



THE AMERICAN SCHOOL OF SÃO PAULO

# Lower School Student/Parent Handbook

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## 2018-19

**Graded's Lower School Handbook is currently undergoing revision.  
An updated 2019-20 edition will be posted in August.**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

[Mission Statement](#)

[Welcome](#)

[Core Values](#)

[Calendar](#)

[Program Overview](#)

[The School Day](#)

[Montessori](#)

[Learning Communities](#)

[Lower School Buddies](#)

[Playground](#)

[Field Trips and Other School Travel](#)

[After School Activities](#)

[Eaglets](#)

[Service Learning](#)

[Homework](#)

[Supplies](#)

[Class Placement](#)

[Lower School Library](#)

[Student Support](#)

[Counseling](#)

[English Language Learners](#)

[Academic Support Program](#)

[Tutoring](#)

[Individualized Support Plans \(ISP\)](#)

[Attendance](#)

[Extended Absences](#)

[Punctuality](#)

[Student Logistics: Obtaining Gate Passes, Notifying Us of Absences, and Alerting us of Changes in Transportation Methods](#)

[School Dismissal](#)

[Class Parties](#)

[Citizenship, Community and Conduct](#)

[Lower School Discipline Policy](#)

[Lower School Rights and Responsibilities](#)

[Major Behavioral Offences](#)

[Consequences](#)

[Consequences for Major Behavioral Offences](#)

[Graded's Harassment and Bullying Policy](#)

[Definition of Bullying](#)

[Lower School Dress Code](#)

[Physical Education Clothing](#)

[Graded's Language Statement](#)

[Academic Integrity](#)

[Information and Communication Technology \(ICT\) Rights and Responsibilities](#)

[Information and Communication Technology \(ICT\)](#)

[LARK Guidelines](#)

[Online Publication and Student Authorship](#)

- [Mobile Phone Use](#)
- [Parent Volunteers](#)
- [Parent Teacher Association](#)
- [Parent Code of Conduct](#)
- [Communication](#)
  - [Addressing Concerns](#)
- [Assessment for Learning](#)
  - [Types of Assessment](#)
    - [Formative Assessments](#)
    - [Summative Assessments](#)
  - [Descriptors of Achievement](#)
- [Grade Reporting](#)
  - [Purpose of Grades](#)
  - [Student Progress Report](#)
  - [Grades Calculations](#)
  - [Habits of a Learner Descriptors](#)
  - [Promotion and Retention](#)
- [Recognizing Excellence](#)
- [Wellness](#)
  - [Strong Body – Strong Mind](#)
  - [Water](#)
- [Health Service](#)
  - [Illness or Injuries at School](#)
  - [Medication](#)
  - [Immunization](#)
- [Facilities Policies and Procedures](#)
  - [Regulations for Use of Campus Facilities](#)
  - [Athletic Facilities](#)
  - [School Store](#)
  - [Snack Bar](#)
- [Personal Effects](#)
  - [Lockers](#)
  - [Valuables](#)
  - [Lost & Found](#)
- [Safety and Emergency Drills](#)
- [School Visitors](#)
- [Bus Transportation](#)
- [Car Pick Up](#)



THE AMERICAN SCHOOL OF SÃO PAULO

## Mission

**inspire**  
**challenge**  
**succeed**

every student  
every heart  
every mind

## Vision

Individuals empowered to reach their potential and positively impact the world.

## Core Values

Graded instills these values in all members of our community:



# Welcome

August 2018

Dear Graded Students and Parents,

Welcome to the 2018-19 school year! The Lower School faculty is excited to help each child master academic skills appropriate for each grade level and strives to develop the habits of a learner necessary for each child to succeed in school. We firmly believe the platform of successful education is built on the relationship between student, school and home.

In order to facilitate a developmentally appropriate environment of growth and change, we continually examine the work we do to ensure our practices are commensurate with best practices in Brazil and around the world. The procedures and practices outlined in this handbook are a result of considerable thought and deliberation by our staff in conjunction with student and community input.

Please review this handbook with your child as it provides a common framework and language for our learning community. If you have any questions or comments, please free to call the Lower School Office at 3747-4808.

Sincerely,

Vance Boisjoli, Lower School Principal  
Shannon Beckley, Lower School Associate Principal  
and the Lower School Team



## Calendar

The school calendar is updated yearly and can be found on our school website: [2018-19 Calendar](#)

## Program Overview

Lower School provides an educational foundation for the youngest students at Graded. Our three year old students enter a mixed age Montessori classroom with students who are one and two years older than them. In this environment, the teacher follows the child and assists in each child's personal development. As the students enter first grade, they are exposed to single grade learning environment. To assist students in successfully crossing the bridge from preprimary to first grade, our teachers offer a variety of exploratory and experiential opportunities - both social and academic. Graded provides a wide range of inclusive activities that encourage student involvement and personal responsibility throughout the Lower School. The Lower School provides many opportunities for students to take ownership in their own learning. They are encouraged to reflect on themselves as learners, and also have many opportunities for self-directed learning (with guidance from their teachers).

## The School Day

Students should be at school at 8:00 as classes begin promptly at 8:05. The last class of the day ends at 15:05. Students engaged in extracurricular activities finish at 16:00 (most often), 16:30 or 17:45 (on occasion) depending on the activity. Students who catch the bus are released from activities at 16:00. Please note that Wednesdays are early dismissal days for students; the dismissal is at 14:35.

Each day, students have:

- 360 minutes of instruction;
- 60 minutes for lunch and recess

Each day, students have scheduled time in their homeroom class to study language arts, math, science and social studies (with the exception of Preprimary which follows the Montessori philosophy detailed below, and fifth grade where students have one teacher for humanities and another for math/science). Students also attend daily Portuguese lessons, along with daily specials which include: physical education, music, art, and library.

## Montessori

In 1979, [Montessori education](#) was added to Graded's Early Childhood division and it continues to effectively lead Graded into the future. This move, led by then Lower School Principal Joyce Pickering (now the President of the Board of Directors of the American Montessori Society), has allowed early childhood education at Graded to remain at the [forefront of learning theory and practice](#).

Maria Montessori's (1870 - 1952) legacy rests on her tremendous work on child development and successful learning. When you walk into Graded's Early Childhood

classrooms, it is easy to spot the pillars of a Montessori education: choice, movement, social interaction, independent work and individual challenge. They are evident within the children at work and the environment. Maria Montessori was a scientist and her findings have been expanded upon well into the 21st century. Psychologists Deci and Ryan, built on her insights in their famed [self-determination theory](#): *“Human beings have an inherent tendency to seek out novelty and challenges, to extend and exercise their capacities, to explore, and to learn.”*

In a mixed-age classroom, one can see children act as caring and respectful role models and mentors to each other. Like family members, they take on roles and do their best to maintain a peaceful and healthy community. The teachers prepare the environment so children can engage in activities of their choice, or work in small groups according to their developmental level. Without a timeframe or schedule, they have the freedom to improve their concentration, self-confidence and master the fundamental skills to take on more advanced activities.

A Montessori classroom develops independence. The individual is allowed autonomy in his/her daily work and is rewarded with deeper learning. This, in turn, develops the growth of the whole child and community. This is a legacy we want to continue to build at Graded. Research shows the pillars of the Montessori education philosophy are timeless. Children who develop love of work, concentration, self-discipline and sociability will naturally reach the expected outcome: individual excellence and become engaged, ethical citizens in a dynamic world.

## **Learning Communities**

Four different groupings of classes have been created consisting of one class from First to Fifth Grade and one or two classes from Pre-Primary. The Learning Communities will meet in two different ways. The entire Learning Community will gather four times this academic year for assemblies. The purpose of the assembly is to create an environment for meaningful sharing of learning and community-building. When the Learning Communities meet, students will have opportunities to present information in a variety of ways and learn from each other. These smaller community environment will be less formal than whole-school assemblies and will have more opportunities for students to present.

## **Lower School Buddies**

In addition to the assemblies, we also have a buddy program within the Learning Communities. Students in Third to Fifth grade will be paired with a younger buddy which they will interact with on a regular basis. Possible buddy activities may include reading, art, singing, and playing games. Older buddies will be given leadership roles with their younger buddies, and we hope to foster the core values of responsibility and communication within all the students. We also believe this will increase interactions between students in different grade levels to further develop a sense of community within the entire Lower School. Our buddy program also supports academic gains:



cross-age learning partnerships can help both students improve their reading fluency and oral vocabulary.

## **Playground**

Field space and playground equipment is available for all recess activities. Recess is a time for the students to participate in cooperative play and/or relax. The school recognizes the need for students to enjoy a time when they can choose activities freely. As in the classroom, students are supervised by adults. Students are encouraged to design games to include all those who wish to play. Rough play is discouraged to reduce physical harm to children.

## **Field Trips and Other School Travel**

Students in each grade level have the opportunity to participate in various various local daylong field trips. Additionally, students in third to fifth grade experience three day trips. These overnight trips are designed as an extension of the Lower School curriculum and give students the opportunity to explore a variety of interests, engage in team-building, enhance cultural awareness, and learn about themselves and each other as well as the wonderful country of Brazil. Trip itineraries and travel arrangements are reviewed by security experts in addition to the scrutiny and analysis provided by the school.

Students who do not participate in field trips are considered absent from school.

School-sponsored travel is also available through various groups and activities, such as Eaglets Sports and Destination Imagination. Students must meet the Participation and Eligibility in Extracurricular Trips and Activities requirements described in this Handbook in order to participate.

