



THE AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
S A L Z B U R G A U S T R I A

Important Information for New Students
2011-2012

The administration, staff, and teaching faculty of the American International School-Salzburg would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to our school and provide you with some important preliminary information which should help you in your preparation for arrival at the school and the start of the academic work in September. We are excited to be given the chance to work with you and hope that you are prepared for an exciting, challenging, and rewarding school year here in Salzburg, Austria.

Right now, you are probably full of questions and concerns about starting a new school year in a new environment and (in most cases) in a foreign country. In an effort to direct your thinking towards what we consider to be important or fundamental considerations, this letter is a listing of major points which should provide some concreteness to your planning and allow you to focus on your academic and social success at our school as soon as possible upon arrival. After reading this material, please contact our office staff or particular administrators with further questions or concerns.

What to Bring/Dormitory Rooms

You should receive a form with a list of items that you should bring with you, items you are encouraged to bring but are not required, and a list of items that are not to be brought into the dormitories. Please read this carefully and check with us if you are uncertain of anything. Of great importance is not to bring too much. A limited amount of space in closets and chests of drawers in the individual rooms which must be shared with roommates. At the start of the year, any superfluous items which do not fit in the standard storage space of the rooms will be placed in storage upstairs. Skis, snowboards, skateboards, rollerblades, golf clubs, and other such items are never to be stored in the dormitory rooms. Please also note that desktop computer systems are not allowed and laptop computers are encouraged.

All of the dormitory rooms have separate bathroom with shower and the school cleaning staff cleans the rooms weekly and changes the bedclothes regularly. However, the primary responsibility for maintaining a tidy room rests on the students themselves and we feel that this is an important aspect of life in a boarding school. Daily, there are a certain number of things which are to be taken care of for a room to meet expectations upon inspection. These include general neatness and tidiness, turning off electronics, airing out the room by kipping the window, locking the door upon departure, etc. Each morning and evening before study hall, the rooms are checked by the administration and staff and once a month a major inspection of the rooms occurs. Rooms which do not meet expectations and standards are noted and the inhabitants restricted to campus for a period of time. The rooms are also inspected for any damage or vandalism to any of the furnishings or structures and compared with digital photographs taken at the start of the year in September. A student who is responsible for the damage will be called upon to pay for the replacement or repair immediately and the parents informed. Should no student claim responsibility for damage to a particular room or its furnishings, all inhabitants of the room will be charged equally.

One aspect of student life in dormitories which has become more and more problematic has been the increasing number of electronic items which require recharging or a constant electricity source. Please note that each room has a limited number of electrical outlets and no room is to have more than one three-plug extension cord. For most of the dormitory rooms, this means that there will be four or five plugs available. Please also note that only electrical appliances which work on 210 volts can be utilized in the dormitories. Items that cook, heat, or boil water are not permitted in the dormitories for safety reasons.

Attendance Policy

Attendance policies at American schools are generally different from most other systems and need to be thoroughly understood by all students transferring in beforehand. High-school courses at an American school are passed by achieving a passing average grade which includes three trimester grades and a final examination score. If this final grade average is above 60%, then academic credit is awarded to the student for this course. To receive the school diploma, a specific number of academic credits in required and elective courses must be gained by the end of the 12th grade. This being the case, attendance in courses becomes an important aspect of the grading and credit awarding. In an American high school, there is no possibility, for example, to resit an examination and pass the course if the final grade is failing. The entire course with up to 160 periods of instruction must be completed.

Promotion and graduation from the school are dependent upon each and every student meeting three requirements: passing grades in all courses; a positive conduct record; and at least 80% attendance in all periods held in all courses. Any student who is absent—for any reason—more than 20% of the school year in a particular course, automatically fails the course. The calculation of this attendance average includes all forms of absences including absences from instruction for school sports, medical appointments, tardies, and unexcused absences. If a student has enough absences in one or more courses so that it becomes impossible for them to complete the course with 80% attendance, they are released from the course with a failing grade and do not receive credit. This policy is very important and such things as early departures or late returns before vacation periods can have a dramatic affect on a student's ability to gain credit and the school diploma.

