



# **El Alsson American School-New Giza**



## **Guidance, Counseling and Student Services Handbook**



**EL ALSSON AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**  
**OUR VISION**  
**DEVELOPING SUCCESSFUL 21ST CENTURY CITIZENS**  
**OUR MISSION**

**Our students will think, create, contribute and take pride in themselves and society**

**WE AIM TO:**

- 1. Encourage students to be involved in their community.**
- 2. Challenge our students to think critically.**
- 3. Provide opportunities to connect learning to real life.**
- 4. Emphasize effective communication skills.**
- 5. Support personal and social development.**
- 6. Encourage students to work collaboratively.**
- 7. Appreciate all students as unique individuals.**
- 8. Inspire students to rise to challenges**

**Introduction**

The Guidance, Counseling and Student services department is an integral component of the



educational mission of the school. Guidance, Counseling and Student services department offer Guidance and Counseling services and Learning support services to promote the personal/social, educational, and career development of all students.

### **Who is who?**

Ms. Angie Shalaby: Head of Guidance and Student Services

Junior School Guidance and Student Services Staff:

Ms. Nadine Arafa: EC/ES School Counselor- ES Student Council Leader

Ms. Tamika Wilkes : EC/ES Head of Learning Support Services

Ms. Sahar Foda: Learning Support Teacher

Ms. Rania Mushtaha : Learning Support Teacher

Ms. Paula Girgis: Learning Support Teacher

Ms. Marianne Tawfik: Learning Support Teacher

Ms. Dalia Shawky: Learning Support Teacher

Senior School Guidance and Student Services Staff:

Ms. Ana Cubra: MS School Counselor

Ms. Dahlia Mostafa: MS Head of Learning Support Services

HS programs:- Mr. Ahmed Refaat: Service Learning Coordinator

Mr. Mostafa Hammad: Work Experience Coordinator

## **Guidance and Counseling services**

### **Philosophy and Beliefs**

As counselors we can impact each student and the learning process through the development and implementation of a comprehensive school counseling program. As an essential and integral part of the collaborative process in schools, El Alsson school counselors improve schools by enhancing student developmental needs and focusing on primary prevention. School counselors are a bridge between students, teachers, administrators and other stakeholders in fostering opportunities for academic, career, and personal/social development. We believe that given proper support based on data and research based best practices, all students can achieve at high levels according to their strengths and can maximize his or her potential, have equal access with dignity and support. We provide that support and advocate for every student.

### **Vision**

The vision for counselors in El Alsson is that the training, support, skills, and knowledge that they provide will assist all El Alsson students in acquiring the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to reach their fullest potential and successfully manage their lives as healthy, responsible, competent and productive citizens who respect themselves and others.

### **Communication Information for Schools, Students, and Families**

Working with Students: The school counselor's first professional responsibility is to the students.



The educational, academic, career, personal, and social needs of all students within the school setting, from Kindergarten to Grade 12, are the focus in planning and delivering a developmental, comprehensive guidance and counseling program.

**Working with Parents/Guardians:** Parents/guardians fulfill a primary role in the lives of their children. Collaboration with parents in the best interest of students is a key activity of school counselors. School counselors provide family counselling as needed. Working with students, we keep parents appropriately informed without breaching confidentiality which is an important responsibility. School counselors bridge communication with parents at every opportunity.

**Working with the School and Community:** School counselors serve a dual role of educator (through guidance education activities) and counselor (through counseling services) merging when the counselor is involved in prevention work. All of life's situations interact with each other. For instance, by addressing a student's personal/social needs through counseling, the school counselor simultaneously teaches resiliency skills and affects the student's readiness for educational challenges. As a result of such interrelationships, the school counselor supports the integration of guidance and counseling services to address school and community needs. This development process includes identifying needs, implementing and monitoring programs, as well as adjusting plans based on the developmental needs of students.

### **El Alson Comprehensive Counseling Program Components**

The program components provide the vehicle by which school counselors deliver the developmental content of the comprehensive school counseling program. The delivery system is the "how" of the implementation process. The delivery system consists of direct and indirect student services. The program components are as follows:

#### **College and Career services**

El Alson school provides strong career and college services. The Head of Guidance and Student services assists high school students with the preparation of necessary college entrance documentation and ensure that these students are meeting all requirements to enter a college upon graduating from high school. Each year; the Head of Guidance and Student Services strives to help students find the right matches for their abilities, interests and ambitions. Also, career education; career planning and guidance services are available in student services.