## **After School Activities**

The Graded Experience for many of our students in the Lower School includes participation in after-school activities. These activities allow students to pursue their interests in a variety of areas including: athletics, arts, academics, and/or service learning. We encourage all our students to understand the importance pursuing different interests both in and out of the classroom. There are many benefits for our students participating in after-school activities. One in particular is the opportunity to interact with different students and make new friends. Students also are exposed to new skills and given opportunities to develop them through different activities. In addition, a sense of belonging also comes with being part of a group that is based on their own particular interest.

A list of After School Activities will be run both semesters with information handbooks sent out mid-August and mid-January. Parents will then register their students the following week through a



Google Form. If there are any conflicts with registration, parents will be contacted via email. Parents are responsible for coordinating transportation prior to the start of the activity. We request any students in K5 to second grade are picked up by car at 4:00 pm from the room the activity takes place. Children who have not been picked up by 4:00 pm will be brought to the office to wait for pickup. If the secretary leaves the office, the children will be taken to the guards' station at the Giovanni Gronchi gate. If a student in K5 to second grade has an older sibling, they may return home with their sibling with permission from the parents. Please contact the Lower School Office to inform us. For students in third to fifth grade the 4:15 pm buses are available. Please remember these buses have limited stops, and therefore may not drop all students off directly at their homes. Please ensure arrangements have been made to pick up children at the stop locations. Teachers will remind students the week activities begin. We ask parents also to review the After School Activity schedule with their children to help them feel secure about their week ahead.

## **Eaglets**

As one of the pillars of our institution, we believe athletics are an integral part of a well-rounded education. Athletic opportunities offered for Lower School students are designed to build skills and sportsmanship. Our athletic community values teamwork, school spirit, and the development of individual skills and self-esteem through training and competition. Students have the opportunity to belong to a more formal team with the Eaglets. Along with students in sixth grade, the Eaglets focus on developing skills, both in coed and single-gender practices. They also participate in friendly games during the season and at least one local tournament. All fifth grade students are welcome to participate as there is a 'No cuts' policy. An email will be sent out mid-August to fifth grade students and parents.

**To see an example of the Lower School After School Activities, visit the [Lower School Activity Handbook](#)**  
**For information about Eaglets, visit [www.graded.br/athletics](http://www.graded.br/athletics)**

## **Lower School Participation in Field Trips and Extracurricular Activities**

### **Participation**

- All students are encouraged to participate in activities, have the right to participate, the criteria for conduct and behavior is outlined below.

### **Student Conduct and Behavior**

- Students are expected to conduct themselves in manner that aligns to Graded's core values, and reflects positively on themselves the school community.
- All school and team rules must be adhered to.
- If a participant is involved in a major violation of the school rules, the administrator will include in the disciplinary response whether a student can continue to participate in the activity.

## **Overnight Trips**

Graded aims to support all students selected to participate in overnight trips. Those that are scheduled to go on a trip, but are experiencing academic, attendance, or behavioral issues may go through a process to support them to remain eligible.

## **Service Learning**

Students can engage in many community service activities throughout the year. They may sponsor special programs for less privileged people, raise awareness and funds for the environment, and help our local Graded community. Community service initiatives take place in class and are often part of the curriculum.

Activities to raise money for community service and class projects must be approved one week in advance by the Assistant Principal. Students may not sell products for personal gain on school grounds at any time.

## **Homework**

Homework supplements or extends a student's class work. Starting in first grade, students should generally expect to have a small amount of work do complete each night. This may include reading, reviewing the day's work, discussing learning with parents, projects, preparing for assessments, or self-directed learning (see section below). Teachers at each grade level endeavor to coordinate a balanced homework load.

Students are expected to complete assignments within the prescribed timelines. The amount and kind of work which is assigned for outside the class period varies according to the subject and to what projects or work is being done in class at any given point in the year. Due to individual differences in work style, learning styles, and energy management, different students will need different amounts of time to complete homework.

Teachers seek feedback from parents and students regarding the approximate time spent on homework. Teachers who get frequent feedback that homework is a challenge for a student will adjust expectations accordingly. Students who consistently need more time to complete assignments should also confer with their teachers.

## **Self-Directed and Parent Supported Home Learning**

We invite children to participate in reading and self-directed learning, to explore their curiosities, and to engage in unstructured play. This style of learning at home empowers students and families to determine how they want to structure their time after school.

Learning initiated in the classroom will have natural extensions to home learning. For example, your child may be invited to bring items from home to contribute to school projects. In our classroom learning communities, we will celebrate school-home learning connections and invite students to share their passions and learning with their peers.

## Supplies

From Pre-primary to Grade 3, school supplies will be furnished by the school. However, please make sure to buy a non-rolling backpack. Students may bring in their favourite items, including a pencil case with writing utensils. We ask that toys be left at home unless brought in by teacher request for a special day or project. Fourth and fifth grade supplies are listed in the link below.

**Supply Lists:** [www.graded.br/supplies](http://www.graded.br/supplies)

## Class Placement

When class groupings are made, a great deal of time and thought is put into the process. Teachers and administrators start by determining groups of students that will work well together academically. Additionally, we look for a balance of girls and boys, native English speakers and English Language Learners (ELL), and different learning styles. We also consider nationalities of students and peer relationships. This process is lengthy, but essential for us to prioritize strong learning environments. With the large number of students in the Lower School, it is not possible for us to honor parent requests for specific teachers or placement with specific friends.

## Lower School Library

Please visit our library - both the physical space (from 7:30am-4pm) and the online space (24 hours a day) - often! We are here to promote a wide range of literature to develop passionate readers, to integrate technology and information literacy into classroom units, and to collaborate and share resources with staff to support student learning. Students will visit the library regularly to find and enjoy great books, to learn more about exploring big questions in a safe and nurturing environment, and to develop thinking and researching strategies. The librarian will also work with students and teachers in their classrooms, at times. As with all areas of Graded, our mission and core values are at the heart of our work with your children and with you!

Come explore our print materials, audiobooks, DVDs, and online resources. Through [www.graded.br](http://www.graded.br) Quicklinks, you have access to our library catalog. We also invite you to visit the library to set up a parent login for our digital subscriptions which, when used from the library catalog page, will provide a wealth of online resources, from eBooks to *World Book Encyclopedia* to multiple popular magazines. Once you've set up this online account, you will be able to access these resources from home.

Parent volunteers are also an invaluable part of our program, so please let us know if you are interested in volunteering.

# Student Support

## Counseling

Mission: The Graded Counseling Program is an integral part of all student experiences, providing proactive and responsive services to meet personal, social and emotional needs of the Graded Community. Through collaboration with all relevant education professionals and coordination of programs, we ensure that comprehensive services are available to all students. We value a student-centered approach that empowers students to be engaged, ethical citizens.

Our counselors are available to meet with students or parents during the school day. Students may drop into the counselor's office or schedule an appointment for a specific meeting. Parents may wish to talk with teachers or a counselor about social/emotional concerns, transitions, or other issues. Our counselors have an open door policy, please stop by and introduce yourself or feel free to call or email the LS Secretary if you would like to set up an appointment.

## English Language Learners (ELL)

Mission: Graded's English Language Learner Program empowers multilingual students to succeed in the school's rigorous academic learning environment. Language instruction in this program supports access to core curricular content while honoring diverse backgrounds and learning styles. Students' linguistic needs are comprehensively assessed in order to determine which services will be provided to facilitate full immersion into Graded's academic program.

The Lower School English Language Learning program is designed to foster the acquisition of social language and to assist students in acquiring the cognitive and academic proficiency necessary for success in the mainstream curricular program of the school. In the Lower School we believe that additional language learners will make a more rapid academic, social, and emotional adjustment to the school environment through mainstream immersion.

Linguistic needs, placement, and exit criteria are assessed using the [WIDA Framework](#).

## Optimal Learning Services (OLS)

Mission: The Optimal Learning Center supports students with learning differences, providing available intervention, remediation, and academic support towards the mastery of grade level standards. We at Graded believe that special services should be integrated into the daily routines, classroom structure, curriculum and strategies. Learning specialists collaborate with students, parents, teachers and other stakeholders to develop student support plans which maximize individual excellence. Services are provided in the classroom, a small group, individual setting or through consultation. We aim to develop self-advocacy in all students to help them become confident, autonomous learners.

To be eligible for OLC services in the Lower School (K3-5th grades), the student must have a current (in the past 3 years) diagnosed learning difference, identified special educational need, social/emotional diagnosis and/or be performing below grade level

academic standards in literacy and numeracy despite documented intervention and support. Student will be exited from OLC services when they are meeting grade level expectations and/or no longer require the accommodations or other services the OLC provides. The decision to exit a student will be made by the Student Support Team, followed by consultation with the student and the parents.

## **Tutoring**

In some cases, students may need reinforcement in certain areas beyond what can be covered in class. In these cases, teachers may suggest to parents that a tutor could help. The list of tutors can be obtained in the Lower School Office with the Lower School Secretary only. For the convenience of families, Graded campus may be used as the location for tutoring, as long as the tutor is not an employee of the school. Please contact the Lower School Office for more details about how to get permission and secure a location for this purpose. All costs of tutoring are the parents' responsibility.

## **Graded Mentoring and Tutoring Program (GMT)**

The Graded Mentoring and Tutoring Program (GMT) is a teacher-inspired, student-run initiative. By matching High School students with Lower/Middle schoolers for weekly tutoring sessions based on their needs and interests, the program aims to not only create a helpful learning environment in the community, but to also form lasting bonds between tutors and their tutees. This tutoring opportunity is offered to all High School students from 10th grade and above, while all tutees must be from 3rd to 8th grade.

## **Attendance**

Success in the academic program in the Lower School depends on regular and punctual attendance. Our educational philosophy places high value on the learning process during these formative years, and students need to be active participants in their classes to achieve the maximum benefits of a Graded education.

