**Preparing Students**

**For Success In A Changing World**

**Student Handbook**

**&**

**Code of Conduct**

**2013 - 2014**

**NOTICES TO PARENTS**

**Statement of Nondiscrimination**

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, Knox City - O'Brien CISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The following district staff members have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements:

* Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of gender: Louis Baty, Superintendent of Schools, 606 East Main, Knox City TX, 940-657-3521.
* Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Louis Baty, Superintendent of Schools, 606 East Main, Knox City TX, 940-657-3521.
* All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the superintendent Louis Baty, Superintendent of Schools, 606 East Main, Knox City TX, 940-657-3521.

[See FB(LOCAL) and FFH(LOCAL)]

#### Asbestos Management Plan

The district’s Asbestos Management Plan, designed to be in compliance with state and federal regulations, and is available in the district office. If you have any questions, please contact Louis Baty at 940-657-3521.

#### Pest Management Plan

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. The school’s contracted exterminator will be making the monthly inspections and treatments on the 4th Wednesday of each month.

All pesticides used are registered for their intended use by the United States 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 Louis Baty, the district’s IPM coordinator, at 940-657-3521.

**Additional Notices**

Other important notices in the Student Handbook cover the following topics:

* Student participation in a survey, analysis, or evaluation;
* Opting out of surveys and data collection activities;
* Requesting the professional qualifications of teachers and staff;
* Requesting a transfer of your child to a safe public school;
* Assistance to students who have learning difficulties;
* Student records;
* Bacterial meningitis;
* Career and technology programs;
* Homeless students; and
* School lunch programs.

Please take some time to review these notices and other important information contained in the Student Handbook.

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# PREFACE

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to school year 2013–2014! 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 **Knox City - O'Brien CISD Student Handbook** is designed to provide a resource for some of the basic information that you and your child will need during the school year. In an effort to make it easier to use, the handbook is divided into two sections:

**Section I**—PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES—with 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—organized alphabetically by topic for quick access when searching for information on a specific issue.

Please be aware that the term “the student’s parent” is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or any other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

Both students and parents should become familiar with the Knox City - O'Brien CISD ***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 as an attachment to this handbook and posted on the districts website at [**www.knoxcityschools.net**](http://www.knoxcityschools.net) or available in the principal’s office.

The Student Handbook is designed to be in harmony with board policy and the ***Student Code of Conduct***. Please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters or other communications.

In case of conflict between board policy or the ***Student Code of Conduct*** and any provisions of the Student Handbook, the current provisions of board policy or the ***Student Code of Conduct*** are to be followed.

Also, please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters or other communications. 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.

 If you or your child has questions about any of the material in this handbook, please contact a teacher, the counselor, or the principal.

Also, please complete and return to your child’s campus the following required forms provided in the forms packet accompanying this handbook:

1. Acknowledgment Form or Acknowledgment of Electronic Distribution of Student Handbook form;
2. Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent’s Response Regarding Release of Student information form;
3. Parent’s Objection to the Release of Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Learning form; if you choose to restrict the release of information to these entities; and
4. Consent/Opt-Out Form.

[See **Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights** on page 4 and **Directory Information** on page 14 for more information.]

Please note that references to policy codes are included so that parents can refer to current board policy. A copy of the district’s policy manual is available for review in the school office or online at www.knoxcityschool.net.

**Debts**

All debts to the school or school related organizations shall be paid before any grades will be released at the end of the year.

A graduating senior that owes money will forfeit honors and privileges, including not being allowed to attend graduation exercises.

Students will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities until all debts from the previous school year have been paid. If a student is financially unable to pay his/her debt, the student may be allowed to work-off the debt at an hourly rate, set by the administration (with a minimum of one hour).

# SECTION I: PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This section of the **Knox City - O'Brien CISD** Student Handbook includes several notices that the district is required to provide to you, as well as other information on topics of particular interest to you as a parent.

## PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

### 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 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 counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
* Reviewing the requirements of the graduation programs with your child, if your child is entering ninth grade.
* Monitoring your child’s academic progress and contacting teachers as needed. [See **Academic Counseling** on page 29 and **Academic Programs** on page 20.]
* Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, 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 62.]
* Becoming a school volunteer. [For further information, see policies at GKG and/or contact the building principal.
* Participating in campus parent organizations. Parent organizations include: District/Campus Improvement Planning Committees, Greyhound Booster Club, Knox City Band Boosters, Elementary PTO, and O’Brien Middle School PTO.
* Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees, assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For further information, see policies at BQA and BQB, and contact the building principal.
* Serving on the School Health Advisory Council, assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction. [See policies at BDF, EHAA, FFA, and information in this handbook at **School Health Advisory Council** on page 52.]
* 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.]

