



ISKWELAHANG PILIPINO

2014-2015 School Year

IP Handbook

Iskwelahang Pilipino Handbook

The IP Family Guide to IP Programs, Policies and Procedures

Welcome to the **Iskwelahang Pilipino** community! This handbook is provided as a quick reference for information for families. Please keep it readily available for your use during the school year.

Overview of Iskwelahang Pilipino

CONTACT INFORMATION

Iskwelahang Pilipino
12 Mudge Way,
Bedford, MA 01730
www.ipbahay.org

HISTORY OF ISKWELAHANG PILIPINO

Iskwelahang Pilipino (IP) was established in 1976 by a group of parents and educators to create an environment where their children would have an opportunity to learn about their Filipino heritage. The school started at Eliot Church in Newton, Massachusetts with 55 students and stayed there for 19 years. IP was incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1981. In 1995 IP moved to 12 Mudge Way, Bedford, Massachusetts where it currently resides.

Over the years, IP has grown from its signature biweekly language and culture program for school-age children to include a number of family activities, a rondalla music program, the acclaimed IP Rondalla Ensemble, and a vibrant community of Filipino American families.

The oldest Filipino cultural school in continuous operation in the United States, IP has been recognized by both the Philippines and the Filipino American Community. In September 2005, IP received the Leadership Award from the New England Chapter of the National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NaFFAA) “in recognition of its outstanding achievements and leadership in Filipino Arts and Culture Development and Promotion.” In December 2006, IP was honored at Malacañang Palace with a Presidential Award, the prestigious Banaag Award “given to those whose contributions have significantly benefited a sector or community in the Philippines, or advanced the cause of overseas Filipino communities.”

Run on a strictly volunteer basis, the majority of the faculty and staff are parents who have the skills, interest, and commitment to support and advocate the school mission. Our parents and students come from diverse economic and professional backgrounds from the Greater Boston area and nearby New Hampshire and Connecticut.

MISSION & GOALS

The **mission** of IP is to strengthen Filipino American children, families and community by celebrating the rich Philippine cultural heritage in a structured and nurturing environment.

As part of this mission, we seek to achieve the following **goals**:

- Develop in Filipino American children a strong positive ethnic identity and instill pride in the student's cultural heritage.
- Promote better relationships between the children and their parents through the understanding and appreciation of the Filipino and American value system.
- Foster a sense of group ethnic awareness and to promote friendships among the children.
- Develop awareness of the choices possible for conducting one's life through evaluation and selection of the "the best of both worlds".
- Develop a sense of community among Filipino American residents in the Greater Boston area through understanding and acknowledgement of their common linguistic and cultural heritage.
- Heighten the consciousness of New Englanders about the existence in their midst of an important Asian ethnic group.

PHILOSOPHY

We believe that an understanding, appreciation and acceptance of one's cultural background and heritage will help towards preventing an identity crisis in the student's future years. Involving children, their parents and their peers actively and consistently in structured, productive activities which work towards the same goals and aspirations results in family bonding and lasting friendships.

Parent initiative and involvement have always been IP's cornerstone, as well as the driving force behind its many years of existence, and should be strongly encouraged to continue. Their support and reinforcement of classroom lessons at home and in the community show that they value the school goals and will have an impact on their child's cultural development.

Students blossom under IP's varied cultural offerings so that they remember the school fondly long after they leave it. IP gives them reasons to celebrate and be proud of their ethnicity and therefore, makes them want to share their pride in their culture with others but at the same time develop sensitivity to other cultures.

PROGRAMS

To achieve its goals, IP has four core program areas:

- **School-Age Children's Program** – IP's signature program is designed for school-age children and is composed of four different subject areas: Folk Music, Folk

Dance, Language & Culture and Arts & Crafts. While the framework for the curriculum remains the same, the staff selects a new theme, such as a regional theme, each year to serve as an anchor for their lesson plans. IP's curriculum has served as a model for similar programs across the country.

- **Rondalla Music Program** – To preserve and perpetuate a native form of Philippine folk music, the Rondalla program introduces children to the basics of playing these string instruments: octavina, banduria, laud and guitarra. As they progress, students are then encouraged to perform with the Rondalla ensemble.
- **Family Activities** – Structured activities, such as our Celebrity Series, Christmas Caroling and the Lowell Folk Festival food booth, facilitate family bonding and the development of lasting friendships while also raising funds to support IP programs.
- **Special Projects** – In addition to IP's annual programs, IP periodically undertakes special events and activities. IP celebrates five-year milestones with an Anniversary Show performed by our students and the IP Rondalla that celebrates Filipino culture. Rondalla tours and special performances are an opportunity for the more accomplished rondalla students and alumni to showcase their talents for a broader audience and promote the art of rondalla.

