular uniform shirts and the sleeves of the "undershirt" may extend past the sleeve of the top uniform shirt. (Thermal underwear and turtleneck shirts are not allowed.) All shirt tails must be tucked inside garments. No midriff shirts or blouses shall be worn.

BELTS: Elementary students are encouraged to wear belts. Belts are mandatory for middle school, junior high school and high school students when wearing pants or shorts with belt loops. Belts with designs, emblems, insignias, monograms, logos, holes, studs, etc. that are offensive (at

the discretion of the school principal) will not be allowed. Metal spikes or studs are not allowed. Belts must be the appropriate length for the student's waist size. Belt buckles must be plain, standard style.

OUTER GARMENTS: Students may wear heavy coats or jackets of any color or style inside and outside of school classrooms/buildings. If the outer garment is a pullover including sweaters, jackets, vests or windbreakers that do not zip or button from the bottom up, it must be navy, white, or the school-chosen color. Coats, jackets, and/or pullover garments may not have inappropriate insignia, logos, or language. Dusters and trench coats will not be allowed. Jackets or sweatshirts with a hood may be allowed for indoor wear with the stipulation that hoods will be removed upon entering a building. A regulation uniform shirt must be worn under all outerwear. Students will be allowed to wear school-sponsored organization (FFA, BETA, athletic, etc.) jackets, sweatshirts and sweaters inside buildings and classrooms with the stipulation that the garments should be blue, white, or the school chosen color.

SHOES: All shoes must have a closed back and front. No sandals, wedged soles, platforms, high heels, crocs, slippers, shower shoes, flip flops, or knee-high shoes will be allowed.

When it has been determined that a student is in violation of the dress code that student will be warned. After the first warning, a parent will be called to bring appropriate clothing or take the child home. If a parent cannot be reached, the child will be placed in PAC for the day. Frequent dress code violations by the same student will result in further disciplinary actions.

Harassment and Bullying

Sexual harassment, bullying, and other inappropriate behaviors are violations of the law. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated, condoned, or overlooked. Bullying occurs when a person(s) willfully subjects another person (victim), to an unwanted and unprovoked, verbal, physical, emotional or sexual action at any school site or school-sponsored activity or event. Students and parents of students experiencing harassing behaviors are encouraged to report such incidents to the Principal's office. All reports will be investigated an appropriate action will take place. Students are given a copy of the Tangipahoa Parish School Board Sexual Harassment policy and Bullying policy at the beginning of the school year.

Food and Beverages

- Food and beverages are not allowed in the school building. This includes food brought in before school begins.
- Gum chewing is prohibited on the school campus and in the buildings.
- Students are prohibited from selling candy or other food items on the campus or in the buildings.
- Students are not allowed to have fast foods (hamburgers, pizzas, etc.) delivered to them at school during lunch period or at any other time. This is a direct violation of the state and federal regulations regarding school food service.
- Students may purchase bottled water at school, but it cannot be brought into the building.

Fees Owed from Previous Years

Students who have outstanding fees from last year will not be issued textbooks until their fees are paid in full. Cumulative records and report cards will be held until the fees have been paid. Students who have outstanding fees will not be allowed to participate in field trips or take part in other activities that require money.

Notes Home

It is a student's responsibility to take notes home. If a student refuses to take a note home, it is the parent's responsibility to correct the situation. Due to the limited amount of planning time and accessibility to telephones, it is not always possible for your child's teacher to call you in reference to notes sent home. Please do not request that we give notes to siblings, neighbors, etc. It deters your child from becoming responsible.

Parent – Teacher Conferences

Communication between parents and teachers is essential to your child's success in school. Conference time is limited for teachers during the school day; therefore, it is important that conferences are scheduled during the teacher's planning period. However, we will do everything possible to accommodate your schedule. Please remember that time before and after school is a teacher's personal time. It is essential to keep all contact information current in order for positive communication to occur between home and school.

Classroom/ Campus Visitation

All visitors must sign in with the secretary in the main Office and receive a visitor's pass using "school check in." Visitors are not allowed in classrooms without approval from the principal. To further protect instructional time, we ask that items should be delivered to a student after class has begun, be brought to the office, and we will deliver the item(s) to the student. Classes **will not** be interrupted to deliver items not related to instruction.