## PARENTAL RIGHTS

### Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights

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.
* Sexual 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 parents.
* 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 Surveys and Activities

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 or selling that information.
* 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 scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law. [See policies EF and FFAA.]

### Inspecting Surveys

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

### Requesting Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Staff

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 undergraduate and graduate degree majors, graduate certifications, and the field of study of the certification or degree. You also have the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to your child.

### Reviewing 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.(Also see **Removing a Student from** **Human Sexuality Instruction** on page 6 for additional information.

### Displaying a Student’s Artwork and Projects

The district will seek parental consent before displaying students’ artwork, special projects, photographs taken by students, and the like on the district’s Web site, in printed material, by video, or by any other method of mass communication.

### 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 counselor evaluations,
* Reports of behavioral patterns, and
* State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child.
* Teaching materials and tests used in your child’s classroom.

[See **Student Records** on page 10.]

### Granting Permission to Video or Audio Record a Student

As a parent, you may grant or deny any written request from the district to make a video or voice recording of your child. State law, however, 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.

### Granting Permission to Receive Parenting and Paternity Awareness Instruction

As a parent, if your child is under the age of 14, you must grant permission for your child to receive instruction in the district’s parenting and paternity awareness program or your child will not be allowed to participate in the instruction. This program, developed by the Office of the Texas Attorney General and the Texas State Board of Education, is incorporated into the district’s health education classes.

### Removing a Student Temporarily from the Classroom

You may remove your child temporarily from the classroom if an instructional activity in which your child is scheduled to participate in 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 the Texas Education Agency.

### Removing a Student from 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 or acquired immune deficiency syndrome 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.

As a parent, you are entitled to review the curriculum materials. In addition, you may remove your child from any part of this 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.

### Excusing a Student from 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 United States 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 60 and policy EC(LEGAL).]

### Excusing a Student from Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence

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 United States government extends diplomatic immunity. [See policy EHBK(LEGAL).]

### Requesting Limited or No Contact with a Student through Electronic Media

Teachers and other approved employees are permitted by the district to communicate with students through the use of electronic media within the scope of the individual’s professional responsibilities. 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.

An employee described above may also contact a student individually through electronic media to communicate about items such as homework or upcoming tests.

If you prefer that your child not receive any one-to-one electronic communications from a district employee, please submit a written request to the campus principal stating this preference.

### Requesting Notices of Certain Student Misconduct

A non-custodial parent may request in writing that he or she be provided, for the remainder of the school year, a copy of any written notice usually provided to a parent related to his or her 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***.]

### Prohibiting the Use of Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment—spanking or paddling the student—may be used as a discipline management technique in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and policy FO(LOCAL) in the district’s policy manual.

If you do not want corporal punishment to be administered to your child as a method of student discipline, submit a written statement to the campus principal stating this decision. A signed statement must be provided each year.

You may choose to revoke this request at any time during the year by providing a signed statement to the campus principal. However, district personnel may choose to use discipline methods other than corporal punishment even if the parent requests that this method be used on the student.

### School Safety Transfers

As a parent, you have a right:

* To request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the board or its designee to have been a victim of bullying as the term is defined by Education Code 25.0341. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. See the superintendent for information. [See policy FDB.]

[See **Bullying** on page 21, and policy FFI(LOCAL).]

* 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 FDD(LOCAL).]
* Request the transfer of your child to another 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 that assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault. [See policies FDD(LEGAL) and (LOCAL).]

### Requesting Classroom Assignment for 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 FDB(LEGAL).]

### Parents of Students with Disabilities

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. [See policy FDB(LOCAL).]

#### Request for the Use of a Service Animal

A parent of a student who uses a service animal because of the student’s disability must submit a request in writing to the principal at least ten district business days before bringing the service animal on campus.

#### Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need or May Need Special Education Services

If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the person listed below to learn about the district’s overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for 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 school districts to meet the needs of all struggling students.

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If the evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide informed written consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within 60 calendar days of the date the district receives the written consent. The district must give a copy of the report to the parent.

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with prior written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parents of their rights, if they disagree with the district. The district is required to give parents the ***Notice of Procedural Safeguards—Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities***. Additional information regarding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is available from the school district in a companion document, ***A Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process***.

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

* Texas Project First, at <http://www.texasprojectfirst.org/>
* Partners Resource Network, at <http://www.partnerstx.org/howPRNhelps.html>

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education services is building principal.

### Parents of 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.

### Accommodations for 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 <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/mil/>.

### Services for Title I Participants

The Parent Involvement Coordinator, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs is Louis Baty and may be contacted at 940-657-3521.

### Student Records

Both federal 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. For purposes of student records, an “eligible” student is one who is 18 or older OR who is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

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

* The parents—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 becomes 18, is emancipated by a court, or enrolls in a post-secondary institution, control of the records goes to the student. The parents 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.