School-Age Children's Program	Rondalla Music Program	Family Activities	Special Projects*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Arts & Crafts ➤ Folk Music ➤ Folk Dance ➤ Language & Culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rondalla Instruction ➤ Performance Ensemble 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Celebrity Series ➤ Christmas Caroling ➤ Lowell Folk Festival 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Anniversary Shows ➤ Special Events & Activities ➤ Rondalla Tours

School-Age Children's Program

IN THE CLASSROOM

The classes at **IP** involve four different subject areas:

- **Wika (Tagalog)** – In this class they learn the fundamental Tagalog vocabulary and basic conversational skills like greetings, introductions and simple questions and answers. They develop the skills to use words in a social setting such as travel, shopping, dining, and party gathering. The learning tools used are visuals, games and the Rosetta Stone program.
- **Sayaw (Folk Dance)** – Since folk dancing is an expression of a people's ethnicity, this class seeks to incorporate the study of culture, music, geography and regional lifestyles in its dance repertoire. The children also develop body coordination and graceful movement by learning intricate dance steps in traditional folk dances. In addition to this, dancing helps them gain self-confidence through public performances.
- **Kultura (Language & Culture)** – In Language & Culture, emphasis is placed on the teaching of similarities and differences between the American and Philippine culture and values. The objective of this emphasis is to help the children appreciate their parents' upbringing and cultural background, and to use this appreciation in forming their own values as adults in the greater community. This class involves Philippine history, geography and literature.
- **Bahay Pinoy (Arts & Crafts)** – The Arts & Crafts program involves the teaching of how to make native handicrafts using motifs and materials from the Philippines. An example of this would be the parol, a Pilipino Christmas lantern which the children can use during the annual Christmas Program and for decorating their homes during the holidays. The children make most of the props and accessories needed for the school's performances. In addition to learning how to create native handicrafts, this class also includes cooking ethnic dishes, which helps develop their own tastes and preferences.
- **Lutuan** – A cooking class that introduces many different dishes from different regions of the Philippines to the children. This is offered in conjunction with the Arts and Crafts Program. Many basic Pilipino dishes like adobo, pancit and lumpia and desserts like palitao, bibingka and leche flan are taught to help the children develop their taste for and love of Pilipino food.

A core or basic curriculum framework is consistently followed in each subject area. Students are assigned to one of four classes and are grouped by age with a cohort of peers. Age ranges can vary for each class depending on the demographics of the students enrolled in IP each year.

Generally, students are divided into the following five groups:

Class/Group	Binh	Ilang-Ilang	Sampagita	Bonifacio	Rizal
Age Range	Pre-K	K-Grade 2	Grades 3-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12

Pre-school children can join the Ilang-Ilang class while accompanied by a parent or guardian to assist the child in class activities.

To enhance the curriculum for long-term students, a new theme is selected every year. This theme is integrated into all the subject areas. Many themes have been regional (the Lumad people or non-Christian tribes, the Muslim culture and the Christians in the lowlands, etc.). For example: If the theme is about the *Igorots*, the dance class would be learning *Igorot* dances; the music class might be learning some chants; arts and crafts would be making *Igorot* handicrafts or costumes; language and culture class would be studying *Igorot* customs and traditions. IP has repeated regional themes in past years, but with additional new and interesting information about the selected region. Themes may also be topical, such as Philippine values, or a theme on the various countries that have influenced the Philippine culture.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

IP meets every other Sunday afternoon from the last week of September to the last week of May for a maximum of 18 sessions. A school year calendar is released at the start of each year. The following are special events during the year:

- **Christmas Program/Party** – To celebrate the holidays the students perform in a Christmas program, sing Philippine and English Christmas songs, present dances and exchange gifts with their classmates.
- **Tea Musicale** – The Tea Musicale is an opportunity to showcase the students' talents in different aspects of arts and entertainment.
- **Palaro Olympics** – This is a fun day for the children where they engage in a friendly competition while learning and playing Filipino games. See *Family Activities* below.
- **NEFFA** – Every year in April since the school started in 1976, IP students have participated in the New England Folk Festival. Each group – Ilang-Ilang, Sampagita, Bonifacio, and Rizal – presents a dance that they have learned in their dance class. The occasion gives them an opportunity to share their Philippine cultural heritage with other ethnic groups in the festival and learn about dances from other countries. See *Family Activities* below.
- **Graduation** – Graduation is held in May during the last session of the school year. Graduation day is a school-wide event where students in all class groups showcase what

they learned during the year for their families in a special performance. Since 1987, IP has said goodbye to our graduating seniors with a special ceremony. Seniors meeting requirements for consistent participation in IP receive a plaque commemorating their graduation from IP.