We realize, however, that there are some times in which students cannot be in school. Graded trusts that parents will remove their children from school only when they feel it absolutely necessary, and therefore all parent-approved absences are deemed "excused."

To fulfill Brazilian law, students are required to be in attendance a minimum of 75% of class time. It is the responsibility of the student and family to know and understand the Attendance Policy in order to ensure that students do everything possible to minimize absences from school.

## **Extended Absences**

When a family must take a student away from school for an extended period, prior notice equal to the anticipated time away must be given to the School office and the student's teachers. In most circumstances, effort will be made to provide students with work that might be accomplished outside of school. Lengthy absences (more than three days) should be reported to the Assistant Principal, who will help the student work out a makeup plan that is fair to the student and teachers. The school cannot take responsibility for diminished achievement resulting from a student's

absence. Teachers and administrators are unanimous in recommending that, whenever possible, trips and home leave be planned to coincide with school holidays. The student is responsible for making up all missed work.

## Punctuality

Students are expected to be prepared and on time for classes. A student's success at school is dependent upon regular and consistent attendance. When students are late to class, not only does their learning suffer significantly, but the learning of other students is also affected. Therefore, timeliness to class is considered a matter of respect for the members of the Graded learning community. Specifically, "on time" means physically being present in the classroom at 8:00 and prepared to be an active member of the Graded learning community. As a rule, tardiness is not accepted at Graded and teachers will record tardies on Veracross. In the event of tardiness, the following procedure is used:

- Parents are asked to call the LS Office if their son/daughter will not be arriving to school on time.
- Students are to go straight to class if they arrive late to school unless they arrive to school after 8:20 a.m. In this case they must obtain a tardy pass from the Lower School Office in order to enter class.

Habitual tardiness, more than two tardies per 5 day period, is unacceptable. Students who are habitually tardy will receive a call home by the Associate Principal to ensure compliance, and a note will be placed on their veracross file.

## Student Logistics: Obtaining Gate Passes, Notifying Us of Absences, and Alerting us of Changes in Transportation Methods

In order to obtain a gate pass, you must do so utilizing Veracross. This is for security reasons. Only families with a password to login to the system can notify us of permissions for students to leave campus. Below you will find information on how to use the Student Logistics system within Veracross. With Student Logistics, you can:

- Change student's attendance status for a single or multi-day absence;
- Change transportation information

### Step 1: Login in the Portal.

Secure | <https://portals.veracross.com/graded>

### Graded

#### Log In

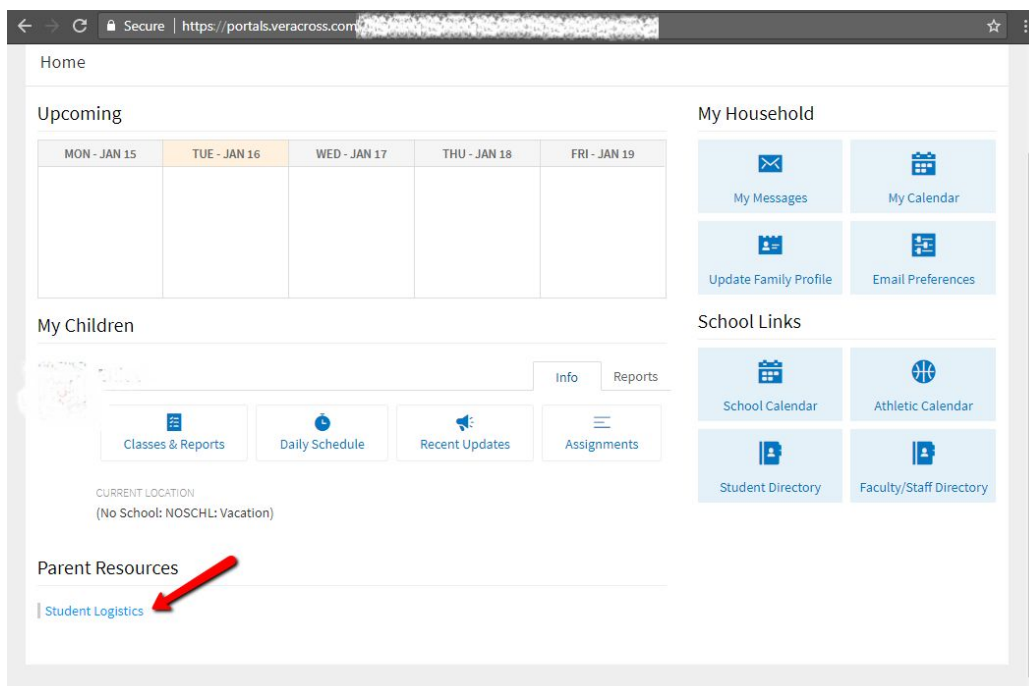
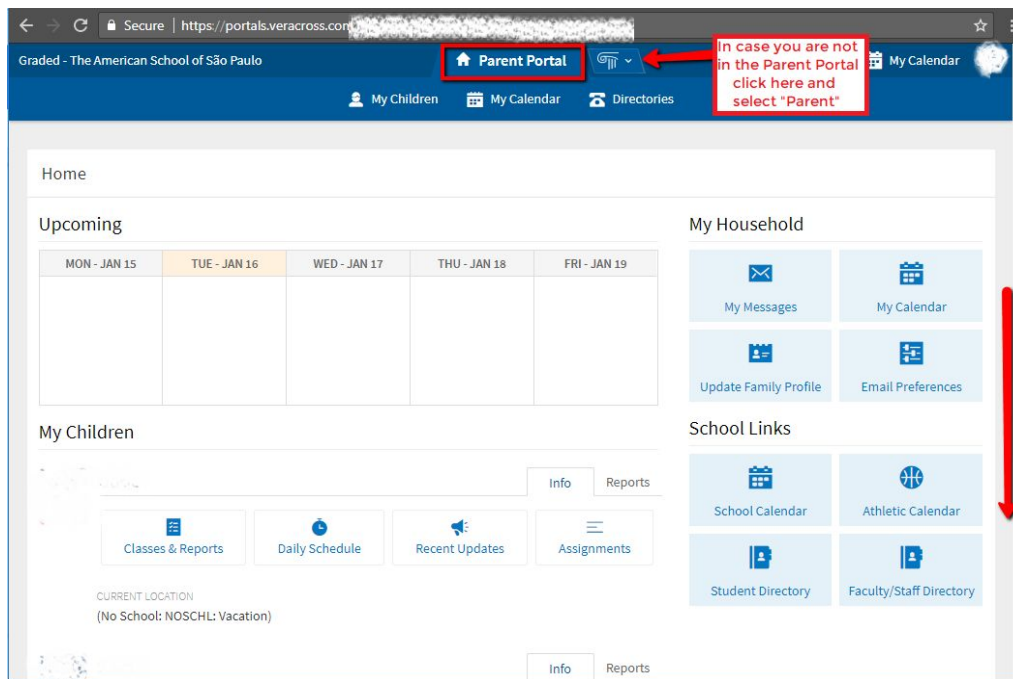
username

password

[forgot username or password?](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) · powered by Veracross

Step 2: Scroll down the page and click on 'Student Logistics'. If you are a Faculty member, make sure you are in the Parent Portal.





Step 3: Select your child's name and the date you want to indicate.

The screenshot shows the 'Student Logistics Request' form in the Parent Portal. The form has a title 'Student Logistics Request' in blue. Below the title, there are three sections: 'Select a child' with a dropdown menu showing 'Select an Option', 'Select a date' with a calendar icon and the date 'Thursday, Jan 18', and 'Request a change to:' with four radio button options: 'Attendance', 'Multi-Day Absence', 'Transportation To School', and 'Transportation From School'. Two red arrows point to the 'Select a child' dropdown and the 'Select a date' calendar.

The steps 1 - 3 are the same for the three situations presented below.

### Situation 1: Attendance Change Request

Step 4: After selecting your child's name and the date you want to request the change, select "Attendance", under "Request a change to:"

This screenshot shows the same 'Student Logistics Request' form as the previous one, but with the 'Attendance' radio button selected under the 'Request a change to:' section. The date is now 'Tuesday, Jan 16'. Three red arrows point to the 'Select a child' dropdown, the 'Select a date' calendar, and the 'Attendance' radio button.

Step 5: Select the reason why you are requesting this change, scroll down to see the options provided.

Secure | [https://portals.veracross.com/graded/parent/logistics\\_request](https://portals.veracross.com/graded/parent/logistics_request)

Graded - The American School of São Paulo

Parent Portal

Messages My Calendar

My Children My Calendar Directories

### Student Logistics Request

Select a child  
Select an Option

Select a date  
Tuesday, Jan 16

Request a change to:

☒ Attendance ☐ Transportation To School  
☐ Multi-Day Absence ☐ Transportation From School

What is the reason for this request?  
Choose a reason...  
Armed service  
College visit/College-related activity  
Death in the family/family emergency  
Embassy/government appointment  
Health care appointment  
Illness or injury - hospitalization

day, Jan 16th

☐ Leave Early  
☐ Leave Early & Return

Select a "Reason" and add a Note

Step 6: Select the status, provide details on the comment box and click on "submit" to send the request.

Secure | [https://portals.veracross.com/graded/parent/logistics\\_request](https://portals.veracross.com/graded/parent/logistics_request)

Graded - The American School of São Paulo

Parent Portal

Messages My Calendar

My Children My Calendar Directories

### Student Logistics Request

Select a child  
Select an Option

Select a date  
Tuesday, Jan 16

Request a change to:

☒ Attendance ☐ Transportation To School  
☐ Multi-Day Absence ☐ Transportation From School

What is the reason for this request?  
Other

What will 's status be on Tuesday, Jan 16th

☒ Absent ☐ Leave Early  
☐ Arrive Late ☐ Leave Early & Return

SUBMIT

Select a "Reason" and add a Note

As soon as the secretaries (from Lower, Middle or High School) get your request they will reply approving the request, meaning that they are aware and the system will be updated accordingly.