* District school officials who have what federal law refers to as a “legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records. School officials would include trustees and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals; teachers, counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff; a person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a particular service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, 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; or investigating or evaluating programs.
* Various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers and Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers or other child welfare representatives, in certain cases.
* Individuals granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
* A school or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she is already enrolled.

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

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. The address of the superintendent’s office is 606 East Main, Knox City, TX.

The address of the principals’ offices is:

* Elementary: 300 N 4th Street, Knox City, TX
* Middle School: 1100 Hayes Street, O’Brien, TX
* High School: 400 N 4th Street, Knox City, TX

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student’s records and request a correction 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 principal or superintendent. 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 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 62, and **Student or Parent Complaints and Concerns** on page 25 for an overview of the process.]

The district’s policy regarding student records found at FL(LEGAL) and (LOCAL) is available from the principal’s or superintendent’s office or on the district’s Web site at www.knoxcityschools.net.

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 parents or student.

**Please note:**

Parents or eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the district is not in compliance with federal law regarding student records. The complaint may be mailed to:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U. S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5901

**CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS OF STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY**

Each campus within the Haskell-Knox Shared Services Arrangement (SSA) maintains attendance, academic, and health records on all students enrolled in the school. Special education records on all students enrolled in special education and on all students referred for consideration of special education are kept in Knox City, Texas, at the Haskell-Knox SSA office and are kept under lock. The director of the Shared Service Arrangement has responsibility for eligibility records. In addition, the special education teachers keep in their classrooms, copies of the individual education plans (IEP) and academic evaluation reports for their assigned students.

There is posted on the file cabinet names of those persons who have legitimate education interest and therefore, are entitled to access of the records without consent of the parent or adult student with a disability. Persons with legitimate educational interests are those persons who are assigned responsibility for a portion of the student’s educational experience, or who have a need to inspect the records for audit purposes. These individuals include designated teachers and support personnel within the district and Haskell-Knox SSA as well as, personnel for the Regions IX and XIV Education Service Centers, Regional School for the Deaf, and Texas Education Agency. Personnel within the public school system whose names are not posted will sign the record of access form on the eligibility folder; state the date, his/her name, title, agency, and the reason for access to the student’s eligibility folder. All other persons must present written consent before access will be permitted, and they must sign the record of access form.

The Haskell-Knox SSA recognizes the rights of parents, adult students with a disability, and/or their designee as outlined under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. The policy regarding these rights and administrative procedures are included in Confidentiality of Records, Texas Education Agency. Copies of these policies and administrative procedures are located in the principal’s office of your campus and in the office of the director of special education. The filing of complaints of alleged failures of the School District or Shared Service Arrangement to comply with these policies and administrative procedures will follow complaint procedures as established in the policies

Requests to inspect the special education records will be directed to the Director of the Haskell-Knox SSA and an appointment with the appropriate school personnel will be scheduled without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding an individual educational plan or hearing. In no case will the appointment be scheduled more than 30 days after the request.

Copies of student’s special education records will be sent to their new school district. This is in compliance with federal and state law. The previous school district is required to send records, including special education records, to the new district within thirty calendar days. Parental and adult consent is not required, but must be informed that records have been sent.

If the parent or adult student with a disability requests the deletion or change or any portion of the records, this request will be considered, unless that portion is necessary to document eligibility for services. If the request is denied, the parent or adult student with a disability has the right to write a dissent or addition to be included in the records, and/or appeal the decision by following the complaint procedures as established in the most current Notice of Procedural Safeguards.

Copies of their student records will be supplied to parent or adult student with a disability at their request as expeditiously as possible with fee of $.25 per page required.

Student’s eligibility folders will be maintained within the Shared Service Arrangement office at least seven years after the cessation of services to students with a disability. After that time, in the event it is planned to destroy these records, written notification will be forwarded to the latest address recorded in each of the eligibility folders no later than three months before the records are scheduled to be destroyed. Written requests not to destroy the special education records from parents or adult students with a disability will be honored.

### Directory Information

The law permits the district to designate certain personal information about students as “directory information.” 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 in writing to the principal within ten school days of your child’s first day of instruction for this school year. [See the “Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent’s Response Regarding Release of Student Information” included in this handbook.

### Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes

The district often needs to use student information for the following school-sponsored purposes:

[see FL(LOCAL)]. For these specific school-sponsored purposes, the district would like to use your child’s:

1. Name

2. Address

3. Telephone listing

4. Date and place of birth

5. Photograph

6. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports

7. Weight and height of members of athletic teams

8. Dates of attendance

9. Grade level

10. Enrollment status

11. Honors and awards received in school

12. Most recent previous school attended

13. E-mail address

This information will not be used for other purposes without the consent of the parent or eligible student, except as described above at Directory Information.

