

Dripping Springs

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

**STUDENT HANDBOOK
2018-2019**



We inspire and equip students to be life-long learners and positive contributors to the world.

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Preface

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to the 2018–19 school year! Education is a team effort, and we know that students, parents, teachers, and other staff members all working together can make this a wonderfully successful year for our students.

The Dripping Springs Independent School District (DSISD) Student Handbook is designed to provide basic information that you and your child will need during the school year. The handbook is divided into two sections:

Section I: Parental Rights offers information to assist you in responding to school-related issues. We encourage you to take some time to closely review this section of the handbook.

Section II: Other Important Information for Students and Parents is organized alphabetically by topic, and, where possible, further divided by applicability to ages and/or grade levels, for quick access when searching for information on a specific issue.

Please be aware that the term “parent,” unless otherwise noted, is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, any person granted some other type of lawful control of the student, or any other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

Both students and parents should become familiar with the DSISD Student Code of Conduct, which is a document adopted by the board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document may be found on the district’s website at <https://www.dsisdtx.us/domain/143> and is available in hard copy upon request.

The Student Handbook is a general reference guide only and is designed to be in harmony with board policy and the Student Code of Conduct. Please be aware that it is not a complete statement of all policies, procedures, or rules that may be applicable in a given circumstance.

In case of conflict between board policy (including the Student Code of Conduct) and any provisions of the Student Handbook, the provisions of board policy and the Student Code of Conduct are to be followed. In case of conflict between the Student Handbook and the Dripping Springs ISD District of Innovation Plan, the District of Innovation plan controls.

Please be aware that the Student Handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. The district encourages parents to stay informed of proposed board policy changes by attending board meetings and reviewing newsletters and other communications explaining changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions. The district reserves the right to modify provisions of the Student Handbook at any time, whenever it is deemed necessary. Notice of any revision or modification will be given, as is reasonably practical under the circumstances.

Although the Student Handbook may refer to rights established through law or district policy, the Student Handbook does not create any additional rights for students and parents. It does not, nor is it intended to, create contractual or legal rights between any student or parent and the district.

Note: References to policy codes are included so that parents can refer to board policy. The district's official policy manual is available for review in the district administration office. DSISD Board Policy can be viewed on-line at <https://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/619>.

If you or your child has questions about any of the material in this handbook, please contact your campus administration.

Applicability of School Rules

As required by law, the board has adopted a Student Code of Conduct that prohibits certain behaviors and defines standards of acceptable behavior - both on and off campus - and consequences for violation of these standards. The district has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards set out in the Student Code of Conduct as well as campus and classroom rules. During any periods of instruction during the summer months, the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct in place for the year immediately preceding the summer period shall apply, unless the district amends either or both documents for the purposes of summer instruction.

Accessibility

If you have difficulty accessing the information in this document because of disability, please contact Rhonda Whitman, rhonda.whitman@dsisdtx.us, (512)858-3053.

Section I: Parental Rights

This section of the DSISD Student Handbook includes information related to certain rights of parents as specified in state or federal law.

Consent, Opt-Out, and Refusal Rights

Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation

A district employee will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without obtaining prior written parental consent unless the examination, test, or treatment is required under state or federal law regarding requirements for special education or by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for child abuse investigations and reports.

Consent to Display a Student's Original Works and Personal Information

Teachers may display students' work, which may include personally identifiable student information, in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement.

However, the district will seek parental consent before displaying students' artwork, special projects, photographs taken by students, original videos or voice recordings, and other original works on the district's website, a website affiliated or sponsored by the district, such as a campus or classroom website, and in district publications, which may include printed materials, videos, or other methods of mass communication.

Consent to Receive Parenting and Paternity Awareness Instruction if Student is under Age 14

A student under the age of 14 must have parental permission to receive instruction in the district's parenting and paternity awareness program; otherwise, the student will not be allowed to participate in the instruction. This program, developed by the Office of the Texas Attorney General and the State Board of Education (SBOE), is incorporated into the district's health education classes.

Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student when Not Otherwise Permitted by Law

State law permits the school to make a video or voice recording without parental permission for the following circumstances:

- When it is to be used for school safety;
- When it relates to classroom instruction or a co-curricular or extracurricular activity;
- When it relates to media coverage of the school; or
- When it relates to the promotion of student safety as provided by law for a student receiving special education services in certain settings.

The district will seek parental consent through a written request before making any other video or voice recording of your child not otherwise allowed by law.

[See **Video Cameras** on page 98 for more information, including a parent's right to request video and audio equipment be placed in certain special education settings.]

Limiting Electronic Communications with Students by District Employees

Teachers and other approved employees are permitted by the district to use electronic communication with students within the scope of the individual's professional responsibilities, as described by Board Policy DH and any other district guidelines. For example, a teacher may set up a social networking page for his or her class that has information related to class work, homework, and tests. As a parent, you are welcome to join or become a member of such a page.

However, text messages sent to an individual student are only allowed if a district employee with responsibility for an extracurricular activity needs to communicate with a student participating in the extracurricular activity.

If you prefer that your child not receive any one-to-one electronic communications from a district employee or if you have questions related to the use of electronic media by district employees, please contact the campus principal.

Objecting to the Release of Directory Information

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) discloses appropriately designated "directory information" from a child's education records without written consent. "Directory information" is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. This directory information will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it. However, release of a student's directory information may be prevented by the parent or an eligible student. This objection must be made at the time of annual enrollment verification. A parent may change their student's release status at any time by making the request in writing to the campus principal. Within ten 9 Dripping Springs ISD school days of your child's first day of instruction for this school year, as allowed by state law, the district has identified two directory information lists - one for school-sponsored purposes and the second for all other requests. For a list of items that have been designated as directory information, see Board Policy FL (Local). If you do not object to the use of your child's information for these limited school-sponsored purposes, the school will not need to ask your permission each time the district wishes to use the information for the school-sponsored purposes and must release this information when the school receives a request from an outside entity or individual. The district is required by federal law to comply with a request by a military recruiter or an institution of higher education for students' names, addresses, and telephone listings, unless parents have advised the district not to release their child's information without prior written consent. This objection must be made at the time of annual enrollment verification. A parent may change this release status at any time by making the request in writing to the campus principal.

Also review the information at **Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records** on page 12 .

Objecting to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

The district is required by federal law to comply with a request by a military recruiter or an institution of higher education for students' names, addresses, and telephone listings, unless parents have advised the district not to release their child's information without prior written consent. This objection must be made at the time of annual enrollment verification. A parent

may change this release status at any time by making the request in writing to the campus principal.

Participation in Third-Party Surveys

Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey, Analysis, or Evaluation

Your child will not be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation—funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education—that concerns:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent.
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family.
- Sex behavior or attitudes.
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
- Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship.
- Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parent.
- Income, except when the information is required by law and will be used to determine the student’s eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

You will be able to inspect the survey or other instrument and any instructional materials used in connection with such a survey, analysis, or evaluation. [For further information, see policy EF(LEGAL).]

“Opting Out” of Participation in Other Types of Surveys or Screenings and the Disclosure of Personal Information

As a parent, you have a right to receive notice of and deny permission for your child’s participation in:

- Any survey concerning the private information listed above, regardless of funding.
- School activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from your child for the purpose of marketing, selling, or otherwise disclosing that information.

Note: This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.

- Any non emergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered and scheduled by the school in advance and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student. Exceptions are hearing,

vision, or spinal screenings, or any physical examination or screening permitted or required under state law. [See policies EF and FFAA.]

As a parent, you may inspect a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to your child.

Removing a Student from Instruction or Excusing a Student from a Required Component of Instruction

Human Sexuality Instruction

As a part of the district's curriculum, students receive instruction related to human sexuality. The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) is involved with the selection of course materials for such instruction.

State law requires that any instruction related to human sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) must:

- Present abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice of behavior in relationship to all sexual activity for unmarried persons of school age;
- Devote more attention to abstinence from sexual activity than to any other behavior;
- Emphasize that abstinence is the only method that is 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity;
- Direct adolescents to a standard of behavior in which abstinence from sexual activity before marriage is the most effective way to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases; and
- If included in the content of the curriculum, teach contraception and condom use in terms of human use reality rates instead of theoretical laboratory rates.

In accordance with state law, below is a summary of the district's curriculum regarding human sexuality instruction:

The objective of the DSISD Human Sexuality (Sex Education) Curriculum is to provide a basic overview of accurate information related to the human reproductive system, risks associated with sexual activity, promote awareness and prevention of sexually transmitted infections, and reinforce abstinence as the healthiest choice to ensure physical and emotional well-being.

As a parent, you are entitled to review the curriculum materials. In addition, you may remove your child from any part of the human sexuality instruction with no academic, disciplinary, or other penalties. You may also choose to become more involved with the development of curriculum used for this purpose by becoming a member of the district's SHAC. Please see the campus principal for additional information.

Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence in Grades 3–12

You may request that your child be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence. State law requires students in social studies classes in grades 3–12 to recite a portion of the text of the Declaration of Independence during Celebrate Freedom Week unless (1) you provide a written statement requesting that your child be excused, (2) the district determines that your child has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or (3) you are a representative of a foreign government to whom the U.S. government extends diplomatic immunity.

[See policy EHBK(LEGAL).]

Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags

As a parent, you may request that your child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be in writing. State law does not allow your child to be excused from participation in the required minute of silence or silent activity that follows.

[See **Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence** on page 77 and policy EC(LEGAL).]

Religious or Moral Beliefs

You may remove your child temporarily from the classroom if an instructional activity in which your child is scheduled to participate conflicts with your religious or moral beliefs. The removal cannot be for the purpose of avoiding a test and may not extend for an entire semester. Further, your child must satisfy grade-level and graduation requirements as determined by the school and by state law.

Tutoring or Test Preparation

Based on informal observations, evaluative data such as grades earned on assignments or tests, or results from diagnostic assessments, a teacher may determine that a student is in need of additional targeted assistance for the student to achieve mastery in state-developed essential knowledge and skills. The school will always attempt to provide tutoring and strategies for test-taking in ways that prevent removal from other instruction as much as possible. In accordance with state law and policy EC, the school will not remove a student from a regularly scheduled class for remedial tutoring or test preparation for more than ten percent of the school days on which the class is offered, unless the student's parent consents to this removal.

The school may also offer tutorial services, which students whose grades are below 70 will be required to attend.

[Also refer to policies EC and EHBC, and contact your student's teacher with questions about any tutoring programs provided by the school.]

Right of Access to Student Records, Curriculum Materials, and District Records/Policies

Instructional Materials

As a parent, you have a right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum, and to examine tests that have been administered to your child.

You are also entitled to request that the school allow your child to take home any instructional materials used by the student. If the school determines that sufficient availability exists to grant the request, the student must return the materials at the beginning of the next school day if requested to do so by the student's teacher.

Notices of Certain Student Misconduct to Noncustodial Parent

Noncustodial parents may request in writing that they be provided, for the remainder of the school year, a copy of any written notice usually provided to parents related to their child's misconduct that may involve placement in a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) or expulsion. [See policy FO(LEGAL) and the Student Code of Conduct.]

Participation in Federally Required, State-Mandated, and District Assessments

You may request information regarding any state or district policy related to your child's participation in assessments required by federal law, state law, or the district.

Student Records

Accessing Student Records

You may review your child's student records. These records include:

- Attendance records,
- Test scores,
- Grades,
- Disciplinary records,
- Counseling records,
- Psychological records,
- Applications for admission,
- Health and immunization information,
- Other medical records,
- Teacher and school counselor evaluations,
- Reports of behavioral patterns,

- Records relating to assistance provided for learning difficulties, including information collected regarding any intervention strategies used with your child, as the term intervention strategy is defined by law,
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child, and
- Teaching materials and tests used in your child’s classroom.

Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records

A federal law, known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, affords parents and eligible students certain rights with respect to student education records. For purposes of student records, an “eligible” student is one who is age 18 or older or who is attending an institution of postsecondary education. These rights, as discussed in this section as well as at **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 7, are:

- The right to inspect and review student records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access.
- The right to request an amendment to a student record the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of FERPA.
- The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information from the student’s records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning failures by the school to comply with FERPA requirements. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Both FERPA and state laws safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and eligible students certain rights of privacy. Before disclosing any personally identifiable information from a student’s records, the district must verify the identity of the person, including a parent or the student, requesting the information.

Virtually all information pertaining to student performance, including grades, test results, and disciplinary records, is considered confidential educational records.

Inspection and release of student records is primarily restricted to an eligible student or a student’s parent—whether married, separated, or divorced—unless the school is given a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student’s education records.

Federal law requires that, as soon as a student reaches the age of 18, is emancipated by a court, or enrolls in a postsecondary institution, control of the records goes to the student. The parent may continue to have access to the records, however, if the student is a dependent for tax purposes and under limited circumstances when there is a threat to the health and safety of the student or other individuals.

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FERPA permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's education records, without written consent of the parent or eligible student, in the following circumstances:

- When district school officials have what federal law refers to as a “legitimate educational interest” in a student's records. School officials would include board members and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals; teachers, school counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff (including district health or district medical staff); a person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a particular institutional service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, third-party vendor that offers online programs or software, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, school resource officer, or volunteer); a parent or student serving on a school committee; or a parent or student assisting a school official in the performance of his or her duties. “Legitimate educational interest” in a student's records includes working with the student; considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities; compiling statistical data; reviewing an educational record to fulfill the official's professional responsibility to the school and the student; or investigating or evaluating programs.
- To authorized representatives of various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers, the U.S. Comptroller General's office, the U.S. Attorney General's office, the U.S. Secretary of Education, TEA, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture's office, and Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers or other child welfare representatives, in certain cases.
- To individuals or entities granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- To another school, school district/system, or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she is already enrolled.
- In connection with financial aid for which a student has applied or which the student has received.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; administer student aid programs; or improve instruction.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- When the district discloses information it has designated as directory information. [See **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 7 for opportunities to prohibit this disclosure.]

Release of personally identifiable information to any other person or agency—such as a prospective employer or for a scholarship application—will occur only with parental or student permission as appropriate.

The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school and for students who have withdrawn or graduated.

A parent or eligible student who wishes to inspect the student's records should submit a written request to the records custodian identifying the records he or she wishes to inspect. Records may be inspected by a parent or eligible student during regular school hours. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

A parent or eligible student who provides a written request and pays copying costs of ten cents per page may obtain copies. If circumstances prevent inspection during regular school hours and the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals, the district will either provide a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review these records.

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student's records and request a correction or amendment if the records are considered inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. A request to correct a student's record should be submitted to the appropriate records custodian. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected and include an explanation of how the information in the record is inaccurate. If the district denies the request to amend the records, the parent or eligible student has the right to request a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the parent or eligible student has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record.

Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student's grade in a course or on an examination is handled through the general complaint process found in policy FNG(LOCAL). A grade issued by a classroom teacher can be changed only if, as determined by the board of trustees, the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or inconsistent with the district's grading policy. [See Finality of Grades at FNG(LEGAL), **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 79, and **Complaints and Concerns** on page 39 for an overview of the process.]

The district's policy regarding student records found at policy FL is available from the principal's or superintendent's office or on the district's website at <https://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/619>.

The parent's or eligible student's right of access to and copies of student records do not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records—such as a teacher's personal notes about a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher—do not have to be made available to the parent or student.

Teacher and Staff Professional Qualifications

You may request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's teachers, including whether a teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; whether the teacher has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived; and whether the teacher is currently teaching in the field of discipline of his or her certification. You also have the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to your child.

Students with Exceptionalities or Special Circumstances

Children of Military Families

Children of military families will be provided flexibility regarding certain district requirements, including:

- Immunization requirements.
- Grade level, course, or educational program placement.
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities.
- Graduation requirements.

In addition, absences related to a student visiting with his or her parent, including a stepparent or legal guardian, who has been called to active duty for, is on leave from, or is returning from a deployment of at least four months will be excused by the district. The district will permit no more than five excused absences per year for this purpose. For the absence to be excused, the absence must occur no earlier than the 60th day before deployment or no later than the 30th day after the parent's return from deployment.

Additional information may be found at [Military Family Resources at the Texas Education Agency](#).

Parental Role in Certain Classroom and School Assignments

Multiple Birth Siblings

As a parent, if your children are multiple birth siblings (e.g., twins, triplets, etc.) assigned to the same grade and campus, you may request that they be placed either in the same classroom or in separate classrooms. Your written request must be submitted no later than the 14th day after the enrollment of your children. [See policy FDB(LEGAL).]

Safety Transfers/Assignments

As a parent, you may:

- Request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the district to have been a victim of bullying, which includes cyberbullying, as defined by Education Code 37.0832. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. See the principal for information.
- Consult with district administrators if your child has been determined by the district to have engaged in bullying and the board decides to transfer your child to another classroom or campus. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus.

[See **Bullying** on page 33, and policies FDB and FFI.]

- Request the transfer of your child to attend a safe public school in the district if your child attends school at a campus identified by TEA as persistently dangerous or if your child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds. [See policy FDE.]

- Request the transfer of your child to another district campus or a neighboring district if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether the assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault. If the victim does not wish to transfer, the district will transfer the assailant in accordance with policy FDE.

Service/Assistance Animal Use by Students

A parent of a student who uses a service/assistance animal because of the student's disability must submit a request in writing to the principal before bringing the service/assistance animal on campus. The district will try to accommodate a request as soon as possible but will do so within ten district business days.

Students in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care)

A student who is currently in the conservatorship (custody) of the state and who enrolls in the district after the beginning of the school year will be allowed credit-by-examination opportunities outside the district's established testing windows, and the district will grant proportionate course credit by semester (partial credit) when a student only passes one semester of a two-semester course.

A student who is currently in the conservatorship of the state and who is moved outside of the district's or school's attendance boundaries, or who is initially placed in the conservatorship of the state and who is moved outside the district's or school's boundaries, is entitled to continue in enrollment at the school he or she was attending prior to the placement or move until the student reaches the highest grade level at the particular school.

In addition, if a student in grade 11 or 12 transfers to another district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, the student can request to receive a diploma from the previous district if he or she meets the criteria to graduate from the previous district.

In addition, for a student in the conservatorship of the state who is eligible for a tuition and fee exemption under state law and likely to be in care on the day preceding the student's 18th birthday, the district will:

- Assist the student with the completion of any applications for admission or for financial aid;
- Arrange and accompany the student on campus visits;
- Assist in researching and applying for private or institution-sponsored scholarships;
- Identify whether the student is a candidate for appointment to a military academy;
- Assist the student in registering and preparing for college entrance examinations, including, subject to the availability of funds, arranging for the payment of any examination fees by the DFPS; and
- Coordinate contact between the student and a liaison officer for students who were formerly in the conservatorship of the state.

[See also **Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration** on page 42, **Course Credit** on page 42, and **Students in Foster Care** on page 95 for more information.]

Students Who Are Homeless

Children who are homeless will be provided flexibility regarding certain district provisions, including:

- Proof of residency requirements;
- Immunization requirements;
- Educational program placement, if the student is unable to provide previous academic records, or misses an application deadline during a period of homelessness;
- Credit-by-examination opportunities;
- The award of partial credit (awarding credit proportionately when a student passes only one semester of a two-semester course);
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities; and
- Graduation requirements.

If a student in grade 11 or 12 is homeless and transfers to another school district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, the student can request to receive a diploma from the previous district if he or she meets the criteria to graduate from the previous district.

Federal law also allows a homeless student to remain enrolled in what is called the “school of origin” or to enroll in a new school in the attendance area where the student is currently residing.

A student or parent who is dissatisfied by the district’s eligibility, school selection, or enrollment decision may appeal through policy FNG(LOCAL). The district will expedite local timelines, when possible, for prompt dispute resolution.

[See also **Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration** on page 42, **Course Credit** on page 42, and **Homeless Students** on page 95 for more information.]

Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education or Section 504 Services

For those students who are having difficulty in the regular classroom, all school districts must consider tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students, including a process based on Response to Intervention (RtI). The implementation of RtI has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of districts to meet the needs of all struggling students.

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her parent may contact the individuals listed below to learn about the school’s overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including making a referral for a special education evaluation or for a Section 504 evaluation to determine

whether the student needs specific aids, accommodations, or services. A parent may request an evaluation for special education or Section 504 services at any time.

Please note that a request for a special education evaluation may be made verbally and does not need to be in writing. Districts and charter schools must still comply with all federal prior written notice and procedural safeguard requirements and the requirements for identifying, locating, and evaluating children who are suspected of being a child with a disability and in need of special education. However, a verbal request does not require the district or charter school to respond within the 15-school-day timeline.

Special Education Referrals

If a parent makes a written request for an initial evaluation for special education services to the director of special education services or to a district administrative employee of the school district, the district must respond no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, the district must give the parent prior written notice of whether it agrees or refuses to evaluate the student, along with a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*. If the district agrees to evaluate the student, it must also give the parent the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

If the district decides to evaluate the student, it must complete the student's initial evaluation and evaluation report no later than 45 school days from the day it receives a parent's written consent. However, if the student is absent from school during the evaluation period for three or more school days, the evaluation period will be extended by the number of school days equal to the number of school days that the student is absent.

There is an exception to the 45-school-day timeline. If the district receives a parent's consent for the initial evaluation at least 35 but less than 45 school days before the last instructional day of the school year, it must complete the written report and provide a copy of the report to the parent by June 30 of that year. However, if the student is absent from school for three or more days during the evaluation period, the June 30 due date no longer applies. Instead, the general timeline of 45 school days plus extensions for absences of three or more days will apply.