CLASS SCHEDULE

IP sessions start with a general assembly with the singing of the Philippine National Anthem and School song followed by announcements usually related to the day's schedule or about upcoming school activities. Sessions run for four hours. The four classes (Ilang-Ilang, Sampaguita, Bonifacio and Rizal) rotate around the four subject areas in forty-minute periods with a twenty-minute break for the Pilipino snack time called "merienda." Class schedules are released each year.

The Binhi class remains in one class with different subject matters.(language, movement, crafts and cooking). The Binhi Class time meets for 90 minutes, then breaks for Pilipino snack.

REGISTRATION POLICIES

Registration

Parents of continuing students are encouraged to register their children at the end of the school year for the following school year. This will help jumpstart preparations for the succeeding year.

New parents should attend the parent meeting in September to give them a chance to meet and interact with other parents, ask questions, give their input and receive school materials.

IP has open enrollment throughout the year, but in order to get the full benefit from IP's programs, children should start when the school opens in September.

Registration Fees

IP charges a minimal fee to cover some of the expenses used for the school program. Rates are published at the start of each year. Each additional child in a family may enroll at a discounted rate. The fourth child is free. There is a separate registration fee for Rondalla classes.

It should be noted that **registration fees cover only a small portion of the expenses** associated with running the school. The majority of IP's operating expenses are covered by the fundraising efforts of the IP community.

Cancellation Policy: Full refunds on fees up until the third IP session and/or IP Rondalla Class, otherwise, no refunds will be given after this time.

Late Payment Fees: \$25.00 late payment fee will be charged if registration fees are not paid after the 3rd IP session and/or Rondalla Class.

PROGRAM POLICIES

Merienda

A popular Filipino custom followed by IP is “merienda.” A “merienda” or snack, often consisting of Filipino refreshments and nutritious drinks, is served mid-way through IP Sessions. Parents are requested to sign up to bring snacks at least three to four times during the year. On certain special event days, all parents are asked to bring refreshments. A food coordinator is assigned to attend to the sign up sheet and ensure that there is enough food to go around.

Attendance

Each teacher takes attendance in the different classes at each session. Regular and prompt attendance is necessary to achieve the goals of **Iskwelahang Pilipino**. Unless excused for illness or another serious reason, students are expected to attend school. **No more than four (4) absences** from IP sessions, performances and formal IP activities will be allowed. Since the school meets only every other week, the student is responsible for whatever s/he missed in the different classes by asking her or his classmates. Consecutive absences are greatly discouraged and shall be dealt with accordingly. Students with excessive absences will be asked to withdraw from the program and will not qualify for graduation from the school.

Lateness

To ensure the proper flow of the classes and to lessen the distraction of the teachers and other students in each of the classes, tardiness is also greatly discouraged. All students and parents are expected to be at the school promptly for the opening ceremonies, which include singing of the Philippine National Anthem and special school announcements. It is the responsibility of the parents to have the children at the school on time. The children are also expected to be in their respective classrooms for their classes at the appointed times and stay for the duration of the class time as indicated in the Student Schedule which is posted at the entrance of each classroom door for consultation.

Graduation Requirements

IP recognizes that high school students today regularly face multiple demands and must balance their schoolwork, student activities, sports, part-time jobs, and social life. It is hoped that participation in IP classes and performances will remain a priority for our students, and that they will find the support and encouragement they need among their classmates and teachers, particularly in the latter years of high school as our students prepare for future careers and post high school education. Past experience demonstrates that our students develop life-long friendships among their IP classmates and that more mature students and alumni serve as role models for the younger children.

Seniors who meet participation requirements receive an IP graduate plaque at the end of the school year. In order to be eligible for graduation, a senior must be present and participating at IP activities. **Students may be absent from no more than four (4) IP sessions**, performances and formal IP activities. The full school year calendar is published at the beginning of the school year so that IP students can plan accordingly.