The Guidance and student services department offers the following services from grade 9-12:

- Academic Advising
- Course selection
- Academic requirements
- Course Placement
- Standardized Testing Information: PSAT, SAT I, SAT II, TOEFL, IELTS.
- AP Information
- Graduation plans and transcripts
- College information and Career Advising
- Administration and interpretation of the PSAT and AP exams
- Parent-Student Evening Programs (see calendar for dates)
- Campus visits by representatives of universities and colleges



- Campus tours of local universities and colleges
- University and College fairs
- Printed materials, college catalogues, directories, and guidebooks in the College Advising office
- Individual parent/student appointments for college planning, decision-making, and application processes
- Assistance with creating an appropriate College Application list and with organizing the college application process
- Assistance with organizing application materials and meeting deadlines
- Letters of Recommendation and contact with University representatives as appropriate
- HS option counseling and college information news for parents and students on school website

Our High School Program is a 4-year program of study that prepares students for college and careers and enables them to become successful 21st century citizens through thinking, creating and contributing. Beginning with the class of 2018, students are also expected to fulfill work experience and service learning requirements ahead of graduation. Throughout high school, students have options to take a variety of standard high school courses as well as honors level courses and Advanced Placement (AP) courses and exams. AP courses and exams are college-level courses and may earn students advanced college credit while still in high school. Core academic courses throughout High School prepare students for the SAT through developing college-readiness skills in reading, writing, mathematics, critical thinking and analysis. Selected Grade 11 and 12 Mathematics and Science courses cover the necessary topics and skills for SAT II Subject Tests in Mathematics, Physics, Biology and Chemistry. Students and parents can learn more about different courses of study for High School by reviewing the information on our High School Options Counseling website. Students receive individual guidance and career/college counselling in order to enable them to make the best course choices. Parents and Students can email directly the Head of Guidance, Counseling and Student Services, Ms. Angie Shalaby directly to set an appointment: [ashalaby@alsson.com](mailto:ashalaby@alsson.com). Please see our option counseling website:- <https://sites.google.com/site/eahsoptions/home>.

2) BridgeU : It is our first year to provide our grade 10, 11 and 12 students with access to computerized and comprehensive BridgeU university and careers guidance platform that covers every aspect of the advice and guidance process. Each student and parent will be provided with access account to follow up the university and career guidance services provided through BridgeU. The Head of Guidance and Student services will be able to centrally follow up all students using the platform.

The platform allows the following services:

- Document sending: Upload and send documents directly to universities, eliminating offline procedures, printing costs, and task duplication. The platform has partnered with Parchment, the leading secure-sending application for school transcripts, to ease the process of sending documents to universities



- Reference writing: Coordinate, write, and track reference letters for students. Access summarised information on a student's academic and personal history, and collaborate with other teachers to compile detailed, personalised student letters of recommendation.
- Smart university matching: With BridgeU, students build a robust personal profile, including data on subject interests, grades, social, professional and learning preferences. Cross-referencing our vast database of historical data points, our matching algorithm generates university and course choices that are personalised to the unique preferences and academic strengths of each individual students.
- International education: Explore the benefits of an international education with BridgeU. With a database of over 100,000 higher education programmes across the US, UK, Canada, Australia, Hong Kong and the Netherlands, BridgeU can personalise global university and course recommendations, enabling each student to consider the right post-secondary opportunities for them, regardless of location.
- Performance insights: Track admissions and placement performance year-on-year. BridgeU data will also show you local and global admissions trends, and allow comparison by subject and curriculum.

### 3) Standardized Testing PSAT/SAT and AP for students with Learning Difficulties

The College Board is committed to making sure that students with learning disabilities can take tests, including the SAT, SAT Subject Tests, PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10, and Advanced Placement Exams, with the accommodations they need. Ms. Angie Shalaby is the SSD coordinator; she is responsible for ensuring that the correct accommodations are in place every time students with approved accommodations take a College Board exam on campus as El Alsson school is a closed venue to testing students with disabilities. Students must have documentation of their disability, such as a current psychoeducational evaluation or a report from a doctor. Examples of typical accommodations include: extended time, computer use for essays, extra and extended breaks, reading and seeing accommodations, four-function calculator...etc. Please be noted testing with accommodation is a service provided by College Board and has no implication on university admission. All students who take the SAT with 100 percent extended time are tested at their school. Students test over two days if they are testing with 100% extended time in reading (for both SAT and SAT with Essay), or testing with 100% extended time in both math and writing and taking the SAT with Essay. This is the two-day testing schedule:

- Day 1: Complete ID information and test sections 1–3.
- Day 2: Complete test sections 4–5.