Unless you object to the use of your child’s information for these limited purposes, the school will not need to ask your permission each time the district wishes to use this information for the school-sponsored purposes listed above.

### Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education

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. A form has been attached for you to complete if you do not want the district to provide this information to military recruiters or institutions of higher education.

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# SECTION II: INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Topics in this section of the 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. It is conveniently organized in alphabetical order to serve as a quick-reference when you or your child has a question about a specific school-related issue. If you are unable to find the information on a particular topic, please contact the building secretary and/or principal

## 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. Two state laws—one dealing with compulsory attendance, the other with attendance for course credit—are of special interest to students and parents. They are discussed below.

### Compulsory Attendance

State law requires that a student between the ages of six and 18 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.

A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 18th birthday is required to attend each school day until the end of the school year and is subject to compulsory attendance laws, if the student is under 21 years old. In addition, if a student 18 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 FEA]

Students enrolled in pre-kindergarten or kindergartens are required to attend school.

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.

### Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences. These include the following activities and events:

* Religious holy days;
* Required court appearances;
* Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship;
* Service as an election clerk; and
* 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. 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,
* Mental health or therapy appointments; or
* Court-ordered family visitations or any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the student’s participation in the activity outside of school hours.

In addition, a junior or senior student’s absence of up to two days related to visiting a college or university may be considered an exemption, provided the student receives approval from the campus principal, follows the campus procedures to verify such a visit, and makes up any work missed.

Absences of up to two days in a school year will also be considered an exemption for a student serving as an early voting clerk, provided the student notifies his or her teachers and receives approval from the principal prior to the absences.

As listed in Section I at **Accommodations for 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. Please see page 10 for that section.

### Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance

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.

A court of law may also impose penalties against both the student and his or her parents 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 from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, or
* Is absent on three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period.

For a student younger than 12 years of age, the student’s parent could be charged with a criminal offense based on the student’s failure to attend school.

If a student between the ages of 12 and 18 violates the compulsory attendance law, both the parent and student could be charged with a criminal offense.

 [See policy FEA(LEGAL)]

### Attendance for Credit for Final Grade

To receive credit in a class, a student must attendat least 90 percent (159 days) of the days the class is offered. A student who attends at least 75 percent (132 days) but fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered may receive credit for the class if he or she completes a plan, approved by the principal that allows the student to fulfill the instructional requirements for the class. If a student is involved in a criminal or juvenile court proceeding, the approval of the judge presiding over the case will also be required before the student receives credit for the class.

If a student attends less than 75 percent (132 days) of the days a class is offered or has not completed a plan approved by the principal, then the student will be referred to the attendance review committee to determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit or a final grade lost because of absences. [See policies at FEC]

In determining whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences, the attendance committee will use the following guidelines:

* All absences will be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days. If makeup work is completed, absences for the reasons listed above at **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance** will be considered days of attendance for this purpose.
* A transfer or migrant student begins to accumulate absences only after he or she has enrolled in the district.
* In reaching a decision about a student’s absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that it is in the best interest of the student.
* The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student’s absences.
* The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the student or the student’s parent could exercise any control.
* The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.
* The student or parent will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to talk about ways to earn or regain credit.

The student or parent may appeal the committee’s decision to the board of trustees by filing a written request with the superintendent in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL).

The actual number of days a student must attend school in order to receive credit will depend on whether the class is for a full semester or for a full year.

### Official Attendance-Taking Time

The district must submit attendance of its students to Texas Education Agency (TEA) reflecting attendance at a specific time each day.

Official attendance is taken every day **during second period**.

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

### Parent’s Note after an Absence

When a student must be absent from school, the student—upon returning to school—**MUST** bring a note, signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence. A note signed by the student, even with the parent’s permission, will not be accepted unless the student is 18 or older or is an emancipated minor under state law. A phone call from the parent may be accepted, but the district reserves the right to require a written note.

Please note that, unless the absence is for a statutorily allowed reason under compulsory attendance laws, the district is not required to excuse any absence.

### Doctor’s Note after an Absence for Illness

Upon return to school, a student absent for more than 3 consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic 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.

The reason for an excused absence must be in writing, dated, and signed by the parent or guardian. **If the student goes to the doctor and returns to school the same day with a note from the doctor, the student is counted present for state accounting.**

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.

[See policy FEC(LOCAL).]