Caps, Hats, and Hoods

Caps and hats confiscated by a teacher or school administrator will be returned at the end of the semester. No student is to wear a cap, hat, or any other head gear (hood) in the building or on any part of the campus during school hours.

Field Trips

The faculty and staff at IMS recognize the educational benefits of field trips. They are designed to give students an opportunity to learn skills through a different medium. When students are on field trips, they are under the auspices of the school. Students will not be allowed to leave a field trip with a parent or other adult under any circumstances. Under no circumstance will younger siblings be allowed on field trips. Remember, students owing fees to the school will not be allowed to go on field trips. If you choose to go on your own with your child, you will not

be granted school rates nor will you be allowed to participate with the group. Your child will be given an unexcused absence of the day of the field trip. Parents are not allowed to ride the bus; therefore, please be prepared to drive your personal vehicle if you are going to chaperone students on the field trip.

Food/Drink/Candy Sales

Federal law forbids the sale of these items before the last 15 minutes of the lunch period. Concessions are sold daily. Students are not allowed to sell candy or snacks unless it is participation of a fundraising activity for a school sponsored club or organization.

Homework Policy

Homework is an intricate part of the educational process. The purpose of homework is to provide practice of skills taught in the classroom. Homework can also serve as informational tools for parents. When parents take the time to look at their child's homework, they will be aware of the skill(s) that their child is working on at school as well as allowing them to see which skill(s) their child is having difficulty with. The high demands of the standardized tests have made homework more important than ever. Students are required to do more homework in order to master a more difficult curriculum.

Emergency Early Dismissal/ School Closures

At the beginning of each school year, packets of forms are given to all students to take home for their parents to fill out. An Early Dismissal Form is included in the packet for transportation purposes. Homeroom teachers and the secretary keep copies of these forms. They give information telling how parents want their child to return home if there is an emergency early dismissal. The times of emergency early dismissals and school closures are determined by the Tangipahoa Parish School System. Please listen to local radio, television channels, IMMS school messenger and check TPSS website for all school closing announcements due to inclement weather or other emergency situations.

Student Materials

Students are expected to report to school with only the appropriate materials needed for learning. Students will be directed not to bring any personal property to school. This includes toys, jewelry, electronics, or other items. IMS teachers and/or administrators will not be expected to locate or replace lost or stolen items. Teachers may confiscate inappropriate items and send them to the office. Parents will be required to collect confiscated items. They will not be sent home with students. Students should have no more than \$2.00 with them at school unless they are participating in school activities that require funds.

Use of Electronics

Radios, CD Players, MP3, iPOD, Cell Phones, and Pagers

- Students are not allowed to use electronic devices such as cell phones, pagers, iPods, radios, MP3 players, and CD players to be visible at any time during the school day.
- If students are using electronic devices, particularly cell phones, the teacher should retrieve the electronics and turn it in to Ms. Casanave or Mrs. Randolph.
- The electronic devices must be picked up by a parent/guardian no earlier than 2 school days from the time that it was confiscated.
- If this occurs again, the electronics will be kept until the end of the semester and the student will receive 1 day of PAC. Parents/Guardians can pick up the electronic devices.
- If the student continues to violate the electronic policy, the cell phone will be kept until the end of the school year. The student will receive 3 days in PAC or may result to out-of-school suspension.

Positive Action Class

TPSS will attempt to reduce the number of out of school suspensions by providing a Positive Action Class (PAC) that provides opportunities for schools to remove students from the traditional classroom but not be sent home. The PAC program typically involves setting aside a space in the school where the students can be carefully monitored, give back to the community, and complete academic work while separated from their peers. Implementation of this program will result in the improvement of student behavior throughout the school.

The student will:

- Bring books, paper, pencil, pens, and other materials to PAC.
- Not use electronic devices while assigned to PAC.
- Not eat candy, chew gum, eat food, or have any beverages (including water) while in PAC. EXCEPTIONS: Students will be permitted to eat lunch in PAC.
- Complete all work assigned by the PAC teacher.
- Adhere to the TPSS dress code while assigned to PAC.
- Not deface school property: Such acts will be considered vandalism.
- Follow all the school and PAC rules.

Students assigned to PAC will not be allowed to ride the bus to or from school during the assigned days in PAC. Students must report to the picnic tables outside near the old library when they arrive in the morning. The PAC monitor will then walk them to the PAC room and give them further instructions. Any student absent from his/her assigned PAC days will have an unexcused absence for the missed day. When the student returns to school, he/she will be reassigned to PAC with additional days unless there are extenuating circumstances approved by an administrator.