## Situation 2: Multi-Day Absence

After selecting your child's name and date:

Step 5: Select the option "Multi-Day Absence";

Step 6: Select the reason for it;

Step 7: Complete "Start Date" and

Step 8: "End Date" (the last day student will miss class).

Step 9: Make a comment in the text box explaining in more details and

Step 10: click on "SUBMIT".

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL [https://portals.veracross.com/graded/parent/logistics\\_request](https://portals.veracross.com/graded/parent/logistics_request). The page header includes "Graded - The American School of São Paulo" and "Parent Portal". Navigation links include "My Children", "My Calendar", and "Directories". The main form area is titled "Select a child" and "Select a date". Below these, the "Request a change to:" section has four radio button options: "Attendance", "Multi-Day Absence" (selected), "Transportation To School", and "Transportation From School". The "What is the reason for this request?" section has a dropdown menu labeled "Choose a reason...". The "Start Date:" field is set to "Tuesday, Jan 16th" and the "End Date:" field is labeled "Pick an end date". A large text area for comments is below the date fields. At the bottom is a blue "SUBMIT" button. Red numbered boxes (5-10) with arrows point to the following elements: 5 points to the "Multi-Day Absence" radio button; 6 points to the "What is the reason for this request?" dropdown; 7 points to the "Start Date:" field; 8 points to the "End Date:" field; 9 points to the comment text area; and 10 points to the "SUBMIT" button.

As soon as the secretaries (from Lower, Middle or High School) get your request they will reply approving the request, meaning that they are aware and the system will be updated accordingly.

## Situation 3: Requesting Transportation Change

Step 4: After selecting your child's name and date, select the request change to

"Transportation To School"(the way this student will go to school) or "Transportation From School" (the way this student will leave school after class)

**Student Logistics Request**

Select a child  
 Select an Option

Select a date  
 Tuesday, Jan 16

Request a change to:

- ☐ Attendance
- ☐ Multi-Day Absence
- ☒ Transportation To School
- ☐ Transportation From School

How is getting to school?

Choose transportation...

- Car
- On Foot
- School Bus
- Taxi/Uber
- Other
- Bus - Do Not Use

Your request will be sent to the Director of Transportation who will check the possibility of having this student on the bus on the day you requested. You will always get a reply saying if your request was approved or not, explaining the next steps.

[Student Logistics - Versão em Português](#)

In case of any doubts, please write to [parenttechsupport@graded.br](mailto:parenttechsupport@graded.br)

## School Dismissal

After a student is dismissed from their class, or after school activity, they are required to leave campus unless in direct adult supervision. In the event that a student needs to wait for a ride home they may wait in the Lower School Office. Please note that school dismissal is at 14:35 PM on Wednesdays and 15:05 all other weekdays.

## Class Parties

Parents often ask to give Birthday Parties at school; requests should be directed to the classroom teacher. Parents will be asked to hold the celebration during a natural break in the day or during the last 15 minutes if possible. If providing treats for students, please prepare small individual portions in advance of entering the classroom. Do not send gifts as part of the celebration. Please be aware of all dietary restrictions of the

students in the class and plan accordingly. Invitations for parties outside of school should be distributed out of the classroom. If inviting a large group of students, please be inclusive (ie. include all girls and/or boys in the class).

## Citizenship, Community and Conduct

Students at Graded are expected to conduct themselves, both on and off campus, in a manner which reflects well on themselves, the school, their families, and their countries. They should maintain standards of conduct that model the school's mission statement and core values. The Superintendent and/or the Principal reserve the right to take appropriate disciplinary action in the case of a violation of these standards.

The school expects parents to support its behavioral expectations and to direct any questions regarding an action taken by the school staff to the particular staff member involved or the Principal without delay.

### Lower School Discipline Policy

We believe that realizing Graded's mission and core values is a continuous, developmental process and mistakes and lapses in judgment are learning opportunities. Our community works to instill Graded's shared values through open dialogue, teaching, and counseling. The ultimate goal for all Graded students is to develop appropriate, autonomous, and self-correcting behavior.

As a school, our priority is to assure a safe learning environment, free from disruptions. Student's rights and responsibilities, as well as school rules, are established for the safety and wellbeing of all students in our school. School rules apply in school, on school grounds, on school buses and at school related activities. Any incident that happens outside of school, but still affects the learning environment at school will be handled as a disciplinary incident. Common sense and a concern for the safety of all shall prevail in situations where a rule has not been formalized.

### Lower School Rights and Responsibilities

Every community develops a unique set of commitments that reflects the beliefs about that community. First, the community agrees on what can be expected from each of its members. These are known as **responsibilities**. Then, the community agrees on what each member can expect from the community. These are known as **rights**. These rights and responsibilities come from the school's mission and values.

We are committed to helping each of you achieve academic success, explore your interests, and discover your strengths as a unique individual. During your Lower School years, you will grow and change in many ways. We are committed to supporting you and to recognizing and celebrating your many skills, talents and accomplishments.

### Lower School Student Rights

- **You have the right to an outstanding education** that is engaging, challenging, and involves you in important learning activities at your ability level. You have the responsibility to participate actively in your own learning and accept the

responsibility to take intellectual risks and to stretch yourself. You have the responsibility to exhibit growth in the areas of personal responsibility for learning, social relationships, character development, and learning habits. You will make mistakes, but these are opportunities for growth.

- **You have the right to feel cared for and valued.** Your teachers are your primary adult advocates. They will be there for you throughout the year. Reach out to them if you are not feeling cared for by any member(s) of our school community. You have the responsibility to care for, be kind, and value others in this community. You have the responsibility to report events or situations that result in you or another member of our school community feeling uncared for or not valued.
- **You have the right to express yourself.** You may demonstrate the core values of intellectual curiosity, perseverance, respect, integrity, and kindness without fear and have the responsibility to respect one another's beliefs and opinions. If you don't agree with a rule, you have a right to express your feelings and opinions, respectfully, without being interrupted or punished. Celebrate the multiple perspectives and learn from the differences in our school community.
- **You have the right to dignity and fairness.** If you feel that an adult has made a decision which is not fair, you can make an appointment to talk to the teacher, the assistant principal, or the principal and he or she will meet with you. If you break a rule or hurt someone, you have a right to explain what happened.
- **You have the right to a safe school** free from bullying, labeling, harassment and hurtful behavior. Our community will not allow anyone to make you feel oppressed; therefore, we will not allow you to do that to anyone else. Further, you must not permit anyone to frighten or harass another member of our community. If you do not take action, such as telling an adult, when you know this is happening then you are participating in this oppression and are just as guilty. You have the responsibility to act.

### **Lower School Student Responsibilities**

Each member of the community has the responsibility to protect and nurture the above rights. Mutual respect and consideration are the keys to making our school a great place to be. To promote and support the life of the Lower School community, Lower School students are expected to **abide by "The Eagle Way" in all areas on our campus.**

### **We are Graded Eagles:**

**Eager to Inspire by**  
**Acting Safely**  
**Giving Respect**  
**Living Responsibly**  
**Embracing Challenges and**  
**Soaring to Success!**

### **Behavioral Offenses**

The school works to turn mistakes and lapses in good judgment into learning opportunities. Students who have lapses in behavior or cannot fulfill their responsibilities and violate school rules will be subject to a progressive response by

staff. The severity of the violation and the student's individual discipline record will be considered when responding and assigning consequences if necessary. Because of the various influences that affect the nature of discipline cases, each specific situation is handled individually. School staff will generally follow the steps below, but may assign alternative consequences if extenuating circumstances merit a different response.

Students will be given fair notice and warning when they stray outside of rules and guidelines of the school. These responses and/or consequences are designed to help students understand and learn from their mistakes. The Lower School uses a ladder approach to reporting out behavior missteps.

### **Major Behavioral Offences**

Students may be given immediate in or out-of-school suspensions for major offences. In these cases, the administrator, consulting the homeroom teacher and reporting staff member, will determine the length and nature of the suspension and make appropriate arrangements with the parents. Suspended students may not participate in any school-sponsored activity on the days of their suspensions, and students involved in major offences may also lose the privilege in participating in off-campus activities and/or trips. The suspension will be documented in the Veracross system and kept in a student's file for the duration of their time at Graded. In addition, a behavior plan or contract may be written as a proactive measure to minimize recurring behavior offences.

In some cases, with the cooperation of the family, if a Behavior Plan is not adhered to, or if the infraction merits, a student may be issued a reverse suspension. Unlike an out-of-school suspension, a reverse suspension requires that a student come to school accompanied by a parent who stays with them all day, through classes, lunch and any other activities. At the end of a reverse suspension, the Principal or Assistant Principal, student, parent, advisor, and counselor, review and reflect on the day, debrief the student's infractions and set a plan for improvement, generally as an extension to a Behavior Plan or the beginning of a Behavior Contract.

In some cases, if the infraction is of a serious enough nature, or if students do not comply with the terms of a Behavior Contract, it may raise the question of whether or not a student may remain part of the Graded Community. In these cases, the Principal makes a recommendation to the Superintendent, who makes a final decision on continued enrollment in the School.

Those students who apply to transfer to new schools during their time in the Lower School should note that in some cases, if requested, we may be required to disclose and report major behavioral offences.

Students are expected to act in accordance with prevailing local laws at all times. The possession of illegal drugs, the possession of a weapon or the use of a weapon, or other more serious offences will raise the question of whether or not the student may remain part of the Graded community.