Rondalla Music Program

HISTORY

The **Iskwelahang Pilipino Rondalla** was established in 1986 by Cristina Castro under the musical direction of classical/folk guitarist, Michael Dadap. They sought to foster a love of instrumental Filipino folk music amongst the children, and charged the students with the task of helping to inspire a revival of, and new respect for, the rondalla in the Philippines. Dadap developed the IP Rondalla as a versatile ensemble capable of playing folk music and complex concert music alike. Not long after the students became adept with their instruments, they found that they could incorporate aspects of dance and movement into their repertoire, a first for rondallas in general and a signature of the IP Rondalla to this day.

In an initial step toward the goal of reviving the art of rondalla playing in the Philippines, the IP Rondalla toured the Philippines in July of 1990, performing for, meeting, and bonding with Filipino children of all ages and geographic and economic backgrounds. The trip was an amazing cultural exchange and “re-exchange,” as Filipino children, embraced the IP Rondalla’s music and Filipino American ambassadors. The rondalla members were likewise enriched by an incredible range of experiences, from their interaction with young children of Smokey Mountain in Tondo, to their special performance before then-President Corazon Aquino at Malacañang Palace. Two “rondalla generations” later, the IP Rondalla returned to the Philippines in 1998, in celebration of the Centennial of the Philippine Republic, with a 3-week/18-performance tour of the Philippines. Although the most acclaimed performance of the tour took place at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, some of the students’ most fond memories are of hiking up a mystical mountain in Tayabas with local villagers and giving a benefit performance to help the villagers combat the ecological destruction of the mountain caused by illegal logging. In February of 2004, the next generation of the rondalla was excited to return to the Philippines when they were invited to participate in the first International Rondalla Festival

As musical ambassadors of the culture, rondalla members develop a particularly strong sense of Filipino identity and pride in their heritage, as well as a lasting connection to one another and the IP community. The love of music and lifelong friendships fostered by the experience of playing with the IP Rondalla keep the alumni within the IP family. As a result, the IP Rondalla has had a tradition of finding its teachers from within the rondalla itself, so that members of one generation of players become leaders of the next. Former students Christi-Anne Castro ’87 and Elsa Janairo ’93 serve as Music Directors of the group, and primary teachers have included Eric Liwanag ’90, Antonio Endriga ’91, Melissa Liwanag ’00, James Concepcion ’00, Alberto Bhoge ’02 and Francis Payumo.

Through the years, the IP Rondalla has flourished as a truly Filipino American expression, incorporating into its repertoire aspects of traditional and contemporary music from the Philippines and the United States. The Rondalla regularly performs at colleges, folk festivals, galas and Filipino American events throughout the Northeast United States, representing Filipino culture at multi-cultural events, raising awareness of Filipino-Americans and the Philippines, and bringing the nostalgia of familiar folk music from the homeland to Filipino expatriates. Additionally, the Ensemble has completed a three-week European concert tour of Belgium, Germany, The Netherlands, Austria and England, played at NATO in Brussels, and performed for the United Nations in New York. In April 1993, the group gave a special tribute performance in honor of Nitoy Gonzales, the beloved Filipino rondalla maestro, composer, and songwriter. The group has also twice had the honor of performing for then-President Fidel V. Ramos. Their first full length CD, *Crossing Over*, was recorded and released in 1995, and their Christmas CD, *Pasko sa America*, an album of Filipino and Western Christmas favorites, was released in 2002.

RONDALLA INSTRUMENTAL INSTRUCTION

Throughout the IP school year, classes are held during IP sessions to train new rondalla players, teaching the young students how to play the banduria, octavina and laud. IP encourages students to learn to play these native instruments, and has a few instruments that can be loaned to students so that they can begin to take classes and try out the instrument for up to a year before they purchase their own instrument from the Philippines. Students may begin participating in these instructional classes during the elementary school years, provided that they have a background in note reading and the physical capacity to play the instruments. There are typically three levels of classes: beginner, intermediate, and advanced, though as the number of students increases, other levels may be appropriate. Students are promoted through the different class levels based upon ability and progress, not year level. Consistent attendance is mandatory, as is regular individual practice time at home. Every student must purchase his/her own music stand and tuner (for tuning the instrument at home if a piano or keyboard is unavailable). Students who accumulate an excessive number of absences from rondalla classes may be asked to withdraw from the rondalla program for the duration of the school year and to return borrowed instruments or any other property belonging to IP.

