

**American Leadership Academy**  
***Parent / Student Handbook***  
**2021-2022**



**American  
Leadership  
Academy**

**Academics | Leadership | Character | Service**

**(updated September 2021)**

## AMERICAN LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

P.O. Box 851203

Richardson, TX 75085-1203

[www.americanleadership.online](http://www.americanleadership.online)

800-211-6791 (toll free)

**“Inspiring students with the American dream”**

### PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

Welcome to American Leadership Academy (ALA). Each family is requested to advise their enrolled student(s) of the American Leadership Academy policies and procedures that affect them. These policies and procedures are in effect for all current students and apply to the duration of their enrollment at the Academy. Any future changes or updates will be presented to parents for acknowledgment.

By enrolling at ALA, you are automatically consenting to following policies in this handbook. It is your responsibility to thoroughly read this handbook and discuss the policies with your student(s).

***Policies are subject to change as deemed necessary by ALA.*** This updated Handbook is available via [Sycamore](#) and the ALA [Website](#).

### MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Greetings to our Parents and Students-

Welcome to a year of partnership with us. Together, we share the responsibility and the privilege of passing on the rich heritage of the American education and providing opportunities to gain the American Diploma to each of our students. By choosing to send your son or daughter to our school, you have demonstrated your trust in us. For this, and for the many ways you show your support and spirit of cooperation, we are grateful.

When our students attend online, ready to absorb the knowledge and strive to learn, we know you care. At the end of each day, your genuine interest in school's extra-curricular activities will reinforce positive attitudes, leadership, and acts of service. Please provide a time and place for students to have focused study and ability to engage with the curriculum.

We urge all of our parents to participate as much as possible in the online community forums provided. Any skill or talent you can share with us will enrich our school community. If job responsibilities prevent active presence at school, your prayers, your encouragement and your vocal support are still very important to us.

Like you, we want what is best for all our students at ALA. Together, we can make this year rich in experiences that lead to mental, moral, and spiritual growth.

Sincerely,



Dr. Iram Shaikh-Jilani  
Superintendent



## **VISION**

ALA delivers quality academics, character building and leadership development to students as global citizens.

## **MISSION**

ALA is committed to provide American academic standards world-wide. We provide an environment that promotes accessibility, positivity, and responsibility in students to be life-long learners and serve humanity.

## **VALUES, BELIEFS, AND EXPECTATIONS**

ALA values, beliefs and expectations are centered around 4 major concepts:

1. Academic Rigor
2. Leadership Focus
3. Character Development
4. Service as a Global Citizen

ALA's curriculum is focused on all 4 components needed in a holistic curriculum. These aspects of student development provide a well-rounded experience and are invaluable in developing a strong citizen. ALA recognizes that these areas are also needed as important elements in the University/College application processes and beyond.

### **Online- Learners**

1. Online Learners are expected to be punctual to their synchronous (live) classes and complete the hours required for their asynchronous classes.
2. Students must engage with asynchronous (self-paced) for a minimum of 10 hours a week.
3. Behavior during live classes must be respectful and courteous to all peers and teachers.
4. Students must sign off on the technology agreement form, have headphones, and stay on task.
5. Students must be prepared and submit assignments, documents, and paperwork on time.
6. Students must maintain academic integrity at all times. Students must complete their own work and ensure that they are honest in their educational experience.
7. Students are expected to complete all required coursework including at least 25% of the ALA courses required by the institution to be eligible for graduation.

### **Parents**

1. Parents must provide the necessary items for student success. (i.e. technology, distraction-free space for learning, time.)
2. Parents should engage in community forums and ask questions.
3. Submit appropriate fees on time.
4. Support their students in the online learning process. This will require installing parental controls on technology.
5. Parents can guide the students but may not do the work for the students.