## Harassment and Bullying Statement

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school, and is against Brazilian law. Reports of harassment or bullying will be investigated by the principal, assistant principal, and/or school counselors. They will determine if the situation will be treated as a Minor Offence or a Major Offence as outlined in the previous section and respond accordingly.

**At Graded, you have the right to be free from bullying, labeling, harassment and hurtful behavior.** Our community does not tolerate students being oppressed, frightened or harassed by another member of our community. **All students are required to report any incident they witness of these behaviors.** Hurtful bystanders, those who instigate, passively accept, encourage or join, are considered participants. Witnessing and not reporting, also defines a participant. It is the responsibility of every member of the Graded community to prevent these behaviours.

### Definition of Harassment and Bullying

Harassment and bullying at the Graded School is defined as any type of verbal, physical, or psychological abuse or intimidation against another student, which is repeated and purposeful (intentional). The underlying purpose of this type of behavior is always to humiliate, hurt, or distress someone else. A bullied person is one who is repeatedly exposed to negative action by one or more persons. Harassment and bullying can include, but it is not necessarily limited to the following categories and specific behaviors in person, online, or on the phone: verbal bullying, threatening, social exclusion, physical bullying, cyberbullying, vandalism, extortion or theft.

#### Verbal harassment and bullying:

- Name-calling, teasing, insulting, calling someone pejorative nicknames
- Making fun of or being disrespectful of another person. For example, physical characteristics, nationality, religion, color, size, sexual orientation, physical disabilities, family structures (i.e., divorce), economic means, ability to learn, athletic ability, etc..
- Using inappropriate language
- Spreading lies or rumors about a person
- Laughing at another's misfortune
- Inciting others to fight or bully someone in any way
- Putting people down
- Mocking someone
- Sexually harassing someone

#### Threatening:

- Saying that someone will be hurt if they do not comply with the bully's requests
- Using antagonistic language towards someone (i.e., saying things like, "I don't like the way you're looking at me!")

#### Social Exclusion:

- Not allowing someone to play with, participate, or work with you in your group (including online groups)

- Forming a circle or group on the playground or the hallways so that another person cannot join
- Speaking with a group so that one person is purposely excluded either because of the language or the slang being used by the group
- Ignoring a person to purposely isolate or exclude them
- A group pressuring others to isolate someone or exclude them as a friend
- Refusing to allow someone her or his place in a line, on a bus, or at a cafeteria table

### **Physical Harassment and Bullying:**

- Pushing or shoving someone, hitting someone, poking or jabbing someone with hands or fingers or objects such as a pencils or sticks
- Grabbing someone's clothes (i.e. taking off someone's hat and throwing it down or giving it to someone else or grabbing a person's clothes with the intent to tear them)
- Fighting

### **Cyberbullying:**

- Any bullying, as outlined in this policy, through online means (using any application, tool or forum through the world wide web)
- Tampering with someone else's electronic files, photos, or personal data
- Disparaging, embarrassing, intimidating, insulting, humiliating, hurting, or threatening someone through online means, including sending text messages or on messaging services (i.e., Whatsapp)
- Publicly humiliating someone online (i.e., Facebook, Whatsapp, Snapchat, sharing inappropriate pictures, etc.)

### **Vandalism:**

- Damaging someone's books, locker, or personal items
- Breaking someone's pencils, pens or art supplies
- Writing on someone's notebook or binder
- Digital vandalism (i.e., adding something to another student's computer without the owner's permission)
- Writing derogatory graffiti

### **Extortion or Theft:**

- Taking someone's money
- Taking or hiding something that belongs to someone else (i.e., books, laptops, ipads, etc.)

### **REFERENCE: Brazilian Law**

Brazilian law prevents and combats against systematic oppression and intimidation, known as bullying. The law aims to promote citizenship, empathy and a culture of peace and mutual tolerance. It outlines the duty of educational institutions to train their communities, including teachers, students and parents, to discuss, create awareness of and prevent bullying. It also calls for schools to establish codes of conduct and guidance for students and families, which include how to identify bullying, its victims and perpetrators. It promotes a rehabilitative approach to the education of bullying offenders. (Lei nº 13.185/2015)

## Reporting Incidents of Harassment or Bullying

Suspected incidents of harassment or bullying can be reported to any adult at the school. Common individuals that students and/or parents report harassment or bullying to include: their classroom teacher, the school counselors, and the principal/associate principal. Your report will initiate an investigation which, in most cases, will be completed within a week. Reporters will be informed of the outcome of the investigation and the school will work with you to decide next steps to help address the issue.

## Lower School Dress Code

As part of an inclusive community that cherishes both multiculturalism and individualism aiming to foster a collaborative and respectful environment for all, students are encouraged to feel comfortable in their attire. Students should feel free to express themselves while also being mindful of others and their cultures. Each student comes with a set of cultural and individual values that shape how they choose to present themselves.

Clothing items that are prohibited are those that include: pejoratives (e.g. sexist, homophobic, racist, other derogatory language), clear sexual overtones, and the promotion of underage alcohol and drug consumption. Infractions will result in either covering the piece of clothing, turning it inside-out, or requiring the student to wear Graded Athletic apparel on top.

Graded respects students' choices on how to dress and faculty will only orient students with regards to inappropriate clothing if there is clear violation of the infractions above or the clothing presents a safety concern (e.g. open-toed shoes when conducting science labs). In a situation where a faculty member is concerned about the way a student is dressing, the faculty member may approach the student in a discreet way or they can approach a counselor or selected faculty member who will initiate a conversation with the student. Students who repeatedly violate the infractions above will be asked to meet with the assistant principal.

Repeated infractions will result in a disciplinary response and meeting with parents.

## Physical Education Clothing

Loose-fitting, comfortable clothing and running shoes are required for physical education classes. Jeans or dresses are not considered suitable. Students and parents will receive their schedule of physical education classes at the beginning of the school year.

## Graded's Language Statement

The Graded community is a dynamic pluricultural environment. Language is the key component of cultural understanding. We are **an American school serving an international community that instills excellence and empowers students to succeed in a global society.** To this end, our language philosophy and aims are as follows:

## Philosophy

We believe that language is the primary means of communication, and its acquisition is a lifelong process and a central component of intellectual and personal growth. Proficiency in one language is transferable to other languages, and aids the student in acquiring competence in other curricular areas. In addition, there are definite cognitive benefits to learning other languages.

As an expression of culture and identity, the continued development of the home language(s) is critical. Language learning promotes internationalism and cross-cultural understanding and must be fostered in all aspects of the school community.

All teachers strive to recognize the language needs of all students and work to serve these needs within the context of their subject areas, and outside the classroom as well.

## Aims

Our Language Program not only empowers students to develop proficiency in speaking, listening, reading and writing, but also [connects with other disciplines](#), and is crucial in developing intercultural competence and active global citizenry. Students engage in purposeful and collaborative communicative and academic activities that provide insight into their own heritage, and increase their awareness into the identities of others. In our program they learn to respect and embrace differences within an international community of learners. As students learn to [communicate and interact with cultural competence](#), they are able to participate in plurilingual communities locally and globally.

## Languages Offered at Graded in Lower School

Throughout grades PK-12, all students study English language and literature; students also study Portuguese language and literature. All classes except Portuguese language classes and Brazilian Social Studies are taught in English. Portuguese is taught either as a first or additional language.

In class we speak the target language (English in an English-medium class, Portuguese in a Portuguese- medium class).

In our public spaces we recognize the social importance, educational value and comfort of people speaking their 'mother tongue'. Thus, in our halls we may hear an array of different languages. In Lower School homeroom and specials classes our group interactions are in English as it is the language of inclusion at Graded.

## Academic Integrity

Graded aims to develop "engaged ethical citizens" who use information ethically and value the work of others. Academic Honesty means to be trustworthy (display integrity) and responsibility in all academic work, creating and expressing your own ideas and acknowledging the intellectual contributions of others. Graded believes that the wellbeing of our community depends on creating a trusting, caring and kind environment that values each individual's honest contributions. Academic Honesty is a fundamental aspect of responsibility, which is part of our Core Values.

## **Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:**

- Cheating: Cheating may involve:
  - *giving* unauthorized assistance to another student (collaborating when it's not authorized) or an adult (such as a tutor or family member) without acknowledging their assistance.
  - *receiving* unauthorized assistance from another student or an adult (such as a tutor or family member) without acknowledging their assistance;
  - giving or receiving unauthorized materials during an assessment;
  - copying parts of or an entire assignment or assessment; and
  - use of internet translators as a substitute for a student's own work in language study.
- Fabrication (making things up; lying): intentionally making up data, information, documents, research or forging signatures.
- Facilitating academic dishonesty (collusion): intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another engage in academic dishonesty. This includes telling peers what will appear on tests and quizzes in advance.
- Plagiarism: representing another person's ideas, "facts" or original work without giving proper credit (e.g. citations, footnotes, endnotes). This includes handing in assignments or coursework which has been downloaded in full or in part from the Internet, or used for another current or previous class.
- Other actions of academic dishonesty not listed above, as determined by a teacher and administrator.

## **Consequences of academic dishonesty**

- The student will have a conference with the administrator/counselor, teacher, and student in order to learn from their poor choices. The primary purpose of the conference is to understand the importance of integrity, how to properly value the intellectual property of others, and understand the consequences of their actions. The conference will also serve as a warning. Parents will be notified.
- The student will be required to complete another assignment under supervised conditions within a new timeline set by the teacher.
- All extracurricular involvement may be suspended until the assignment is completed.
- A note with details of the incident will be placed in the student's official file on Veracross. This will allow the school to track repeated offences.