Upon completing the evaluation, the district must give the parent a copy of the evaluation report at no cost.

Additional information regarding special education is available from the school district in a companion document titled *Parent's Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process*.

Contact Person for Special Education Referrals

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for special education services is Katharine Muller, located at 510 W. Mercer St., by telephone at 512-858-3066.

Each school district must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of students in the district's Section 504 program. Districts must also implement a system of procedural safeguards that includes notice, an opportunity for a parent or guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parent or guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure.

Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for Section 504 services is Katharine Muller, located at 510 W. Mercer St., by telephone at 512-858-3066.

[See also **Students with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504** on page 91.]

The following websites provide information to those who are seeking information and resources specific to students with disabilities and their families:

- [Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process](#)
- [Partners Resource Network](#)
- [Special Education Information Center](#)
- [Texas Project First](#)

Notification to Parent of Intervention Strategies for Learning Difficulties Provided to Student in General Education

The district will annually notify parents that it provides assistance to students, other than those already enrolled in a special education program, who need assistance for learning difficulties, including intervention strategies.

Students Who Receive Special Education Services with Other School-Aged Children in the Home

If a student is receiving special education services at a campus outside his or her attendance zone, the parent or guardian may request that any other student residing in the household be transferred to the same campus, if the appropriate grade level for the transferring student is offered on that campus. However, the district is not required to provide transportation to the other children in the household. The parent or guardian should speak with the principal of the school regarding transportation needs prior to requesting a transfer for any other children in the home. [See policy FDB(LOCAL).]

Students Who Speak a Primary Language Other than English

A student may be eligible to receive specialized support if his or her primary language is not English, and the student has difficulty performing ordinary class work in English. If the student qualifies for these extra services, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will determine the types of services the student needs, including accommodations or modifications related to classroom instruction, local assessments, and state-mandated assessments.

Students with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected Under Section 504

A student determined to have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, as defined by law, and who does not otherwise qualify for special education services, may qualify for protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Section 504 is a federal law designed to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities. When an evaluation is requested, a committee will be formed to determine if the student is in need of

services and supports under Section 504 to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE), as this is defined in federal law. [See policy FB.]

[See also **Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education or Section 504 Services** on page 91 for more information.]

Section II: Other Important Information for Students and Parents

Topics in this section of the Student Handbook contain important information on academics, school activities, and school operations and requirements. Take a moment with your child to become familiar with the various issues addressed in this section. Should you be unable to find the information on a particular topic, please contact the campus administration.

Enrollment

Attendance Zones

Students must live in the boundaries of the Dripping Springs ISD or qualify for enrollment in accordance with Board Policy FD (LEGAL) in order to attend one of the district's schools. Each student is required to attend the school in the attendance zone in which the student's family resides. The attendance zones are established by the DSISD Board of Trustees. Current boundary information can be found at the DSISD website, www.dsisdtx.us.

Enrollment

The basic requirements for admission to DSISD schools are:

- The student lives in the district with a parent or legal guardian, or one of the student's parents lives in the district, even if the student does not live with that parent.
 - To be eligible for admission based on just the parent's residence in the district, the court that issued a final order in a divorce proceeding must have designated that parent as a managing or possessory conservator for the child.
 - The parent enrolling a student based on only the parent's residence in the district must provide a copy of a current final order, signed by the judge and showing a file stamp from the court, designating the parent as a managing or possessory conservator.
- The student is under age 18 and, subject to Board Policy at FD (LOCAL) and FDA (LOCAL), lives in the district with an adult resident of the district who has completed all appropriate district documents for students living separate and apart from their parents. The school district has Power of Attorney forms to be completed by both the parent and the person with whom the student lives.
- The student is under age 18 and does not reside in the district, but a grandparent who provides a substantial amount of after-school care for the person resides in the district. The parent or legal guardian who enrolls the student must complete the appropriate district documents and submit them for approval to the superintendent.
- Students under the age of 18 must be enrolled by a parent, legal guardian, or adult resident who has a valid Power of Attorney for the student. Students who are 18 or older, who are legally married, or who have ever been legally married, and who have not graduated from high school can enroll themselves.

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The adult enrolling the student must present current immunization records or show proof that the required immunizations have begun.

No later than 30 days after a student has been enrolled, the adult enrolling the student must provide a copy of a birth certificate, or other acceptable identification for the child, and copies of the education records from the school the child last attended. A pre-kindergarten program is available for children who are at least four years old on September 1. Students who meet one or more of the following criteria may attend the pre-kindergarten program at no cost:

- cannot speak or understand English;
- homeless as defined by federal law;
- educationally disadvantaged;
- the child of an active duty member of the armed forces, including a National Guard member ordered to active duty;
- the child of a member of the armed forces, including a National Guard member, who was injured or killed while on active duty; or
- in or have been in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services, after an adversary proceeding.

If you think your child or children are eligible, please contact the principal.

Your child must be five years old on or before September 1 of the current school year to be admitted to kindergarten.

To be admitted to first grade, your child must be six years old on or before September 1st of the current year, or must have completed kindergarten in the public schools of another state, or been enrolled in first grade in the public schools of another state.

The application for admission and enrollment forms are official government records and it is a crime to provide false information of any kind or false records for identification. School officials can ask parents or another adult enrolling a student to provide some evidence that they are bona fide residents of the school district. As required by law, we will record the name, address, and date of birth of the person enrolling a student. If school officials have reason to question the legitimacy of a child's residency information, they can investigate to determine the student's actual place of residence. If the district finds that a student is not really a district resident, the student will be withdrawn and school officials will take the necessary legal steps to recover the maximum tuition fee the school district can charge or the amount the board of trustees budgets as an expense per student.

Registration

Students new to DSISD schools should register at the appropriate campus during the posted summer registration times or at any time during regular school hours. Please bring the following items to registration:

- Proof of Residence:
- Current lease agreement AND a current electric bill OR
- Settlement statement with signature page/warranty deed AND a current electric bill OR
- Current tax statement indicating Homestead Exemption

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- Parent Identification (must be a state or federally issued ID, such as driver's license or passport, that shows name, address, and date of birth)
- Birth Certificate (certified), to obtain a copy of Texas certificates:
<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/VS/>
- Student's Social Security Card
- Immunization Records* (current immunization requirements can be found on the DSISD website)
- Previous School's Withdrawal Form
- Recent Unofficial Transcript or Report Card and Standardized Test results

*Exceptions to immunization requirements are granted only in compliance with the conditions outlined in Board Policy FFAB (Legal).

Transfers

Intracampus Transfer

The principal is authorized to transfer a student from one classroom to another.

Intradistrict Transfer

The parent of a resident student of the district may request an intradistrict transfer from one campus to another if the parent:

- Is in the process of building a domicile within the attendance zone. The domicile shall be expected to be completed, reasonably, within 120 days from the transfer application date. The student shall live in the residence.
- Has a signed lease or a rental agreement to occupy a domicile within the attendance zone within 30 calendar days following the student's enrollment.
- Is a resident District employee and is assigned to a campus in a zone in which he or she does not reside.

Moving Out of the District

A resident student who becomes a nonresident during the course of the school year may make application to continue attendance for the remainder of the school year under the provisions of Board Policy FDA (LOCAL).

Early Enrollment Transfer: New Residence Construction

Children of families who are in the process of building a domicile within the District may be enrolled as transfers if the domicile is reasonably expected to be completed within 120 days from the transfer application date with the student living in the domicile. In addition, parents are responsible for providing transportation to and from school if early enrollment is granted.

Child of Employee Intradistrict Transfer

Children of nonresident District employees shall be assigned to the campus at which the employee is assigned if space is available. In the event space is not available without incurring additional cost for teachers or classrooms, or if the student's grade level is not offered where the employee is assigned, the District may assign the student to a campus with available space. The employee may request the campus of choice. The request shall be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Superintendent or designee. Child of employee intradistrict transfers

must be renewed annually as required by Board Policy FDA (Local). Transportation services will not be provided to, from, or between school campuses for transfer students.

Child of Employee Interdistrict Transfer

A nonresident student over the age of five years but not over the age of 18 years who has not completed high school may enroll in the district if they have a parent who works at least four hours per day as an employee of the district. Employee interdistrict transfers must be renewed annually as required by board policy FDA (Local). Transportation services will not be provided to, from, or between school campuses for transfer students.

Absences/Attendance

Regular school attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his or her education—to benefit from teacher-led and school activities, to build each day's learning on the previous day's, and to grow as an individual. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, the student and parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Regular attendance is also critical to the District's success because it is a factor in the district and campus rating under the state accountability system and the amount of funding received for the student.

Two state laws—one dealing with the required presence of school-aged children in school, e.g., compulsory attendance, the other with how a student's attendance affects the award of a student's final grade or course credit—are of special interest to students and parents. They are discussed below.

Compulsory Attendance

Age 19 and Older

A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 19th birthday is required to attend each school day until the end of the school year. If a student age 19 or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester, the district may revoke the student's enrollment. The student's presence on school property thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing. [See policy FEA.]

Between Ages 6 and 19

State law requires that a student between the ages of 6 and 19 attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction program, extended year program, or tutorial session, unless the student is otherwise excused from attendance or legally exempt.

State law requires attendance in an accelerated reading instruction program when kindergarten, first grade, or second grade students are assigned to such a program. Parents will be notified in writing if their child is assigned to an accelerated reading instruction program as a result of a diagnostic reading instrument.

A student will be required to attend any assigned accelerated instruction program, which may occur before or after school or during the summer, if the student does not meet the passing standards on the state assessment for his or her grade level and/or applicable subject area.

Prekindergarten and Kindergarten

Students enrolled in prekindergarten or kindergarten are required to attend school and are subject to the compulsory attendance requirements as long as they remain enrolled.

Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance

All Grade Levels

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences if the student makes up all work. These include the following activities and events:

- Religious holy days;
- Required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining U.S. citizenship;
- Documented health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders, if the student comes to school or returns to school on the same day as the appointment. A note from the health-care provider must be submitted upon the student's arrival or return to campus; and
- For students in the conservatorship (custody) of the state,
 - An activity required under a court-ordered service plan; or
 - Any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the student's participation in the activity outside of school hours.

As listed in Section I at **Children of Military Families**, absences of up to five days will be excused for a student to visit with a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian who has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from certain deployments. [See page 24 for that section.]

Secondary Grade Levels

In addition, a junior or senior student's absence of up to two days related to visiting a college or university will be considered an exemption, provided this has been authorized by the board under policy FEA(LOCAL), the student receives approval from the campus principal, follows the campus procedures to verify such a visit, and makes up any work missed.

An absence will also be considered an exemption if a student 17 years of age or older is pursuing enlistment in a branch of the U.S. armed services or Texas National Guard, provided the absence does not exceed four days during the period the student is enrolled in high school and the student provides verification to the district of these activities.

Absences of up to two days in a school year will also be considered an exemption for:

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- A student serving as an early voting clerk, provided the district's board has authorized this in policy FEA(LOCAL), the student notifies his or her teachers, and the student receives approval from the principal prior to the absences; and
- A student serving as an election clerk, if the student makes up any work missed.

An absence of a student in grades 6–12 for the purpose of sounding “Taps” at a military honors funeral for a deceased veteran will also be excused by the district.

District Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance

A person required to attend school due to compulsory attendance law may be excused for temporary absence for any unusual cause acceptable to the District and documented appropriately. Such causes may include, but are not limited to:

Personal illness

School nurse request: Each school is equipped with a health facility. The health facility is designed to treat minor injuries and to act as a temporary “waiting station” for children who have become ill during the school day. Should a student become ill, persons designated in the Skyward system will be contacted to pick up the student. A student will be sent home if they exhibit the following:

- Fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Itching, red eyes with discharge
- Unknown rash
- Ringworm of the scalp (until treatment has started)
- Communicable diseases listed by the Texas State Department of Health.
- Head lice: When a child is sent home for lice infestation, he or she shall not be excused for more than 48 hours. The child is expected to return to school the next day after receiving treatment to eradicate head lice. A parent must accompany the student to the readmission screening to provide transportation home in the event that the student is not free of lice.
- Family emergency or death
- Board-approved extracurricular activities

Unexcused

Unexcused absences are those that are not exempt or excused, but are approved and verified by a parent. Out of town absences are documented as unexcused absences. Parents must verify the absence by e-mail to the campus attendance office, through Family Access Absence Notification on-line, or a phone call to the campus attendance office within 48 hours of the absence. When possible, verification of a planned absence should be provided in advance of the absence. Absence verification must describe the reason for the absence. The verification must be submitted by the student's parent or, if the student is 18 or older or is an emancipated minor, by the student.

Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance

All Grade Levels

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent without permission from school; from any class; from required special programs, such as additional special instruction, termed “accelerated instruction” by the state; or from required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

Students with Disabilities

If a student with a disability is experiencing attendance issues, the student’s ARD committee or Section 504 committee will be notified, and the committee will determine whether the attendance issues warrant an evaluation, a reevaluation, and/or modifications to the student’s individualized education program or Section 504 plan, as appropriate.

Age 19 and Older

After a student age 19 or older incurs a third unexcused absence, the district will send the student a letter as required by law explaining that the district may revoke the student’s enrollment for the remainder of the school year if the student has more than five unexcused absences in a semester. As an alternative to revoking a student’s enrollment, the district may implement a behavior improvement plan.

Between Ages 6 and 19

When a student between ages 6 and 19 incurs unexcused absences for three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period, the school will send a notice to the student’s parent, as required by law, to remind the parent that it is the parent’s duty to monitor the student’s attendance and to require the student to come to school. The notice will also inform the parent that the district will initiate truancy prevention measures and request a conference between school administrators and the parent. These measures will include a behavior improvement plan, school-based community service, or referrals to either in-school or out-of-school counseling or other social services. Any other measures considered appropriate by the district will also be initiated.

The assistant principals on each campus act as the truancy prevention facilitators for their respective campus. If you have questions about your student and the effect of his or her absences from school, please contact these campus administrators.

A court of law may also impose penalties against a student’s parent if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. A complaint against the parent may be filed in court if the student is absent without excuse from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year.

If a student ages 12–18 incurs unexcused absences on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, the district, in most circumstances, will refer the student to truancy court.

[See policies FEA(LEGAL) and FED(LEGAL).]

Official Attendance-Taking Time (All Grade Levels)

The district must submit attendance of its students to the TEA reflecting attendance at a specific time each day.

Official attendance is taken every day at 10:40 a.m. for the High School, 10:50 a.m. for middle schools, and 8:45 a.m. for elementary schools, and at 11:30 a.m. for half day programs.

A student absent for any portion of the day, including at the official attendance-taking time, should follow the procedures below to provide documentation of the absence.

Documentation after an Absence (All Grade Levels)

When a student is absent from school for any portion of a school day, the parent must verify the absence with an e-mail to the campus attendance office, an absence notification through the Family Access system, or a phone call to the campus attendance office within 48 hours of the absence. Absence verification must describe the reason for the absence. The verification must be submitted by the student's parent or, if the student is 18 or older or is an emancipated minor, by the student. Otherwise, the student's absence may be considered unexcused and, if so, would be considered to be in violation of compulsory attendance laws. The campus will document in its attendance records for the student whether the absence is considered by the district to be excused or unexcused. Please note that, unless the absence is for a statutorily allowed reason under the compulsory attendance laws, the district is not required to excuse any absence, even if the parent provides a note explaining the absence.

Doctor's Note after an Absence for Illness (All Grade Levels)

Upon return to school, a student absent for more than four consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a health care provider verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's extended absence from school.

Otherwise, the student's absence may be considered unexcused and, if so, would be considered to be in violation of compulsory attendance laws.

Should the student develop a questionable pattern of absences, the principal or attendance committee may require a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's absence from school to determine whether the absence or absences will be excused or unexcused.

[See policy FEC(LOCAL).]

Tardy to School or a Class

All students are highly encouraged to be at school on time. Students who are tardy interrupt the instructional process for themselves, their classmates, and the teacher. A student who is tardy to school must check in at the office and get a tardy slip before reporting to class. A tardy may be considered a violation of the compulsory attendance law as it is considered a "part of the day" absence.

Elementary

Students should arrive at school between 7:15 a.m. and 7:35 a.m. and report to assigned areas. At 7:35 a.m., students will be lined up to go to homerooms. Students should be in the building

at the 7:45 a.m. bell; if not, they will be counted as tardy. Students arriving after the 7:45 a.m. bell should report to class with a slip from the office. If tardies are excessive, students may be assigned disciplinary consequences in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Middle School

A student who is not in class when the bell rings and does not have an official excuse is considered tardy. Teachers will track the number of tardies for each student. By the third tardy, the teacher will talk to the student about the importance of being in class on time. Teachers will submit a referral to Skyward at the fourth (and each subsequent) tardy. Tardies will be reset for the second semester.

High School

Any student who chooses to be late to class through negligence, lack of preparation or planning, or any other unacceptable reason will be considered tardy and will be required to serve a consequence for each offense. A student is considered tardy if he/she is not in his or her assigned classroom when the tardy bell rings, but enters class before the first 10 minutes of class time have elapsed. Students who arrive at school or return to school while class is in progress or between classes must sign in at the attendance office immediately and must have a parent confirm the reason for the absence within 48 hours. Failure to sign in at the time of arrival will result in a truancy and disciplinary consequence. Students arriving late to class with an official hall pass excusing the student will not be considered tardy. Students who arrive tardy to class will be assigned consequences according to the following guidelines:

- First tardy to a class will result in a teacher conference and/or warning.
- Second tardy to a class will result in teacher-assigned consequences.
- Third tardy to a class will result in teacher assigned consequences and phone call to parents.
- Fourth tardy to a class will result in a discipline referral to the office and After School Detention assigned by an administrator or designee.
- Fifth tardy to a class will result in a discipline referral to the office and After School Detention assigned by an administrator or designee.
- Six or more tardies to a class will result in a discipline referral to the office and will result in appropriate consequences determined by an administrator and may result in a referral to the Justice of the Peace for truancy.

Release During the School Day

Students will be allowed to leave school during the school day only with the permission of the principal or someone in the principal's office who has been given the authority to release students. Parents cannot go directly to their children's classroom and take the child away from school during the day. Teachers do not have the authority to let children leave their classroom with anyone.

At the time children are enrolled, the parent or other adult completing the enrollment forms should list those people who are authorized to pick up children during the school day. Unless the principal has a current court order signed by a judge, showing an official file stamp with the

court, and indicating that a parent's right of access to and possession of his or her children has been limited in some way, the children will be released to either parent.

Students are urged to schedule appointments after school hours or on non-school days. If this is not possible, appointments should be scheduled after 11:00 a.m. Students must schedule physicals for athletics after school hours.

Students missing any part of a school day for an appointment with a health-care professional will be considered present if the appointment is supported by a document such as a note from the health-care professional. All medical appointments must be verified in writing by the medical professional.

If a student becomes ill during the school day and the school nurse or other district personnel determines that the student should go home, the nurse will contact the student's parent and document the parent's wishes regarding release from school. Unless directed by the parent to release the student unaccompanied, the parent or other authorized adult must follow the sign-out procedures as listed above.

If a student is allowed to leave campus by himself or herself, as permitted by the student's parent, or if the student is age 18 or is an emancipated minor, the nurse will document the time of day the student was released. Under no circumstances will a child in elementary or middle school be released unaccompanied by a parent or adult authorized by the parent.

Elementary and Middle School

A parent must confirm the absences prior to leaving by any of the following:

- through Family Access Absence Notification on-line
- by e-mail to the campus attendance office
- by phone directly to the attendance office
- Parents must come into the office to check out their child by using the Raptor Visitor Management System. Photo identification will be required.
- Office personnel will call for the student to come to the office upon parent's arrival.

If the student returns to campus the same day, the parent or authorized adult must sign the student back in through the main office upon the student's return. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will be required.

High School

Students who must leave school at any time during their scheduled school day must have parent permission confirmed by the attendance office and must sign out at the attendance office.

A parent must confirm the absences, prior to leaving, by any of the following:

- through Family Access Absence Notification on-line
- by e-mail to the campus attendance office

- by phone directly to the attendance office at 858-3101 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

If a student is 18 years of age or is an emancipated minor, the student may produce a note on his or her own behalf.

If departure is to be during a passing period, the student is to sign out in the Attendance Office and receive a permit to leave the parking lot.

If departure occurs during a class period, the student must obtain an early dismissal form from the attendance office, present the form to the teacher, and return to the attendance office to sign out.

The act of signing out does not constitute school approval for the student to leave. An assistant principal or designee will determine if the reason for leaving school will be excused or unexcused. Any student who leaves campus without signing out will be considered unexcused or truant as determined by the appropriate administrator.

Dripping Springs High School is a closed campus. Students are not allowed to leave campus during the school day without parent permission and following the procedures for leaving the campus during school hours. Students who choose to leave campus without following the campus procedures will be subject to a one week parking suspension on the first offense. A second offense will result in a loss of parking privileges through the end of the semester.

Absence and School-Related Activities

A student who is absent from school for any reason will not be allowed to participate in school-related activities on that day or evening. Exceptions will be considered by the principal for excused absences only.

Homebound Services for Long Term Absences

If an illness or accident is such that the student will miss four weeks or more of school under doctor's orders, the student's parent must contact the appropriate school counselor in order to secure homebound services.

Withdrawal for Excessive Absences

A student who misses more than 10 consecutive class days and does not provide sufficient support evidence to justify the absences according to district board policies is subject to withdrawal from school. Prior to withdrawal, an effort to contact the parent, and/or student will be made to clarify the reasons for non-attendance or lack of responsible attendance. After hearing the circumstances and reviewing the case, the appropriate administrator or the Attendance Review Committee may recommend reentry conditions.