### **Staff & Faculty**

1. Staff and faculty members are role models and set an example of professionalism in students.
2. Staff members actively support the academic mission of ALA.
3. They are genuinely interested in the general welfare of students and display a positive attitude towards them, their learning, the needs, wants, unique characteristics and expectations of "each student."
4. Staff members should routinely implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision-making that embody the values of respect, fairness, equity, and inclusion and are free from bias.
5. They are to display initiative, operate with minimal supervision and possess a strong desire to be the best



they can be.

6. Teachers set high expectations for both student learning and student achievements because expectations directly affect achievement. Teachers should evaluate student performance in a fair, objective and consistent manner.
7. Teachers should make full use of instructional time, be result oriented, and provide regular and consistent feedback to both students and parents.
8. Teachers should utilize activities which promote student’s ability to think in a critical and creative manner.

### Community

1. The community must take an active interest in the welfare and education of all children and should work with the school in harmony on issues of mutual concern.
2. The community should serve as a resource for student learning and join the school in providing enriching educational activities throughout school year.
3. Community members can contribute online via online community forums and events.

### Administrators / School Advisory Board

1. Governance decisions should be made on the basis of the strategic plan of ALA to achieve the vision and the mission of the school.
2. Administrators should ensure the realization of the vision and should disseminate that vision to all stakeholder groups.
3. Administrators should practice effective supervision, including growth target identification, monitoring, conferencing, feedback and evaluation.
4. Administrators will cultivate and sustain a culture that demonstrates respect, fairness, equity, and inclusion, and is free from bias.
5. Administrators should be role models for teachers and students.
6. The governance of the Academy is a collaborative responsibility of Board Advisors, Administrators, and School Staff.
7. Governance decisions should be based upon a balance between the academic and human needs, wants and expectations of students
8. ALA board members are expected to abide by ethical behaviors and practices as outlined in the **ALA Board Code of Ethics**.
9. Board members are expected to engage in a minimum of 10 hours of professional development each year.

### Behavior Expectations for Hybrid Learning

10. Governance decisions should be made on the basis of the strategic plan of ALA to achieve the vision and the mission of the school.

### WHO DO I ASK?

Name	Title	Contact Info
Mr. Syed Kamal	CEO	syed.kamal@americanleadershipacademy.online
Dr. Iram Shaikh-Jilani	Superintendent	superintendent@americanleadershipacademy.online
Mr. William White	Principal	principal@americanleadershipacademy.online
Ms. Mariyah Abdulla	Lead ALA Teacher	Mariyah.abdulla@americanleadershipacademy.online



## **EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY**

ALA does not discriminate, exclude from participation, or deny the benefits of an educational program or activity for which ALA is responsible on the basis of race, color, religious preference, or national origin.

## **ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT AT ALA**

This information is subject to change for the next academic year. Please check our website after November for the latest information, requirements and priority deadlines for the following academic year Admission and Enrollment.

### **American Leadership Academy's Admission Process**

ALA admission process and criteria aim at considering each applicant on their credentials and academic merit. Our decisions are based on the evaluation of the applicant's values, character, academics, behavior, self-motivation, and global citizenship.

## **Admission Checklist: Step-by-Step**

### **Step 1: Apply for Admission – ALA has open enrollment and will be continuously enrolling students throughout the year.**

Submit your online application and pay a \$90.00 non-refundable fee per application (Includes MAP & Writing Assessment).

**In order to graduate with a high school diploma from ALA, students must complete at least 25% of their coursework through ALA. For this reason, please contact the Office of Admission before applying for 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade.**

### **Step 2: Submit all required documents**

Provide your child's current school with the School Records Release form available on our website under "Admission". All documents must be submitted to the Office of Admission.

Documents required: birth certificate, attested previous academic records (at least 2 year's report card), official transcripts (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade applicants), valid Identification, and 2 letters of recommendations.

**Note: Copies must be legible and clear.**

### **Step 3: Complete the Admission Test & Parent/ Student Interview**

Upon receiving all documents, the Office of Admission will contact you to schedule your child's admission test. We advise parents/guardians to submit the required documents as early as possible in order to get an early testing date and interview dates. Dates for testing and Interviews will be based on first to complete document uploads.