The advanced group is the performing arm of the school known as the “IP Rondalla.” The IP Rondalla performs throughout the year and conducts additional rehearsals to prepare for performances. Rondalla alumni are encouraged to participate in IP rondalla performances, as they are important leaders and models for the younger players, and practicing and performing together strengthens the inter-generational bonds within the group.

Parents who play the guitar or bass are also encouraged to join the rondalla to support their children and the community. Committed parent volunteers are essential to the performance ensemble, as volunteers are required for instrument repair and maintenance, props, costumes, stage set and lighting design, backstage logistics, transportation, and food provision.

Registration

There is a separate fee for participating in the rondalla instrumental instruction classes. Students may register at the beginning of the school year in September.

Lowell Folk Festival

The Lowell Folk Festival held every year during the last weekend in July is the largest free folk festival in the nation. There are food booths from different ethnic groups, handicraft and artisan booths, folk dance and music presentations. The IP booth is a favorite among the festival organizers and festival attendees and prides itself in attracting repeat customers and in having the longest line. The festival has been the major fund raising activity for IP since 1988. Proceeds cover the majority of IP’s operating expenses and enable IP to keep registration fees to a minimum. All IP parents and their children participate in this labor-intensive event in true “bayanihan” spirit. Participation in this event of all IP families is required. Non-participation will result in a penalty fee.

Family Activities

IP supplements its educational programs with extracurricular activities that provide families with the opportunity to participate in activities together. We believe that active and consistent involvement in structured and productive activities in which families work toward shared goals results in stronger families, lasting friendships, and a better community. These programs sometimes serve additional purposes, such as fundraising for IP programs, promoting IP, and raising awareness about the Filipino community. The following describes several of IP's most popular family activities.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

- **New England Folk Festival (NEFFA)** – This festival is a presentation of many different ethnic groups in New England in the form of dance, cuisine and cultural exhibits held annually. IP participates in it by presenting folk dances reflecting a certain theme or region of the Philippines.
- **Palaro Olympics** – An event where the children compete with each other in teams by playing certain native games like sipa, patintero, luksong tinik, tumbang preso, etc. It fosters team spirit and cooperation and appreciation for the simplicity of Pilipino life.
- **Celebrity Series** – An annual event where well-known Filipinos in the working world are invited to speak to the children about their careers or the special work they do. Some of the celebrities were priests who work with indigenous tribes in the Philippines, newscasters, artists, doctors, chefs, authors, illustrators of children books, and many more. They not only inspire the children with their life's work, but also serve as role models for the children.
- **Annual Tea Musicale** - IP children play traditional Pilipino games such as "*tumbang preso*," "*sipa*," "*luksong baka*," "*siyato*," "*babulan*." While learning how to play Pilipino indigenous games, they get to work out their sportsmanship, camaraderie and competitiveness. Everyone wins with "*Pabitin*."

OTHER FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

- **Tiange** – A marketplace to promote holiday shopping for Pilipino goods, food and home-made craft items made by children at Iskwelahang Pilipino. This is also a community event where other organizations and Pilipino entrepreneurs have tables with products to fundraise.
- **Christmas Caroling** – Christmas caroling, started in 1976, is the second major fundraiser for IP. The IP carolers, consisting of parents, students and the rondalla, rehearse for more than two months and go caroling (by appointment) for the three weekends in December before Christmas. Christmas caroling is a fundraising tradition that is still practiced in the Philippines and helps promote the Christmas spirit to Filipinos and their friends.

Special Projects

IP periodically undertakes special events and activities beyond its annual programs. These include:

- **Public Performances** – The IP Rondalla regularly performs at colleges, folk festivals, galas and Filipino American events throughout the Northeast United States, representing Filipino culture at multi-cultural events, raising awareness of Filipino-Americans and the Philippines, and bringing the nostalgia of familiar folk music from the homeland to Filipino expatriates. These performances provide students with an opportunity to perform outside of the immediate IP community, while also raising public awareness of the Filipino community and culture.
- **Anniversary Shows** – IP Anniversary shows take place every five years and provide students the opportunity to participate in a full production at least once during their enrollment in IP. IP's tradition of celebrating five-year milestones with an extravaganza of Pilipino cultural presentation has produced the following:
 - 10th anniversary - "Pista sa Nayon"
 - 15th anniversary - "Binhi at Sibol"
 - 20th anniversary - "Baro't Sayaw"
 - 25th anniversary - "Katuwaan!"
 - 30th anniversary - "Tayo Na Sa Antipolo"
 - 35th anniversary – “Hale Hale Hoy”
- **Rondalla Tours** – In addition to local and regional performances, the IP Rondalla periodically goes on concert tours and trips. These tours not only promote the art of rondalla, but also provide the Rondalla members with an opportunity to act as ambassadors for IP and interact with Filipinos in the Philippines and Europe. The tours and trips have included:
 - 1990 First Concert Tour of the Philippines
 - 1994 European Concert tour
 - 1998 Second Concert Tour of the Philippines
 - 2004 First International Rondalla Festival, Bicol, Philippines
 - 2008 European Concert Tour
 - 2013 Philippine Concert Tour
- **Gawad Kalinga Sibol Project** - The Children at IP saved and raised quarters and pennies all throughout the year to send pre-school children to a Sibol School at their Gawad Kalinga (GK) Village in the Philippines. The GK Village chosen was the Aldaba Hills at Towerville, Bulacan. The monies sent (\$3000) 13 children to school in 2006.