Driver License Attendance Verification (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

For a student between the ages of 16 and 18 to obtain a driver's license, written parental permission must be provided for the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) to access the student's attendance records and, in certain circumstances, for a school administrator to provide the student's attendance information to DPS.

In accordance with state law, all persons under the age of 18 must meet certain attendance requirements to qualify for a driver's permit, a driver's license, or a renewal of a driver's license. Students must:

- be currently enrolled, and
- have been in attendance a minimum of 90 percent of the days during the preceding semester (absent no more than nine times in any class). Hours lost must be made up through the assistant principal's office before a Verification of Enrollment form will be issued.

A Verification Of Enrollment (VOE) and attendance form may be obtained from the attendance office. The student will need to submit the VOE form to DPS upon application for a driver license. Due to the large number of requests, and because all student information must be confirmed by a school official before a verification form can be issued, students should allow a minimum of two days for processing their requests. After the first copy, students will be charged \$2 for each additional copy. Students must plan to acquire or renew licenses after school or on school holidays. DPS offices are open until 7:00 pm at many locations. Please plan ahead for a renewal. Absences from school for acquisition or renewal of a driver's license will be considered unexcused.

Accountability under State and Federal Law (All Grade Levels)

DSISD and each of its campuses are held to certain standards of accountability under state and federal law. A key component of the accountability requirements is the dissemination and publication of certain reports and information, which include:

- The Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) for the district, compiled by TEA, the state agency that oversees public education, based on academic factors and ratings;
- A School Report Card (SRC) for each campus in the district compiled by TEA based on academic factors and ratings;
- The district's financial management report, which will include the financial accountability rating assigned to the district by TEA; and
- Information compiled by TEA for the submission of a federal report card that is required by federal law.

This information can be found on the district's website at <https://www.dsisdtx.us/Page/419>. Hard copies of any reports are available upon request to the district's administration office.

TEA also maintains additional accountability and accreditation information at [TEA Performance Reporting Division](#) and the [TEA homepage](#).

Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Test

A student in grades 10–12 will be offered an opportunity to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test and consult with a military recruiter.

Please contact the principal for information about this opportunity.

Bullying (All Grade Levels)

Bullying is defined in Section 37.0832 of the Education Code as a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that:

- Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property;
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student;
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school; or
- Infringes on the rights of the victim at school.

Bullying includes cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is defined by Section 37.0832 of the Education Code as bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device, including through the use of a cellular or other type of telephone, a computer, a camera, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, a social media application, an Internet website, or any other Internet-based communication tool.

The district is required to adopt policies and procedures regarding:

- Bullying that occurs on or is delivered to school property or to the site of a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property;
- Bullying that occurs on a publicly or privately owned school bus or vehicle being used for transportation of students to or from school or a school-sponsored or school-related activity; and
- Cyberbullying that occurs off school property or outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity if the cyberbullying interferes with a student's educational opportunities or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a classroom, school, or school-sponsored or school-related activity.

Bullying is prohibited by the district and could include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading, or ostracism.

If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying or has witnessed bullying of another student, it is important for the student or parent to notify a teacher, school counselor, principal, or another district employee as soon as possible to obtain assistance and intervention. The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying or other related misconduct. The district will also provide notice to the parent of the alleged victim and the

parent of the student alleged to have engaged in bullying. A student may anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying by bullyreport@dsisdtx.us.

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying has occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action and may notify law enforcement in certain circumstances. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying. Available counseling options will be provided to these individuals, as well as to any students who have been identified as witnesses to the bullying.

Any retaliation against a student who reports an incident of bullying is prohibited.

Upon the recommendation of the administration, the board may, in response to an identified case of bullying, decide to transfer a student found to have engaged in bullying to another classroom at the campus. In consultation with the student's parent, the student may also be transferred to another campus in the district. The parent of a student who has been determined by the district to be a victim of bullying may request that the student be transferred to another classroom or campus within the district. [See **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 81.]

A copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office, superintendent's office, and on the district's website, and is included at the end of this handbook in the form of an appendix. Procedures related to reporting allegations of bullying may also be found on the district's website.

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of an investigation may appeal through policy FNG(LOCAL).

[See **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 81, **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 44, **Hazing** on page 63, policy FFI, and the district improvement plan, a copy of which can be viewed in the campus office.]

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

Career and Technical Education courses are infused in all five of the academies at Dripping Springs High School. These courses are designed to provide students with an opportunity to acquire academic and technical skills while exploring a wide range of career interests. Please refer to the academy guide for course options and course descriptions.

It is the policy of the district not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap in its vocational programs, services, or activities as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

It is the policy of the district not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, or age in its employment practices as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The district will take steps to assure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs.

[See **Nondiscrimination Statement** on page 34 for the name and contact information for the Title IX coordinator and ADA/Section 504 coordinator, who will address certain allegations of discrimination.]

Celebrations (All Grade Levels)

Although a parent or grandparent is not prohibited from providing food for a school-designated function or for children in the child's or grandchild's classroom for his or her birthday, please be aware that children in the school may have severe allergies to certain food products. Therefore, it is imperative to discuss this with the child's teacher prior to bringing any food in this circumstance. Occasionally, the school or a class may host certain functions or celebrations tied to the curriculum that will involve food. The school or teacher will notify students and parents of any known food allergies when soliciting potential volunteers for bringing food products.

[See **Food Allergies** on page 35 .]

Elementary Level

Parties may be held during the school day in observance of winter holiday, Valentine's Day, and end-of-school. Birthday parties (for teachers or students) are not permitted. Party invitations are not to be distributed at school. Balloons, flowers, and/or other gifts will not be delivered to students.

Birthday snacks may be sent for the teacher to serve to the class during the regularly scheduled snack time. The State of Texas Department of Agriculture strongly suggests that snacks provided be healthy and nutritional. Since class instruction may continue during snack time, the school administration urges parents to send snacks of pre-divided portions that are not messy or sticky. Some healthy snacks suggestions are provided on the Texas Department of Agriculture website: www.squaremeals.org. All snacks provided for classes must be dropped off in the front office.

Child Sexual Abuse and Other Maltreatment of Children (All Grade Levels)

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children, which may be accessed on the district website at

<https://www.dsisdtx.us/domain/127>. As a parent, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. A person who compels or encourages a child to engage in sexual conduct commits abuse. It is illegal to make or possess child pornography or to display such material to a child. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

Possible physical warning signs of sexual abuse could be difficulty sitting or walking, pain in the genital areas, and claims of stomachaches and headaches. Behavioral indicators may include verbal references or pretend games of sexual activity between adults and children, fear of being alone with adults of a particular gender, or sexually suggestive behavior. Emotional warning signs to be aware of include withdrawal, depression, sleeping and eating disorders, and problems in school.

A child who has experienced sexual abuse or any other type of abuse or neglect should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Be aware as a parent or other trusted adult that disclosures of sexual abuse may be more indirect than disclosures of physical abuse and neglect, and it is important to be calm and comforting if your child, or another child, confides in you. Reassure the child that he or she did the right thing by telling you.

Parents, if your child is a victim of sexual abuse or other maltreatment, the school counselor or principal will provide information regarding counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs. [To find out what services may be available in your county, see [Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Programs Available in Your County.](#)]

Be aware that children and adolescents who have experienced dating violence may show similar physical, behavioral, and emotional warning signs. [See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (All Grade Levels)** on page 44.]

The following websites might help you become more aware of child abuse and neglect:

- [Child Welfare Information Gateway Factsheet](#)
- [KidsHealth, For Parents, Child Abuse](#)
- [Texas Association Against Sexual Assault, Resources](#)
- [Texas Attorney General, What We Can Do About Child Abuse Part One](#)
- [Texas Attorney General, What We Can Do About Child Abuse Part Two](#)

Reports of abuse or neglect may be made to:

The CPS division of the DFPS (1-800-252-5400 or on the web at [Texas Abuse Hotline Website](#)).

Class Rank/Highest-Ranking Student (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

The determination of class rank, cumulative unweighted grade average, and Rank in Class Average (R.I.C.A.) differs depending on the year a student enters High School. The method of determining R.I.C.A., class rank, and cumulative unweighted grade average is discussed in the Academy Program Guide and Course Book found on the High School website.

Please refer to the Program Guide and Course Catalog to determine each of the above rankings. If you have questions, please contact a school counselor.

Students entering Grade 9 in the 2014-2015 school year and beyond will be under a different graduation program than previous school years. Therefore, class ranking procedures may be

adjusted by the district based on the new graduation plan. As these decisions are made, the district will make the information available to the students affected by these changes.

[For further information, see policy EIC.]

Class Schedules (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

All students are expected to attend school for the entire school day and maintain a class/course schedule to fulfill each period of the day. Exceptions may be made occasionally by the campus principal for students in grades 9–12 who meet specific criteria and receive parental consent to enroll in less than a full-day's schedule.

[See **Schedule Changes** on page 37 for information related to student requests to revise their course schedule.]

College and University Admissions and Financial Aid (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

For two school years following graduation, a district student who graduates in the top ten percent and, in some cases, the top 25 percent, of his or her class is eligible for automatic admission into four-year public universities and colleges in Texas if the student:

- Completes the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation graduation program (a student must graduate with at least one endorsement and must have taken Algebra II as one of the four required math courses); or
- Satisfies the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks or earns at least a 1500 out of 2400 on the SAT.

In addition, the student must submit a completed application for admission in accordance with the deadline established by the college or university. The student is ultimately responsible for ensuring that he or she meets the admission requirements of the university or college to which the student submits an application.

The University of Texas at Austin may limit the number of students automatically admitted to 75 percent of the University's enrollment capacity for incoming resident freshmen. For students who are eligible to enroll in the University during the summer or fall 2019 term, the University will admit the top six percent of the high school's graduating class who meet the above requirements. Additional applicants will be considered by the University through a holistic review process.

Should a college or university adopt an admissions policy that automatically accepts the top 25 percent of a graduating class, the provisions above will also apply to a student ranked in the top 25 percent of his or her class.

Upon enrolling in their first course that is eligible for high school credit, the district will provide written notice concerning automatic college admission, the curriculum requirements for

financial aid, and the benefits of completing the requirements for automatic admission and financial aid.

Students and parents should contact the school counselor for further information about automatic admissions, the application process, and deadlines.

Students who have a financial need according to federal criteria and who complete the foundation graduation program, may be eligible under the T.E.X.A.S. Grant Program for tuition and fees to Texas public universities, community colleges, and technical schools, as well as to private institutions. Contact the school counselor for information about other scholarships and grants available to students.

[See **Class Rank/Highest-Ranking Student** on page 36 for information specifically related to how the district calculates a student's rank in class, and requirements for **Graduation** on page 58 for information associated with the foundation graduation program.]

[See **Students in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care)** on page 95 for information on assistance in transitioning to higher education for students in foster care.]

College Credit Courses (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

Students in grades 9–12 have opportunities to earn college credit through the following methods:

- Certain courses taught at the high school campus, which may include courses termed dual credit, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or college preparatory;
- Enrollment in an AP or dual credit course through the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN);
- Enrollment in courses taught in conjunction and in partnership with Austin Community College(ACC), which may be offered on or off campus;
- Enrollment in courses taught at other colleges or universities; and
- Certain CTE courses.

All of these methods have eligibility requirements and must be approved prior to enrollment in the course. Please see the school counselor for more information. Depending on the student's grade level and the course, a state-mandated end-of-course assessment may be required for graduation.

It is important to keep in mind that not all colleges and universities accept credit earned in all dual credit or AP courses taken in high school for college credit. Students and parents should check with the prospective college or university to determine if a particular course will count toward the student's desired degree plan.

Dual Credit Courses

Students who are at least 16 years of age, have junior status credit, and qualifying THEA or Compass scores may enroll at ACC while finishing their high school education. Students can

earn both college and high school credit for many courses. The high school counselors can provide additional information and approval forms. Some high school classes require as many as four dual enrollment courses in order to meet all requirements for graduation.

Advanced Placement

Advanced Placement (AP) courses are college level classes taught by high school teachers using a college level curriculum. Each May, Advanced Placement examinations are administered to students nationwide. Those students who obtain a qualifying score of 3 or higher (on a scale of 1-5) may have their scores submitted to the college(s) of their choice for evaluation and possible college credit. In addition, a qualifying score on an Advanced Placement exam constitutes one of the advanced measures required for the Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP). All four of the advanced measures required for the DAP may be satisfied by obtaining qualifying scores of 3 or higher on AP exams. All Advanced Placement and Pre-AP classes in DSISD are open to any student.

Communications—Automated

Emergency

The district will rely on contact information on file with the district to communicate with parents in an emergency situation, which may include real-time or automated messages. An emergency purpose may include early dismissal or delayed opening because of severe weather or another emergency, or if the campus must restrict access due to a security threat. It is crucial to notify your child's school when a phone number previously provided to the district has changed.

[See **Safety** on page 81 for information regarding contact with parents during an emergency situation.]

Non-emergency

Your child's school will request that you provide contact information, such as your phone number and email address, for the school to communicate items specific to your child, your child's school, or the district. If you consent to receive such information through a landline or wireless phone, please ensure that you notify the school's administration office immediately upon a change in your phone number. The district or school may generate automated or pre-recorded messages, text messages, or real-time phone or e-mail communications that are closely related the school's mission, so prompt notification of any change in contact information will be crucial to maintain timely communication with you. Standard messaging rates of your phone carrier may apply. If you have specific requests or needs related to how the district contacts you, please contact your child's principal. [See **Safety** on page 81 for information regarding contact with parents during an emergency situation.]

Complaints and Concerns (All Grade Levels)

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed informally by a phone call or a conference with the teacher or principal. For those complaints and concerns that cannot

be handled so easily, the board has adopted a standard complaint policy at FNG(LOCAL) in the district's policy manual. A copy of this policy and complaint forms may be obtained in the principal's or superintendent's office or on the district's website at <https://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/619>.

Should a parent or student feel a need to file a formal complaint, the parent or student should file a district complaint form within the timelines established in policy FNG(LOCAL). In general, the student or parent should submit the written complaint form to the campus principal. If the concern is not resolved, a request for a conference should be sent to the superintendent. If still unresolved, the district provides for the complaint to be presented to the board of trustees.

Conduct (All Grade Levels)

Applicability of School Rules

As required by law, the board has adopted a Student Code of Conduct that prohibits certain behaviors and defines standards of acceptable behavior—both on and off campus as well as on district vehicles—and consequences for violation of these standards. The district has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards set out in the Student Code of Conduct, as well as campus and classroom rules. During any periods of instruction during the summer months, the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct in place for the year immediately preceding the summer period shall apply, unless the district amends either or both documents for the purposes of summer instruction.

Disruptions of School Operations

Disruptions of school operations are not tolerated and may constitute a misdemeanor offense. As identified by law, disruptions include the following:

- Interference with the movement of people at an exit, entrance, or hallway of a district building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interference with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.
- Use of force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.
- Interference with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to district property.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving district property without authorization from an administrator.
- Disruption of classes or other school activities while on district property or on public property that is within 500 feet of district property. Class disruption includes making loud noises; trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity; and entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with loud or profane language or any misconduct.

- Interference with the transportation of students in vehicles owned or operated by the district.

Social Events

School rules apply to all school social events. Guests attending these events are expected to observe the same rules as students, and a student inviting a guest will share responsibility for the conduct of his or her guest.

At all UIL events in which the school is represented, students should conduct themselves according to school and UIL standards of conduct. Disruptive and unsportsmanlike conduct reflects on the entire student body and could result in disqualification of teams and the ejection of the student engaging in the conduct. Further disciplinary action may be taken per the Student Code of Conduct. Students attending any school-sponsored activity are expected to abide by all rules and standards of conduct and are under the authority of school officials. School ID cards will be required at school activities.

Dances – Middle School

School dress code and code of conduct will be observed for all school social events. Only enrolled DSISD middle school students may attend dances. Anyone leaving before the official end of the dance will not be readmitted. Parents are welcome to attend. Students exhibiting inappropriate behavior at dances or other after school events are subject to disciplinary action and restricted attendance at future events.

Counseling

Academic Counseling

Elementary and Middle-School Grade Levels

The school counselor is available to students and parents to talk about the importance of postsecondary education and how best to plan for postsecondary education, including appropriate courses to consider and financial aid availability and requirements.

In either grade 7 or 8, each student will receive instruction related to how the student can best prepare for high school, college, and a career.

High School Grade Levels

High school students and their parents are encouraged to talk with a school counselor, teacher, or principal to learn more about course offerings, graduation requirements, and early graduation procedures. Each year, high school students will be provided information on anticipated course offerings for the next school year and other information that will help them make the most of academic and CTE opportunities, as well as information on the importance of postsecondary education.

The school counselor can also provide information about entrance examinations and application deadlines, as well as information about automatic admission, financial aid, housing, and scholarships as these relate to state colleges and universities. Additionally, the school counselor can provide information about workforce opportunities after graduation or technical

and trade school opportunities, including opportunities to earn industry-recognized certificates and licenses.

Personal Counseling (All Grade Levels)

The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, emotional or mental health issues, or substance abuse. A student who wishes to meet with the school counselor should contact the campus counselor. As a parent, if you are concerned about your child's mental or emotional health, please speak with the school counselor for a list of resources that may be of assistance.

[See **Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention** on page 95, **Suicide Awareness and Mental Health Support** on page 95, and **Child Sexual Abuse and Other Maltreatment of Children and Dating Violence** on page 35.]

Course Credit (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

A student in grades 9–12, or in a lower grade when a student is enrolled in a high school credit-bearing course, will earn credit for a course only if the final grade is 70 or above. For a two-semester (1 credit) course, the student's grades from both semesters will be averaged and credit will be awarded if the combined average is 70 or above. Should the student's combined average be less than 70, the student will be required to retake the semester in which he or she failed.

Credit by Examination—If a Student Has Taken the Course/Subject (All Grade Levels)

Credit by exam is also offered to students who attempted a course or subject and did not pass, or to determine appropriate placement for students transferring from homeschool or non-accredited schools. The student is required to score at least a 70 on such a test to demonstrate subject mastery. A student who has had sufficient prior formal instruction as determined by the District on the basis of a review of the student's educational records and who has failed a course with a grade of no less than 60 may gain credit or a final grade for the course by passing a proficiency examination on the essential knowledge and skills of the course. Exams are offered through Dripping Springs ISD, Texas Tech University, and/or the University of Texas based on fees established by the testing entity. The student or his/her parents are responsible for all costs and fees associated with each credit by exam. The attendance committee may allow a student with excessive absences to receive credit for a course by passing an examination. A student may not use credit by exam to regain eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities. Scores must be received at the appropriate campus two weeks prior to the first day of school in order to prepare student schedules.

[For further information, see the school counselor and policy EHDB(LOCAL).]

Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration—If a Student Has Not Taken the Course/Subject

A student will be permitted to take an examination to earn credit for an academic course or subject area for which the student has had no prior instruction, i.e., for advancement or to accelerate to the next grade level. The examinations offered by the district are approved by the district's board of trustees, and state law requires the use of certain examinations, such as College Board Advanced Placement (AP) and College Level Examination Program (CLEP) tests, when applicable.

A student in Grade 6 or above will earn course credit with a passing score of at least 80 on the exam, a scaled score of 50 or higher on an exam administered through the CLEP, or a score of 3 or higher on an AP exam, as applicable. A student may take an exam to earn course credit no more than twice. If a student fails to achieve the designated score on the applicable exam before the beginning of the school year in which the student would need to enroll in the course according to the school's high school course sequence, the student must complete the course.

A student in elementary school will be eligible to accelerate to the next grade level if the student scores at least 80 on each exam in the subject areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies; a district administrator recommends that the student be accelerated; and the student's parent gives written approval of the grade advancement.

The dates on which examinations are scheduled during the 2018–19 school year will be published in appropriate district publications and on the district's website.

The only exceptions to the published dates will be for any examinations administered by another entity besides the district or if a request is made outside of these time frames by a student experiencing homelessness or by a student involved in the foster care system. When another entity administers an examination, a student and the district must comply with the testing schedule of the other entity. During each testing window provided by the district, a student may attempt a specific examination only once.

If a student plans to take an examination, the student (or parent) must register with the school counselor no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date.

[For further information, see policy EHDC.]

Kindergarten Acceleration

In accordance with State Board rules, the Board shall approve procedures developed by the Superintendent or designee to allow a child who is five-years-old at the beginning of the school year to be assigned initially to grade 1 rather than kindergarten.

Students in Grades 1–5

A student in elementary school will be eligible to accelerate to the next grade level if the student scores at least 80 on each examination in the subject areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, a district administrator recommends that the student be accelerated, and the student's parent gives written approval of the grade advancement.

In addition to acceleration by grade level as permitted by law, the District shall permit a student in grade 1-5 to accelerate in a single academic subject in accordance with procedures developed by the Superintendent.

Students in Grades 6–12

A student in grade 6 or above will earn course credit with a passing score of at least 80 on the examination, a scaled score of 50 or higher on an examination administered through the CLEP, or a score of 3 or higher on an AP examination, as applicable. A student may take an examination to earn high school course credit no more than twice. If a student fails to achieve the designated score on the applicable exam before the beginning of the school year in which the student would need to enroll in the course according to the school's high school course sequence, the student must complete the course.

Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (All Grade Levels)

The district believes that all students learn best in an environment free from dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation and that their welfare is best served when they are free from this prohibited conduct while attending school. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect, to avoid behaviors known to be offensive, and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop. District employees are expected to treat students with courtesy and respect.