### 4) El Alsson IELTS Test Center

International House Cairo; in collaboration with El Alsson British & American International School and IDP Education, is pleased to announce the launching of IELTS Tests at El Alsson School - New Giza. Students can book their IELTS tests with IHC @ El Alsson School. Students are required to take IELTS test as one of the requirements of universities admission as well as



other purposes. To book IELTS and be tested at El Alsson venue; please follow the online booking procedure:

- 1-Click on this link:<https://my.ieltsessentials.com/IELTS>
- 2- Select your Country: Egypt
- 3-Select your territory: Cairo / New Giza.
- 4-Select the test Type: Academic/General.
- 5-Select: IHC @ El Alsson.
- 6-Select the desired exam date and continue the registration process.

### 5 ) HS Programs (Service Learning and Work Experience)

The goal of the high school and middle school service learning program is to challenge students to be involved in their local communities by volunteering in response to the needs which are present there. The Service Learning program is obligatory for all students to participate in. HS students must complete 40 hours from grades 9-12. Each student must attend at least one service learning event per semester and he/she must do the missions that he/she will be asked to do in the event. Moreover, our HS students from grades 9-12 have the opportunity to be immersed in a range of training activities and gain an idea about what it's like to choose a career path for their future. The work experience program ensures that each student is ready for college and careers, students are required to do 40 hours of work experience through high school either through opportunities offered by the school or participate in outside internship in a field of their interest. Through this work experience program, students will work alongside adults as part of a team, develop and practice a range of new skills, become more confident in their abilities, relate their school curriculum to the workplace, make more informed decisions about their future and learn a range of transferable skills

### **Social and Emotional counseling:-**

If your child is referred to the school counselor, the very word “counseling” may make it sound like a mysterious process, but it is not. Counseling is a relationship built on confidentiality and trust—student trust, parent trust, teacher trust. The following information describes the overall process of counseling.

#### 1. How Do Students Talk to the School Counselor?

Meetings with the School Counselor, can show appear in a variety of ways. Most commonly, School Counselors get to work with students in the following ways:

- One to one counseling: student and counselor meet independently to go over any concerns or work on behavior.
- Group counseling: peer groups of 4-5 students meet to work on character development or group issues
- Support Groups – Counselor meets with the students who want to learn new coping skills or to build self-esteem (anti-bullying group, daily problems group etc.)
- Classroom guidance: counselor goes into classroom and talks with students about a





variety of topic

- Academic advisory: student and counselor meet independently to go over any academic concerns or work on interventions to improve academically
- College and Career advisory: student and counselor meet independently to go over college research and admissions and career exploration

2. When do people request a meeting with a counselor?

- When a student is very sad, confused, shy, angry, or worried
- When severe changes in a student's behavior occur
- When a student is having difficulty dealing with family changes or situations
- When something seems to be bothering a student to the point of distraction or intense anxiety
- When a student is dealing with a loss of a family member, friend, or pet
- When stressors at home are affecting school performance or self-concept
- When a student is consistently absent from school
- When a parent or teacher requests an intervention

3. How does a student receive counseling at school?

Students may be referred to the School Counselor for individual and/or small group counseling by their parents or guardians, school staff, a concerned friend, or they may refer themselves. Once a referral is made the school counselor sets up a meeting with the referred student.

4. Who provides the counseling at school?

Counseling is provided by certified School Counselor . The SC has a Master's degree with an emphasis in School Counseling. School Counseling focuses on the academic development, personal/social development, and career development of students.

5. Is counseling required?

It is your choice to give consent for your child to receive counseling.

6. What will counseling for your child involve?

Counseling may include small group or individual sessions. During the sessions, your child and a school counselor will work together to understand the problem, the present and future consequences, develop goals for change and a plan of action for change.

7. How is information shared?

Trust is the basis for effective counseling. As a parent or guardian, you must trust that the school counselor will “take good care of” one of your most prized possessions. Your child must know and trust that, what is shared with the counselor will stay with the counselor unless he or she gives permission to share information or if the counselor suspects the child is in danger of being hurt by others, hurting himself, or hurting others.

Confidentiality: Trust and confidentiality work together. Counseling records do not become a part of the permanent record of the student except as required by school safety policy. A record may indicate that a student was seen by the school counselor; however, the topics discussed are not included unless required by the school board safety policy. The school counselor may





talk with the classroom teacher about how he or she can help the child in the classroom; however, specific information will not be shared.