### **Step 4: Review and Decision for Admission**

Admission decisions will be communicated to the parents/guardians of those applicants meeting all of the above requirements, via email. Possible Decisions: Acceptance, Waiting Pool (Incase no available virtual seat available) or Non-Acceptance.

## **Transfer Policy**

Students who apply for the school year in session are considered transferring students and fall under the same admission requirements outlined above. Students must submit course equivalency documentation if they are in Grades 9-12th.

For any questions related to Admissions, please contact the Office of Admission by phone at [admissions@americanleadershipacademy.online](mailto:admissions@americanleadershipacademy.online) or call (800) 211-6791.

## **CURRICULUM**

Current curriculum can be found here: <https://americanleadershipacademy.online/curriculum>.

## **FINAL TRANSCRIPTS**

It is the responsibility of the graduating student to request that a final transcript be mailed and to which university it should be sent to. Students should contact their College Guidance Department for transcripts.

## TUITION SCHEDULE

Once Application has been submitted, fees must be processed for Approval process to begin. All fees are in U.S. dollars.

Tuition & Fees	Amount
Application Fee (Non Refundable)- (Includes MAP & Writing Assessment)	\$190
New Family Admissions Fee (One time fee to be an ALA Family)	\$750
Re-Registration Deposit (per student)	\$290
Middle School (Annually)	\$4990
High School (Annually)	\$5990
Individual Course Fee (Semester) / Credit Recovery	\$390/per course
PSAT, SAT, ACT and AP exams are the responsibility of the student taking the exam	*Depends on exam

### Where to Make Payments – (INSTRUCTIONS)

### WITHDRAWAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Parents who decide to withdraw student(s) during the school year must give a thirty (30) notice.

1. Withdrawal form must be filled out for student withdrawing.
2. The financial account must be fulfilled for current standing.
3. No school records will be released to the parents/guardians or to transferring schools until the withdrawal process has been completed and the financial account fulfilled.
4. The student will remain in the school's system (Sycamore) until the withdrawal date provided.
5. **There will be no refund on the tuition or any other fees.**
6. Parents/guardians will be financially responsible for the tuition and fees based on the above policy, without regard to the reason why you are withdrawing. There will be no exceptions.

Below is the procedure to withdraw a student:

1. Meeting with the Superintendent to discuss reasons for student withdrawal. ALA will assist in finding alternate solutions if possible. If not possible then the next steps are to be employed.
2. Fill out a Withdrawal form online and submit to Admissions Advisor.
3. Meet with the Financial Administrator for any outstanding balance and payment (if needed).

For any questions related to Admissions, please contact the Office of Admission by phone at [admissions@americanleadershipacademy.online](mailto:admissions@americanleadershipacademy.online) or call (800) 211-6791.

## RE-ENROLLMENT PROCESS AND FEES

In order to plan the logistics and needs of the following academic year, ALA must have accurate re-enrollment numbers early on. The re-enrollment season takes place between December and January every academic year for the following one. The exact dates of the re-enrollment season will be communicated to parents in December and will be posted on the website and on Sycamore.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

ALA follows the attendance requirements set by the Texas Education Agency.

Minimum Days of Attendance – The minimum number of days a student is required to be in attendance in order to receive Course Credits is 90% of the school year (allocated online time). A student is absent for more than 10% of the school year is liable for the penalties for the violation of this policy regardless if the absences are excused or unexcused and regardless of academic performance. Penalties may involve: grade, retention or repetition of course(s). This is according to Texas state law.

Time Limits – Students' attendance will be monitored for both synchronous and asynchronous attendance. Students in asynchronous learning will be required to complete assignments weekly at a minimum of 10 hours a week. For Synchronous attendance students are expected to attend the live sessions as required by the 90% rule. **While flexibility is provided for course completion, all courses must be completed within one calendar year.**

Instructional Time for Courses- Each ALA course will consist of a minimum of 50 hours of instructional time

Eligibility for Next Courses- To be granted access to the next course (e.g. to begin 10 grade Language Arts after 9<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts), students must complete 100% of the required work for the course and pass the previous course with a minimum of a 70% overall grade. All courses must be completed within one calendar year of the start date.