School-Wide Policies and Resources

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Iskwelahang Pilipino is unequivocally committed to providing a safe and orderly environment in which students learn about their unique and interesting culture. Students whose behavior does not meet the school community's clearly defined standards for reasonable and acceptable behavior will not be permitted to disrupt others.

Students and families have a right to attend a safe and orderly school. Therefore, parents will be expected to be involved in addressing student violations of the code of conduct.

Students are expected to:

- Take responsibility for your cultural education.
- Come to class prepared.
- Participate in your lessons.
- Attend every class.
- Get to IP on time. In the event of tardiness, be responsible for announcements made during the assembly.
- Practice common courtesy.
- Be considerate of the thoughts, feelings and heritage of others.
- Respect your teacher and classmates.
- Turn in your work on time.
- Care for IP costumes and instruments as if they were your own.
- Dress in a manner that reflects positively on yourself, your parents and your school.
- Conduct yourselves in an appropriate manner when going to and from IP sponsored events, in classrooms, on IP premises, during rehearsals and performances, and any other place or situation where they are associated with IP, including in person and on the internet.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parent participation in school activities is required for families joining **Iskwelahang Pilipino**. Parent participation requirements are as follows:

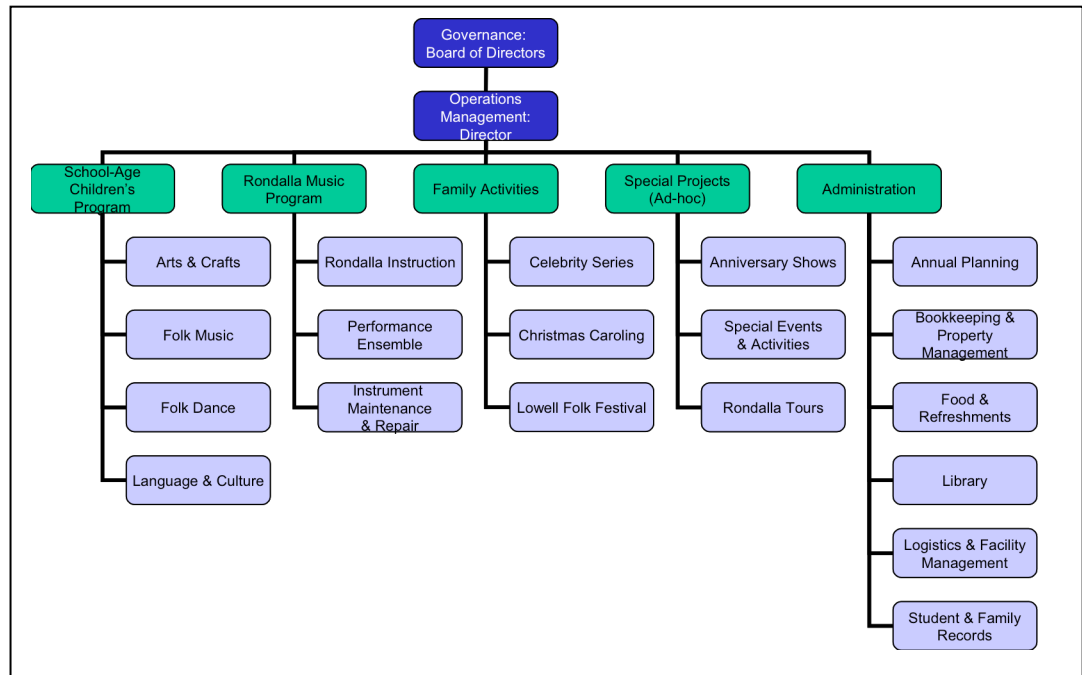
- Ensure that their children attend sessions regularly and on time. Whenever parents and/or their children miss a session, parents should contact the I.P. secretary or director to get updated information on any assignments, schedules, or activities.
- Ensure that the children make up for missed class work and rehearsals. The children should schedule time with someone to practice with, in order to catch up and be able to participate at the final performance.