Possible outcomes: Through counseling, your child may be taught strategies to help him or her make more effective and healthier decisions, increase the ability to set and reach goals, build better relationships with others, and be more successful in school. We all must realize that changes take time; his or her problem did not develop overnight, nor will it disappear overnight. Counseling will be successful when students, school counselors, teachers, and family members work together.

Cost: There is no cost to you for any of the counseling your child receives as a part of our school's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program.

### **Referral Forms**

#### Middle and High School (Staff, Parents and Students)

Senior School Parents Referral Form: <https://goo.gl/forms/W0Yzc63IbaQbrTIB3>  
Middle School Learning Support Form: <https://goo.gl/forms/oIY1y8dz4jAYFYMn1>  
Senior School Counseling Referral Form: <https://goo.gl/forms/yIhOrR54xzZYuPrd2>  
Bullying Incident Report Form: <https://goo.gl/forms/q78sV4FO1yd4KFQt1>  
Child Protection and Safeguarding form: <https://goo.gl/forms/YibX5hEs3AYMSyh1>  
Option counseling and college readiness form: <https://goo.gl/forms/H5X0ykLlp3YzcOx03>  
Senior Parent Referral Form: <https://goo.gl/forms/9N8iaA4Xu6107sBI2>

#### Elementary School (Staff, Parents and Students)

Elementary Parents Referral Form: <https://goo.gl/forms/LNCo6OFul8LrfWwT2>  
Elementary Student Referral Form: <https://goo.gl/forms/2IQixlTO5IRyqU2F2>  
Junior School Learning Support Form: <https://goo.gl/forms/CuLgbWzUb65dWXK82>



Table 1: At-a-Glance: El Alsson School Four Components of a Comprehensive School Counseling Program

<b>Guidance Curriculum</b>	<b>Individual Planning</b>	<b>Responsive Services</b>	<b>System Support</b>
Includes structured experiences presented systematically through classroom and group activities for all grades	Includes counseling activities to assist all students to plan, monitor, and manage their own academic achievement as well as their personal and career development.	Includes counseling or referral activities to meet the immediate needs and concerns of students. Responsive services includes personal counseling; crisis counseling; agency referral; consultation with parents, teachers, and other professionals, support groups; and problem solving.	Includes indirect guidance management activities that maintain and enhance the total guidance program. Responsibilities in this component include staff and community relations, special research projects, committees, professional development, and student support.
Purpose: - Learning to Live <b>(Personal/Social Development)</b> -Learning to Learn <b>(Academic)</b> - Learning to Work <b>(Career Development)</b>	Purpose: <b>-Personal/Social</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of healthy self-concept</li> <li>• Development of both short- and long-term goals</li> </ul> <b>-Academic</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquisition of study skills</li> <li>• Awareness of educational opportunities</li> <li>• Lifelong learning</li> <li>• Utilization of test scores and data</li> </ul> <b>-Career</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of career opportunities</li> <li>• Development of an education/career plan</li> </ul>	Purpose: <b>-Personal/Social</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationships</li> <li>• Abuse</li> <li>• Grief, loss, death</li> <li>• Family problems/concerns</li> <li>• Coping skills</li> </ul> <b>- Academic</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tardiness</li> <li>• Absences and truancy</li> <li>• School and classroom conduct</li> </ul>	Purpose: -Guidance program development -Parent Education -Teacher/administrator consultation -Staff development for educators - Counselor's professional development -Community outreach - Public relations -Research and publishing
<b>Counselor Role</b> -Structured groups -Consultation -Guidance curriculum -Implementation	<b>Counselor Role</b> -Assessment - Planning -Placement	<b>Counselor Role</b> - Individual and small group counseling -Consultation -Referral	<b>Counselor Role</b> - Program management -Consultation - Coordinator



## **Guidance Curriculum: Social and Emotional Learning**

**The school counseling curriculum** is the means by which school counselors promote the healthy development and growth of all students. The curriculum provides developmental and sequential lessons and activities in classroom and/or group settings, which address student development in academic, career and personal/social domains. This curriculum consists of structured lessons designed to help students attain the desired competencies and to provide all students with the knowledge, attitudes and skills appropriate for their developmental level. El Alsson delivers SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) program from K-8. Social and emotional learning (SEL) enhances students' capacity to integrate skills, attitudes, and behaviors to deal effectively and ethically with daily tasks and challenges. In El Alsson, we teach the skills that empower students with effective problem-solving, communication, empathy, and relationship-building.

**Lions Quest Skills for Growing (SFG)** is an evidence-based PreK-8 program that integrates social and emotional learning, character development, drug and bullying prevention, and service-learning. Through a series of developmentally appropriate thematic units and lesson plans, the program helps create a school and classroom environment that promotes the positive student behaviors that lead to greater academic success.