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly respond to inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are based on a person's race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law. A copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office and in the superintendent's office or on the district's website at <https://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/61>. [See policy FFH.]

Dating Violence

Dating violence occurs when a person in a current or past dating relationship uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other person in the relationship. Dating violence also occurs when a person commits these acts against a person in a marriage or dating relationship with the individual who is or was once in a marriage or dating relationship with the person committing the offense. This type of conduct is considered harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

Examples of dating violence against a student may include, but are not limited to, physical or sexual assaults; name-calling; put-downs; threats to hurt the student, the student's family members, or members of the student's household; destroying property belonging to the student; threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship; threats to harm a student's current dating partner; attempts to isolate the student from friends and family; stalking; or encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

Discrimination

Discrimination is defined as any conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law that negatively affects the student.

Harassment

Harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

Examples of harassment may include, but are not limited to, offensive or derogatory language directed at a person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation; threatening, intimidating, or humiliating conduct; offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

In addition to dating violence as described above, two other types of prohibited harassment are described below.

Sexual Harassment and Gender-Based Harassment

Sexual harassment and gender-based harassment of a student by an employee, volunteer, or another student are prohibited.

Examples of sexual harassment may include, but not be limited to, touching private body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature; sexual advances; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee or volunteer does not include necessary or permissible physical contact not reasonably construed as sexual in nature, such as comforting a child with a hug or taking the child's hand. However, romantic and other inappropriate social relationships, as well as all sexual relationships, between students and district employees are prohibited, even if consensual.

Gender-based harassment includes harassment based on a student's gender, expression by the student of stereotypical characteristics associated with the student's gender, or the student's failure to conform to stereotypical behavior related to gender.

Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a student, regardless of the student's or the harasser's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, may include, but not be limited to, offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; threatening or intimidating conduct; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

Retaliation

Retaliation against a person who makes a good faith report of discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, is prohibited. Retaliation against a person who is participating in an

investigation of alleged discrimination or harassment is also prohibited. A person who makes a false claim or offers false statements or refuses to cooperate with a district investigation, however, may be subject to appropriate discipline.

Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.

Reporting Procedures

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced dating violence, discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should immediately report the problem to a teacher, school counselor, principal, or other district employee. The report may be made by the student's parent. [See policy FFH(LOCAL) and (EXHIBIT) for other appropriate district officials to whom to make a report.]

Upon receiving a report of prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH, the district will determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by that policy. If not, the district will refer to policy FFI to determine if the allegations, if proven, would constitute bullying, as defined by law and that policy. If the alleged prohibited conduct, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct and would also be considered bullying as defined by law and policy FFI, an investigation of bullying will also be conducted.

The district will promptly notify the parent of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct involving an adult associated with the district. In the event alleged prohibited conduct involves another student, the district will notify the parent of the student alleged to have experienced the prohibited conduct when the allegations, if proven, would constitute a violation as defined by policy FFH.

Investigation of Report

To the extent possible, the district will respect the privacy of the student; however, limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct a thorough investigation and to comply with law. Allegations of prohibited conduct, which includes dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, will be promptly investigated.

If a law enforcement or other regulatory agency notifies the district that it is investigating the matter and requests that the district delay its investigation, the district will resume the investigation at the conclusion of the agency's investigation.

During the course of an investigation and when appropriate, the district will take interim action to address the alleged prohibited conduct.

If the district's investigation indicates that prohibited conduct occurred, appropriate disciplinary action, and, in some cases, corrective action, will be taken to address the conduct. The district may take disciplinary and corrective action even if the conduct that is the subject of the complaint was not unlawful.

All involved parties will be notified of the outcome of the district investigation within the parameters and limits allowed under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL).

Discrimination

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 44.]

Distance Learning

All Grade Levels

Distance learning and correspondence courses include courses that encompass the state-required essential knowledge and skills but are taught through multiple technologies and alternative methodologies such as mail, satellite, Internet, video-conferencing, and instructional television.

If a student wishes to enroll in a correspondence course or a distance learning course that is not provided through the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN), as described below, to earn credit in a course or subject, the student must receive permission from the principal prior to enrolling in the course or subject. If the student does not receive prior approval, the district may not recognize and apply the course or subject toward graduation requirements or subject mastery.

Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN) (Secondary Grade Levels)

The Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN) has been established by the state as one method of distance learning. A student has the option, with certain limitations, to enroll in a course offered through the TXVSN to earn course credit for graduation.

Depending on the TXVSN course in which a student enrolls, the course may be subject to the “no pass, no play” rules. [See **Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations** on page 52.] In addition, for a student who enrolls in a TXVSN course for which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment is required, the student must still take the corresponding EOC assessment.

If you have questions or wish to make a request that your child be enrolled in a TXVSN course, please contact the school counselor. Unless an exception is made by the principal, a student will not be allowed to enroll in a TXVSN course if the school offers the same or a similar course.

A copy of policy EHDE is available at <https://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/619>. If have questions about this policy, please contact the school principal.

Distribution of Literature, Published Materials, or Other Documents (All Grade Levels)

School Materials

The school administration recognizes the significant amount of printed information sent home to parents throughout the school year. To respect parents’ time and ensure that information sent home receives the attention it deserves, the campuses have established guidelines for the judicious distribution of school-related information and the elimination of unnecessary use of

paper. For these reasons, only school-related information will be distributed to all students. Flyers and other communication from non-school organizations may be inserted in the campus monthly newsletter if approved through the established approval process.

Dress and Grooming (All Grade Levels)

The district's dress code is established to instill discipline, prevent disruption, avoid safety hazards, and to help prevent unauthorized access to our campus. A student's dress and grooming are the responsibility of the student and his/her parents. A student must dress in such a way that neither interferes with or disrupts the learning and educational program. It is expected that all students be neat and clean and meet the common community standards of decency and modesty at all times. Any student who fails to comply with this code or who in the judgment of the appropriate administrator fails to comply with the requirements of neatness, cleanliness, safety, and decency will be disciplined accordingly. Campus administrators have the final authority concerning the propriety of clothing, hairstyles, and jewelry to be worn on school property, at school activities, or any time a student is representing the campus/district. If a student's dress is deemed unacceptable by a faculty member and/or administrator, appropriate consequences will be assigned. The student will be required to change the inappropriate item or correct the violation. Students who persistently violate the dress code may be subject to more severe consequences on each subsequent referral. Campus administrators will communicate with the parent to discuss the appropriate consequence base on the violation.

Elementary

- A student's dress is not to be revealing as determined by campus administration.
- Hair must be clean and groomed and not of a distracting style or color (no cut outs).
- Proper footwear must be worn. For safety reasons, heels are not permitted. Thong-type sandals and flip-flops are not recommended. Tennis shoes are required for PE days.
- Displays of pictures, emblems, or writings that are lewd, offensive, vulgar, obscene, violent, cult or gang related, that advertise tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, drugs, or other controlled substances are not permitted.
- Hats, caps, bandanas, head-scarves, or other headwear are not to be worn on campus during school hours. Exceptions may be granted by the principal for medical reasons or for an approved campus event.
- Dark glasses (sunglasses) worn in the building are to be worn only upon the written request of a physician and with permission from the principal.
- Revealing shirts/blouses and spaghetti straps are prohibited.
- Visible body piercing and tattoos, other than the piercing of ears, are prohibited.
- Costumes, including facial and/or hair make-up, are not permitted unless associated with an approved campus event.
- Homecoming corsages and similar decorations are not to be worn by students during the week of homecoming

Secondary Dress Code

The district's dress code is established to prevent disruption and avoid safety hazards. A student's dress and grooming are the responsibility of the student and his/her parents. A student must dress in such a way that neither interferes with nor disrupts the learning and educational program. Campus administrators have the final authority concerning student dress on school property, at school activities, or any time a student is representing the campus/district. Any student who fails to dress accordingly or who in the judgment of the appropriate administrator fails to comply with the requirements of neatness, cleanliness, safety, and decency will be addressed accordingly.

Student dress standards:

- Clothing must be appropriate and not be revealing.
- The student's back, chest, and stomach must be covered.

Students may not wear:

- Tops that are strapless, plunging or low-cut
- Sheer or see-through clothing
- Visible underwear
- Pajamas/sleepwear of any kind

Electronic Devices and Technology Resources (All Grade Levels)

Use of Personal Electronic Devices & Software

Dripping Springs ISD strives to provide each student with a technology-enriched learning environment and has invested heavily in classroom and mobile learning technologies. DSISD has embraced a "Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)" initiative to enhance teaching and learning, improve student engagement, encourage collaboration, and expand the capabilities of existing technology infrastructures.

Teachers encourage students to use their own mobile devices to enhance the learning experience and to engage in technology-enriched lessons. Students are not required to bring in a personally owned device; however, every student is strongly encouraged to participate if possible. Arrangements can be made for students who cannot bring a personal device to use a district-owned device while at school as deemed necessary for instructional purposes. Students who do not bring their own device may be asked to share school-owned devices, depending on classroom needs.

Any student who brings a device into the district must abide by the district's Responsible Use Guide, the Student Code of Conduct, and all other guidelines provided in this student handbook. Each user is expected to use these resources for educational or administrative purposes as approved by the district.

Conditions for Use

The following conditions apply to the use of any non-district-owned devices and software:

Personal devices must be available at all times for observation or inspection by district staff to ensure compliance with these procedures.

All software must be legally licensed by the owner of the device and proof of purchase/licensing must be made available if requested by district staff.

Computers or other applicable devices must have up-to-date virus software while the device is connected to the network. All system updates and patches to the operating system must be installed.

Defective devices (causing interference with network operations) must be disconnected and repaired and cleared with the Technology Department before reconnecting.

Acceptance of Risk

A student bringing personal devices onto a district campus must realize that the district cannot be responsible for any physical or electronic damage that could occur when connected to the district network. The district is not responsible for any loss, damage, replacement, repair, or configuration of any personal device. This includes making any connection to the district network, either physical or wireless, and also includes connecting to projectors or other district devices. Technology support is not available for personal devices.

Wireless Guest Network

Students may be allowed to connect to the DSISD Wireless Guest Network during instructional time with permission of the teacher for an approved instructional purpose. Students are not allowed to connect to any wired district connection. The network will have access to filtered Internet resources, although student users are reminded that the guest access may not be as robust as a wired connection. Users must be considerate of the impact of their work and usage of the network upon the work of others. Recreational activities such as downloading music, videos, game files, or joining chat rooms, etc. are not allowed because aggregated, they consume substantial network resources. The network is a district technology resource, and all provisions of the Student Acceptable Use Procedures apply to its use. Should it become necessary to restrict availability of shared resources for the security and maintenance of the network, DSISD Technology staff is authorized to do so without prior notice.

Prohibited Use

The use of cellular telephones and other mobile devices capable of capturing images is strictly prohibited in locker rooms or restroom areas while at school or at a school-related or school-sponsored event, on or off campus.

All personal technology devices, including cellular telephones, must remain turned off during all testing.

If a student uses a mobile device in violation of the guidelines in this handbook, or without authorization, the device will be collected by the teacher or other staff member and turned in

to the assistant principals' offices. The student or parent may pick up the collected device from the assistant principals' offices. Confiscated devices that are not retrieved by the student or the student's parents will be disposed of after the notice required by law. [See Board Policy FNCE.]

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal telecommunications device or other personal electronic device may be searched by authorized personnel.

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and may include confiscation of the device. The district will not be responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen telecommunications devices.

Possession and Use of Other Electronic Devices

Radios, CD players, MP3 players, video or audio recorders, DVD players, cameras, games, or other electronic devices are not allowed in the classroom unless permitted by the teacher and approved in advance. Without such approval and permission, teachers will collect the items and turn them in to the assistant principal's office. The assistant principal will determine whether to return items to students at the end of the day or to contact parents to pick up the items at a later date and time. In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal electronic device may be searched by authorized personnel.

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and may include confiscation of the device. The district is not responsible for any damaged, lost, or stolen electronic device.

Unacceptable & Inappropriate Use of Technology

Resources

Students are prohibited from sending, posting, accessing, or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition applies to conduct off school property, whether the equipment used to send such messages is district-owned or personally owned, if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content, commonly referred to as "sexting," will be disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct, may be required to complete an educational program related to the dangers of this type of behavior, and in certain circumstances, may be reported to law enforcement. Because engaging in this type of behavior can lead to bullying or harassment, as well as possibly impede future endeavors of a student, we encourage you to review with your child [Before You Text' Sexting Prevention Course](#), a state-developed program that addresses the consequences of engaging in inappropriate behavior using technology.

In addition, any student who engages in conduct that results in a breach of the district's computer security will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, and, in some cases, the consequence may rise to the level of expulsion.

Students who engage or participate in cyberbullying may be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. See Board Policy FFI and the Student Code of Conduct.

End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments

[See **Graduation** on page 58 and **Standardized Testing** on page 93.]

English Language Learners (All Grade Levels)

A student who is an English language learner is entitled to receive specialized services from the district. To determine whether the student qualifies for services, a Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will be formed, which will consist of both district personnel and at least one parent representative. The student's parent must consent to any services recommended by the LPAC for an English language learner. However, pending the receipt of parental consent or denial of services, an eligible student will receive the services to which the student is entitled and eligible.

To determine a student's level of proficiency in English, the LPAC will use information from a variety of assessments. If the student qualifies for services, and once a level of proficiency has been established, the LPAC will then designate instructional accommodations or additional special programs that the student will require to eventually become proficient at grade level work in English. Ongoing assessments will be conducted to determine a student's continued eligibility for the program.

The LPAC will also determine whether certain accommodations are necessary for any state-mandated assessments. The STAAR Spanish, as mentioned at **Standardized Testing** on page , may be administered to an English language learner for a student up to grade 5. In limited circumstances, a student's LPAC may exempt the student from an otherwise required state-mandated assessment or may waive certain graduation requirements related to the English I end-of-course (EOC) assessment. The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) will also be administered to English language learners who qualify for services.

If a student is considered an English language learner and receives special education services because of a qualifying disability, the student's ARD committee will make instructional and assessment decisions in conjunction with the LPAC.

Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations (All Grade Levels)

Participation in school-sponsored activities is an excellent way for a student to develop talents, receive individual recognition, and build strong friendships with other students; participation, however, is a privilege, not a right.

Participation in some of these activities may result in events that occur off-campus. When the district arranges transportation for these events, students are required to use the transportation provided by the district to and from the events. Exceptions to this may only be made with the approval of the activity's coach or sponsor. [See **Transportation** on page 97.]

Eligibility for initial and continuing participation in many of these activities is governed by state law and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL)—a statewide association

overseeing interdistrict competition. If a student is involved in an academic, athletic, or music activity governed by UIL, the student and parent are expected to know and follow all rules of the UIL organization. Students involved in UIL athletic activities and their parents can access the UIL Parent Information Manual at [UIL Parent Information Manual](#); a hard copy can be provided by the coach or sponsor of the activity on request. To report a complaint of alleged noncompliance with required safety training or an alleged violation of safety rules required by law and the UIL, please contact the curriculum division of TEA at (512) 463-9581 or curriculum@tea.texas.gov.

[See [UIL Texas](#) for additional information on all UIL-governed activities.]

In addition, the following provisions apply to all extracurricular activities:

- A student is allowed in a school year a maximum of ten extracurricular absences not related to post-district competition, a maximum of five absences for post-district competition prior to state, and a maximum of two absences for state competition. A student shall be permitted up to a total of five additional absences for extracurricular activities if the student has no more than three absences in the courses or subjects to be missed.
- All extracurricular activities and public performances, whether UIL activities or other activities approved by the board, are subject to these restrictions.
- An absence for participation in an activity that has not been approved will receive an unexcused absence. Student safety in extracurricular activities is a priority of the district. The equipment used in football is no exception. Parents are entitled to review the district's records regarding the age of each football helmet used by a campus, including when a helmet has been reconditioned. This information can be obtained from the district's Athletic Director.

Standards of Behavior

Sponsors of student clubs and performing groups such as the band, choir, and drill and athletic teams may establish standards of behavior - including consequences for misbehavior - that are stricter than those for students in general. If a violation is also a violation of school rules, the consequences specified by the Student Code of Conduct or by board policy will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization's standards of behavior. For more information, refer to the Extracurricular Code of Conduct.

Extracurricular Eligibility

A student will be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities subject to the following restrictions:

- During the first grading period, a student is eligible if he/she was promoted at the end of the previous year, or has accumulated the required number of credits toward graduation.
- During other grading periods, a student who receives an average below 70 in any course or subject, or a student with disabilities who fails to meet the standards in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) may not participate in extracurricular activities during the following grading period. The suspension from extracurricular activities goes into effect seven

days after the last day of the grading period. A student regains eligibility seven days after the end of any grading period in which a passing grade is earned in all courses or subjects.

A student is allowed up to 10 school-related absences from class during the year in order to participate in school-related or school-sanctioned activities on or off campus. Students who accrue 10 school-related absences will be restricted from further participation in activities where additional time away from class is required.

Students absent on the day of the extracurricular activity are not available to participate in or attend extracurricular activities unless the absence is for an appointment with a healthcare professional.

Extracurricular Eligibility Exemption

Guidelines & Courses

A student may be exempt from the no pass/no play eligibility guidelines for designated courses:

- The student must have a minimum grade of 60 in an exempt course to be eligible.
- A student may be exempt for more than one course during a regular grading period.
- A student may use an exemption only one time for each course during the semester.
- A student will not be exempted based on a grade earned on an interim grade report.

The following is a list of courses that have been approved to be exempt from the no pass, no play eligibility rule.

High School

- All courses designated as Pre-Advanced Placement or Advanced Placement courses in the Dripping Springs High School Course Guide.
- All courses designated as dual enrollment English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and Spanish courses in the Dripping Springs High School Course Guide
- All courses designated as gifted and talented courses in the Dripping Springs High School Course Guide
- All Language Other Than English courses designated as Level III or higher in the Dripping Springs High School Course Guide
- Anatomy and Physiology
- Pre-calculus
- Biotechnology

Middle School

- All courses designated as Pre-Advanced Placement courses in the Dripping Springs Middle School Course Guide
- All courses designated as gifted and talented courses in the Dripping Springs Middle School Course Guide
- High school courses taken in middle school considered advanced including Algebra I and Spanish I (completed in one year).

Clubs, Organizations, and Student Groups

All clubs and organizations are required to maintain a constitution and/or bylaws that provide clear guidance for the operation of the club or organization. For copies of the constitutions and bylaws as well as current clubs, organizations, and student groups, please contact your child's campus.

Offices and Elections

Clubs, organizations, and performing groups that hold elections for student officers will do so in accordance with those organizations' approved by-laws and/or constitution.

Fees (All Grade Levels)

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds at no charge to a student. A student, however, is expected to provide his or her own pencils, paper, erasers, and notebooks and may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including:

- Costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities.
- Security deposits.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.
- Voluntarily purchased student health and accident insurance.
- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance, when uniforms are provided by the district.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Parking fees and student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Fees for driver training courses, if offered.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that require use of facilities not available on district premises.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A reasonable fee for providing transportation to a student who lives within two miles of the school. [See **Buses and Other School Vehicles** on page 97.]

- A fee not to exceed \$50 for costs of providing an educational program outside of regular school hours for a student who has lost credit or has not been awarded a final grade because of absences. The fee will be charged only if the parent or guardian signs a district-provided request form.
- In some cases, a fee for a course taken through the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN).

Any required fee or deposit may be waived if the student and parent are unable to pay. Application for such a waiver may be made to the campus administrator. [For further information, see policy FP.]

Fundraising (All Grade Levels)

Only principal-approved fundraisers are permitted on school property. Students are allowed to sell approved school-sponsored fundraising items before school, during lunch, or after school. Independent sales are prohibited.

Gang-Free Zones (All Grade Levels)

Certain criminal offenses, including those involving organized criminal activity such as gang-related crimes, will be enhanced to the next highest category of offense if they are committed in a gang-free zone. For purposes of the district, a gang-free zone includes a school bus and a location in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any district-owned or leased property or campus playground.

Gender-Based Harassment

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 56.]

Grading Guidelines (All Grade Levels)

Elementary Grading Parameters & Assessment Guidelines

Grade Recording

Generally, weekly assignment grades shall be recorded in the Skyward system on a weekly basis. Teachers should report weekly assignment grades by 4:00 pm every Monday.

The Process of Grading in Grades 3-5.

The nine-week grades for each subject shall be calculated based on a combination of summative and formative assessments. The following are the best guide for determining if an assessment is Academic Practice (formative) or Academic Achievement (summative).

- **Formative Assessment** - Assessment that is designed to provide direction for both students and teachers while a student is still learning the curriculum. For the students, this may mean reviewing, additional practice, or confirmation that they are ready to

move forward. For the teachers, it may mean changing instructional strategies, providing additional practice, or being ready to move forward. (e.g. teacher observation, quizzes, homework, rough drafts, peer editing, or notebook checks.)

Review of Formative Assessments - Formative assessments should be reviewed by the teacher with the class as a whole or individually. Not all formative assessments will be graded. The teacher has the discretion to determine which formative assessments will be graded and the weight of each assessment within the formative assessment category.

• **Summative Assessments** - Assessments conducted when a student has had adequate instruction and practice to be responsible for the material.

Development of Summative Assessments - Summative assessments should be developed prior to the beginning of the instruction on the curriculum units to be assessed, i.e. chapter assessments prior to instruction on the chapter, culminating projects prior to the beginning of the unit etc. Summative assessments should be written to ensure students have adequate time to complete the assessment during the time allotted.