- Reinforce lessons at home. Parents should be aware of the subject being covered in class by observing or looking through school material given to the children in order to help the teachers with the lessons.
- Assist staff as teacher's aides, and carry out both curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- Provide snacks for the children and parents at designated times, and help keep the premises clean and orderly.
- Assist in fundraising.
- Encourage other parents to join and publicize the school's activities to friends and colleagues.

VOLUNTEERING FOR IP

There are many ways to become involved in IP whether you are a parent, family member, college student, alumni or an interested community member. The following chart shows how IP is organized. Each box corresponds with an opportunity to volunteer with IP.

ISKWELAHANG PILIPINO ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



Help is always needed in the classroom and with the administration of IP. The Board of Directors is made up of parents, alumni and IP community members who have a long history of involvement with IP. Areas of expertise that are especially helpful on the board include education, music, law, accounting, public relations, fundraising and business

management. The Board of Directors carries responsibility for the governance of IP as well as playing a leadership role in the following areas:

- Fundraising
- Public Relations & Communications
- Community Outreach
- Rondalla Support
- Curriculum Support

GENERAL POLICIES AND RESOURCES

First Aid

IP will have a first aid kit available for minor cuts and bruises. The school is not equipped to deal with medical emergencies beyond basic first aid.

Fire Drill

Fire drills will be conducted twice during the school year. Monitors will be assigned to check each room on each level of the building.

School Cancellations

IP rarely cancels sessions unless the weather is extremely severe with resulting dangerous road conditions. In last minute cases when emailing would be too late, IP would call families through a prearranged phone chain.

IP Office and Meeting Site

IP's administrative office is located at Bedford Town Center on 12 Mudge Way in Bedford, Massachusetts. IP rents classrooms for scheduled class sessions from the Town Center. Therefore, members of the IP community are expected to comply with Bedford Town Center rules and regulations when using this site. In addition, at the close of any IP session or activity, rented rooms must be returned to their original state.

Most IP activities take place at this site. However, IP sometimes meets at other locations for its activities. IP policies apply to formal IP activities that take place at Bedford Town Center or at alternative locations. This includes building facilities and parking areas.

Dress Code

Students will dress in a manner that reflects positively on themselves, their parents and their school. Just as adults must conform to workplace standards, so must students. Clothing must be in good repair and footwear must be worn at all times, unless required for dance lessons, rehearsals or performances. Teacher's discretion may be used to determine attire appropriate for the classroom. Questions about the dress code should be addressed to a teacher or the Director.

When representing IP at special performances, tours and public appearances, IP students, performers, parents and volunteers may be required to wear a designated uniform or costume to suit the occasion.

Use of School-Owned Property

School-owned equipment, such as costumes, stage props and instruments may be loaned out to students and rondalla members for classes or performances. IP parents, students and staff regularly volunteer to help with the maintenance and care of IP-owned instruments, costumes and stage props. In many cases, parents have voluntarily procured equipment, transported instruments from the Philippines, sewn costumes and built stage props. Several parents have become skilled at repairing instruments.

Borrowers are expected to keep equipment in the best condition possible and take responsibility for the upkeep of any equipment borrowed. Instruments must be in good playing condition and costumes must be performance-ready. Students and rondalla members are expected to treat an instrument or costume as if it were their own. Normal wear on an instrument or costume is expected, but any damage beyond normal wear is the borrower's responsibility.

Students and rondalla members are responsible for returning any borrowed equipment to IP at the end of the school year, class, rehearsal or performance. If equipment is damaged, check with your teacher to find out whether someone can help with a needed repair.

Personal Property

All your personal gear, bags, clothes, costumes, instruments, etc. should be marked with your name. If you can avoid it, do not bring valuables to school activities. Make sure you have all of your personal property before you leave an IP activity. IP cannot be held responsible for items left unattended. If you lose anything, report it to an IP teacher or administrator immediately.

Smoking

IP is a smoke-free environment. Therefore, smoking is not permitted on IP premises. Students are not permitted to smoke during IP activities.