## **Further disciplinary consequences:**

If a student commits academic dishonesty for a second time further disciplinary consequences will be applied (as per the division's disciplinary policy), and can include:

- Further conference with the parents and Assistant Principal or Principal.
- A Behavior Plan may be collaboratively developed.
- A note will be placed on the student's official file on Veracross. This forms part of a student's official record.
- The student may serve an internal or external suspension.
- For repeated offences, a Behavior Contract will be put in place.

# Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Rights and Responsibilities

## School Devices

All Lower School students are able to use school provided devices (iPads, laptops, cameras). Most of our school resources are accessed online.

## Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The following guidelines are intended to help Lower School students understand appropriate use of all Information and Communication Technology at Graded, both school and student owned. The primary use of ICT resources is to further the educational goals of the school.

### Using ICT in the Lower School

- Computers are only to be used for educational purposes as directed by teachers in classroom settings. Non-educational gaming is not allowed during class.
- Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy school technology equipment or materials, the data of another user, or any of the institutions, or other networks that are connected to the internet is prohibited.
- All data created within the school domain and on associated online spaces is governed by the core values and educational expectations of Graded School. There are occasions when a member of the technology staff may need to access data for security or maintenance reasons.
- Students should not play video games in the hallways between classes.

## LARK Guidelines

The following LARK guidelines are designed to provide users with an ethical framework to use digital tools in a way that supports their learning.

### Legal (Respect and protect intellectual properties)

- Use only legally acquired software, music and other media.
- Get permission to record and publish images or video of others.
- Use only accounts that have been created by you or for your use and follow the guidelines in the user agreement.
- Abide by copyright laws and “fair use” when using text, images, audio or video and credit is given to all sources.
- Use parenthetical citation and cite sources to create authentic work and avoid plagiarism.
- Use Creative Commons licensed media instead of copyrighted media where possible.

### Appropriate (Digital footprint)

- Access media that is focused on learning and is fitting for the academic environment.
- Create content that demonstrates learning, and contributes positively to your digital footprint.

- Communicate in collaborative online spaces in a way that represents yourself and the school in a positive manner and respects others.

### **Responsible (Protect yourself and others)**

- Keep personal accounts and passwords private and secure.
- Share only personal information, images and materials that do not put you at risk.
- Find an appropriate way to identify yourself, depending on the situation, when creating content, communicating and collaborating.
- Use cell phones for educational purposes when requested by teachers.

### **Kind (Respect yourself and others)**

- Respect others when sharing and collaborating in online spaces using electronic devices so as not to engage in *bullying behavior*.

## **Online Publication and Student Authorship**

We are committed to protecting the privacy of students and families while still providing opportunities for global sharing and collaboration. Students and teachers will be sharing work in a variety of online spaces. They are expected to treat these spaces as they would a classroom environment, and to act safely by keeping personal information private.

Images or videos of students, or their work, may be used on the school website and on other online platforms, as well as in print media, including teaching and school promotional materials. If parents have concerns about their children's images or work appearing in online spaces, please contact the appropriate division principal.

## **Mobile Phone Use**

Graded values the development of interpersonal communication. Deliberate skills are taught across subjects, taking into account multiple modes and mediums. However, research today points to the adverse effects of mobile phone technology on education. Lower school-aged students do not have the maturity, understanding, and self-control to utilize these devices in moderation, and always appropriately. While students can perform many of the same functions on laptop computers that they can perform on mobile phones, the portability of these devices makes them an impediment and distraction to learning. Research points to academic gains when these devices are removed. Both research, as well as on-the-ground experience of diverse schools, reveals that removing mobile phone devices during the school day also reduces cyberbullying incidents and disciplinary infractions, while encouraging more play and personal interactions.

Therefore, the use of mobile phones and other personal technology, is prohibited in the Lower School between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:05 p.m. Such devices should remain out of sight, stored in cubbies, and turned off during these hours. The only exception is when a teacher requests the use of these devices for instructional purposes. Violations of this prohibition will result in:

- 1st offence: Reminder and confiscation of the device until the end of the school day.
- 2nd and further offences: Confiscation of the device until the end of the school day. A parent or guardian (not a driver) must pick up the device from the Lower



School Office.

If students need to make a phone call, they can do so from the office.

Furthermore, use of audio/video recording devices is particularly prohibited without the express consent of the teacher or administrator. A violation of this prohibition may be considered a serious infraction causing students to face disciplinary consequences as identified in our disciplinary policies. Students and parents should also be aware that a secret audio or video recording (recording of individual without his/her knowledge) is against the law Brazil and in many countries.

## **Parent Volunteers**

At Graded we value and appreciate all the time parents commit to helping out in classrooms. Parent involvement in school is one indicator of positive school climate and we all realize the importance of taking an active part in education both at home and at school. To ensure the volunteer experience is positive for everyone involved we ask parent volunteers to:

- be a positive adult role model within the school
- practice confidentiality at all times; leave information you have learned about students and staff members in the classroom
- ask for clarification if you are unclear of instructions or directions the teacher has given
- talk to the teacher if you see a problem in the classroom; if the problem remains unresolved, speak to an administrator
- call in advance, if at all possible, if you are unable to keep a prior commitment
- understand that your support is voluntary, non-paid, and you are not a contracted employee of the school

Thank you for considering being a parent volunteer. Education is a cooperative effort and your assistance is greatly valued and appreciated.

## **Parent Teacher Association (P.T.A.)**

Parents are encouraged to attend all P.T.A. coffees and social events. Please watch for the date and time in the school calendar or the PTA Facebook page. These meetings are designed to update parents on all events taking place in school. This is a good time to clarify any questions and contribute suggestions on school-wide endeavors.

## **Parent Code of Conduct**

At Graded, we are committed to building and maintaining a positive school-home partnership. A strong relationship is based on respect and mutual understanding and is necessary to ensure the success and wellbeing of our students.

As a Graded Parent, I commit to:

- recognizing that the education of children is the joint responsibility of the parents and the Graded school community;

- supporting the respectful ethos of the school by setting a good example in my own speech and behavior towards all members of the Graded community;
- working together with teachers for the benefit of children, including approaching the school to resolve any issues of concern and to discuss and clarify specific events in order to bring about a positive solution;
- following Graded's protocol to resolving issues: speaking to the teacher first, if unresolved, then the Principal, and if further unresolved, then to the Superintendent;
- reinforcing and supporting the school's **code of conduct** for students;
- not engaging in disruptive behavior which interferes with the operation of a classroom, an office area or any other part of the school grounds;
- building positive relationships with teachers, other parents and my children's friends; and
- not using any form of communication, including e-mails, phone or social network messaging in an abusive, threatening, malicious or inflammatory manner regarding any member of the Graded Community.

### **Parent Code of Conduct in Portuguese: Acordo de Parceria com Pais**

Na Escola Graduada, somos comprometidos em construir e manter uma parceria positiva entre escola e família. Uma relação forte é baseada no respeito e no entendimento mútuo, e é necessária para garantir o sucesso e o bem-estar dos alunos.

Como pai/mãe/responsável da Escola Graduada, comprometo-me a :

- Reconhecer que a educação das crianças é uma responsabilidade conjunta dos pais e da comunidade da Escola Graduada;
- Apoiar o *ethos* da escola, dando um bom exemplo por minhas palavras e ações, em relação a todos os membros da comunidade Graduada;
- Trabalhar juntamente com os professores, em prol das crianças, inclusive procurando a escola para resolver qualquer preocupação e para discutir e esclarecer determinados acontecimentos, a fim de encontrar uma solução positiva;
- Seguir o protocolo da escola para resolver problemas: falar com o professor primeiro; se não for resolvido, falar com o Diretor do Segmento; caso ainda não tenha tido solução, procurar o Superintendente;
- Reforçar e apoiar o **código de conduta** da escola para os alunos;
- Não me envolver em comportamentos disruptivos que interfiram em alguma sala de aula, ou qualquer outra área de funcionamento da escola;
- Construir relacionamentos positivos com professores, outros pais e amigos de meus filhos;
- Não utilizar nenhuma forma de comunicação em tom abusivo, ameaçador, malicioso ou inflamado, incluindo mensagens por emails, telefone ou rede social, em relação a qualquer membro da Comunidade Graduada.

## **Communication**

Graded makes a great effort to include parents, students and our larger community in discussions concerning school issues involving our greater community. Through clear and open communication by both parents and school staff we can ensure that all students have the best educational experience possible.

Graded families should ensure their Veracross account is updated regularly with the most update e-mail and contact information.

There are a number of ways the school will communicate with parents. These include, but are not restricted to:

### **Electronic Communications**

- **Email Correspondence:** Parents should provide an email address to the school by updating their Veracross account. We aim to respond to emails within 24 hours.
- **Website:** The school's website is [www.graded.br](http://www.graded.br).
- **Graded Gazette:** The school newsletter is called the Graded Gazette. The Gazette is distributed electronically monthly.
- **Grade Level Blogs:** Each grade level has a blog that provides regular curricular updates, along with suggestions for supporting student learning.
- **Emergencies:** The school website will provide up-to-date information in the case of very rare school closings due to emergencies.

### **In-person communication**

- **Open House:** Early in the school year parents are invited to an evening meeting to meet their child's teachers and to learn more about the program.
- **Parent/Teacher Meetings:** Teachers may contact parents to discuss student progress. Parents are also welcome to request a meeting with the teacher at any time. Please be sure to email in advance to ensure the teacher has an appropriate time to set the meeting.
- **Student Led Conferences:** Student Led Conferences take place at the completion of the first and second trimester. Teachers are available during the conferences.
- **Parent Coffees:** Periodically, parents are invited to attend meetings with the Principal or other school members to receive updates on the program and to share questions and concerns. Meetings are also conducted by the PTA and often involve guest speakers. For detailed times and locations, please consult the school calendar.
- **Open door policy:** Please know the school community is welcome to come by the Lower School Office anytime. As the office is an active place, arranging an appointment prior to visiting may reduce waiting time.