**Excused Absences**

**State law and Board policy permit certain absences, including:**

* An extracurricular activity or public performance, approved by the District's Board of Trustees.
* A District-approved mentorship designed to meet requirements for the Distinguished Achievement graduation program.
* Required screening, diagnosis, and treatment for Medicaid-eligible students.
* Observance of religious holy days, including travel for that purpose.
* A documented health care appointment—if the student begins classes or returns to school on the same day as the appointment.
* A temporary absence resulting from any cause acceptable to the teacher, principal, or Superintendent, is including personal illness, or illness or death in the immediate family.
* A juvenile court proceeding documented by a probation officer.
* An absence required by state or local welfare authorities
* A family emergency or unforeseen or unavoidable instance requiring immediate attention.
* An approved visit to a college campus.
* A student absence from school for any reason, other than a documented health care appointment, will not be allowed to participate in school related activities on that day or evening. Unless circumstances of the absence are pre-approved by the building principal and/or the student is in attendance for at least ½ of the official school day.
* In order for a student to receive a pre-arranged absence, the parent must send a note in advance to school. (pre-arranged will not be approved the week of finals or state testing). The student must secure the approval of all their teachers and then final approval by the principal. In order for approval the student must be passing and have fewer than 5 absences. The building principal may put extra stipulations on any pre-arranged absence. ie…time, reason for absence

**Unexcused Absences**

Unexcused absences include:

1. Truancy from school ( unlawful absence from school or classes
2. Leaving the campus without checking out through the office.

Unexcused absences will result in the following disciplinary actions :

1st Offense – 8 days After School Detention ( one [1] period missed equals one [1] day detention )

2nd Offense – (one period missed equals 2 days detention)

Any subsequent unexcused absences will be considered a pattern leading to Truancy and will be dealt with as such. See Detention for further details.

**Admits for Absence**

If the student is absent from class, he or she is expected to pick up an admittance slip to class from the office on his or her return to school. The student must have a note stating the full name of the student, the days missed, the reason for missing, and the signature of the parent or guardian. If the student does not have the note, the absence will be unexcused. This should be done before 7:55 AM.

**The School Day**

### The school day for Knox City High School consists of an eight period day. The day’s first bell rings at 7:55 a.m., the tardy bell rings at 8:00 a.m.

**Daily Bell Schedule**

1st period 8:00-8:45 4th period 10:40-11:25 7th period 1:40-2:25

Breakfast 8:45-9:00 5th period 11:30-12:15 TCB 2:30-2:245

2nd period 9:00-9:45 Lunch 12:15–12:45 8th period 2:50-3:35

3rd period 9:50-10:35 6th period 12:50-1:35

### Driver License Attendance Verification

To obtain a driver license, a student between the ages of 16 and 18 must provide to the Texas Department of Public Safety a form obtained from the school verifying that the student has met the 90 percent attendance requirement for the semester preceding the date of application. The student can obtain this form at the High School Campus office.

## ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The school counselor provides students and parent’s information regarding academic programs to prepare for higher education and career choices. [For more information, see page 24 of this handbook and policies at EIF.]

[See **Academic Counseling** on page 29.]

## AWARDS AND HONORS

Any award or honor, conferrable upon graduation, or conferrable at a time subsequent to determination that the award will be conferred is conditioned upon the conferee student’s complying with all rules and regulations of the District up to the time the award or honor is to be conferred.

[See **Class Rank** **Academic Counseling**.]

## BULLYING

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic methods, or physical conduct against another student on school property, at a school-sponsored or -related activity, or in a district operated vehicle, and the behavior:

* Results in harm to the student or the student’s property,
* Places a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or of damage to the student’s property, or
* Is so severe, persistent, and pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment.

This conduct is considered bullying if it exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator(s) and the student victim and if it interferes with a student’s education or substantially disrupts the operation of the school.

Bullying is prohibited by the district and could include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, assault, demands for money, confinement, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading, and ostracism. In some cases, bullying can occur through electronic methods, called “cyber bullying.”

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.

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying has occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying. The district will also contact the parents of the victim and of the student who was found to have engaged in the 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 his or her child be transferred to another classroom or campus within the district. [Also see **School Safety Transfers** on page 8.

A copy of the district’s policy is available in the principal’s office, superintendent’s office, and on the district’s Web site, 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 Web site.

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

[Also see **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 30, **School Safety Transfers** on page 8, **Hazing** on page 48, policy FFI, and the district improvement plan, a copy of which can be viewed in the campus office.]

## CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS

The district offers career and technology programs in Business and Computers, Family and Consumer Science and Agricultural Science. Admission to these programs is based on student interest.

Knox City - O'Brien CISD will take steps to ensure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs.

**Nondiscrimination Statement** on page ii for additional information regarding the district’s efforts regarding participation in these programs.]

## CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse, which may be accessed at the superintendent’s office. 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. 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 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 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.

As a parent, if your child is a victim of sexual abuse, the campus 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 (TDFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs. To find out what services may be available in your county, see [http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention\_and\_Early\_Intervention/Programs\_Available\_In\_
Your\_County/default.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Programs_Available_In_Your_County/default.asp).