• The combinations of the Formative and Summative grades will be based on embedded standards, developmental, and/or grade level. The weight percentage of each category for Grades 3-5 will be predetermined by the elementary grading committee. Rubrics for each subject area in Grades PK-2 will be used to determine performance based on summative grades and evaluations.

• Assessments to be included in the formative (academic practice) and summative (academic achievement) categories shall be determined by each grade level at each elementary campus.

• The elementary grading committee will predetermine performance evaluation criteria and grading processes, including weights and minimum number of required grades per subject, per grading period or through the development of performance evaluation rubrics for each subject and area. Teachers will apply them consistently and with fidelity.

• Re-assessment shall be offered for any summative assessment below 70 percent with the exception of Curriculum Based Assessments (CBAs). No re-assessment shall be offered for summative grades of 70 percent or above. When a re-assessment is offered, the teacher may require the student to complete additional practices, attend tutoring sessions, or complete another activity. Reassessment grades will be recorded as additional grades within the category. Reassessment of summative assignments or assessments are limited to one after additional practice, tutoring, or activity requirements are met as determined by the teacher. The re-assessment shall be a different assessment than the original assessment. Teachers will communicate grade level guidelines to parents at the beginning of the school year.

Extra Credit

The purpose of extra credit is to provide additional academic work in order to enhance the learning of subject standards. A teacher is not required to offer extra credit in any given subject. Extra credit, if used at all, should not exceed five percent of the academic practice

grade for a nine week grading period. Every student should have an equal opportunity to earn the credit.

No extra credit shall be provided for non-academic achievement or traits including, but not limited to, providing classroom supplies, activity or event attendance, participation in a fundraiser, classroom behavior, effort, attitude, or responsibility.

At a teacher's discretion, bonus points may be included in a specific assessment grade (tests, quizzes, projects, etc.) and should be related to the academic content standards being evaluated

in a given class. Bonus points shall not affect more than five per- cent of the grade on a given assessment. These rigorous questions shall be related to the standards of a subject.

Grade Reporting

Student grades shall be recorded in Skyward Gradebook in a timely manner to ensure parents and students have access to accurate grade information.

Confidentiality and Grading

Teachers/school personnel shall not allow peer checking/grading. Teachers/school personnel may not call out students' grades in class or display graded work that can connect a particular student with a particular grade.

Parent Communication

All teachers are expected to hold parent teacher conferences in the fall with the parents of each of their students. Teachers are encouraged to make every effort to meet with each family in

person reserving telephone conferences as a last resort. Spring conferences are expected for all students of concern and/or students who are not meeting grade-level expectations. This includes those who are failing or in danger of failing for the current year, reading below grade level, struggling with class assignments, etc. Conferences for all other students are at the discretion of the teacher, but frequent parent communication is always encouraged.

Weekly Communication Folder

At the elementary level, a weekly folder will be sent home or provided electronically containing school information as well as teacher information. Some teachers may send home daily folders to report behavioral information.

Homework

Homework assignments are opportunities to practice and reinforce skills learned in class.

Students will be assigned an average of 10 minutes per night per grade level (ex: Grade 3 = 30 minutes). Homework from all content areas combined should fit within this time frame.

Long-term projects (extending beyond one week) will be introduced to parents in writing at the outset of the assignment.

Graduation (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

Foundation Graduation Program

Graduation Programs

All students entering Grade 9 are required to enroll in the Recommended Program or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program.

Graduation Requirement for Students Entering High School (9th Grade) During the 2014-2015 and Beyond

Every student in a Texas public school who entered Grade 9 in the 2014-2015 school year and thereafter will graduate under the “foundation graduation program”. With the foundation graduation program are “endorsements” which are paths of interest that include Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM); Business and Industry; Public Services; Arts and Humanities/and Multidisciplinary Studies. Endorsements earned by a student will be noted on the student’s transcript. The foundation graduation program also involves the term “distinguished level of achievement” which reflects the completion of at least one endorsement and Algebra II as one of the required advanced mathematics credits. Each state endorsement is embedded in the DSHS Academies and students can earn more than one state endorsement depending on their program of study.

The District requires no additional credits beyond the number mandated by the state to graduate under the foundation program with or without an endorsement or to obtain the distinguished level of achievement.

A personal graduation plan will be completed for each high school student. State law and rules prohibit a student from graduating solely under the foundation graduation program without an endorsement unless, after the student’s sophomore year, the student and student’s parent are advised of the specific benefits of graduating with an endorsement and submit written permission to the school counselor for the student to graduate without an endorsement. A student who anticipates graduating under the foundation graduation program without an endorsement and who wishes to attend a four-year university or college after graduation must carefully consider whether this will satisfy the admission requirements of the student’s desired college or university.

Graduating under the foundation graduation program will also provide opportunities to earn “performance acknowledgments” that will be acknowledged on a student’s transcript. Performance acknowledgments are available for outstanding performance in bilingualism and biliteracy; in a dual credit course; on an AP or IB exam; certain national college preparatory and readiness or college entrance exams; or for earning a state recognized or nationally or internationally recognized license or certificate. The criteria for earning these performance acknowledgments are prescribed by state rules.

The default graduation plan for all students at DSHS is the Distinguished Level of Achievement with Multidisciplinary Endorsement. The Multidisciplinary Endorsement requires four credits in all core-area classes (Math, Science, Social Studies, English/Language Arts). By doing this,

students can change Academies as needed and still graduate with the state multidisciplinary endorsement and therefore completing the endorsement component of the Distinguished Achievement Diploma.

The District shall offer up to 3 credits of reading for state graduation credit. The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for establishing procedures to assess individual student needs and evaluate student progress and shall monitor instructional activities to insure that student needs are met. Student shall be identified as eligible to earn reading credit based on (1) recommendation by a teacher or counselor (2) scores on assessment instruments and/or achievement tests.

To the extent permitted by state rules applicable to the student's graduation program, the District shall award state graduation credit in fine arts for participation in an approved community-based fine arts program; state graduation credit in physical education for participation in approved activities and elective courses; and state graduation credit in physical education for appropriate private or commercially sponsored physical activity programs conducted either on or off campus, upon approval by the Commissioner of Education.

Please refer to the DSHS Academic Program Guide and Course Catalog for specifics related to each graduation programs. Questions can be directed to the school counselors and/or academic advisors.

Early Graduation

For a student to attain the maximum benefits from Dripping Springs High School's curriculum, he/she should plan to spend four years acquiring the necessary number of credits for graduation. Valuable learning opportunities are available to students for the full four-year period. The administration and Board of Trustees believe that all students should have the benefit of the courses provided. Students may earn additional credits in summer school, through correspondence courses, and through credit by examination (specific criteria apply – please contact the school counselors). The parent of a student who plans to graduate early must complete an early graduation approval form and return it to the student's school counselor. It is recommended that the student and parents schedule a conference with the school counselor in order to revise and determine an appropriate graduation plan.

Graduation Honors/Class Ranking

Class rankings are calculated for the first time at the end of the sophomore year. Final rank in class for purpose of determining the highest ranking graduate, valedictorian, salutatorian, and honor graduates is calculated at the end of the fifth six-week grading period of the senior year.

Rank in class for purposes of determining which students are in the top 10 percent of their graduating class will be calculated at the end of the 11th grade, middle of the 12th grade, and at high school graduation. Students will use the latest ranking in relation to their college application deadlines. The number of students in the top 10 percent for automatic admission to a Texas college will not exceed the mathematical calculation of 10 percent of the number of students in the graduating class.

DSISD uses a weighted grade point/grade average system that is designed to recognize the relative difficulty and effort required for the course. The additional grade point/points on the

grade are used solely for ranking purposes and will not be reflected in the grades recorded on your child's official transcript or Academic Achievement Record.

The valedictorian and salutatorian will be the highest and next highest ranking eligible student in the graduating class. Eligible students who complete all requirements in three years, rather than the usual four years, will be ranked for graduation honors with students who have completed requirements in four years. The highest ranking graduate, who will be eligible to receive a scholarship for exemption from the first year of tuition at a state college or university, will be the person who has the highest rank in class, regardless of eligibility for the honor of valedictorian under our board policies.

Eligible students whose class ranking places them in the top 10 percent of their graduating class will be recognized as Honor Graduates. Additional information on class ranking can be found in the Program Guide and Course Catalog on the Dripping Springs High School website.

Graduation Exercises

Students who have completed all graduation requirements, whether in three years or four years, are eligible to participate in graduation exercises. Students who have met coursework requirements for graduation but have not yet demonstrated satisfactory performance on exit-level tests or end-of-course assessments and have not been declared eligible to graduate by an individual graduation committee, if applicable, will be allowed to participate in graduation activities. However, please keep in mind that participating in the activities and ceremonies is not synonymous with graduating. Ultimately, the final awarding of a diploma will be contingent upon the student's completion of all applicable requirements for graduation.

Official diplomas are not distributed at the graduation ceremony, but may be picked up either immediately after the graduation ceremony or from the high school administrative office during office hours following the graduation ceremony.

Participation in graduation exercises is a privilege, not a right, and students who do not comply with dress, grooming, and conduct standards for the rehearsal and ceremony will be removed from the ceremony.

Graduating students who are assigned to the district's Disciplinary Alternative Education Program through the end of school year and successfully complete their term of assignment in the DAEP without further disciplinary action may be allowed to take part in graduation ceremonies. That decision rests with the principal and cannot be appealed. See the Student Code of Conduct for additional information.

The graduation ceremony is a formal event commemorating a milestone achievement in the lives of our graduates. The planning and execution of the ceremony is under the joint control of the graduating class and the administration.

Certificates of Coursework Completion

A certificate of coursework completion will be issued to a student who has successfully completed state and local credit requirements for graduation but has not yet demonstrated satisfactory performance on the state-mandated tests required for graduation.

Students with Disabilities

Upon the recommendation of the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee, a student with a disability who receives Special Education services may be permitted to graduate under the provisions of his or her Individual Education Plan and in accordance with state rules. A student who receives special education services and has completed four years of high school, but has not met the requirements of his or her IEP, may participate in graduation ceremonies and receive a certificate of attendance. Even if the student participates in graduation ceremonies to receive the certificate of attendance, he or she may remain enrolled to complete the IEP and earn his or her high school diploma; however, the student will be allowed to participate in only one graduation ceremony. [See Board Policy FMH(LEGAL).]

ARD committees for students with disabilities who receive special education services will make instructional and assessment decisions for these students in accordance with state law and rules. In order to earn an endorsement under the foundation program, a student must perform satisfactorily on the EOC assessments and receive no modified curriculum in the student's chosen endorsement area. A student may still be awarded an endorsement when the student fails to perform satisfactorily on no more than two EOC assessments but meets the other requirements for graduation under state law.

Graduation Expenses

Because students and parents will incur expenses in order to participate in the traditions of graduation—such as the purchase of invitations, senior ring, cap and gown, and senior picture—both the student and parent should monitor progress toward completion of all requirements for graduation. The expenses often are incurred in the junior year or first semester of the senior year.

College and University Admission

For two school years following his or her graduation, a district student who graduates in the top ten percent and, in some cases, the top 25 percent, of his or her class is eligible for automatic admission into four-year public universities and colleges in Texas if the student:

completes the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation graduation program (a student must graduate with at least one endorsement and must have taken Algebra II as one of the four required math courses); or satisfies the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks or earns at least a 1500 out of 2400 on the SAT

In addition, the student must submit a completed application for admission in accordance with the deadline established by the college or university. The student is ultimately responsible for ensuring that he or she meets the admission requirements of the university or college to which the student submits an application.

The University of Texas at Austin may limit the number of students automatically admitted to 75 percent of the University's enrollment capacity for incoming resident freshmen. For students who are eligible to enroll in the University of Texas at Austin during the summer or fall 2018 term, the University will be admitting the top eight percent of the high school's graduating class who meet the above requirements. Additional applicants will be considered by the University through a holistic review process.

Should a college or university adopt an admissions policy that automatically accepts the top 25 percent of a graduating class, the provisions above will also apply to a student ranked in the top 25 percent of his or her class.

Students and parents should contact the school counselor for further information about automatic admissions, the application process, and deadlines.

State Scholarships and Grants

Students who have a financial need according to federal criteria and who complete the foundation graduation program, may be eligible under the T.E.X.A.S. Grant Program for tuition and fees to Texas public universities, community colleges, and technical schools, as well as to private institutions. Contact the school counselor for information about other scholarships and grants available to students.

Harassment

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 63.]

Hazing (All Grade Levels)

Hazing is defined as any intentional, knowing, or reckless act occurring on or off campus directed against a student that endangers the mental or physical health or the safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated to, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are or include other students. Examples include:

- Any type of physical brutality;
- Any type of physical activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of physical or mental harm, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement to small spaces, or calisthenics;
- Any activity involving consumption of food, liquids, drugs, or other substances that subjects the student to unreasonable risk of physical or mental harm;
- Any activity that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student, such as ostracism, shame, or humiliation; and
- Any activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to violate the Penal Code.

Hazing will not be tolerated by the district. If an incident of hazing occurs, disciplinary consequences will be handled in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. It is a criminal offense if a person engages in hazing; solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in hazing; or has firsthand knowledge of an incident of hazing being planned or having occurred and fails to report this to the principal or superintendent.

[See **Bullying** on page 33 and policies FFI and FNCC.]

Health-Related Matters

DSISD provides a school nurse for each campus. The health and well-being of our students is a high priority. Students, parents and the school must work together to make sure our students are healthy and attending school. Considering the following may help:

Nutrition - All students need to eat something for breakfast. Skipping this meal or only eating something high in sugar causes some students to feel 'sick' mid-morning with a headache or stomach ache. Classroom time is very important, so please be sure your child eats breakfast.

Rest - To be really alert and ready to learn, students need eight to ten hours of rest each night. Please see that your child gets the proper amount of rest to ensure optimum learning.

Hygiene - The skin is the body's first line of defense against infection, so daily baths or showers are important. Clean clothing that is appropriate for the weather also safeguards health.

Prevention - Sharing food and drinks among friends is a common practice; however, many diseases are spread in this manner so such sharing should be discouraged. Hand washing is a very effective part of infection control.

School Health Advisory Council

The DSISD School Health Advisory Council is an advisory group whose members include parents, students, teachers, staff members, and diverse community representation. The group acts collectively to provide advice to the school district on all aspects of the school health program. The council's duties range from recommending curriculum to developing strategies for integrating curriculum into a coordinated school health program encompassing issues such as school health services, counseling services, a safe and healthy school environment, recess recommendations, improving student fitness, mental health concerns, and employee wellness.

During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council held four meetings. Additional information regarding the district's School Health Advisory Council is available on the district website. Also refer to Board Policies BDF and EHAA.

Immunization

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized. For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. This form may be obtained by writing the TDSHS Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347; or online at <https://corequest.dshs.texas.gov>. The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or school nurse within 90 days of notarization. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required are: diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis; measles, mumps, and rubella; polio; hepatitis A; hepatitis B; varicella (chicken pox); and meningococcal. The school

nurse can provide information on age-appropriate doses or on an acceptable physician-validated history of illness required by the TDSHS. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or a member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a life-long condition.

As noted in the section on Bacterial Meningitis, entering college students must also, with limited exception, furnish evidence of having received a bacterial meningitis vaccination within the five years prior to enrolling in and attending classes at an institution of higher education. A student wanting to enroll in a dual credit course taken off campus may be subject to this requirement.

[For further information, see Board Policy FFAB(LEGAL) and the TDSHS website:

<http://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/school/default.shtm>.]

Student Illness

When your child is ill, please contact the school to report that he or she won't be attending that day. It is important to remember that schools must exclude students with certain illnesses from school for periods of time as identified in state rules. For example, if your child has a fever over 100 degrees, he or she must stay out of school until fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications. Students with vomiting or diarrheal illnesses must stay home until they are vomiting and/or diarrhea free without vomiting/diarrhea-suppressing medications for at least 24 hours. A full list of conditions for which the school must exclude children can be obtained from the school nurse.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, he or she must receive permission from the teacher before reporting to the school nurse. If the nurse determines that the child should go home, the nurse will contact the parent. Students who have fever, diarrhea, and/or are vomiting will not be allowed to remain at school. A full list of conditions that require children to be sent home from school can be obtained from the school nurse.

The district is required to report certain contagious (communicable) diseases or illnesses to the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) or our local/regional health authority. The school nurse can provide information from TDSHS on these notifiable conditions.

Contact the school nurse with questions or concerns about whether or not a child should stay home.

Injury

If an injury occurs at school, first aid will be given. If further medical attention or evaluation is recommended, a parent will be contacted at the numbers on the Student Information Sheet. If an injury occurs at home, please care for it or seek medical care before returning to school.

There is no physician on campus nor is x-ray equipment available. All staff are required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

Safety

Student safety on campus, at school-related events, and in district vehicles is a high priority of the district. Although the district has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensure school safety. A student is expected to:

- avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk;
- follow the behavioral standards in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, teachers, or bus drivers;
- remain alert to and promptly report to a teacher or the principal safety hazards such as intruders on campus and threats made by any person toward a student or staff member;
- know emergency evacuation routes and signals; and
- immediately follow the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

Emergency Medical Treatment and Information

If a student has a medical emergency at school when the parent cannot be reached, the school may have to rely on previously provided parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment and information about allergies to medications, foods, insect bites, etc. Therefore, parents are asked each year to complete an emergency care consent form. Parents should keep emergency care information up-to-date (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.). Please contact the school nurse to update any information that the nurse or teacher needs to know.

Insurance

At the beginning of the school year, the district will make available to students and parents a low-cost student accident insurance program. Parents are responsible for paying premiums (if coverage is desired) and for submitting claims. The district will not be responsible for costs of treating injuries or assume liability for any other costs associated with an injury.

If the board purchases accident, liability, or automobile liability insurance coverage for students or businesses involved in the district's CTE programs, the district will notify the affected students and parents.

Physical Examination

A student desiring to participate in UIL athletics, cheerleading, high school band, and high school dance team will annually submit certification from a health-care provider authorized

under UIL rules indicating that the student has been examined and is physically able to participate in the program. The district may provide additional screening as district and community resources permit. Parents of students identified through any screening programs as needing treatment or further examination will be advised of the need and referred to appropriate health agencies.

Mandated Screenings

State-required health screenings are mandated for vision, hearing, spinal (scoliosis) and acanthosis nigricans (a skin marker, which may indicate pre-diabetes).

Spinal Screening Program

School-based spinal screening helps identify adolescents with abnormal spinal curvature and refer them for appropriate follow-up by their physician. Screening can detect scoliosis at an early stage, when the curve is mild and may go unnoticed. Early detection is key to controlling spinal deformities.

All students who meet the Texas Department of State Health Services criteria will be screened for abnormal spinal curvature before the end of the school year. For information on spinal screening by an outside professional or exemption from spinal screening based on religious beliefs, see policy FFAA(LEGAL) or contact the superintendent.

Spinal screening is non-invasive and conducted following the most recent, nationally accepted and peer-reviewed standards for spinal screening.

The testing schedule is: vision and hearing – kindergarten, first, third, fifth, and seventh grades, as well as all students new to Texas schools; spinal – all students in fifth and eighth grades; acanthosis nigricans – first, third, fifth, seventh, and ninth grades, as required by the 77th Texas Legislature. Vision screening may be conducted by photoscreening.

Invasive physical examinations or screenings as a condition of attendance are not performed.

Physical Fitness Assessment

Annually the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in Grades 3-12 who are enrolled in a physical education course or a course for which physical education credit is awarded. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to the campus principal to obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.

Psychotropic Drugs

Teachers and other district employees may discuss a student's academic progress or behavior with the student's parents or another employee as appropriate; however, they will not recommend use of psychotropic drugs. A district employee who is a registered nurse, an advanced nurse practitioner, a physician, or a certified or credentialed mental health professional can recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner, if appropriate.

“Psychotropic drug” means a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease, or as a component of a medication and intended to have an altering effect on perception, emotion, or behavior. It is commonly described as a mood- or behavior-altering substance.

Administering Medicine at School

Medication that must be administered to a student during school hours must be provided by the student’s parents. All medication, whether prescription or nonprescription, must be kept in the nurse’s office and administered by the nurse or another authorized district employee, unless the student is authorized to possess his or her own medication because of asthma or a severe allergy as described below or as otherwise allowed by law. All medication brought to school must be taken to the clinic at the beginning of the school day. Non-prescription medications must be in the original container and properly labeled. Prescription medications must be provided in a properly labeled prescription bottle, which includes the student’s name, the name of the medication, the name of the student’s physician, dosage, and instructions for administration. The prescribing physician must be a licensed U.S. physician. A Medication Administration Request form must be completed by the parent and provided to the school nurse with the medication to keep on file in the clinic.

Parents need to schedule the administration of student medication in such a manner that medication brought to school will be kept to a minimum. For example, if the medication is required four times a day, the school would administer the noon dose only. Medication required three times a day should be given at home. It is the student’s responsibility to come to the nurse’s clinic for the medication unless he/she is physically unable to do so.

Parents may request a “school bottle” from the pharmacy if a prescription medication is to be given at school. The pharmacy will divide the dosage needed for school time and home. Please only bring enough medicine for school doses. The school bottle can remain at school until its contents have been taken. The transportation of medication to and from school is the responsibility of the parents. All controlled substances are required to be delivered to the school nurse or other authorized school employee by the parent.