Unexcused absences from classes are not tolerated at AIS-Salzburg and result in disciplinary consequences as well as threaten a student's minimum attendance requirement. All parents of new students are encouraged now to make travel plans so that no instructional time is compromised or lost to avoid conflict in this area. The school dormitories are always open several days for departures after instruction ends and open several days before instruction begins again. The school administration will not make allowances for flight schedules, family plans which conflict with instructional time, or holidays which fall during classtime.

PowerSchool®

The PowerSchool® student information program is an online school program which is accessible to all members of the school community including students and parents. Students and parents can log onto the PowerSchool® site with their unique login and password and may check attendance records, grades in all classes and electives, as well as read teacher commentary concerning academic progress and social status. At the start of the school year, login names and passwords will be sent to all students and parents. It is very advantageous for all students and parents to be up-to-date on these aspects of school life so that achievement can be maximized throughout the year. Please remember that all login names and passwords are private property and are not to be shared or communicated to others at any time. Students must maintain the security of their login name and password throughout the year and attempts to gain access to another student's data or restricted areas of the program result in being barred from use of the PowerSchool® program.

If you have any difficulties or problems accessing or understanding the PowerSchool® program data, please contact the school by telephone or E-mail. We would be glad to assist you in this important area.

Enrollment Forms and Agreements

Attached to this message, you should find a number of Enrollment forms. These need to be signed and submitted to the school office before the start of the school year and are of critical importance. Here is further clarification about these forms for your better understanding:

1. Arrival Form

The arrival form must be sent to the front office before the end of August so that the school staff is aware of when you will arrive and by what means. If your travel plans change at any time, please be certain to inform the school office staff of this so that we can be there at the airport or train station on time to pick you up there. Please provide us with as much information as possible including carrier, flight number, arrival time, date, etc.

2. Alcohol Permission Form

Although this form needs to be signed and turned in by all students, it only pertains to students who are over 17 years of age. Signing this form and agreeing to allow the student to have alcohol permission grants permission to consume one glass of beer or wine with a meal on a Friday or Saturday evening in a licensed restaurant. Any abuse of this permission results in a major disciplinary violation, possible suspension from the school, and significant consequences.

3. Attendance Policy Agreement Form

This form details the specific requirements in the area of attendance for all students. Signatures on these forms represent agreement with the school's policy and the willingness to support our attendance requirements at all times throughout the school year. Further information concerning the school's attendance policies can be found in the Parent and Student Handbook on pages 19 through 22.

4. Community Commitment Statement

This form, signed by both the parents and the student, demonstrates commitment to the school's rules and policies generally as outlined in the Parent and Student Handbook. In order to establish and maintain a community of learners which is based upon respect, consideration for others, appropriate behavior, and high goals, the handbook is provided and its rules are in place. All

students must agree to these terms at the start of the school year, demonstrating their commitment to and understanding of the school's expectations in all areas of student life.

5. Computer Use Policy and Form

Computers are an important part of most young peoples' lives. However, they are also a source of potential distraction and conflict with school goals and behavioral expectations. This policy states clearly that all computer use at AIS-Salzburg is guided by very specific rules which are to be taken seriously.

6. Contact Form

Throughout the school year, the school staff and personnel will frequently contact parents electronically. Of greatest importance, we send all final grades and transcripts by e-mail also. Therefore, please be certain that the e-mail contact address given on this form is up and functioning throughout the school year and is checked frequently. If you change your e-mail address at any time, please inform the school office immediately. It is often impossible to tell—from our end—if an e-mail message sent has actually been received. Therefore, if you do not receive report cards, for example, at the end of each trimester, please contact the office and we will revise our information or correct the problem right away. Finally, please be certain to provide us with correct emergency contact information where you can be reached at any time.

7. Damage Liability form

This form is required of all residents, signed both by the students and the parents. This statement specifies that liability in case of damage or vandalism to the dormitory rooms or their furnishings is held by the residents of the rooms and that charges are incurred through the student incidentals account. At any time, proof of damage and comparative photos from the start of the school year are available upon request in the case that a charge is levied.