### **2) Learning Support Services**

The purpose of El Alsson learning support services is to identify a student's learning style and needs. Our goal is to scaffold the student's learning, differentiate the curriculum and provide appropriate support for social, emotional and behavioral needs in order to highlight his/her true potential. The focus is on the differentiation of learning and well-being of the whole child. We believe it is the responsibility of all those who interact with students to provide a supportive emotional, social and academic environment, focusing on the unique talents, abilities and needs of the whole child. We believe effective learning support utilizes a collaborative approach, supporting students, teachers and parents in developing an environment that results in optimum learning. It is the responsibility of all teachers to ensure that support is relevant, contextual and consistent with the school curriculum, occurring inclusively wherever possible.

As a school we maintain a commitment to providing K-8 students with mild learning disabilities and/or who have difficulties accessing the curriculum due to language deficiencies, specific learning styles, or who require specific teaching styles, with available means to access the mainstream curriculum and assessment. It is our goal to support students to develop the necessary independent skills and strategies to access the mainstream curriculum and assessment fully and independently by the end of Grade 8. The purpose of this learning support services at El Alsson is to identify and assess the needs of students promptly, implementing and monitoring inclusive practices to meet their needs efficiently, employ strategies within our available resources, to support students to access mainstream curriculum, and to support teachers with the use of differentiated instruction through identifying a student's learning style, scaffolding their learning and to provide an appropriate educational plan for these students.



## Eligibility

The Learning Support Department at El Alsson consists of personnel who work with students who have been identified as having specialized learning needs. Currently this refers to students identified as having Specific Learning Disabilities/Disorders (SLD), Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and English Language Learners (ELL) and other mild Neurodevelopmental delay.

### Students become eligible for Learning Support Services if:

- He/she has been identified as having a mild learning disability by the Learning Support Team following the referral process
- He/she has been admitted to El Alsson with diagnosed mild learning disabilities (see School Admissions below)
- He/she has performed poorly on standardized assessments and/or is performing significantly below expected grade level and is thereby eligible for support.
- He/ She suffers medical condition that has had an impact on their academic performance which led to high absence rate, attention deficiencies...etc. Students with define medical conditions (seizures, diabetic, asthmatic) are placed on plan 504.

## Program Descriptions

Support Model: In the Learning Support Department, we provide tiered levels of support that follow the Response to Intervention (RtI) model. The Response to Intervention model is based on the premise that learning support is provided early, monitored systematically, and adjusted intentionally to respond to the individual learner's needs.

## Head of Guidance, Counseling and Student services message

In my belief that success in school and in life depends on more than academic ability alone, I would like to introduce the Guidance, Counseling and Student Services department to you. Our primary goal is to enhance and promote student learning; our services are designed to provide support to students, parents and staff. Our department intends to facilitate the educational, personal, social, emotional, and career development of students in school. We branch to provide direct and indirect counseling services and learning support services. This year, I am proud to announce the implementation of SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) program cross the American school from PreK-8. Social and Emotional learning, or SEL, programs have flourished in many US schools. In reference to research there have been several meta-analysis studies to measure the impact of implementing SEL programs in schools, the overall results of SEL implementation showed positive outcomes on students' academic performance as well as their emotional well being. Our SEL curriculum provides developmental and sequential lessons and activities in classroom and/or group settings, which address student development in academic, personal and social domains. We have chosen "Lions Quest Skills for Growing (SFG)" as an evidence-based Pre K-8 program that integrates social and emotional learning, character development, bullying prevention, and service-learning. Nadine, our EC/ES school counselor will be teaching the program from G 2-5. Nadine will also support EC staff in



delivering SEL program in early childhood. Additionally, Ana Cubra, our MS school counselor will be teaching the program from 6-8.

As a school, we are privileged to have Tameka as our EC/ES Head of Learning Support working with her new team of well qualified learning support teachers. Furthermore, Ms. Dahlia Mostafa is our MS Head of Learning Support. The purpose of our Learning support services is to identify and assess the needs of diverse learners promptly, implementing and monitoring inclusive practices to meet their needs efficiently, employ strategies within our available resources, to support diverse learners to access mainstream curriculum, and to support general education teachers with the use of differentiated instruction through identifying a student's learning style, scaffolding their learning and to provide an appropriate educational plan for these students.

As for High school, Ms. Angie Shalaby, as Head of Guidance, Counseling and Student services extensively provide college and career counseling services, monitoring and advising students and parents as to progress toward promotion and graduation.