The school district is not permitted to supply ANY medication (including over-the-counter meds such as Tylenol or ibuprofen) to ANY student. A written request by a physician licensed in the U.S. will be required if a parent requests that over-the-counter medication be administered differently from the manufacturer’s instructions. School personnel cannot administer herbals, home remedies, and dietary supplements.

Students whose schedules provide for regular time spent outdoors, including for recess and physical education classes, should apply sunscreen before coming to school. For students at the secondary level, a student may possess and apply sunscreen when necessary. Whether a student is at the elementary or secondary level, if sunscreen needs to be administered to treat any type of medical condition, this should be handled through communication with the school nurse so that the district is made aware of any safety and medical issues.

Children with asthma or children with severe allergies that may result in anaphylaxis will be allowed to carry and self-administer their prescription asthma or anaphylaxis medicine under certain conditions. The student must have demonstrated to his or her doctor and to the school

nurse that he/she has the skills necessary to self-administer the asthma or anaphylaxis medicine. Additionally, parents must provide to the school nurse a completed Medication Administration Request form for the asthma or allergy medication, with the bottom section for self-administration signed by the physician.

In accordance with a student's individual health plan for management of diabetes, a student with diabetes will be permitted to possess and use monitoring and treatment supplies and equipment while at school or at a school-related activity. [See Board Policy FFAF(LEGAL)]

Parents with a child who has unique medical conditions or any other condition, such as a food allergy, that requires virtually immediate administration of medications under specified conditions, should contact the principal, who will schedule a meeting of appropriate personnel to ensure that the child's needs are met.

High school students ONLY will be allowed to carry over-the-counter medication if the parent provides written consent, stating the name of the medication(s) the student will carry, as well as any medication allergies the student has. (Permission to Carry Medication Form is available on the High School Nurse's website). DSISD does not accept any responsibility for the self-administration of over-the-counter medication, including but not limited to, the administration, supervision, or documentation thereof. Students are not permitted to share medication with other students and doing so may result in disciplinary action. Please contact the high school nurse for more information.

Head Lice

Elementary schools will notify the parents of any elementary student found to have head lice as soon as practicable, but no later than 48 hours after the head lice are discovered. The parents of each child in the affected student's classroom will be notified as soon as practicable, but no later than five days after the head lice are discovered. Such notices will not contain the name of the affected student.

Communicable Diseases

Parents of students with a communicable or contagious disease are asked to telephone the Student Health Clinic or principal so that other students who have been exposed to the disease can be alerted. Students with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while their disease is contagious. Students should be "fever free" for 24 hours (temperature under 1000 without the aid of fever-reducing medications, such as Tylenol or Advil) before returning to school. The Student Health Office will contact the parent of any child who becomes ill during the school day and requires transportation home. It is the responsibility of the parent to arrange for this transportation as soon as possible.

Bacterial Meningitis

What is meningitis?

Meningitis is an inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by viruses, parasites, fungi, and bacteria. Viral meningitis is common and most people recover

fully. Parasitic and fungal meningitis are very rare. Bacterial meningitis is very serious and may involve complicated medical, surgical, pharmaceutical, and life support management.

What are the symptoms?

Someone with meningitis will become very ill. The illness may develop over one or two days, but it can also rapidly progress in a matter of hours. Not everyone with meningitis will have the same symptoms. Children (over 2 years old) and adults with bacterial meningitis commonly have a severe headache, high fever, and neck stiffness. Other symptoms might include nausea, vomiting, discomfort looking into bright lights, confusion, and sleepiness. In both children and adults, there may be a rash of tiny, red-purple spots. These can occur anywhere on the body. The diagnosis of bacterial meningitis is based on a combination of symptoms and laboratory results.

How serious is bacterial meningitis?

If it is diagnosed early and treated promptly, the majority of people make a complete recovery. In some cases it can be fatal or a person may be left with a permanent disability.

How is bacterial meningitis spread?

Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as diseases like the common cold or the flu, and they are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been. They are spread when people exchange respiratory or throat secretions (such as by kissing, coughing, or sneezing).

The germ does not cause meningitis in most people. Instead, most people become carriers of the germ for days, weeks, or even months. The bacteria rarely overcome the body's immune system and cause meningitis or another serious illness.

How can bacterial meningitis be prevented?

Maintaining healthy habits, like getting plenty of rest, can help prevent infection. Using good health practices such as covering your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing and washing your hands frequently with soap and water can also help stop the spread of the bacteria. It's a good idea not to share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes. Limit the number of persons you kiss.

There are vaccines available to offer protection from some of the bacteria that can cause bacterial meningitis.* The vaccines are safe and effective (85–90 percent). They can cause mild side effects, such as redness and pain at the injection site lasting up to two days. Immunity develops within seven to 10 days after the vaccine is given and lasts for up to five years.*

What should a student do if he/she thinks he/she or a friend might have bacterial meningitis? The student should seek prompt medical attention.

Where can you get more information?

The school nurse, family doctor, and the staff at the local or regional health department office are excellent sources for information on all communicable diseases. You may also call your local health department or Regional Texas Department of Health office to ask about meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at the websites for the

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov>, and the Texas Department of Health, <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us>.

*Please note that the TDSHS requires at least one meningococcal vaccination. Also note that entering college students must show, with limited exception, evidence of receiving a bacterial meningitis vaccination within the five-year period prior to enrolling in and taking courses at an institution of higher education. Please see the school nurse for more information, as this may affect a student who wishes to enroll in a dual credit course taken off campus.

Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)

Staphylococcus Aureus “Staph” is a common bacteria found on the skin and in noses of healthy people. Sometimes “Staph” causes infections found commonly in pimples, blemishes, or boils. Some of these “Staph” infections become potent and resistant to common antibiotics such as Methicillin. Methicillin Resistant Staph Aureus (MRSA) has become more common in community settings in recent years. This usually develops as a boil or abscess. Often people describe the initial lesions as a spider bite. The involved area is swollen, red, painful, and pus may be present. The lesion will often get worse until proper treatment is begun.

DSISD follows the recommendations of the Hays County Health Department based on the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and the Department of State Health Services for the care, containment, and reporting of MRSA in schools and within school athletic departments.

DSISD educates staff, students, and visitors by promoting proper hand washing, which is best prevention against the spread of infections and diseases. Hand sanitizers are also made available to all staff. Student use is supervised. Universal precautions are practiced, and updated instructions are offered yearly to all staff having contact with students. Proper wound care principles are followed during school and any school-related activity. Cleaning products used throughout the district are specifically purchased as effective agents against MRSA.

Physical Activity Requirements

Elementary School

In accordance with Board Policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA, the district will ensure that students in full-day prekindergarten through Grade 5 engage in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day or 135 minutes per week.

Students in middle school will engage in 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity per day for at least four semesters OR at least 225 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity within each two-week period for at least four semesters.

A student who is unable to participate in physical activity due to a disability or illness may be able to substitute a course in English language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies for the required credit of physical education. This determination will be made by the student’s ARD committee, Section 504 committee, or other campus committee, as applicable.

For additional information on the district's requirements and programs regarding elementary, middle school student physical activity requirements, please see the principal.

School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) (All Grade Levels)

During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) held four meetings. Additional information regarding the district's SHAC is available from the <https://www.dsisdtx.us/Page/439>.

The duties of the SHAC range from recommending curriculum to developing strategies for integrating curriculum into a coordinated school health program encompassing issues such as school health services, counseling services, a safe and healthy school environment, recess recommendations, improving student fitness, mental health concerns, and employee wellness.

[See policies at BDF and EHAA. See **Human Sexuality Instruction** on page 63 for additional information.]

Student Wellness Policy/Wellness Plan (All Grade Levels)

DSISD is committed to encouraging healthy students and therefore has developed a board-adopted wellness policy at FFA(LOCAL) and corresponding plans and procedures to implement the policy. You are encouraged to contact John Crowley, Director of Child Nutrition, at 512-858-3048 with questions about the content or implementation of the district's wellness policy and plan.

Other Health-Related Matters

Physical Fitness Assessment (Grades 3–12)

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3–12 who are enrolled in a physical education course or a course for which physical education credit is awarded. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to the campus principal to obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.

Vending Machines (All Grade Levels)

The district has adopted and implemented the state and federal policies and guidelines for food service, including the guidelines to restrict student access to vending machines. For more information regarding these policies and guidelines, see the John Crowley. [See policies at CO and FFA.]

Tobacco and E-Cigarettes Prohibited (All Grade Levels and All Others on School Property)

Students are prohibited from possessing or using any type of tobacco product, electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), or any other electronic vaporizing device, while on school property at any time or while attending an off-campus school-related activity.

The district and its staff strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of all tobacco products, e-cigarettes, or any other electronic vaporizing device, by students and all others on school property and at school-sponsored and school-related activities. [See the Student Code of Conduct and policies at FNCD and GKA.]

Asbestos Management Plan (All Grade Levels)

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. A copy of the district's Asbestos Management Plan is available in the superintendent's office. If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please contact Steve Randel, the district's designated asbestos coordinator, at 512-858-3084.

Pest Management Plan (All Grade Levels)

The district is required to follow integrated pest management (IPM) procedures to control pests on school grounds. Although the district strives to use the safest and most effective methods to manage pests, including a variety of non-chemical control measures, pesticide use is sometimes necessary to maintain adequate pest control and ensure a safe, pest-free school environment.

All pesticides used are registered for their intended use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and are applied only by certified pesticide applicators. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before indoor application. All outdoor applications will be posted at the time of treatment, and signs will remain until it is safe to enter the area. Parents who have further questions or who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact Plant Operations, the district's IPM coordinator, at 512-858-3013.

Homeless Students (All Grade Levels)

You are encouraged to inform the district if you or your child are experiencing homelessness. District staff can share resources with you that may be able to assist you and your family.

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's homeless education liaison, Rhonda Whitman, at 512-858-3053.

[See **Students Who Are Homeless** on page 73.]

Homework (All Grade Levels)

Homework assignments are opportunities to practice and reinforce skills learned in class. Students will be assigned an average of 10 minutes per night per grade level (ex: Grade 3 = 30 minutes). Homework from all content areas combined should fit within this time frame. Long-term projects (extending beyond one week) will be introduced to parents in writing at the outset of the assignment.

Illness

[See **Student Illness** under **Health-Related Matters** on page 73.]

Law Enforcement Agencies (All Grade Levels)

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school, the principal will cooperate fully regarding the conditions of the interview, if the questioning or interview is part of a child abuse investigation. In other circumstances:

- The principal will verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and ask for an explanation of the need to question or interview the student at school.
- The principal ordinarily will make reasonable efforts to notify the parents unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.
- The principal ordinarily will be present unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.

Students Taken Into Custody

State law requires the district to permit a student to be taken into legal custody:

- To comply with an order of the juvenile court.
- To comply with the laws of arrest.
- By a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision.
- By a law enforcement officer to obtain fingerprints or photographs for comparison in an investigation.
- By a law enforcement officer to obtain fingerprints or photographs to establish a student's identity, where the child may have engaged in conduct indicating a need for supervision, such as running away.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services (CPS), Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.
- To comply with a properly issued directive from a juvenile court to take a student into custody.

Before a student is released to a law enforcement officer or other legally authorized person, the principal will verify the officer's identity and, to the best of his or her ability, will verify the official's authority to take custody of the student.

The principal will immediately notify the superintendent and will ordinarily attempt to notify the parent unless the officer or other authorized person raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection to notifying the parents. Because the principal does not have the authority

to prevent or delay a student's release to a law enforcement officer, any notification will most likely be after the fact.

Notification of Law Violations

The district is required by state law to notify:

- All instructional and support personnel who have responsibility for supervising a student who has been taken into custody, arrested, or referred to the juvenile court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors.
- All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a student who is thought to have committed certain offenses or who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors.
- All appropriate district personnel regarding a student who is required to register as a sex offender.

[For further information, see policy FL(LEGAL).]

Lost and Found (All Grade Levels)

Lost and Found items are maintained in the front office of each campus. Articles such as jewelry, purses, wallets, money, etc., found by students are to be turned in to the office immediately. Lost and Found items will be given to a charity periodically throughout the year. It is recommended that parents identify personal items (i.e., notebooks, daily assignment log, jackets, shoes, etc.) with a student's name.

Makeup Work

Students who are absent have a maximum time to complete make-up work and/or assessments equal to the number of consecutive days missed by the student. Previously announced projects must be turned in upon the student's return to school. Additional days are at the discretion of the teacher. Every effort shall be taken to hold students accountable for completing the work. A zero will be used in the last resort if the student chooses to make no effort to complete an assessment.

Make Up Work Due to an Extracurricular Absence

Students who will be absent from school for school-sponsored extracurricular activities shall request assignments and assessment information from their teachers in advance of the absence. Assigned work and/or assessments missed due to a school-sponsored extracurricular absence shall be due upon the student's return to class unless arrangements are made with the teacher in advance of the absence. Additional days are at the discretion of the teacher if arrangements are made in advance of the absence.

DAEP Makeup Work

A high school student removed to a disciplinary alternative program (DAEP) during the school year will have an opportunity to complete, before the beginning of the next school year, a foundation curriculum course in which the student was enrolled at the time of removal. The district may provide the opportunity to complete the course through an alternative method, including a correspondence course another distance learning option, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. [For additional information, see Board Policy FOCA (LEGAL).]

Nondiscrimination Statement (All Grade Levels)

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, DSISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law, in providing education services, activities, and programs, including CTE programs, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following district representatives have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements:

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment or gender-based harassment: Nicole Poenitzsch, located at 510 W. Mercer St, by telephone at 512-858-3010.
- ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Katharine Muller, located at 510 W. Mercer St., by telephone at 512-858-3066.
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the superintendent, Dr. Bruce Gearing, DSISD Superintendent, located at 510 W. Mercer St.; he can be reached by telephone at 512-858-3002.

[See policies FB, FFH, and GKD.]

Parent and Family Engagement (All Grade Levels)

Working Together

Both experience and research tell us that a child's education succeeds best when there is good communication and a strong partnership between home and school. Your involvement and engagement in this partnership may include:

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the school counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.

- Reviewing the requirements and options for graduation with your child in middle school and again while your child is enrolled in high school.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed. [See **Academic Counseling** on page 41.]
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, school counselor, or principal, please call the school office-for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school. [See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 79.]
- Every campus in the district has an active Parent Teacher Association, and we encourage parents to participate in the group at their child's or children's campus(es). At the secondary schools, parents have formed booster clubs and organizations to support several types of student activities.
- Dripping Springs ISD encourages parents to volunteer in the district's schools. All volunteers must complete an application form, available on the DSISD website, and the district will obtain a Criminal History Report on all applicants for volunteer programs. Classroom volunteers must have a pre-arranged schedule approved by the classroom teacher and must check in at the main office upon arrival at a campus.
- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction and other wellness issues. [See policies at BDF, EHAA, FFA, and information in this handbook at **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)** on page 63.]
- Being aware of the school's ongoing bullying and harassment prevention efforts.
- Contacting school officials if you are concerned with your child's emotional or mental well-being.
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. [See policies at BE and BED for more information.]

Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence (All Grade Levels)

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge. [See **Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags** on page 77.]

State law requires that one minute of silence follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that minute so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others. In addition, state law requires that each campus provide for the observance of one minute of silence at the beginning of the first class period when September 11 falls on a regular school day in remembrance of those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001.

[See policy EC for more information.]

Prayer (All Grade Levels)

Each student has a right to pray individually, voluntarily, and silently or to meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt instructional or other activities of the school. The school will not encourage, require, or coerce a student to engage in or to refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

Promotion and Retention

Students may be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency of the subject matter of the course or grade level. Students may be retained at any grade level. In determining promotion, the district will consider:

- the recommendation of the student’s teacher,
- the student’s grade in each subject or course,
- the student’s score on an assessment instrument administered under Education Code 39.023, and
- other necessary academic information as determined by the district, including:
 - Kindergarten: Promotion to Grade 1 is based on a comprehensive assessment of academic indicators, as well as other areas of development.
 - Grades 1-5: Promotion to the next grade level is based on a student’s sufficient mastery of the Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies to be successful at the next grade level.
 - Grades 6-8: Students must attain a 70 average in core academic courses (language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies) and have an overall 70 average for all courses taken in order to be promoted to the next grade level.
 - To earn credit in a course, a High School student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade level-standards. A student in Grades 9-12 will be advanced a grade level based on the number of credits earned.
 - Grade 9: To enter Grade 9, a student must have been promoted from grade 8.
 - Grade 10: To enter Grade 10, a student must have earned at least six credits towards graduation, including English I, Algebra I, one required science credit, and one required social studies credit.
 - Grade 11: To enter Grade 11, a student must have earned at least 12 credits toward graduation, including English II, Geometry, two required social studies credits, and two required science credits.
 - Grade 12: To enter Grade 12, a student must have earned at least 18 credits toward graduation, including English III.

In addition, at certain grade levels, a student—with limited exceptions—will be required to pass the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) if the student is enrolled in a public Texas school on any day between January 1 and the date of the first administration of the STAAR.

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In order to be promoted to Grade 6, students enrolled in Grade 5 must perform satisfactorily on the mathematics and reading sections of the Grade 5 assessment in English or Spanish.

In order to be promoted to Grade 9, students enrolled in Grade 8 must perform satisfactorily on the mathematics and reading sections of the Grade 8 assessment in English.

If a student in Grade 5 or 8 is enrolled in a course that earns high school credit and for which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment will be administered, the student will not be subject to the promotion requirements described above for the relevant grade 5 or 8 assessment.

If a student in Grades 3-8 is enrolled in a class or course intended for students above his or her current grade level in which the student will be administered a state mandated assessment, the student will be required to take an applicable state mandated assessment only for the course in which he or she is enrolled unless otherwise required to do so by federal law.

Parents of a student at any grade level at or above Grade 3 who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her state-mandated exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. The student may be required to participate in this instruction before or after normal school hours or outside of the normal school year. Failure of a student to attend these programs may result in a violation of required school attendance as well as the student not being promoted to the next grade level.

A student in Grade 5 or 8 will have two additional opportunities to take a failed assessment. If a student fails a second time, a grade placement committee, consisting of the principal or designee, the teacher, and the student's parent, will determine the additional special instruction the student will receive. After a third failed attempt, the student will be retained; however, the parent can appeal this decision to the committee. In order for the student to be promoted, based on standards previously established by the district, the decision of the committee must be unanimous and the student must complete additional special instruction before beginning the next grade level. Whether the student is retained or promoted, an educational plan for the student will be designed to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year. [See Board Policies at EIE.]

Students will also have multiple opportunities to retake EOC assessments. For more information on EOC assessments, see sections on Graduation and Standardized Testing.

Certain students with disabilities or with limited English proficiency may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing. An admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee meeting will be convened if a student receiving special education services in grade 5 or 8 fails to meet satisfactory performance after the first STAAR administrations in reading or math. For more information, contact the principal, or school counselor.

A Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) will be prepared for high school students and for any student in middle school who did not perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated assessment or who is determined by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year following enrollment in Grade 9. The PGP will be designed and implemented by a school counselor, teacher, or other staff member designated by the principal. The plan will, among other items, identify the student's educational goals, address the parent's educational expectations for the student, and outline an intensive instruction program for the student. [For

additional information, see the school counselor and Board Policy EIF(LEGAL).] For a student receiving special education services, the student's IEP may serve as the student's PGP and would therefore be developed by the student's ARD committee.

Report Cards/Progress Reports

Guiding Principles

Dripping Springs ISD is committed to supporting a system of guiding principles that will be used to arrive at a clear and accurate grading and reporting policy and procedures. In order to realize these goals, the grading and reporting system must:

- reflect academic achievement
- contain meaningful feedback
- be honest, fair, transparent, credible, useful and user friendly
- be criterion referenced
- align with the Dripping Springs Independent School District curriculum
- reflect consistency and continuity as appropriate within and among courses, grade levels, departments, and/or schools
- communicate in a clear and timely manner information to parties
- reflect high expectations of all students across all courses and programs
- be developmentally appropriate for all grade levels

Meaning of the Grade

The primary purpose of grading is to communicate the academic achievement status of students to the students, their families, employers, and postsecondary institutions.

Grade Reporting

Parents and students will be informed of student progress through interim performance reports and six- or nine weeks performance reports. In addition, parents may monitor student progress throughout the year through the Family Access online system.

Electronic or online grade reports are considered written notice and the parent act of accessing Skyward Family Access with their unique username and password, and accessing the electronic signature will be maintained by the district in the form of the Skyward access tracking log.

Parents will be notified by email each time an interim performance report or a term performance report is posted to Skyward Family Access.

The campus Student Records Specialists will electronically process and post all term report cards and interim reports in the Skyward system. Printed copies will be available as requested.

Teachers will utilize the Skyward Educator Access system for performance reporting. Grades or performance shall be recorded in a timely manner on the schedule described by grade level in this document. Interim progress reports shall be issued at three-week intervals and term performance reports shall be issued at six- or nine-week intervals as noted on the District calendar.

The Purpose of Performance Evaluations

The primary purpose of performance evaluation (grading) is to communicate the academic achievement status of students to the students and their families. Additional purposes for performance evaluation include:

- providing information that students can use for self-evaluation;
- providing information that teachers can use to model planning and instruction;
- evaluating the effectiveness of instructional programs.

Subject performance evaluation or grades will reflect the level of the student's academic achievement. Teachers will assess student learning in a variety of ways within an assessment period.

All performance evaluations and reporting should be based on the standards and be criterion-referenced—not using any type of curve. Students are not in competition with each other for the highest score.