The following Web sites might help you become more aware of child sexual abuse:

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index.aspx?id=2820>

<http://sapn.nonprofitoffice.com/>

<http://www.taasa.org/member/materials2.php>

<http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse1.shtml>

<http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse2.shtml>

Reports may be made to:

The Child Protective Services (CPS) division of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (1 800-252-5400 or on the Web at <http://www.txabusehotline.org>).

## [CLASS RANK / TOP TEN PERCENT / HIGHEST RANKING STUDENT](#_CLASS_RANK_/_TOP TEN PERCENT / HIGH)

* English I, II, III, IV 4 credits
* World Geography 1 credit
* World History 1 credit
* U.S. History 1 credit
* U.S. Government ½ credit
* Economics ½ credit
* Math 4 credits
* Science 4 credits
* Languages other than English 2 credits
* P.E. 1 credit
* Speech ½ credit
* Fine Arts 1 credit
* Electives 7 1/2 credits
* Of the four courses taken in each of core subject areas, the highest three grades will be averaged.
* Graduating academic averages will be based on (approximately) the thirty-third week average.
* With the implementation of H.B. 5 this procedure is subject to change

## COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS

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 Recommended or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program; 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 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 2013 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 an independent 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 counselor at 940-657-3427 for further information about automatic admissions, the application process, and deadlines.

**Students selected for Valedictorian or Salutatorian honors shall meet the following requirements:**

* Enrollment in the District for two consecutive years prior to and including the year of graduation**. (Early graduates are NOT eligible for these honors)**
* Completion of the Recommended High School Program.

**Honor Graduates** will be recognized during the graduation ceremony by the wearing of an honor cord. Honor Graduates must have a cumulative grade point average of ninety (90) or above in the courses listed in the previous Class Ranking section in this handbook.

**O’Brien Middle School Class Ranking:**

Valedictorian, Salutatorian and Honor graduates of the 8th grade will be determined by averaging the grades from Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Language Arts (an average of the English and Reading grade) through the 33rd week of school. Students must be enrolled one full year before becoming eligible for such awards.

## CLASS SCHEDULES

Students **are NOT** allowed to add or drop classes after the first two days of school. Exceptions to this may be made if a serious problem exits with the consent of the building principal. **Low grades or a personality conflict are NOT considered valid reasons for schedule changes.** State law requires that students take certain courses and those laws may be the basis for granting or denying schedule changes.

## COLLEGE CREDIT COURSES and UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS

In addition to the programs offered by the district, Students in grades 10–12 may earn college credit. See building principal or counselor for more information.

## COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed by a phone call or a conference with the teacher or principal. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled so easily, the district has adopted a standard complaint policy at FNG(LOCAL) in the district’s policy manual. A copy of this policy may be obtained in the principal’s or superintendent’s office or on the district’s Web site at www.knoxcityschools.net.

In general, the student or parent should submit a written complaint and request a conference with 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.

## COMPUTER RESOURCES

To prepare students for an increasingly technological society, the district has made an investment in computer technology for instructional purposes. Use of these computer resources is restricted to students working under a teacher’s supervision and for approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement (separate from this handbook) regarding use of these resources; violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

Students and their parents should be aware that an e-mail address using district computers is NOT private and will be monitored by district staff. [For additional information, see policies at CQ.]

## CONDUCT

### 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.

To achieve the best possible learning environment for all students, the ***Student Code of Conduct*** and other campus rules will apply whenever the interest of the district is involved, whether on or off school grounds, in conjunction with classes and school-sponsored activities.

* **Academic Dishonesty / Cheating / Plagiarism**

Academic dishonesty – as in cheating or plagiarism – is not acceptable. Cheating includes the copying of another student’s work- such as homework, class-work or test answers –as one’s own. Plagiarism is the use of another person’s original ideas or writing without giving credit to the true author. A student found to have engaged in academic dishonesty will be subject to loss of credit for the work in question, as well as disciplinary penalties, according to the Student Code of Conduct.

* **Alcohol / Drugs / Tobacco / Weapons**

Under State and Federal law, a student is not allowed to possess, sell, give away or use alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco products, guns or other weapons on school property or at a school-related or school-sanctioned activity, on or off of school property. Having one of these items in a privately owned vehicle that the student may have driven to school and parked on District property is also prohibited. **Including pocket knives of any size**.(See Student Code of Conduct for information on disciplinary consequences.)

## Attending School Sponsored Activities

With the exception of going to the restroom or concession stands, students attending school sponsored activities are expected to remain in the stands or other designated areas. When a student leaves a school sponsored activity they are expected to leave the school grounds and will not be allowed to return without paying.

### Bullying or Taunting Behaviors

Students must not participate, either individually or in a group, in bullying or taunting behaviors toward another student. Such behaviors may include repeated teasing or ridicule, name-calling, threats, theft, gossip and rumors, or physical intimidation of any kind. A substantiated complaint against a student will result in disciplinary action, according to the nature of the offense and the Student Code of Conduct.