### **Telephone and Cell Phone Communication:**

- **Telephone and Cell Phones Use:** Lower School students may not use cell phones to send or receive calls or messages during the school day. Unless prearranged with the teacher, cell phones should be turned off. Should the need to make a phone call become necessary, the phone in the Lower School office is available for student use. If students bring a mobile phone to school it must be kept in their bags during the school day. The school is not responsible for any personal devices should they go missing.

### **Addressing Concerns**

If a parent or student has a concern, they should work proactively to address and resolve issues. They should follow Graded's protocol to resolving issues: speaking to the

teacher first, if unresolved, then the Principal, and if further unresolved, then to the Superintendent.

### **Families Addressing Concerns**

In the Lower School, we believe in working in partnership with families to resolve issues quickly and proactively. Families are *highly encouraged* to contact the relevant teachers and counselors about any issues, then, if necessary, the Principal. As we teach our students to be self-advocates, we want adult communication to serve as an example for our students.

We always encourage and expect constructive feedback from parents. We have an open door policy and welcome parents to speak to the Administration about their concerns. Although, when the conversation veers away from being constructive and solution-focused (e.g., using Whatsapp messages, emails, or public conversations etc., to complain, defame, or speak ill of individuals or the school without talking to the school or the individual directly), those involved will be asked to speak with the Principal to review the Parent Code of Conduct. We aim to model what we teach our students.

## **Assessment for Learning**

Graded School recognizes that teaching, learning and assessment are deeply linked. Students and teachers work in partnership to enable students to demonstrate what they have learned, assess their progress and identify specific strategies to maximize their potential on their class assessment to demonstrate learning.

We are guided by the following:

- We believe that assessment is effective when it is appropriate, engaging, and targeted at standards.
- Assessment can be diagnostic, formative, or summative and each type of assessment serves a different purpose.
- Assessment should be well-structured and differentiated, often requiring collaboration amongst different learners.
- Meaningful assessment requires a variety of tools, including informal checks in class, observation and student dialogue, formal quizzes and tests, academic prompts, and open-ended assessment tasks.
- Quality assessment is authentic and transparent, providing students with a fair and attainable venue to proudly exhibit what they have learned.
- Assessments provide feedback to students so that they can understand their current level of achievement and take responsibility for their own learning.

## **Types of Assessment**

### **Formative Assessments**

Formative assessments...

- are formal and informal processes or assignments that help students acquire the knowledge and skills outlined in the learning objectives;
- prepare students for summative assessments;
- provide evidence of progress toward the stated learning objectives and/or

standards;

- encourage intellectual risk-taking where students understand that mistakes are part of the learning process; and
- will provide sufficient descriptive feedback to allow students to effectively predict their summative grade.

Teachers will...

- ensure that students and parents know which assessments are for practice (formative assessment) and which will count toward the final grade (summative assessment).
- consider performance on work intended for practice (formative assessment) in the final grade only if it provides extra opportunity to show evidence of proficiency.
- provide descriptive feedback on formative assessments. If the formative assessment is scored, they will provide a score using a rubric with descriptors in order to give students a clear understanding of where they are at. (in relation to the learning being assessed)

Feedback provide by teacher on assessments aims to be:

- **Timely:** It is provided when the student is in the learning process and there's still time for improvement.
- **Descriptive of the work:** It focuses on one or more strengths of the work and provides at least one suggestion for a next step.
- **Positive:** It shows how learning is a journey forward, and it's honest about both strengths to build on and weaknesses to improve.
- **Clear and specific:** It's specific enough so the student knows what to do next, and provides sufficient applicable and actionable feedback/information to act upon on the next assessment.
- **Differentiated:** It meets the needs of each student with respect to the current work. For some students, a reminder is all that's needed for a next step; others may need prompts or examples.

## Summative Assessments

Summative assessments are...

- assessments that provide evidence of student achievement and are used to evaluate student proficiency in the learning objectives at the end of a learning period.

Teachers will...

- ensure that students and parents know which assessments are for practice (formative assessment) and which will count toward the final grade (summative assessment).
- consider performance on summative assessments when determining grades.
- provide descriptive feedback on summative assessments.

## Descriptors of Achievement

The Graded School descriptors of achievement support students and parents in

understanding students' progress in developmentally appropriate structures. In the Lower School we have four progress indicators wherein achievement aligns to deepening levels of application, critical thinking and originality.

Grade	Descriptors
E	<b>Exceeds Benchmarks</b> - Within the classroom setting the student consistently and independently demonstrates understanding of the content and skills in original and insightful ways. Within the classroom setting, the student independently identifies opportunities for application.
M	<b>Meets Benchmarks</b> - The student meets grade-level benchmarks for the trimester. There are no major errors or omissions regarding any content and skills that were explicitly taught.
P	<b>Progressing Toward Benchmarks</b> - The student shows emerging mastery of the content and skills explicitly taught, but has not yet met grade-level benchmarks. The student needs time and support within a classroom setting, including additional instruction, to demonstrate understanding.
AC	<b>Area of Concern</b> - The student has difficulty applying the skills which should be secure at this point. Even with additional support and assistance, the student has not yet met grade-level benchmarks. This indicator requires additional monitoring and a support plan.

## Grade Reporting

### Purpose of Grades

All grading and reporting, as part of the school's overarching assessment philosophy, strives to be comprehensive, equitable, and transparent in the spirit of continuous improvement. The purpose of grading is to communicate achievement of academic standards and habits of learning to all stakeholders.

### Student Progress Reports

Parents are informed of their child's progress in a Student Progress Report sent 3 times each year: October, March and June. This report will include the following components:

- narrative comments from the teacher
- the current level of achievement for each subject area including Habits of a Learner
- a summary of attendance and tardies

Interim reports will be sent to advise specific parents mid-trimester if a student is not on target for meeting end of trimester benchmarks.

Please understand that these reports are not released early in order to give adequate time to assess the child.

## Grade Calculations

The grade for each trimester will be based on the **most consistent, most relevant, most recent data**. This system will give us much more accurate grades that reflect more clearly student achievement levels and also encourages students towards continuous growth.

## Habits of a Learner Descriptors

In the Lower School we value not only the academic achievement of each student, but also the development of healthy learning habits that will serve our students at lifelong learners. The learning habits below are evaluated and reported on the Student Progress Report each trimester.

Habits of a Learner	<u>Exceeding</u> 4	<u>Meeting</u> 3	<u>Progressing</u> 2	<u>Area of Concern</u> 1
<b>Inclusive:</b> Demonstrates respect for others and the community and works collaboratively with others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I consistently include others with the words and language that I use.</li> <li>- I always listen with an open mind to the opinions and ideas of others and ask thoughtful questions to understand their point of view.</li> <li>- I consistently show leadership during group work, ensuring teamwork and best efforts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I usually include others with the words and language that I use.</li> <li>- I usually listen with an open mind to the opinions and ideas of others and ask thoughtful questions to understand their point of view.</li> <li>- I typically show leadership during group work, ensuring teamwork and best efforts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am learning to include others by the words and language that I use.</li> <li>- I sometimes listen with an open mind to the opinions and ideas of others and sometimes ask thoughtful questions to better understand their point of view.</li> <li>- I am learning how to work in a group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I need support to include others by the words and language that I use.</li> <li>- I need support in listening to different opinions and asking thoughtful questions to understand another person's point of view.</li> <li>- I need assistance to work in a group.</li> </ul>
<b>Risk Taker:</b> Explores new ideas and exhibits perseverance when faced with challenges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I consistently stay on task when faced with challenging work.</li> <li>- I always look for multiple ways to accomplish a task and use my resources when I get stuck before asking for help.</li> <li>- I consistently try new experiences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I typically stay on task when faced with challenging work.</li> <li>- I usually look for multiple ways to accomplish a task and use my resources when I get stuck before asking for help.</li> <li>- I usually try new experiences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am learning to stay on task when faced with challenging work.</li> <li>- I sometimes look for multiple ways to accomplish a task and use my resources when I get stuck before asking for help.</li> <li>- I am learning to try new experiences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I need support to stay on task when faced with challenging work.</li> <li>- I need support to look for alternate ways to accomplish a task and use my resources.</li> <li>- I need assistance to try new experiences.</li> </ul>
<b>Curious:</b> Exhibits an active learning style which demonstrates a commitment to deepening their understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I consistently ask quality questions and seek out answers.</li> <li>- I consistently engage in thoughtful ways during classroom discussions and activities.</li> <li>- I consistently look for ways to take my learning beyond the classroom.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I typically ask quality questions and often seek out answers.</li> <li>- I typically engage in thoughtful ways during classroom discussions and activities.</li> <li>- I usually look for ways to take my learning beyond the classroom.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am learning to ask quality questions and seek out answers.</li> <li>- I am learning to engage in thoughtful ways during classroom discussions and activities.</li> <li>- I sometimes look for ways to take my learning beyond the classroom.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I need assistance in asking quality questions and seeking answers.</li> <li>- I need support to better engage in thoughtful ways during classroom discussions and activities.</li> <li>- I need support in finding ways to take my learning beyond the classroom.</li> </ul>