Textbooks

Textbooks are furnished to students by the school system on a loan basis and should be treated as borrowed property.

- Any damage to textbook will result in a fine. If a book has extensive damage, the full cost of a replacement will be assessed. When there is a minimal damage to a textbook that is still in adoption, and the book is usable, the teacher will note the damage in the front of the book and initial it. Damage assessments will be determined at school level by the school administrator. When a student damages a book and pays the full price for it, the book still belongs to the school.
- Students who lose a textbook will be required to pay the full cost of the book before a replacement textbook is issued. If the original book is found and is in good condition, a refund will be given.
- If a student owes for lost or damaged textbooks, additional textbooks will not be issued until the debt(s) has been paid.
- Price lists may be picked up in the school's office.

Supply Fees

A \$15.00 supply fee K-5th and \$20.00 supply fee 6th-8th will be assessed on all students. The fee is used to purchase materials that enhance learning. It is preferable that the fee is paid during the first six weeks of school. If needed, arrangements may be made to pay installments. Speak to your child's teacher concerning a plan. Students who have not paid fees will not be allowed to participate in field trips or other school activities that require money.

Student ID's

All students will be given their first student ID. ID's are required for students to eat breakfast and lunch. ID's will be stored in the lunchroom for students to eat daily. If a student misplaces or loses an ID, replacement ID's are \$5.00. Students will face consequences such as lunch detention, after school detention and others deemed necessary by the administration for failure to have ID's on campus.

Medication

Any student who is required to take medication during the school day must comply with TPSS regulations as listed in the parish handbook. In order for any medication to be given at school, the following requirements must be met:

- Written orders from a physician detailing the name of the drug, dosage, and time interval that the medication is given must be provided to the school using TPSS approved forms which are available at the school.
- Medication **must** be brought to school by the parent/ guardian in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy. ***Students are not allowed to bring medication(s) to school. Initial medicine check-in must be with the school nurse.***
- The medication will be given by the school's nurse or trained designee. The date, time, and signature of the person administering the medication will be documented in the medication log.
- Any medicines that students are required to take during the school day must be checked in with the school nurse.

If a student gets sick at school, he/she will be allowed to call home. It is important that you provide the school with up-to-date telephone numbers where you can be reached during the day. ***If your telephone number changes during the school year, please remember to update your child's information card in the school's office.*** If no one can be reached, the student will be transported by ambulance to the emergency room if the situation requires it.

Nurse

There is a registered nurse who comes to school two days per week.

Immunization

Students must have state required shot records that are current and up to date, or they will be excluded from school.

Clubs

Clubs are offered at Independence Magnet School. Each club has set criteria, rules, regulations and responsibilities. Check with each club sponsor for current criteria.

Ten Tips for a Successful Parent – Teacher Conference

Here are some general hints on how to have a successful conference:

- Ask your child if there is anything that he/she would like you to discuss with the teacher.
- Jot down everything that you want to talk about at the conference.
- Arrive promptly or a few minutes early.
- Begin with positive comments about the teacher or classroom.
- Avoid lengthy discussions of topics that are not related to purpose of the conference.
- Be open-minded to suggestions from the teacher.
- Keep your emotions under control.
- Take notes about what has been discussed to share with your child.
- Express appreciation for the conference.
- Do not stay beyond your allotted time.

Bus Regulations

- Be on time. The bus driver will not wait.
- Do not stand in the street while waiting for the bus. Stand a safe distance off the street and wait until the bus has stopped and the driver motions you before approaching the bus.
- If you must cross the street to board the bus, do so very carefully. Wait for your driver's directions and cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus after the driver signals it is okay to cross. You should also check for traffic in both directions before crossing.
- Cooperate with the driver, because your safety depends on it.
- Remain quiet enough not to distract the driver.
- Present written permission from your parents, approved by the Principal or Secretary to your bus driver to get on or off the bus at a stop other than your own.
- Do not stand when a seat is available and the bus is in motion. Sit in the seat assigned to you by the driver.
- Do not extend arms, head, or other objects out of windows or doors.
- Do not throw objects in the bus or out of the windows or doors.
- Do not use the emergency door except for emergencies that are usually directed by the driver.
- Do not eat or drink on the bus.
- Do not possess or use tobacco, matches, lighters, drugs, obscene materials, weapons, or other prohibited items on the bus.
- Do not fight on the bus.
- Do not board the bus at the incorrect stop.
- Do not leave the bus without permission.
- Do not disrespect the bus driver.
- Do not commit an immoral or vicious act.
- Do not use profane language.
- Do not refuse to occupy a seat.
- Do not show willful disobedience.