Authenticity of Student Work- All work submitted must be the authentic work of the student. ALA teachers will regularly evaluate student work (assignments, projects, assessments) to determine authenticity. See the Academic Honesty policy below for more details on how ALA will address infractions in this area.

Excused Absences – Students may submit absence requests via email to their teacher. Examples of excused absences include: verified illness, death in the immediate family, motor vehicle driver's license test with advanced notice, college visitation with prior notification to the counselor, documented medical appointments, court ordered appointments and absences for a personal reason excused in advance by the administration.

Unexcused Absence – Unexcused absences include truancy, skipping class, excessive tardiness, absences without medical documentation, and absent days accrued prior to parental completion of a withdrawal process.

## TARDY POLICY

Tardies affect continuity of instruction and academic success of students; therefore, all students are expected to be on time for the synchronous sessions. Punctuality is a measure of responsibility and the ALA Administration deems it important that all students learn the value of being punctual.

## EXTRACURRICULAR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, VIRTUAL FIELD TRIPS AND CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

As a general policy, clubs, extracurricular activities, and competitions will relate to, support, improve the school curriculum and standards of student life. Gaining a better understanding of human relationships and a sense of





personal pride in accomplishment are benefits frequently derived from a good program of student activities. Every organization must have the explicit approval of the administration in order to be a part of the school.

All school organizations, clubs and activities (student and parent) will be under the direction of the Academy's Principal. All meetings, projects, activities and social functions must be approved by the school Principal.

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

ALA requires that students are honest and honorable in all their academic efforts. ALA has a zero-tolerance policy for cheating and/or plagiarism. Consequences for academic cheating or plagiarism will be dealt with by the Administration as per the school discipline policy. The academy will provide students with instruction on plagiarism and on proper MLA citation.

While using digital learning tools (ie Edgenuity), ALA staff will enforce the Technology Use Expectations document. This outlines rules for how students use technology and refrain from using unapproved technology sources. Teachers actively review student work to ensure it is authentic using online plagiarism tools.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

All grievances must be in writing. Parents having a grievance to file with the school should first address it with the appropriate teacher. If the parent is not satisfied, he/she may take their grievances to the ALA's Principal. If further intervention is needed parents are welcome to contact the Superintendent

### **Discipline Policy for American Leadership Academy**

The mission of the ALA's discipline policy is to inspire excellence in character and action as a global citizen. This will be achieved through character development, reflection, guidance, and responsibility. The basic principle of our discipline policy is to ensure the safety of the children and to provide an opportunity for the enrichment of their learning process.

Disruptions to the virtual classroom will not be tolerated and the student may be subject to removal. If the student is removed from the virtual classroom, he/she will be counted as absent for that day. Attendance requirements will apply. Students who do not meet the attendance requirements are subject to repeat that course.



## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

American Leadership Academy offers Texas State Standards provided by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). They are known as the **Texas Essential Skills and Knowledge (TEKs)**. The American High School Diploma requirements are based on the **Distinguished Diploma** which is the highest Diploma offering in the State of Texas.

**A breakdown of the required classes that equal 26 credits is as follows:**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Credits</b>
English	4 Credits
Math	4 Credits
Science	4 Credits
Social Studies	4 Credits
Foreign Language	2 Credits
PE/Health	1 Credit
Elective Courses	7 Credits
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26 Credits</b>

Of the 26 required credits, students must complete a minimum of 7 credits with our school to be eligible for an ALA Distinguished Diploma. In addition to the 26 credit Distinguished Diploma, ALA also offers the 22 credit Foundations Diploma option with a minimum requirement of 6 credits of ALA coursework to receive an ALA diploma.