<b>Responsible:</b> Assumes responsibility for assignments, organizes self and materials, and successfully follows classroom routines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I consistently complete my assignments.</li> <li>- I consistently organize personal belongings and am prepared with materials for class.</li> <li>- I consistently follow classroom routines and rules independently.</li> <li>- I consistently arrive to class on time.</li> <li>- I always present work to the best of my ability.</li> <li>- I consistently and effectively manage my time.</li> <li>- I consistently move and interact positively throughout the school day.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I usually complete my assignments.</li> <li>- I typically organize personal belongings and am prepared with materials for class.</li> <li>- I usually follow classroom routines and rules.</li> <li>- I usually arrive to class on time.</li> <li>- I usually present work to the best of my ability.</li> <li>- I typically manage my time in productive ways.</li> <li>- I typically move and interact positively throughout the school day.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I sometimes my complete assignments.</li> <li>- I am learning to better organize my personal belongings and materials for class.</li> <li>- I sometimes follow classroom routines and rules.</li> <li>- I sometimes arrive to class on time.</li> <li>- I am learning to present work to the best of my ability.</li> <li>- I am learning to manage my own time in productive ways.</li> <li>- I am learning to move and interact positively throughout the school day.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I need support to complete my assignments.</li> <li>- I need support to better organize my personal belongings and materials for class.</li> <li>- I need reminders and prompts to follow classroom routines and rules.</li> <li>- I need assistance in arriving to class on time.</li> <li>- I need support with presenting work to the best of my ability.</li> <li>- I need support in knowing how to best manage my time.</li> <li>- I need support to move and interact positively throughout the school day.</li> </ul>
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## Promotion and Retention

In the Lower School we believe in the success of every child. Children are promoted to the next grade level with the successful completion of the current grade. If a child does not satisfactorily complete the academic work in his/her grade and does not indicate readiness for the next grade, the student may be considered for retention in the current grade level for the following year (in consultation with a group of teachers, parents, and other specialists as appropriate). Please note that students not meeting grade level requirements a second time during the Lower School years may be counseled to seek alternative school options.

## Recognizing Excellence

In the Lower School, we recognize achievement throughout the year, often highlighting excellent work, effort, or service within our classes. At the culmination of the Lower School years, we celebrate our fifth grade students with a ceremony. Students are eligible to receive the Presidential Gold and Silver Awards at this time.

## Wellness

### Strong Body – Strong Mind

The Graded cafeteria is administered by a certified dietitian. The school strives to present balanced and nutritious meals every day. Hot lunches are served with soup-and-sandwich alternatives available. Students are strongly encouraged to make healthy choices from our cafeteria and choose to eat healthy snacks. The adage “an apple a day keeps the doctor away” serves growing minds and bodies well. “You are what you eat” is not just a cliché. Students and adults alike are not recommended to eat junk food and consume carbonated soft drinks during the school day. The above, combined with enjoying the outdoors and engaging in mild exercise at breaks (in appropriate locations) is important to promote good health.



## **Water**

Drinking water comes from a well on the site which is periodically analyzed for purity. There are numerous water stations around campus. Students are expected to bring a water bottle for daily use. We encourage water conservation at all grade levels due to the limited reserves in Sao Paulo.

## **Health Services**

The school aims to provide an environment conducive to the promotion and maintenance of good health. Full-time nurses are available and care is provided for students who become ill, are injured, or need treatment and/or medications during the school day. The school nurses also serve as a resource for health-related issues for students, families, and the classroom.

### **Illness or Injuries at School**

The school's nurse's office is equipped to provide immediate first aid and to treat minor injuries. All students that visit the nurse's office are required to "sign-in" through the Health Kiosk upon their arrival. Nurses will assist as necessary. Following the evaluation of the student's symptoms and/or complaints, the nurses will record the treatment actions taken and an automatic veracross notification will be sent to parents. The school nurses will not contact parents by telephone for minor cuts, scrapes, bruises, or complaints.

In the event of illness or accident requiring further medical treatment, parents will be notified. The nurse will call the home, office and/or emergency telephone numbers listed in the student's file. Parents, or their appointed guardians, will be asked to collect their child at school and arrange for medical treatment. In the event of a serious accident requiring immediate, life-saving measures, appropriate ambulance services will be summoned.

### **Medication**

If a student needs to receive medication while at school, please provide the nurse's office with a copy of the prescription. Nurse's may not give students medication without a note from the doctor. No student is allowed to self-medicate and all medicines must be taken under the direction of the school nursing staff. Please contact the nurse's office for further questions.

### **Immunization**

Students are expected to have followed a routine and customary schedule of immunizations throughout their early childhood and later years. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that their child's immunization record is up-to-date. The school requires a copy of each student's vaccination record.

## **Facilities Policies and Procedures**

The Graded community is fortunate to have a variety of facilities and space. The information below is to help us understand how we can safely enjoy the facilities our school has to offer.

## Regulations for Use of Campus Facilities

- Students on campus outside school hours must be under direct adult supervision.
- Use of campus facilities must be approved in advance by the Activities Director.
- Outside school hours, participants and spectators must remain in/near the event area.
- Climbing on trees, gates, walls, towers and roofs is prohibited.
- Smoking and alcoholic beverages are not permitted on campus.
- Pets are not allowed on campus.
- All wheels (bicycles, roller blades, skateboards, etc.) are only permitted with permission of an administrator.
- Safe and proper use of facilities and equipment is expected.
- All community members have the responsibility to keep the campus clean.

## Athletic Facilities

Graded has an extensive sports complex, including a gymnasium, a covered court, a lighted track and field, and weight room. These facilities are used for physical education classes, inter-scholastic sports, and certain Graded community events on weekends.

## School Store

School items such as pens, pencils, paper, notebooks, folders, etc., may be purchased with a student card or cash at the school store which is open during school hours.

## Snack Bar

The snack bar (Paneira) is run by an outside vendor ([GRSA](#)) and is open from 07:30 until 17:00. It however closes during regular lunch hours from 11:00 to 11:45. LS students are permitted to go only with parent supervision. The snack bar is staffed by three people, two sales and a nutritionist.

## Personal Effects

Graded is a warm and welcoming community. It is also a large community with many people coming and going. It is important to treat all belongings with care.

## Cubbies

Students have cubbies to store their personal belongings during the school day. Students are responsible for their own cubbie and are to treat it with respect and a keen eye for organization. Cubbies are the property of the school, and assignment to individuals does not indicate a transfer of ownership. As property of the school, they are subject to inspection at any time deemed appropriate by the school administration. *Students should never open another student's cubbie.*

## Valuables

All personal belongings and articles of clothing brought to school are the students' responsibility. It is unwise for students to bring considerable amounts of money or valuable equipment such as cameras, music devices, electronics or other personally valuable items to school. The school is unable to accept liability for lost articles.

## Lost & Found

The Lost and Found area is located just outside the Lower School office. Parents and students may check this area for missing items. Sometimes lost items are turned in at the security offices. Any missing items not claimed after a reasonable period of time will be donated to a local community organizations in need of clothing and school supplies.

## Safety and Emergency Drills

Emergency drills at regular intervals are required by law and are an important safety precaution. Students, and any parents on campus, must quietly evacuate the building under the supervision of the faculty. Students at lunch should exit the cafeteria and move to the Lower School Playground, where they must report to their pre-assigned place on the field with their homeroom teacher. Detailed emergency procedures are in the classrooms, offices and other areas of the school.

## School Visitors

All adult visitors must check in at the main entrance. Permission to bring a student guest to the school must be sought in advance from the Lower School Office. Depending on the circumstances, visiting students may be granted permission to attend school for one day. Any visiting student is expected to follow all the school rules and the host parent is responsible for the behavior of the guest.

## Bus Transportation

Transportation is outsourced and optional. Spaces are dependent on availability and pick-up and drop-off routes are predetermined. 27 routes deliver students to school at 8:00 and return students to their homes in the afternoon, leaving school at 15:15. Buses leave school at 16:15 and four buses leave school at 18:00 to transport those who participate in after-school activities. The 16:15 and 18:00 buses follow predetermined routes and do not drop students at their doors, but usually within a 10-block radius of their home.

When a student is not paying the regular bus fee and he/she is involved in after-school activities, the single return trip will cost 30% of a single trip on a daily basis with 60 days per quarter. Special bus passes must be issued. When a student is paying the normal bus fee, the after-school activities bus is free.

A signed note must be sent to the transportation supervisor's office BEFORE 9:00 by the parent of a student wanting to: 1) take a bus other than his/her own, 2) get off the bus at a stop other than his/her regular stop, or 3) leave the school by private car. Any such requests received after 12:00 pm cannot be attended. A permanent authorization can be signed by parents of Lower School students to authorize the use of the 16:15 bus on a regular basis, but this does not cover taking a different bus or going to a friend's house. If you are not sure about bus arrangements and permissions needed please contact our transportation department.

The bus drivers are screened and licensed and the bus monitors are responsible for the conduct of the students and rule enforcement in addition to the safe navigation of the bus in the traffic. Students who do not behave properly are a safety hazard to all who ride the bus and can lose the privilege of school bus transportation for varying lengths of time, depending on the seriousness of the infraction. School rules apply to buses.

Students not receiving after-school help or not in an after-school activity should take the 15:15 bus.

## **Car Pick Up**

Students traveling by car are authorized for pick-up and drop-off at the lower car gate on Av. Jose Galante only. Students are supervised at this gate and student exit is monitored. Lower School students are not supervised at any other gates. Students with siblings in Upper School may sometimes choose to exit at another gate. If so, parents are asked to notify the Lower School Office and the child's homeroom teacher. Additionally, we ask parents to speak with their children to assure compliance with the school's behavioral expectations when using unsupervised exits.

## **Check Out Procedures**

Any student leaving Graded must be properly checked out prior to departure from school. The check-out process is initiated by written parent notification to the Admissions Office. No student will be officially checked out until all school obligations have been cleared, including return of school resources (such as texts and library materials). Request for official transcripts and school records will not be honored until a student has been officially cleared by the Business Office. Copies of unofficial transcripts may be available earlier.