### Food / Drinks / Chewing Gum

Food, drinks and gum are not permitted in the classrooms during instructional periods unless permitted by the classroom teacher with approval of the building principal. Food and drinks will be consumed in designated areas during lunch and activity periods. Littering is strictly prohibited and any spills are to be properly cleaned by the student responsible. The use of chewing gum, **specifically the disposal of it,** is an old and continuous problem and is therefore prohibited in the school buildings.

### Disruptions of School Operations

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.

### Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment—spanking or paddling the student—may be used as a discipline management technique in accordance with the ***Student Code of Conduct*** and policy FO(LOCAL) in the district’s policy manual.

* The student will be informed of the reason for corporal punishment.
* The punishment will be administered by the building principal, assistant principal or a teacher.
* The instrument to be used will be approved by the principal.
* The punishment will be administered in the presence of one other District professional employee and out of the view of other students.
* A record will be maintained of each instance of the use of corporal punishment.

## Detention

## The student will be responsible to inform his/her parent/guardian of the length of detention assignment, the reason for the assignment, as well as make his/her own transportation arrangements. If detention does not achieve the desired behavior, further disciplinary actions will be taken to correct the behavior.

Types of Detention:

* **Academic Detention/Tutorial:**
* This punishment will be used for students that have not completed assignments/homework.
* Before or after school
* Attendance will be checked and truancy rules will be enforced. Failure to attend could result in fines to the student or parent.
* **Discipline Detention:**
* Students failing to follow the Student Code of Conduct may be assigned to this detention period.
* May be assigned for more than one day
* This detention will be from either 7:25-7:55 or 3:30 - 4:00 pm
* It will be a 30 minute period during which the student will be required to perform some type of service activity to be determined by the building principal.
* Failure to attend assigned detention will result in further disciplinary actions.
* No more than 5 days can be accumulated without further disciplinary actions.

### 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.

A student attending a social event will be asked to sign out when leaving before the end of the event; anyone leaving before the official end of the event will not be readmitted.

## CONTAGIOUS DISEASES / CONDITIONS

To protect other students from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. If a parent suspects that his or her child has a contagious disease, the parent should contact the school nurse or principal so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted.

The school nurse or the principal’s office can provide information from the Department of State Health Services regarding these diseases.

## CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

The district permits high school students to take correspondence courses—by mail or via the Internet—for credit toward high school graduation.

A maximum of two (2) credits may be earned through correspondence courses. Correspondence may be approved for required course that a student may have failed and when scheduling conflicts make it impossible for a student to enroll in a make-up course offered by the District. For further information contact the building principal. [For further information, see policy EEJC.]

## COUNSELING

### Academic Counseling

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 spring, students in grades 8 through 11 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 vocational opportunities.

To plan for the future, each student should work closely with the counselor in order to enroll in the high school courses that best prepare him or her for attendance at a college, university, or training school, or for pursuit of some other type of advanced education. The counselor can also provide information about entrance exams and application deadlines, as well as information about automatic admission to state colleges and universities, financial aid, housing, and scholarships.

### Personal Counseling

The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, or emotional issues, or substance abuse. The counselor may also make available information about community resources to address these concerns. A student who wishes to meet with the counselor should contact the building secretary to obtain an appointment or the counselor at 940-657-3427.

[Also see **Suicide Awareness** on page 70.

### Psychological Exams, Tests, or Treatment

The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parent’s written consent. Parental consent is not necessary when a psychological examination, test, or treatment is required by state or federal law for special education purposes or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports.

[For more information, refer to FFE(LEGAL) and FFG(EXHIBIT).]

## COURSE CREDIT

A student in grades 9–12 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 EXAM—If a Student Has Taken the Course

A student who has previously taken a course or subject—but did not receive credit for it—may, in circumstances determined by the teacher, counselor, principal, or attendance committee, be permitted to earn credit by passing an exam on the essential knowledge and skills defined for that course or subject. Prior instruction may include, for example, incomplete coursework due to a failed course or excessive absences, home schooling, correspondence courses, or independent study supervised by a teacher.

The counselor or principal would determine if the student could take an exam for this purpose. If approval is granted, the student must score at least 70 on the exam to receive credit for the course or subject.

The attendance review committee may also offer a student with excessive absences an opportunity to earn credit for a course by passing an exam.

A student may not use this exam, however, to regain eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities.

[For further information, see the counselor and policies EEJA.]

## CREDIT BY EXAM—If a Student Has Not Taken the Course

A student will be permitted to take an exam to earn credit for an academic course for which the student has had no prior instruction. . The exams offered by the district are approved by the district’s board of trustees. The dates on which exams are scheduled during the 2013–2014 school year will be published in appropriate district publications and on the district’s Web site

A student will earn credit with a passing score of at least 90 on the exam.