Athletics

The athletic program includes the following sports: football, basketball, and track. In order for students to be eligible, students must:

- Pass four major subjects (reading, English, math, science, social studies) with a 1.5 GPA for the 1st two 6 weeks period and be “in good standing” status.
- Complete a physical examination.
- Be covered by an insurance policy.
- Not be 15 years of age before September 1st of the current school year.

Information regarding team try-outs, team participation, practices, and scheduled events will be communicated by the Head Coach prior to the season.

Dances

All dances will be from 6pm to 9 pm. Tickets can be purchased for \$5 in pre-dance ticket sales. At the door dance tickets will be \$6. Students must adhere to parish uniform policy even while wearing non-uniform attire to dances. (I.e. only 5th and 6th grade students can wear knee length shorts to dances. 7th and 8th grade students' shirts must be tucked, etc.) If a parent does not pick up their child by 9:10 p.m. the student may not attend the next dance. This will strictly be enforced. Students from other schools are not allowed unless it has been approved by the principal.

General Homework Tips for Parents

- **Make sure that your child has a quiet, well-lit place to do homework.**
Avoid having your child do homework with the television on or in places with distractions, such as people coming and going.
- **Make sure the materials that your child needs, such as paper, pencils, and a dictionary, are available.**
Ask your child if special materials will be needed for some projects and get them in advance.
- **Help your child with time management.**
Establish a set time each day for doing homework. Don't let your child leave homework until just before bedtime. Think about using a weekend morning or afternoon for working on big projects, especially if the project involves getting together with classmates.
- **Be positive about homework.**

Tell your child how important school is. The attitude you express about homework will be the attitude your child acquires.

- **When your child does homework, you do homework.**
Show your child that the skills they are learning are related to things you do as an adult. If your child is reading, you read too. If your child is doing math, balance your checkbook.
- **When your child asks for help, provide guidance, not answers.**
Giving answers means your child will not learn the material. Too much help teaches your child that when the going gets rough, someone will do the work for him or her.
- **When the teacher asks that you play a role in homework, do it.**
Cooperate with the teacher. It shows your child that school and home are a team. Follow the directions given by the teacher.
- **If homework is meant to be done by your child alone, stay away.**
Too much parental involvement can prevent homework from having some positive effects. Homework is a great way for kids to develop independent, lifelong learning skills.
- **Stay informed.**
Talk with your child's teacher. Make sure you know the purpose of homework and what your child's class rules are.
- **Help your child figure out what is hard homework and what is easy homework.**
Have your child do the hard work first. This will mean that he/she will be most alert when facing the biggest challenges. Easy material will seem to go fast when fatigue begins to set in.
- **Watch your child for signs of failure and frustration.**
Let your child take a short break if she is having trouble keeping her mind on an assignment.
- **Reward progress in homework.**
If your child has been successful in homework completion and is working hard, celebrate that success with a special event (e.g., pizza, a walk, a trip to the park) to reinforce the positive effort.

Independence Magnet School

Classroom Expectations

Expectations:

1. Bring all necessary materials to class.
2. Raise hand and wait for permission to speak or leave your seat.
3. Sit in your assigned seat and be prepared when the bell rings.
4. Follow directions the first time they are given.
5. Respect the rights and properties of others.
6. No eating or chewing gum in class.
7. Dress appropriately.

Rewards:

1. Positive Praise
2. Tiger Tickets
3. Helper Pass
4. Positive Behavior Activities

Consequences:

1. Step 1- Verbal Warning and Reteach expectation/rule
2. Step 2- Loss of privilege or punish work/Parent Contact
3. Step 3- Lunch Detention
4. Step 4-2nd Lunch Detention/ Parent Contact
5. Step 5-Afterschool Detention/Parent Contact
6. Step 6- Parent Conference Required
7. Step 7- Major Office Referral

TIGERS



T - Timely



I - Independent



G - Geared Up



E - Enthusiastic



R - Respectful/Responsible



S - Safe