Elementary leadership and teacher representatives will pre-determine performance evaluation processes, including weights and proportions or through the development of performance rubrics for each subject or area evaluated. Teachers will apply them consistently and with fidelity. Teachers of the same grade level/subject will apply the grading parameters in the same manner.

Course teams and departments will determine grading processes at the secondary level, including weights and proportions, and apply them consistently and with fidelity. Teachers of the same course will apply the performance evaluation parameters in the same manner.

Retaliation

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 81.]

Safety (All Grade Levels)

Student safety on campus, at school-related events, and on district vehicles is a high priority of the district. Although the district has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensuring school safety. A student is expected to:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or others at risk.
- Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, campus behavior coordinator, teachers, or bus drivers.
- Remain alert to and promptly report to a teacher or the principal any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student or staff member.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.

- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

Accident Insurance

At the beginning of the school year, the district will make available to students and parents a low-cost student accident insurance program. Parents are responsible for paying premiums (if coverage is desired) and for submitting claims. The district will not be responsible for costs of treating injuries or assume liability for any other costs associated with an injury.

Insurance for Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs

If the board purchases accident, liability, or automobile insurance coverage for students or businesses involved in the district's CTE programs, the district will notify the affected students and parents.

Preparedness Drills: Evacuation, Severe Weather, and Other Emergencies

Occasionally, students, teachers, and other district employees will participate in preparedness drills of emergency procedures. When the command is given or alarm is sounded, students need to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner. Visitors to the building are required to participate in drills that may occur during their presence on the campus.

Emergency Medical Treatment and Information

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school may have to rely on previously provided written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment, and information about allergies to medications, foods, insect bites, etc. Therefore, all parents are asked each year to complete an emergency care consent form. Parents should keep emergency care information up-to-date (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.). Please contact the school nurse to update any information that the nurse or the teacher needs to know.

Emergency School-Closing Information

The possibility of having to delay the start of school or dismiss during a school day is always present. In these rare occasions, notification will be given using standard means but the district cannot guarantee every parent receives the message. To minimize the possibility of a child returning to an empty or locked house, parents are asked to:

- ensure that the child can get into the home;
- have a work phone number posted in the home where the child can find it;
- leave a number for another person to contact in case the parent cannot be reached.

The closing of school in weather-related or emergency situations will be posted on the district website and disseminated to parents through email and phone messages. In addition, local media will be alerted.

Alternate Campus Locations in a Crisis Situation

In the event of an emergency situation that requires a campus to be vacated, students will be transported to designated sites as follows:

For Evacuation: Minor Emergencies

DSHS, DSMS, DSES, WSES:	SSMS Gyms & Cafeteria
SSMS, SSES, RSES:	DSMS Gyms & Cafeteria
Central Office, CDC:	DSES Gyms & Cafeteria

For Evacuation: Active Shooter Event

(as designed by Hays County)

All DSISD schools would be relocated for reunification to Dahlstrom Middle School, 3600 FM 967, Buda, TX 78610.

SAT, ACT, and Other Standardized Tests

[See **Standardized Testing** on page 83.]

Schedule Changes (Middle and High School Grade Levels)

Middle School

Schedule changes for any year long courses will not be made after the second week of instruction beginning in August. No schedule changes are made for year long courses at the semester change. All other schedule changes require principal approval.

High School

The school counselors are available to advise students on the courses needed to meet a student's individual goals and expectations. High school students and their parents have the opportunity to complete a course request form during the spring semester to request student course selections for the following school year. It is very important that the requests are accurate and complete. Students are expected to stay in classes selected during pre-registration. Some courses have limited availability and there are limited opportunities for students to request schedule changes. Please refer to the High School Course Catalog for additional schedule change information.

School Facilities

Use by Students Before and After School (All Grade Levels)

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are required to remain in the area where their activity is scheduled to take place. School cafeterias are open to students before school. Unless the teacher or sponsor overseeing an activity gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the building or campus. After dismissal of school in the afternoon, unless a student is involved

in an activity under the supervision of a teacher or other authorized employee or adult, or unless students are granted permission to remain on campus in accordance with policy FNAB, students must leave campus immediately.

Conduct Before and After School (All Grade Levels)

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at before- or after-school activities on district premises and at school-sponsored events off district premises, such as play rehearsals, club meetings, athletic practices, and special study groups or tutorials. Students are subject to the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day and will be subject to consequences established by the Student Code of Conduct or any stricter standards of behavior established by the sponsor for extracurricular participants.

Use of Hallways during Class Time (All Grade Levels)

Loitering or standing in the halls during class is not permitted without permission from the teacher or other campus personnel.

Cafeteria Services (All Grade Levels)

Dripping Springs school cafeterias serve a variety of nutritious foods for students and faculty members at a nominal cost. Foods of minimal nutritional value, as defined by the federal Child Nutrition program, are not allowed to be served or available for purchase in food service and eating areas during the time students are being served meals.

The district participates in the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced lunches daily in accordance with standards set forth in state and federal law. Free and reduced-price lunches are available based on financial need or household situation. Information about a student's participation is confidential however, disclosure of a student's eligibility may be made without prior notice or consent to programs, activities, and individuals that are specifically authorized access under the National School Lunch Act (NSLA) which is the law that sets forth the disclosure limits for the district's child nutrition programs. A student's name, eligibility status, and other information may be disclosed to certain agencies as authorized under the NSLA to facilitate the enrollment of eligible children in Medicaid or the state children's health insurance program (CHIP) unless the student's parent notifies the district that the student's information should not be disclosed. A parent's decision will not affect the child's eligibility for free and reduced price meals or free milk.

Applications are sent home with every student at the beginning of the school year. After that time, an application may be obtained in the school office, or from the DSISD website.

PAMS (Parent Account Management System) Lunchroom offers parents a convenient, safe way to pay for meals online. This free service allows parents to pre-pay online or by phone with a credit card or electronic check from the comfort of their own homes or offices. PAMS Lunchroom allows parents to:

- Prepay for a student's meals online or by phone safely and conveniently (minimum prepayment is \$10.00)
- Choose Visa, MasterCard, Discover or debit card
- Set up an account for automatic payments when balance is low
- Access meal account balances

- Access payment history and view daily cafeteria purchases
- Receive email notification of balance status automatically
- Receive email confirmation on automatic payments
- Register multiple students under one account

Parents are strongly encouraged to continually monitor their child's meal account balance. When a student's meal is depleted, the district will notify the parent. The student will be allowed to continue purchasing meals, according to the grace period set by the school board in Board Policy CO(Local), and the district will present the parent with a school of repayment for any outstanding balance and an application for free or reduced meals. If the district is unable to work out an agreement with the student's parent on replenishment of the student's meal account and payment of any outstanding balance, the student will receive an alternate meal. The district will make every effort to avoid bringing attention to such a student.

Lunch Periods and the Cafeteria

All students (including high school) must remain on the school grounds during the lunch period. Students are expected to practice good behavior while in the cafeteria. This includes not cutting in line, clearing off the table and chairs, and disposing of trash properly after eating. Food and/or drink are not to be taken from the cafeteria without permission. Students who violate the rules of good conduct in the cafeteria will be subject to disciplinary action. Parents, grandparents, and siblings accompanied by the student's guardian are welcome for lunch at any time. Please check in at the office.

Notification of Food Allergy

The district requests to be notified when a student has been diagnosed with a food allergy, especially those allergies that could result in dangerous or possibly life-threatening reactions either by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact with the particular food. It is important to disclose the food to which the student is allergic, as well as the nature of the allergic reaction. Parents should contact the school nurse or campus principal if their child has a known food allergy or as soon as possible after any diagnosis of a food allergy.

The district has developed and annually reviews a food allergy management plan, which addresses employee training, dealing with common food allergens, and specific strategies for dealing with students diagnosed with severe food allergies. When the district receives information that a student has a food allergy that puts the student at risk for anaphylaxis, individual care plans will be developed to assist the student in safely accessing the school environment. The district's food allergy management plan can be accessed on the district website.

If a physician has determined that a child has a food allergy that may result in severe life-threatening (anaphylactic) reactions,

- The parent must obtain a signed statement from the child's physician identifying the food allergy and the need for a food substitution through the DSISD Child Nutrition Department.
- The physician's statement must be on file in the Child

- Nutrition Department (cafeteria) where the child attends school.
- The medication needed to treat an allergic reaction (EpiPen, Benadryl, etc.) must be submitted to the nurse's office in accordance with DSISD procedures.
- The parent is responsible for obtaining the physician's statement and for notifying the cafeteria.

Library (All Grade Levels)

Each school has a Center for Learning and Innovation available for student research and study, with resources appropriate for needs of the grades served by the campus.

Parents who have a concern about library materials available to students should contact the Facilitator for Learning and Innovation, a teacher, or the principal. A board policy and process exists that allows parents to explain concerns and reach an understanding about your student access to the questioned materials.

Meetings of Non-curriculum-Related Groups (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

Student-organized, student-led non-curriculum-related groups are permitted to meet during the hours designated by the principal before and after school. These groups must comply with the requirements of policy FNAB(LOCAL).

A list of these groups is available in the principal's office.

Searches

In the interest of promoting student safety and attempting to ensure that schools are safe and drug free, district officials may occasionally conduct searches. Such searches are conducted without a warrant and as permitted by law.

Students' Desks and Lockers (All Grade Levels)

Students' desks and lockers are school property and remain under the control and jurisdiction of the school even when assigned to an individual student.

Students are fully responsible for the security and contents of their assigned desks and lockers. Students must be certain that their lockers are locked, and that the combinations are not available to others.

Searches of desks or lockers may be conducted at any time there is reasonable suspicion to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by policy, whether or not a student is present.

The parent will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk or locker.

Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices (All Grade Levels)

Dripping Springs ISD provides Internet access, network resources, computing devices, software, and other technologies to its students for educational purposes. Students will use technology, including websites and other Internet applications operated by third party providers (including but not limited to Google, Chrome Apps extensions, textbook resources, and other third-party applications used for learning). One or more of these providers may require that students

disclose certain personal identifying information (generally name and email address) in order to use their product or service. By signing the Acknowledgement of Receipt, parents authorize the district to provide the necessary personal identifying information for his/her child to providers chosen by the district. You may (1) review the privacy policies for these providers on their websites; (2) contact any provider to request the information it has about your child, and/or (3) request that a provider refrain from sharing, or delete, any information it has about your child. A parent who asks a provider to delete their child's information must notify the campus principal in writing. Additionally, a parent may notify the campus principal in writing to exclude a student from all Internet activities. This will prevent a student from participating in some of the district's educational activities.

Use of Personal Electronic Devices & Software

Dripping Springs ISD strives to provide each student with a technology-enriched learning environment and has invested heavily in classroom and mobile learning technologies. DSISD has embraced a "Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)" initiative to enhance teaching and learning, improve student engagement, encourage collaboration, and expand the capabilities of existing technology infrastructures.

Teachers encourage students to use their own mobile devices to enhance the learning experience and to engage in technology-enriched lessons. Students are not required to bring in a personally owned device; however, every student is strongly encouraged to participate if possible. Arrangements can be made for students who cannot bring a personal device to use a district-owned device while at school as deemed necessary for instructional purposes. Students who do not bring their own device may be asked to share school-owned devices, depending on classroom needs.

Any student who brings a device into the district must abide by the district's Acceptable Use Policies and Guidelines (see Board Policy CQ Legal and CQ Local), the Student Code of Conduct, and all other guidelines provided in this student handbook. Each user is expected to use these resources for educational or administrative purposes as approved by the district.

Conditions for Use

The following conditions apply to the use of any non-district-owned devices and software:

- Personal devices must be available at all times for observation or inspection by district staff to ensure compliance with these procedures.
- All software must be legally licensed by the owner of the device and proof of purchase/licensing must be made available if requested by district staff.
- Computers or other applicable devices must have up-to-date virus software while the device is connected to the network. All system updates and patches to the operating system must be installed.
- Defective devices (causing interference with network operations) must be disconnected and repaired and cleared with the Technology Department before reconnecting.
- Personal devices may only connect to the district's BYOD network.

Acceptance of Risk

A student bringing personal devices onto a district campus must realize that the district cannot be responsible for any physical or electronic damage that could occur when connected to the district network. The district is not responsible for any loss, damage, replacement, repair, or configuration of any personal device. This includes making any connection to the district network, either physical or wireless, and also includes connecting to projectors or other district devices. Technology support is not available for personal devices.

Wireless Guest Network

Students may be allowed to connect to the DSISD Wireless BYOD Network during instructional time with permission of the teacher for an approved instructional purpose. Students are not allowed to connect to any wired district connection. The network will have access to filtered Internet resources, although student users are reminded that the BYOD access may not be as robust as a wired connection.

Users must be considerate of the impact of their work and usage of the network upon the work of others. Recreational activities such as downloading music, videos, game files, or joining chat rooms, etc. are not allowed because aggregated, they consume substantial network resources. The network is a district technology resource, and all provisions of the Student Acceptable Use Guideline and policies apply to its use. Should it become necessary to restrict availability of shared resources for the security and maintenance of the network, DSISD Technology staff is authorized to do so without prior notice.

Prohibited Use

The use of cellular telephones and other mobile devices capable of capturing images is strictly prohibited in locker rooms or restroom areas while at school or at a school-related or school-sponsored event, on or off campus.

All personal technology devices, including cellular telephones, must remain turned off during all testing.

Students are prohibited from attempting to bypass district security, including the use of proxy or VPN sites or applications.

If a student uses a mobile device in violation of the guidelines in this handbook, or without authorization, the device will be collected by the teacher or other staff member and turned in to the assistant principals' offices. The student or parent may pick up the collected device from the assistant principals' offices. Confiscated devices that are not retrieved by the student or the student's parents will be disposed of after the notice required by law. [See Board Policy FNCE.]

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal telecommunications device or other personal electronic device may be searched by authorized personnel.

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and may include confiscation of the device. The district will not be responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen telecommunications devices.

Possession and Use of Other Electronic Devices

Radios, CD players, MP3 players, video or audio recorders, DVD players, cameras, games, or other electronic devices are not allowed in the classroom unless permitted by the teacher and

approved in advance. Without such approval and permission, teachers will collect the items and turn them in to the assistant principal's office. The assistant principal will determine whether to return items to students at the end of the day or to contact parents to pick up the items at a later date and time. In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal electronic device may be searched by authorized personnel.

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and may include confiscation of the device. The district is not responsible for any damaged, lost, or stolen electronic device.

Unacceptable & Inappropriate Use of Technology

Resources

Students are prohibited from sending, posting, accessing, or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition applies to conduct off school property, whether the equipment used to send such messages is district-owned or personally owned, if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content, commonly referred to as "sexting," will be disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct, may be required to complete an educational program related to the dangers of this type of behavior, and in certain circumstances, may be reported to law enforcement. Because engaging in this type of behavior can lead to bullying or harassment, as well as possibly impede future endeavors of a student, we encourage you to review with your child <http://beforeyoutext.com>, a state-developed program that addresses the consequences of engaging in inappropriate behavior using technology.

In addition, any student who engages in conduct that results in a breach of the district's computer security will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, and, in some cases, the consequence may rise to the level of expulsion.

Students who engage or participate in cyberbullying may be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. See Board Policy FFI and the Student Code of Conduct.

Vehicles on Campus (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

PARKING

Restrictions and Limitations – High School

- Arrival and departure from school should be the only reason for students to be in the parking lot. Students are prohibited from loitering in or on vehicles at any time. Permission must be obtained from the office before a student may return to the parking lot during the school day. Students are considered truant if in the parking lot during instructional time.
- Students are expected to observe all traffic signs and directional arrows. The campus speed limit is 10 m.p.h.
- A student must have approval from the office to leave school other than at the end of his/her schedule. The student may be required to present his student ID to school officials. Career/

technology, PALs, journalism, and work program students will be issued work permits to leave campus by the teacher in charge of their program. Work program students must carry their work permits and school identification cards with them at all times.

- Any traffic accident or theft of property from the parking lot should be reported to the office immediately; the school district, however, assumes no responsibility for damage to or loss of personal property.
- Students are not to park in unpaved areas or spaces marked RESERVED, VISITOR, or labeled for any other specific purpose.
- Students must park between the painted lines.
- Based on the availability of parking spaces, the school reserves the right to limit the sale of parking permits at any time.

Parking or Driving Violations

Parking violations may result in a parking ticket issued by Dripping Springs High School and/or the suspension of parking privileges. Fines for Dripping Springs High School tickets are \$10 for each offense and must be paid by the end of each nine weeks. After a student receives three parking tickets per year, the student's parking privileges may be suspended or the vehicle towed from the lot. Students who owe fines for parking violations will not be allowed to attend prom or other school functions. Students who owe fines at the end of the year will not be permitted to buy a current sticker until all fines are paid.

Parking Sticker Requirements

- All motorized vehicles in the DSHS parking lot must have a valid parking permit. The permit must be attached above the state inspection sticker on the windshield on the driver's side or in a visible place on motorcycles. Vehicles without a valid parking permit or parked illegally may be towed away and stored at the owner's expense. Students who need a replacement permit due to the sale or damage of a vehicle will have a \$10 replacement fee.
- Parking permits may be purchased during registration or in the office before or after school. Parking permits will be issued at a cost of \$60. New drivers purchasing permits after January 1st are \$30. Permits are \$60 for students who drive to school during the fall semester, even if they fail to purchase the permit during the fall semester.
- Parking stickers will be issued only to students who present a valid driver's license, proof of liability insurance, student ID, and have filled out the parking information sheet. All rules of the parking permit apply at all times.
- Students who drive multiple vehicles must purchase a sticker for each additional vehicle at a cost of \$10 per vehicle.

A student has full responsibility for the security and content of his or her vehicle parked on district property and must make certain that it is locked and that the keys are not given to others. [See the Student Code of Conduct.]

Vehicles parked on district property are under the jurisdiction of the district. School officials may search any vehicle any time there is reasonable suspicion to do so, with or without the permission of the student. If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the student will be asked to unlock the vehicle. If the student refuses, the student's parent will be contacted. If a search is also refused by the student's parent, the district will turn the matter over to law enforcement. The district may, in certain circumstances, contact law enforcement even if permission to search is granted.

Trained Dogs (All Grade Levels)

The district will use trained dogs to alert school officials to the presence of prohibited or illegal items, including drugs and alcohol. At any time, trained dogs may be used around lockers and the areas around vehicles parked on school property. Searches of classrooms, common areas, or student belongings may also be conducted by trained dogs when students are not present. An item in a classroom, a locker, or a vehicle to which a trained dog alerts may be searched by school officials.

Sexual Harassment

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 91.]

Special Programs (All Grade Levels)

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, homeless students, students in foster care, bilingual students, migrant students, English language learners, students diagnosed with dyslexia, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact the campus administrators.

Special Services Department

Special Education

Special Education and related services are specially designed instructional services developed to support students with disabilities within the general curriculum. The intent of the support services is to enable all students with disabilities to make progress in the general curriculum, to participate in extracurricular and non-academic activities, and to be educated and participate with disabled and non-disabled peers in the public school system. Special Education Services are provided at no cost to parents. Services, as determined appropriate by the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee, are available in many different instructional settings.

Related services may include occupational therapy, physical therapy, psychological services, and adaptive physical education for students meeting eligibility criteria for these specific interventions.

In order to qualify for special education, students must have been evaluated in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, and be identified as having a disability in one of the following areas:

- Auditory Impairment
- Autism
- Deaf/Blind
- Emotional Disturbance
- Learning Disabilities
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Early Childhood
- Orthopedically Impaired
- Other Health Impaired
- Speech Impaired
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment

All students will be screened for dyslexia at the end of their kindergarten and first grade school years.

The District shall comply with requests for video and audio monitoring of certain self-contained special education classrooms and settings as required by law to promote student safety in those settings. [See Board Policy EHBAF(Local)].

For more information regarding Special Education services contact Katharine Muller, Director of Special Services, at 512-858-3066.

Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 2008, is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). Section 504 provides: “No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

Section 504 covers qualified students with disabilities who attend schools receiving federal financial assistance. To be protected under Section 504, a student must be determined to: (1) have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, or (2) have a record of such an impairment, or (3) be regarded as having such an impairment. Section 504 requires that school districts provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to qualified students in their jurisdictions who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Section 504 requires recipients to provide to students with disabilities appropriate educational services designed to meet the individual needs of such students to the same extent as the needs of students without disabilities are met. For more information regarding Section 504

services, contact your campus principal or Katharine Muller, Director of Special Services, at 512-858-3066.

Standardized Testing

Secondary Grade Levels

SAT/ACT (Scholastic Aptitude Test and American College Test)

Many colleges require either the American College Test (ACT) or the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for admission. Students are encouraged to talk with the school counselor early during their junior year to determine the appropriate examination to take; these examinations are usually taken at the end of the junior year. The Preliminary SAT (PSAT) and ACT-Aspire are the corresponding preparatory and readiness assessments for the SAT and ACT, and more information can be obtained on these assessments from the school counselor.

Note: Participation in these assessments may qualify a student to receive a performance acknowledgment on his or her transcript under the foundation graduation program and may qualify as a substitute for an end-of-course testing requirement in certain circumstances. A student's performance at a certain level on the SAT or ACT also makes the student eligible for automatic admission to a Texas public institution of higher education.

TSI (Texas Success Initiative) Assessment

Prior to enrollment in a Texas public college or university, most students must take a standardized test called the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) assessment. The purpose of the TSI assessment is to assess the reading, mathematics, and writing skills that entering freshmen-level students should have if they are to perform effectively in undergraduate certificate or degree programs in Texas public colleges and universities. This assessment may be required before a student enrolls in a dual credit course offered through the district as well. Achieving certain benchmark scores on this assessment for college readiness may also waive certain end-of-course assessment requirements in limited circumstances.

STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness)

Grades 3–8

In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels are required to take the state assessment, called STAAR, in the following subjects:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3–8
- Reading, annually in grades 3–8
- Writing, including spelling and grammar, in grades 4 and 7
- Science in grades 5 and 8
- Social Studies in grade 8

Successful performance on the reading and math assessments in grades 5 and 8 is required by law for the student to be promoted to the next grade level, unless the student is enrolled in a reading or math course intended for students above the student's current grade level.

Exceptions may apply for students enrolled in a special education program if the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee concludes the student has made sufficient progress in the student's individualized education plan (IEP). [See **Promotion and Retention** on page 78 for additional information.]

STAAR Alternate 2 is available for eligible students receiving special education services who meet certain state-established criteria as determined by the student's ARD committee.

STAAR Spanish is available for eligible students for whom a Spanish version of STAAR is the most appropriate measure of their academic progress.

High School Courses—End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments

STAAR end-of-course (EOC) assessments are administered for the following courses:

- Algebra I
- English I and English II
- Biology
- U.S. History

Satisfactory performance on the applicable assessments will be required for graduation, unless otherwise waived or substituted as allowed by state law and rules.

There are three testing windows during the year in which a student may take an EOC assessment, which will occur during the fall, spring, and summer months. If a student does not meet satisfactory performance, the student will have additional opportunities to retake the assessment.

STAAR Alternate 2 is available for eligible students receiving special education services who meet certain criteria established by the state as determined by the student's ARD committee.

An admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee for a student receiving special education services will determine whether successful performance on the EOC assessments will be required for graduation within the parameters identified in state rules and the student's personal graduation plan (PNP).

[See **Graduation** on page 58 for additional information.]

Steroids (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

State law prohibits students from possessing, dispensing, delivering, or administering an anabolic steroid. Anabolic steroids are for medical use only, and only a physician can prescribe use.

Bodybuilding, muscle enhancement, or the increase of muscle bulk or strength through the use of an anabolic steroid or human growth hormone by a healthy student is not a valid medical use and is a criminal offense.

Students in Foster Care (All Grade Levels)

In an effort to provide educational stability, the district will assist any student who is currently placed or newly placed in foster care (temporary or permanent custody of the state, sometimes referred to as substitute care) with the enrollment and registration process, as well as other educational services throughout the student's enrollment in the district.

Please contact Rhonda Whitman, who has been designated as the district's foster care liaison, at 512-858-3053 with any questions.

[See **Students in the Conservatorship of the State** on page 95 for more information.]

Student Speakers (All Grade Levels)

The district provides students the opportunity to introduce certain school events. Students are eligible to introduce these events if they:

Are in the highest two grade levels of the school;

Volunteer to speak; and

Are not in a disciplinary placement or suspension from any extracurricular activity at the time of the speaking event.

A student who is eligible and wishes to introduce a school event should submit his or her name to the principal during the first full week of instruction each year. [See Board Policy FNA (LOCAL)].

Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention (All Grade Levels)

If you are worried that your child may be using or is in danger of experimenting, using, or abusing illegal drugs or other prohibited substances, please contact the school counselor. The school counselor can provide you with a list of community resources that may be of assistance to you. The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) maintains information regarding children's mental health and substance abuse intervention services on its website: [Services for Children and Adolescents](#).

Suicide Awareness and Mental Health Support (All Grade Levels)

The district is committed to partnering with parents to support the healthy mental, emotional, and behavioral development of its students. If you are concerned about your child, please access [Texas Suicide Prevention](#) or contact the school counselor for more information related to suicide prevention services available in your area.

You may also contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

Tardies (All Grade Levels)

All students are highly encouraged to be at school on time. Students who are tardy interrupt the instructional process for themselves, their classmates, and the teacher. A student who is tardy to school must check in at the office and get a tardy slip before reporting to class. A tardy may be considered a violation of the compulsory attendance law as it is considered a “part of the day” absence.

Textbooks, Electronic Textbooks, Technological Equipment, and Other Instructional Materials (All Grade Levels)

Textbooks and other district-approved instructional materials are provided to students free of charge for each subject or class. Books are issued for student use during the time of enrollment in school and must be returned at the end of the school term, upon withdrawal from school, or if a schedule changes. Textbooks are numbered and coded, and the textbook coordinator keeps a record of the books issued to the student. Students are required to keep books covered to protect the book and the attached barcode. Electronic textbooks and technological equipment may also be provided to students, depending on the course and course objectives.

Lost textbooks, books, or other instructional materials with a missing barcode must be purchased by the student to whom they were issued. Students or parents purchasing a textbook will be provided a receipt. A new book will not be issued until the student purchases the one that has been lost and shows the receipt to the textbook coordinator. If the lost textbook is found, the student or parent must present the book and receipt to the textbook coordinator in order to obtain a refund. Request for refund must be submitted prior to the last day of school. Students will be subject to periodic textbook checks by the teachers or administrators to see that students are in possession of the textbooks assigned to them at the beginning of the school year, to see that the books are properly covered, and to check for damages. Any violation of these requirements may result in the students having to pay up to the full purchase price of the book.

A student will not receive records or be allowed to re-enroll until the textbook record is clear. A student who has unclear textbook obligations will not be issued final report cards until all records are clear.

Transfers (All Grade Levels)

The principal is authorized to transfer a student from one classroom to another.

[See **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 96, **Bullying** on page 33, and **Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education or Section 504 Services** on page 96, for other transfer options.]

Transportation (All Grade Levels)

School-Sponsored Trips

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation provided by the school to and from the event. As approved by the principal, a coach or sponsor of an extracurricular activity may establish procedures related to making an exception to this requirement when a parent requests that the student be released to the parent or to another adult designated by the parent.

Buses and Other School Vehicles

Transportation services are available to students who live two or more miles from their assigned school. Students residing within two miles of their assigned school may have transportation available if their neighborhood qualifies as hazardous under the district's transportation rating system. Transportation is provided for students to and from the bus stop designated to service the student's residence of record within the attendance zone of the campus the student attends.

Transfer students are not eligible for district-provided transportation to or from school.

Students are expected to ride their assigned bus and load/unload only at their assigned stop. When a student needs to go home with a friend for any reason, parents should work out transportation issues together ahead of time. In the event of an emergency, parents should contact the transportation office.

Students being transported in school-owned vehicles are required to comply with the DSISD SCOC. Failure to comply with the SCOC or established safety rules while on school transportation may result in restrictions or forfeiture of transportation services as well as disciplinary action. Appropriate student behavior is as important on school vehicles as in the classroom. Unlike a teacher, however, the bus driver is occupied primarily with driving the vehicle through traffic in all kinds of weather. When appropriate student behavior is maintained on the vehicle, passengers will have a safe, pleasant trip. Riding to and from school each day is a privilege, not a right. This privilege may be taken away if a student does not adhere to bus and transportation safety rules and cooperate with the driver and other school personnel at all times.

A bus driver may refer a student to the Principal's Office or the campus behavior coordinator's office to maintain effective discipline on district transportation. The principal or campus behave

Expectations

Students will:

- Cooperate with the driver and other school personnel at all times.
- Be at the designated stop 10 minutes prior to the scheduled arrival time and be ready to board.
- As the vehicle approaches, form a single line at least six feet away from where the bus stops.
- Board the vehicle carefully and courteously.

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- Take assigned seat and remain seated until the vehicle has come to a complete stop at the authorized stop.
- Wear a seatbelt if the bus is equipped with seatbelts for all passengers on the bus
- Leave the vehicle carefully and courteously.
- Be courteous to other riders; do not try to save seats for friends.
- Report any problems on the vehicle to the driver, Director of Transportation, or school personnel.
- All loose items, including band instruments, should be secured.
- All students who use District transportation must board buses at authorized stops only. Authorized stops will be designated annually by the superintendent or designee. Bus drivers will load and unload passengers only at authorized stops.
- Except for water in a plastic or non-breakable bottle, no eating or drinking is allowed.

The following items are prohibited:

- Glass objects
- Live animals and/or insects
- Aerosol containers
- Open flame of any kind
- Explosives or firework
- Tobacco products of any type
- E-Cigarette
- Objects too large to fit in a student's lap or seat
- Any item that may present a risk to the safety of passengers
- Cell phones and all electronic devices should remain in the possession of the owner in order to prevent loss or damage. The district will not be responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen telecommunications devices.

Parents should be aware that drivers are unable to monitor appropriate use of electronic devices while on the school bus.

Vandalism (All Grade Levels)

The taxpayers of the community have made a sustained financial commitment for the construction and upkeep of school facilities. To ensure that school facilities can serve those for whom they are intended—both this year and for years to come—littering, defacing, or damaging school property is not tolerated. Students will be required to pay for damages they cause and will be subject to criminal proceedings as well as disciplinary consequences in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Video Cameras (All Grade Levels)

For safety purposes, video and audio recording equipment is used to monitor student behavior, including on buses and in common areas on campus. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used.

The administrator will review the video and audio recordings routinely and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Upon written request of a parent of a student who receives special education services, a staff member (as this term is defined by law), a principal or assistant principal, or the board, state law requires the district to place video and audio recording equipment in a classroom in which the student spends at least 50 percent of his or her instructional day, referred to in the law as a self-contained classroom. The majority of students in this type of classroom must also be students who receive special education services. Before the district places a video camera in a classroom or other setting in which your child receives special education services, the district will provide notice to you. Please speak directly with the principal who has been designated by the district to coordinate the implementation of and compliance with this law, for further information or to request the installation and operation of this equipment.

[See EHBAF(LOCAL).]

Visitors to the School (All Grade Levels)

General Visitors

Parents and others are welcome to visit district schools. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must first report to the main office and must comply with all applicable district policies and procedures. When arriving on campus, all parents and other visitors should be prepared to show identification.

The Raptor system checks identification against a national database of registered sex offenders. The Raptor system will print a visitor's pass that must be worn in a visible location while the visitor is on campus. The visitor's pass will designate the specific location of the visit to the campus. If the destination changes, the visitor must return the office to report the new destination.

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher and so long as their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment. Appointments should be scheduled a minimum of two days in advance of a visit. Unless otherwise approved, visits during instructional time will be limited to 30 minutes in duration. Even if the visit is approved prior to the visitor's arrival, the individual must first check in at the main office.

Registered sex offenders must immediately report to the principal's office of the campus they are visiting upon entering the premises of the campus. "Premises" includes buildings, portions of buildings, the grounds on which buildings are located, public and private driveways, streets, sidewalks, walkways, parking lots, or parking garages on the grounds. This reporting requirement does not apply to students enrolled at the school, students from another school who are visiting the school, or persons who have entered into a written agreement with the school that exempts them from the reporting requirements. Parents of students in the District may wish to contact their child's principal to inquire about a possible exemption to allow the parent to enter the driveway or parking lot of a campus without first reporting to the principal's office.

Parents and grandparents are welcomed and encouraged to have lunch in the cafeteria with their child. Lunchtime visits in the cafeteria do not need to be scheduled in advance; however, visitors must sign in with the office and wear a visitor's badge while in the building. Parents and grandparents may provide any type of food for their child but may not provide for any other students at that campus.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct; disruptive behavior will not be permitted.

Students are not to visit the campus of other schools while classes are in session at the school or at any other time during the regular school day, except for school-approved business or school-sponsored activity.

Any campus visitor who poses a substantial risk to persons on campus or who continues to behave inappropriately after receiving a verbal warning that his or her conduct is inappropriate for the school setting may be refused entry to or removed from DSISD property. A person who is refused entry to or removed from DSISD property may appeal the District's decision to remove the person or refuse the person entry to DSISD property. If the person is a parent, the person can appeal the District's removal or refusal of entry by following the grievance procedure established in DSISD board policy FNG (Local). If the person is not a parent, the person can appeal the District's removal or refusal of entry by following the grievance procedure established in DSISD board policy GF (Local). This procedure is effective September 1, 2017. In the event that this paragraph conflicts with DSISD board policy GKA (Legal) and (Local), this paragraph will control.

Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students

Business, Civic, and Youth Groups

The district may invite representatives from patriotic societies listed in Title 36 of the United States Code to present information to interested students about membership in the society.

Volunteers (All Grade Levels)

We appreciate so much the efforts of parent and grandparent volunteers that are willing to serve our district and students. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the campus administrator for more information and to complete an application.

Voter Registration (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

A student who is eligible to vote in any local, state, or federal election may obtain a voter registration application at the main campus office.

Withdrawing from School (All Grade Levels)

Children who are under age 18 will not be permitted to withdraw from school unless a parent or other adult with responsibility for the child comes to the school to complete the necessary forms. Students must return all textbooks issued to them and clear any library fines and other outstanding fees in order for the school to release an official copy of the student's records to the parents or to another school district.

Students who are age 18 or older, who are legally married, or who have ever been legally married are adults and can withdraw themselves from school.

Glossary

Accelerated instruction is an intensive supplemental program designed to address the needs of an individual student in acquiring the knowledge and skills required at his or her grade level and/or as a result of a student not meeting the passing standard on a state-mandated assessment.

ACT, or the American College Test, is one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions examinations. The test may be required for admission to certain colleges or universities.

ACT-Aspire refers to an assessment that took the place of ACT-Plan and is designed as a preparatory and readiness assessment for the ACT. This is usually taken by students in grade 10.

ARD stands for admission, review, and dismissal. The ARD committee convenes for each student who is identified as needing a full and individual evaluation for special education services. The eligible student and his or her parents are members of the committee.

Attendance review committee is responsible for reviewing a student's absences when the student's attendance drops below 90 percent, or in some cases 75 percent, of the days the class is offered. Under guidelines adopted by the board, the committee will determine whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences and whether the student needs to complete certain conditions to master the course and regain credit or a final grade lost because of absences.

CPS stands for Child Protective Services.

DAEP stands for disciplinary alternative education program, a placement for students who have violated certain provisions of the Student Code of Conduct.

DFPS is the Texas Department of Family Protective Services.

DPS stands for the Texas Department of Public Safety.

EOC (end-of-course) assessments are state-mandated, and are part of the STAAR program. Successful performance on EOC assessments are required for graduation. These examinations will be given in English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and U.S. History.

ESSA is the federal Every Student Succeeds Act passed in December 2015.

FERPA refers to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, which grants specific privacy protections to student records. The law contains certain exceptions, such as for directory information, unless a student's parent or a student 18 or older directs the school not to release directory information.

IEP stands for individualized education program and is the written record prepared by the ARD committee for a student with disabilities who is eligible for special education services. The IEP contains several parts, such as a statement of the student's present educational performance; a statement of measurable annual goals, with short-term objectives; the special education and related services and supplemental aids and services to be provided, and program modifications or support by school personnel; a statement regarding how the student's progress will be measured and how the parents will be kept informed; accommodations for state or

district-wide tests; whether successful completion of state-mandated assessments is required for graduation, etc.

IGC is the individual graduation committee, formed in accordance with state law, to determine a student's eligibility to graduate when the student has failed to demonstrate satisfactory performance on no more than two of the required state assessments.

ISS refers to in-school suspension, a disciplinary technique for misconduct found in the Student Code of Conduct. Although different from out-of-school suspension and placement in a DAEP, ISS removes the student from the regular classroom.

PGP stands for personal graduation plan, which is required for high school students and for any student in middle school who fails a section on a state-mandated test or is identified by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year after he or she begins grade 9.

PSAT is the preparatory and readiness assessment for the SAT. It also serves as the basis for the awarding of National Merit Scholarships.

SAT refers to the Scholastic Aptitude Test, one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions examinations. The test may be required for admissions to certain colleges or universities.

SHAC stands for School Health Advisory Council, a group of at least five members, a majority of whom must be parents, appointed by the school board to assist the district in ensuring that local community values and health issues are reflected in the district's health education instruction, along with providing assistance with other student and employee wellness issues.

Section 504 is the federal law that prohibits discrimination against a student with a disability, requiring schools to provide opportunities for equal services, programs, and participation in activities. Unless the student is determined to be eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), general education with appropriate instructional accommodations will be provided.

STAAR is the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, the state's system of standardized academic achievement assessments.

STAAR Alternate 2 is an alternative state-mandated assessment designed for students with severe cognitive disabilities receiving special education services who meet the participation requirements, as determined by the student's ARD committee.

STAAR Spanish is an alternative state-mandated assessment administered to eligible students for whom a Spanish version of STAAR is the most appropriate measure of their academic progress.

State-mandated assessments are required of students at certain grade levels and in specified subjects. Successful performance sometimes is a condition of promotion, and passing the STAAR EOC assessments is a condition of graduation. Students have multiple opportunities to take the tests if necessary for promotion or graduation.

Student Code of Conduct is developed with the advice of the district-level committee and adopted by the board and identifies the circumstances, consistent with law, when a student

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may be removed from a classroom, campus, or district vehicle. It also sets out the conditions that authorize or require the principal or another administrator to place the student in a DAEP. It outlines conditions for out-of-school suspension and for expulsion. The Student Code of Conduct also addresses notice to the parent regarding a student's violation of one of its provisions.

TAC stands for the Texas Administrative Code.

TELPAS stands for the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System, which assesses the progress that English language learners make in learning the English language, and is administered for those who meet the participation requirements in kindergarten–grade 12.

TSI stands for the Texas Success Initiative, an assessment designed to measure the reading, mathematics, and writing skills that entering college-level freshmen students should have if they are to be successful in undergraduate programs in Texas public colleges and universities.

TXVSN stands for the Texas Virtual School Network, which provides online courses for Texas students to supplement the instructional programs of public school districts. Courses are taught by qualified instructors, and courses are equivalent in rigor and scope to a course taught in a traditional classroom setting.

UIL refers to the University Interscholastic League, the statewide, voluntary nonprofit organization that oversees educational extracurricular academic, athletic, and music contests.

Appendix: Freedom from Bullying Policy

Student Welfare: Freedom from Bullying

Policy FFI(LOCAL) adopted on November 14, 2017.

Note: This policy addresses bullying of District students. For purposes of this policy, the term bullying includes cyberbullying.

For provisions regarding discrimination and harassment involving District students, see FFH. Note that FFI shall be used in conjunction with FFH for certain prohibited conduct. For reporting requirements related to child abuse and neglect, see FFG.

Bullying Prohibited

The District prohibits bullying, including cyberbullying, as defined by state law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of District policy and is prohibited.

Examples

Bullying of a student could occur by physical contact or through electronic means and may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, or ostracism.

Retaliation

The District prohibits retaliation by a student or District employee against any person who in good faith makes a report of bullying, serves as a witness, or participates in an investigation.

Examples

Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.

False Claim

A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a District investigation regarding bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Timely Reporting

Reports of bullying shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. A failure to immediately report may impair the District's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.

Reporting Procedures

Student Report

To obtain assistance and intervention, any student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, school counselor, principal, or other District employee. The Superintendent shall develop procedures allowing a student to anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying.

Employee Report

Any District employee who suspects or receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the principal or designee.

Report Format

A report may be made orally or in writing. The principal or designee shall reduce any oral reports to written form.

Notice of Report

When an allegation of bullying is reported, the principal or designee shall notify a parent of the alleged victim on or before the third business day after the incident is reported. The principal or designee shall also notify a parent of the student alleged to have engaged in the conduct within a reasonable amount of time after the incident is reported.

Prohibited Conduct

The principal or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH, including dating violence and harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, or disability. If so, the District shall proceed under policy FFH. If the allegations could constitute both prohibited conduct and bullying, the investigation under FFH shall include a determination on each type of conduct.

Investigation of Report

The principal or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report. The principal or designee shall promptly take interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate.

Concluding the Investigation

Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within ten District business days from the date of the initial report alleging bullying; however, the principal or designee shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

The principal or designee shall prepare a final, written report of the investigation. The report shall include a determination of whether bullying occurred, and if so, whether the victim used reasonable self-defense. A copy of the report shall be sent to the Superintendent or designee.

Notice to Parents

If an incident of bullying is confirmed, the principal or designee shall promptly notify the parents of the victim and of the student who engaged in bullying.

District Action

Bullying

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, the District shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the District's Student Code of Conduct and may take corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct. The District may notify law enforcement in certain circumstances.

Discipline

A student who is a victim of bullying and who used reasonable self-defense in response to the bullying shall not be subject to disciplinary action.

The discipline of a student with a disability is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Code of Conduct.

Corrective Action

Examples of corrective action may include a training program for the individuals involved in the complaint, a comprehensive education program for the school community, follow-up inquiries to determine whether any new incidents or any instances of retaliation have occurred, involving parents and students in efforts to identify problems and improve the school climate, increasing staff monitoring of areas where bullying has occurred, and reaffirming the District's policy against bullying.

Transfers

The principal or designee shall refer to FDB for transfer provisions.

Counseling

The principal or designee shall notify the victim, the student who engaged in bullying, and any students who witnessed the bullying of available counseling options.

Improper Conduct

If the investigation reveals improper conduct that did not rise to the level of prohibited conduct or bullying, the District may take action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct or any other appropriate corrective action.

Confidentiality

To the greatest extent possible, the District shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

Appeal

A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through FNG(LOCAL), beginning at the appropriate level.

Records Retention

Retention of records shall be in accordance with CPC(LOCAL).

Access to Policy and Procedures

This policy and any accompanying procedures shall be distributed annually in the employee and student handbooks. Copies of the policy and procedures shall be posted on the District's website, to the extent practicable, and shall be readily available at each campus and the District's administrative offices.