Drugs, Tobacco and Alcohol Policy

The unlawful use or possession of controlled substances, including alcohol and tobacco and illicit drugs or other substances is prohibited on IP premises, or in any facility owned, leased, or otherwise controlled by IP. This includes, but is not limited to, IP-related events, programs, or activities which occur on and off IP premises sponsored by the school.

Weapons and Violence

The use or possession of guns or firearms, knives or other weapons by students, family members, staff and volunteers anywhere on school premises or at IP-sponsored activities is prohibited. Physical violence or threats of physical violence that injure or endanger another person or cause a reasonable person to fear injury or endangerment are not allowed.

Electronic Devices

Use of electronic devices is prohibited during class sessions and rehearsals without teacher approval. This includes, but is not limited to CD players, other music listening devices, gaming devices, pagers, cell phones, cameras and cassette recorders.

Student Discipline Policy

Harassment of fellow students, damage to school property, insolence, profanity, fighting, use of tobacco, failure to obey teachers, and any disruptive behavior that might cause injury to the student's self or to others will not be tolerated. Parents are asked to discuss these behavior standards with their child.

Students who cause damage to school property will be expected to pay for the damage. The primary contact for parents at IP is the Director. Subject teachers may also deem it necessary to discuss problems with attendance, participation or behavior issues with the parents.

The Students who violate IP policies may face one or more of the following consequences:

- Apology (oral or written)
- Community service (grounds, cleanup, chores)
- Individual behavioral contract
- Police contact in cases of violent acts, drugs, alcohol, dangerous objects or stealing
- Pay for damage/repairs
- Private reprimand
- Suspension from school or dismissal in the most extreme cases

The Director in conjunction with appropriate staff shall determine what disciplinary action will be taken. The Director will contact parents to discuss student violations of IP policies and disruptive behavior.

RESPECT

IP Community Expectations

These IP Community Expectations outline the standard of behavior expected of every member of the IP community, from our youngest members to our most senior board members. Complying with the expectations and upholding the spirit that it embodies will promote an atmosphere of **respect** for every community member and a positive learning environment for our children. Our reliance on each other has the potential to propel the organization's goals for our children, first and foremost, and for the Filipino/American community in New England.

RELY ON ONE ANOTHER

- Each of us is a valuable member of the IP community who deserves to be treated with respect, consideration and dignity.
- Empower each other as members of the IP community to be participants in IP activities.

ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER

- Acknowledge the contributions of IP members and applaud students' efforts.
- Give guidance to community members who might be unsure about what is expected of them or uncertain about how to help.

STUDENTS FIRST

- In all matters, we place our students needs first. The children are the reason we are all here together.
- Before anything else, we seek to preserve and promote an educational environment that will be conducive to an effective, enjoyable student learning experience.

PRIDE

- The mission of IP is to strengthen Filipino American children, families and community by celebrating the rich Philippine cultural heritage in a structured and nurturing environment.
- IP members are expected to protect and uphold the organization's positive reputation.

EXERCISE DISCRETION

- Maintain confidentiality when handling the personal information of IP members. Be sure to check with the individual concerned before sharing personal information.
- When handling sensitive IP matters, give priority to our students, IP's mission, and our community. If you are unsure how an organizational matter should be handled, consult with the School Director.

COLLABORATE

- Act in accordance with the *Bayanihan* Spirit of communal cooperation.
- Be inclusive and show patience to all members of the IP community.

TALK

- When conflicts arise, talk. Rather than avoiding difficult conversations, try to approach them with an open mind and clear purpose. This is how positive changes are made.
- Be civil and respectful in all forms of communication.

Remember the Golden Rule: Treat others the way you want to be treated.

What We Believe

Families grow stronger when they actively and consistently participate in structured and productive activities together.

Children grow up with a healthy sense of identity when they have the chance to learn about and appreciate their cultural background and heritage.

Young people can develop lasting friendships and support systems through positive shared growing up experiences.

Communities become stronger when they work toward a meaningful goal.

Parent reinforcement of IP lessons at home has a positive impact on a child's cultural development.

Exploration and celebration of one's cultural heritage instills a sense of ethnic pride and sensitivity to other cultures.

Filipino community politics and interpersonal conflicts should not be allowed to interfere with a student's experience at IP.

Strengthening IP strengthens our community.

Cultural explanation should involve all the senses and incorporate movement, music, language, storytelling and art.

Our community extends to students, parents, families, alumni, volunteers and supporters of IP.