



PARENT HANDBOOK

Parents are required to read this Handbook and sign the form provided by the JAMS management thereby confirming compliance with policy and procedures of JAMS.

JAMS
Abacus Math School

JAMS OF PORTLAND
JAMSPORTLAND.COM



15160 NW LAIDLAW ROAD #215
PORTLAND, OREGON 97229
503.419.8040

Revised January 2023

A MESSAGE FROM SENSEI MIWAKO SAKABAYASHI, FOUNDER OF JAMS



I believe that every child has abilities, many of which may be hidden. The reasons these abilities remain hidden lie in the advent of technology—specifically, calculators. By becoming overly dependent on calculators and computers, children never learn the critical ability of mental problem-solving. This skill—which is inside everyone—becomes dormant.

In most cases, schools do a wonderful job of educating our children. However, calculators have become standard equipment, with children using them as early as first and second grade. This time in their lives is critical in the development of their ability to solve problems.

By providing an "artificial crutch" such as a calculator, those life skills are left undeveloped. Fewer and fewer teachers are skilled in the area of teaching children how to mentally calculate and solve problems because they themselves were raised in the "calculator culture."

Children, specifically at an early age, need to be trained to utilize and activate their senses. Learning Abacus teaches children to use their senses: eyes to see, ears to listen and fingers to move Abacus beads for calculation.

This training cultivates concentration skills, and their brain becomes more capable to calculate without the help of calculators. Although they are convenient and inexpensive, it is no exaggeration to say that the use of calculators hinders the recovery and improvement of children's hidden abilities.

Come see for yourself the difference that learning the Abacus can make for your child. I'd like to extend an open invitation for you to call and schedule a no-obligation class visit.

I'm confident that when you witness for yourself the remarkable skills that we develop in our students, you'll want to provide the same advantage for your child or children.

At JAMS, we believe that when your child is engaged in learning the Japanese Abacus, their success will really add up!

美和子
Miwako

SENSEI MIWAKO SAKABAYASHI

COURSE DESCRIPTION

JAMS is a continuous, year-round program. JAMS conducts its lessons in a group setting but individual progress varies. Each student learns at his/her own pace.

The student's progress also requires parental support by maintaining a consistent study schedule at home.

Other than the classroom session, it is recommended that the child do 10-15 minutes of JAMS exercises 5 days a week

Observation Not Allowed

Parents silently observing live classes is not allowed as it distracts children and teachers.

PARENT PORTAL

Parents can log in and "take care of business." Go to <https://app.iclasspro.com/portal/jamsofportland> and create your account to begin using this service.

After logging in, parents can enroll students, pay tuition, update any information, keep track of progress, request future absences and confirm make-up classes.

Any future absence requests must be made through the portal at least 3 hours before the start of class. (We encourage you to submit any absence through the portal even if it is less than 3 hours. However, if it is reported in less than 3 hours, no make-up token will be issued.)

ABSENCES AND MAKE-UP CLASSES

Good attendance is a sign of strong commitment. Each student is a team member of the class, and the team suffers when one person is absent.

Planned Absences

Parents are required to notify JAMS through the Parent Portal at least 3 hours prior to the assigned class time to reserve their right for a make-up class. Failure to contact JAMS will forfeit the right to a make-up class. Make-up classes are only allowed during the current term and cannot be carried over to the next term.

Can I Get a Credit for Planned Absences?

Yes. UPON REGISTRATION of your child, please inform the office of planned absences/known scheduling conflicts so that you can get a class credit discount for the next term.

However, if an absence is communicated after the term has begun, you will then have to sign your child up for make-up classes offered during the predetermined make-up week. There will be no class credit or refunds given if planned absences are NOT communicated at initial registration time.

If you anticipate needing more than 3 make-up classes because of extended travel, please inform us before the term begins. Instead of make-up classes, credits will be applied to the following term. If your child will miss more than half of the term, we request that they skip the affected term.

Make-Up Classes

Make-up classes will be held online during the last week of the term. You can sign up for a make-up class using a punch pass which will be converted from a make-up token within a week from the date you receive a make-up token. You must sign up for make-up classes in the Parent Portal two weeks before the end of the term. No make-up classes will be scheduled after this date. If your child misses a class during the last week of the term, you can request a make-up class by email.

Any changes to the assigned make-up class will require prior permission and approval from JAMS.

If your child misses their make-up class without notice, we will add a \$25 penalty to your invoice.

There is a maximum of 3 make-up classes allowed during each term. If you anticipate needing more than 3 make-up classes because of extended travel, please inform us before the term begins. Instead of makeup classes, credits will be applied to the following term. If your child will miss more than half of the term, we request that they skip the affected term.

Snow days

We will credit them toward the following term.