8. Health form

All new students should have a physical examination before coming to AIS-Salzburg and the school health form should be signed by your family physician. Please be certain to accurately fill out the section on immunizations and allergies. Please also inform us of any ongoing condition that required treatment or medication or in any way restricts a student's participation in school activities. Please understand that all prescription medications must be turned in to the school nurse at the start of the school year and that only physicians here in Salzburg can prescribe medication to our students. Do not come to the school with a bag full of antibiotics and other prescription medications as these will be confiscated and only after a visit to a local physician will these be distributed if necessary. Also, everyone should understand that no one is to give another student medication in any case whatsoever. Only the school nurse is to make determinations such as this as only she is aware of the allergies and conditions of all the students. Any health considerations which are important for the school nurse to be aware of can be communicated to the school office at any time and throughout the school year.

9. Leaves to the City Form

If parent agreement and signature is given, boarding students are allowed to leave campus during free time provided they have met all expectations for the day (room clean, homework done, etc.). When away from the school, all students must remain in the city limits and be with at least one other person from the school. All school rules and policies that apply are in effect when our students are away from campus here in Salzburg.

10. Sports Permission Form

This form releases the school from liability for injuries which may be incurred during athletics games and practices, during physical education courses, and during free-time and weekend activities.

11. Summer Reading

This final form lists all required reading for students in certain high-school English classes over the summer vacation period. All of the texts are available online and can be downloaded for free. The teachers of these classes expect that this reading be completed and may test the students at the start of the school year. If you are not certain if your schedule contains one of these courses, please contact the front office for clarification.

Calendar

In the 2011/2012 school year, there will be two excursions (Fall and Winter) and a Spring Break of two weeks' length. Since the school year has been continuously lengthened over the past eight years, the administration and staff feel it necessary to provide for a break in the spring before the end-of-the-year pressure builds and examinations begin. The Spring Break this year

will be from March 31 through April 15, 2012. During this period, all students must depart the school and dormitories as of Saturday, April 1st at 12:00 and return to the school no later than Sunday, April 15th at 18:00. For clarity, boarders are checked out of the school at the start of the break by either their parents personally or by the school staff transferring them to the Salzburg Airport or train station. It is not acceptable or possible for a boarding student of any grade level to check out of the school's care and remain in Salzburg without parental supervision. Among other things, this violates the Austrian visa requirements and residency stipulations. Several reminders will be made during the school year in the Fall and Winter.

Security

Students resident at AIS-Salzburg should never keep valuables or large amounts of cash in their dormitory rooms or on their persons during their residency at the school. The school office has security safe boxes in which any student can place their valuables. These can only be opened by an office administrator and provide a great deal of security for documents, jewelry, and other items that are not safe in the dormitory rooms.

Students are also encouraged to bring a small, lockable box for the storage of items in their dormitory rooms. This should be small enough to fit in a desk or chest drawer.

Dormitory doors are to be locked at all times when no one is in the room. The cleaning staff will always lock rooms upon their departure, but it is the student's responsibility to keep their personal items and those of their roommates safe.

Finances

All students boarding at the school must have and maintain an incidentals account with our business office. This account is to be funded at 1,500 euro at the start of the school year and replenished as necessary throughout the year. Book fees, costs for activities, laundry fees, and other similar charges are deducted by the accountants regularly and statements of account are sent to the parents regularly throughout the school year.

Spending money can be organized through the school's accounting office and regularly distributed to the students at the start of each week. The school recommends that an amount between 25 and 50 euro per week is reasonable and should cover all personal needs of the students. Utilizing the incidentals account for payment of weekly pocket money is a good way to help ensure that money is not wasted and that the students learn to budget their spending money appropriately. Please also note that requests for larger amounts in cash from the incidentals account can only be released to a student with parental permission and communication (fax, e-mail, or direct telephone call). The school reserves the right to deny payment of any funds from incidentals accounts that are below zero.

Rooming

The administration will begin setting the rooming plan as of mid-August. Returning students who have been enrolled at AIS-Salzburg the longest have first choice for both rooms and roommates and then new students are added appropriately. As of October 1, residents may put in a request for a room change with the administration which will be considered only if every student involved in the change as well as their parents is in agreement.

Final Notes

I thank you for your consideration and agreement with the information above and invite you to contact the school office with questions or need for clarification. Although various administrators will be on vacation during the summer, the telephone, fax, and e-mail address will be staffed throughout. We look forward to a successful and challenging school year in 2011/2012 and seeing you this September.

Sincerely,

Paul McLean
Headmaster