Unplanned Absences

Parents are required to submit the future absence request through our Parent Portal at least 3 hours prior to the assigned class time to notify us of their child's absence. We understand that it may be difficult for a parent with a sick child to follow this guideline. We encourage parents to report any absence through the portal even if it is less than 3 hours. If it is last minute or urgent, we can even accept a call or email. Please include the reason why your child will miss a class.

An absence without any prior communication will result in the forfeiting of the make-up class. To maintain a healthy environment, sick students with contagious illnesses are required to stay home.

The teacher reserves the right to send the student home if his or her sickness interferes with the other students' learning. Please do not bring your child to class if they did not attend their normal school day.

A sick student = sick classmates = a sick teacher = no school.

Class Schedule

Our most up-to-date schedule is listed on our website. Please visit <http://jamsportland.com/calendar/>

Online Classes

Online classes are for those who live more than 30 miles from JAMS and must be approved by JAMS. The schedule for online classes is different from regular classes.

- The online schedule is subject to change according to enrollment numbers.
- Beginner level: two 45-minute classes each week
- Intermediate, Pre-Advanced and Advanced levels: 60 minutes of class (the number of classes varies by term)
- Shipping fee for materials is \$15 fee
- Newly enrolled students will have a one-on-one private lesson during the first week (one class).

PICKUP AND DROPOFF

To avoid unnecessary distractions for all students, parents should drop their children off 5 minutes before class and arrive to pick them up 5 minutes before class ends. For example, if class starts at 3:30 p.m., students must be dropped off at 3:25 p.m. and picked up at 4:25 p.m.

Dropoff

Please be on time. If you are late, please wait outside. Sensei will let you in after 5 minutes when the class has settled.

Pickup

All parents should come inside the building to pick up their children before the class ends. When you arrive, you may wait quietly in the hallway until your child is dismissed.

Waiver

JAMS cannot be responsible for your child's safety after class. If you do not wish to come into the building to pick up your child, you are asked to complete a waiver relieving JAMS and the building leaser of any liability should your child not make it safely to your car. The waiver form is available at the front desk. Please sign and return it to JAMS.

We require that parents of Beginner students be upstairs in the building at the end of class as we only let children leave once we see a parent/guardian. We do not allow children to leave the building alone as we do not find it safe.

If your child is in Bridge (i.e., taking one Intermediate and one Beginner class), you are still required to come upstairs to pick them up during their Beginner class unless you have signed the waiver to let them leave by themselves.

Students in Intermediate Level and above are allowed to leave by themselves.

Penalties

Students are not to be left at the school for more than 5 minutes before or after classes. There will be a charge of \$25 if students are not picked up within 5 minutes of class dismissal and an additional \$25 per 30 minutes thereafter.

The fee is symbolic but will be enforced this term. It's disrupting for teachers and others when a student arrives and disturbs the laser-focus concentration techniques that we are teaching our kids. No exceptions will be made.

If you are unable to pick up your children, you need to provide a permission form to authorize another adult to pick them up from JAMS. No exceptions will be made.

REGISTRATION AND TUITION PAYMENT

Friday of the final week of any term is the registration deadline for the following term. The registration must be received and the tuition paid in full by the registration deadline in order to reserve a seat for your child.

Registration and payment can be made through the Parent Portal. Tuition received after the registration deadline will incur a \$25 late fee.

Class sizes are limited and subject to a first-come, first-served basis.

There will be a fee of \$35 for any NSF check or returned checks.

Please email us if you are interested in learning about discounts for bundled tuition.

Important Note

We will not send new materials until the student is registered, but we will continue to review and build on the foundation laid in the previous term.

Cancellations and Refunds

Cancellations for regular terms must be submitted in writing (mail) and will be processed as follows:

- If you cancel before the first class, the full tuition will be refunded minus a \$50 cancellation fee.
- If you cancel before the fourth week, half of the tuition will be refunded with a \$50 cancellation fee.
- If you cancel after the fourth week, no amount will be refunded. Registrations and fees are non-transferable between applicants.

Written cancellation is also required for Summer Camp and will be processed as follows:

- If you cancel before the first class, the full tuition will be refunded with a \$50 cancellation fee.
- If you cancel before the second week, half of the total fee will be refunded with a \$50 cancellation fee.

Pausing Full-Year Enrollment

- There will be a \$25 processing fee for pausing one term.
- Pausing for more than one term is not allowed. You will need to request a refund and re-enroll later. There will be a \$50 fee for re-enrollment in addition to the \$25 processing fee.

Refunds

If you are eligible for a refund, there will be a \$25 processing fee.

Returning Students

A returning registration fee of \$50 is required again if the student elects to quit for a full term and then decides to return to JAMS at a later date in the school year.

Private Lessons

Private lessons are available to registered students. Rates are:

- \$150 for 30 minutes with Teacher Miwako
- \$100 for 30 minutes with other teachers. Date and time depends on teacher availability.

TERMS AND LEVELS

We have 3 terms — Fall, Winter and Spring. Summer Camp is held during summer break.

Fall and Spring

Fall and Spring terms each consist of 11 weeks of instruction. An exam will be administered in week 11. Results will be posted or emailed when available. Week 12 is reserved for all make-up classes ONLY. No regular classes will be held during this time.

Winter

Winter Term consists of 10 weeks of instruction. An exam will be administered in week 10. Results will be posted or emailed when available. Week 11 is reserved for all make-up classes ONLY. No regular classes will be held during this time.

Summer Camp

Summer Camp has 8 weeks of instruction. An exam will be administered in week 8. Results will be posted or emailed when available. There are no make-up weeks during Summer Camp. Individual requests for make-up classes are arranged by appointment.

Additional Instruction

Passes for additional instruction are available to purchase for all upper levels (Intermediate, Pre-Advanced and Advanced).

We offer 2 options:

- \$200 for 14 passes
- \$100 for 7 passes

Contact info@jamsportland.com to purchase the passes.

ANNUAL COMPETITIONS

There are three annual competitions and contests. Participation is required of all students and applicable fees are added to the term tuition.

Abacus Masters (JAMS only) is held during Winter Term in the local Portland area. As this is a volunteer-run event, we request that all parents assist as advised by our coordinator parents.

Correspondence Contest (League for Soroban Education of America) is held during Fall Term. Students will take part in it during the class.

Northwestern Regional Competition (Portland, Seattle and Calgary) is held in the Spring Term. Participation is mandatory.

SUPPLIES

Parents are required to help students come prepared with necessary supplies. These supplies include:

- Three mid-sized sharpened pencils that would fit in the student's fist. This size is optimal for the child when using the abacus. Please do not send full-size pencils as this slows down the students' proficiency and speed when using the abacus.
- Abacus provided at the time of enrollment.

- Cards provided at the time of enrollment.
- Applicable textbooks and worksheets provided during class.

Failure to bring the above-listed supplies will cause loss of instruction time for your child and others in the class. Replacements will be charged as follows. These charges will be added to your invoice.

Replacement Abacus	\$80
Replacement Workbook	\$10
Replacement of Blue Abacus Card	\$5
Replacement of Red and Black Cards	\$15

New Students

There is a one-time, non-refundable enrollment fee for all new students. This fee includes an abacus bag, abacus, abacus cards, textbooks and worksheets.

COMMUNICATION WITH JAMS STAFF/OFFICE

For questions about policy and procedures and tuition payment, please email us at info@jamsportland.com or call us at 503.419.8040. JAMS business hours are:

Fall, Winter, Spring Terms

Tuesday	3:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday	3:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Thursday and Friday	3:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Saturday	9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Summer Term

Tuesday - Friday	10 a.m. - 6 p.m. (*Email or appointment only)
------------------	---

All times are Pacific

The school is closed on Mondays. While we welcome your calls, calls received during non-business hours or holidays will be returned by a member of the JAMS staff during business hours within two days. If your request is urgent, please email us at info@jamsportland.com with the subject URGENT.

Communication with the JAMS Teaching Staff Regarding Your Child

Sensei Miwako and other members of the teaching staff will contact you if they need to communicate with you regarding your child's progress or behavior. Absence of communication from Sensei simply means that your child is progressing as expected and no further communication is needed at this time.

Please refrain from stepping into the classroom or asking to chat with the teaching staff without a prior appointment as it distracts the teacher, your child and other children in the classroom and takes away from teaching and learning time. You can make an appointment by emailing us at info@jamsportland.com.

Facebook

We strongly encourage parents to take advantage of our Facebook Page (Closed Group) and quarterly parent events to share tips and ideas and to learn from other JAMS parents in an interactive community setting.

EXPECTED BEHAVIOR AND DISMISSAL

At JAMS, we are committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment

We ask that children wash their hands prior to arrival and get a drink and go to the restroom before class, if needed. No food or drink is permitted in the classroom.

Please have your child remove their coat, hat and shoes and greet the instructor with the formal Japanese greeting: "Kon-ni-chi-wa." Upon departure, the student should say goodbye to the instructor in Japanese: "Sayonara." These are gestures of respect and help set the tone for a controlled and effective learning environment.

Any of the following behaviors will result in immediate dismissal from the course: theft, vandalism, violence, foul language, bullying and repeated disrespect toward instructors and fellow students.

Disruptive behavior cannot be tolerated in any classroom; it adversely affects the learning environment and is unfair to other students. The instructor uses "time-out" as a form of discipline if the child becomes disruptive. Parents will be promptly notified if this measure is required.

Classroom Behavior

JAMS reserves the right to dismiss any student at any time for behavior that it regards as inappropriate or dangerous to other students, teachers, staff, equipment or facilities. There are no refunds for dismissals from JAMS.

Injuries

Parents or legal guardians of students waive the right to any legal action for any injuries sustained on school property resulting from normal classroom activity or any other activity conducted by the student before, during or after class.

Snacks

Students can bring a snack and drink, if they need them, for after class. No eating or drinking in class.

Bathroom Breaks

As you know, one of the most important skills for your child's success is "Focus." Our classes are short — only 60 minutes. Multiple bathroom breaks can be disruptive and counterproductive to students and teachers who are doing focus work. We prefer not to allow bathroom breaks during class, so it is important for parents/guardians to make sure their child has taken care of this before class.

However, if your child has a medical condition that requires frequent visits to the bathroom, please notify us at dropoff, and we will be glad to make an exception. We will inform the teacher and seat your child near the door so he/she won't feel shy or embarrassed about disrupting the others.

If a child does need to go to the restroom during class, we allow them to go by themselves. If you are not comfortable with this exception, we ask that you inform us before class and wait in the building so that you can take your child to the bathroom yourself, if the need arises.

LEVEL-SPECIFIC EXAMS DURING WEEK

For all students in Level 8 or higher for abacus and anzan (levels higher than Beginner-level students), we administer a mandatory level-specific exam during Exam Week.

What is Exam Week?

- Exam Week refers to the 4 times during a given JAMS academic year when we host exams in accordance with the League for Soroban Education of America: <http://lseusa.org/index.html>
- Exam Week applies only to students in the Intermediate Levels and above. Exam Week is mandatory and is held toward the end of the term.
- Beginner students do not have Exam Week but have in-house exams for graduating to levels 9, 10 and 11.
- Students in the Bridge Level, i.e. those in one Beginner class and one Intermediate class, are evaluated for readiness to take the test via practice tests. Based on their performance during the practice test, the JAMS teaching staff determines if the student may opt out of the test. A student is allowed to opt out of the test only once based only on Sensei's assessment.

How do I help my child prepare for Exam Week?

- We help students prepare for the exam during class. We administer practice tests for up to a month leading up to Exam Week.
- Parents need to focus on their children completing their homework; no additional parent preparation is needed.

Is there a fee for taking such exams? What is included in such fees?

- Fees for Exam Week are added to your tuition at the beginning of the term.
- If a student moves up to the Bridge Level in the middle of a term, you will be billed for the exam fee then.
- JAMS conducts the exams at the same location as JAMS classes.
- The tests are graded by the League for Soroban Education of America.

Is there anything I can do to help my child be confident for Exam Week?

- Review their recent work in their JAMS textbooks.
- Identify their common/frequent mistakes; understanding one's weakness is the key.
- Re-do some of the problems 5 times each that were common mistakes.
- Cover answers with sticky notes or paper so your child can focus on solving the problem correctly.
- Speed and accuracy are very important for the exam. Encourage your child to use a stopwatch or their JAMS timer. Students are trained to time their work per instructions on the page.

HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN

- Please drop your child off at the entrance door of JAMS.
- Do not show disapproval at mistakes. Your child is quick to notice the slightest hint of disapproval. We learn by our mistakes. Let your child understand that it is all right to take a chance and try and that a mistake is not the end of the world. If your child makes mistakes in the lesson or competition, do not blame them afterward.

- Avoid making comparisons between your child and others (siblings). Every child must progress at his or her own rate.
- We want our JAMS students to grow confident. Please praise their work and respect their intelligence.
- Check their homework. Mark their mistakes and let them correct them.

FACILITY/BUILDING

We are responsible for keeping the facility safe and clean so please be considerate and supervise your children at all times. Make sure the rooms are cleaned up at the end of the class. To avoid unwanted accidents, children are advised to walk (not run) both within and outside the building, especially when they walk in from the entrance door.

We are sharing this building with other tenants so we need to respect their privacy and safety as well.

PHOTOGRAPHY

On occasion, JAMS photographs students enrolled in classes or participating in events. These photographs are for JAMS use only and may be included in future catalogs, brochures, pamphlets or flyers. We also occasionally post photos to Facebook and Instagram with student names. If you do not want your child to be photographed, please notify us at info@jamsportland.com

Photo Release

JAMS is hereby granted permission to take photographs of students to use in its marketing materials including: website, brochures, posters, flyers, ads and other promotional materials necessary for the operation of the school. Permission is also hereby granted for JAMS to copyright such photos in its name.

INCLEMENT WEATHER ADVISORY

In the event of severe weather, or if the Beaverton School District is closed or starting late, JAMS will follow the same schedule.