If a student plans to take an exam, the student (or parent) must register with the principal no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. The district will not honor a request by a parent to administer a test on a date other than the published dates. If the district agrees to administer a test other than the one chosen by the district, the parent must purchase a test from a university approved by the State Board of Education. [For further information, see EEJB(LOCAL).]

## DATING VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION

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, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law. [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. 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 or 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, 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, gender, national origin, disability, 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. 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 Web site.

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 or intimidating 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.

### 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. 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 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.

Retaliation against a student might occur when a student receives threats from another student or an employee or when an employee imposes an unjustified punishment or unwarranted grade reduction. Retaliation does not include petty slights and annoyances from other students or negative comments from a teacher that are justified by a student’s poor academic performance in the classroom.

### 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, counselor, principal, or other district employee. The report may be made by the student’s parent. See policy FFH(LOCAL) for the appropriate districts officials to whom to make a report.

### 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. The district will notify the parents of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct involving an adult associated with the district.

In the event prohibited conduct involves another student, the district will notify the parents of the student alleged to have experienced the prohibited conduct when the allegations, if proven, would constitute a violation as defined by policy.

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

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 29.]

## DISTANCE LEARNING

Students may be enrolled in distance learning coursework, as arranged by the District. Also, during their Junior and Senior years, students may enroll in college coursework as the High School Master schedule and their individual schedules permit

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.

The Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN) has been established 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. In limited circumstances, a student in grade 8 may also be eligible to enroll in a course through the TxVSN.

Depending on the TxVSN course in which a student enrolls, the course may be subject to the “no pass, no play” rules. [Also see **Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations** on page 38. ]

If you have questions or wish to make a request that your child be enrolled in a TxVSN course, please contact the counselor.

If a student wishes to enroll in a correspondence course or a distance learning course that is not provided through the TxVSN in order 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 will not recognize and apply the course or subject toward graduation requirements or subject mastery.

## DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS OR DOCUMENTS

### School Materials

Publications prepared by and for the school may be posted or distributed, with the prior approval of the principal, sponsor, or teacher. Such items may include school posters, brochures, flyers, etc.

All school publications are under the supervision of a teacher, sponsor, and the principal.

[See **Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes** on page 14.]

### Non-school Materials...from students

Students must obtain prior approval from the building principal before posting, circulating, or distributing written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school. To be considered, any non-school material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization. The decision regarding approval will be made within two school days.

The principal will designate a location for approved non-school materials to be placed for voluntary viewing by students. [See policies at FNAA.]

A student may appeal a principal’s decision in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL). Any student who posts non-school material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the ***Student Code of Conduct***. Materials displayed without the principal’s approval will be removed.

### Non-school Materials...from others

Written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials not sponsored by the district or by a district-affiliated school-support organization will not be sold, circulated, distributed, or posted on any district premises by any district employee or by persons or groups not associated with the district, except as permitted by policy GKDA. To be considered for distribution, any non-school material must meet the limitations on content established in the policy, include the name of the sponsoring person or organization, and be submitted to the building principal for prior review. The building principal will approve or reject the materials within two school days of the time the materials are received. The requestor may appeal a rejection in accordance with the appropriate district complaint policy. [See policies at DGBA, FNG, or GF.]

Prior review will not be required for:

* Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a school-sponsored meeting intended for adults and held after school hours.
* Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a community group meeting held after school hours in accordance with policy GKD(LOCAL) or a non-curriculum-related student group meeting held in accordance with FNAB(LOCAL).
* Distribution for electioneering purposes during the time a school facility is being used as a polling place, in accordance with state law.

All non-school materials distributed under these circumstances must be removed from district property immediately following the event at which the materials are distributed.

## DRESS AND GROOMING

The district’s dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, to prevent disruption, and minimize safety hazards. Students and parents may determine a student’s personal dress and grooming standards, provided that they comply with the following:

The school has the right to ask a student to change his or her apparel whether or not it is listed below, if it is such a nature as to detract from the educational atmosphere within the school. This includes hair color, cut or any other accessory that may be ruled as distracting.

The following regulations will serve as a guide to implementing the policy but is not intended to be a complete or exhaustive listing of prohibited wear or appearance.

IN MATTERS OF INTERPRETATION, THE BUILDING PRINCIPAL IS AUTHORIZED TO MAKE JUDGMENTS IN AS FAIR, IMPARTIAL, AND CONSISTENT A MANNER AS POSSIBLE.

**District guidelines:**

Dress and grooming practices that create safety hazards or a disruption will not be permissible, therefore the following are prohibited:

* Pictures, emblems or writing on clothing, or elsewhere, that are lewd, offensive, vulgar or obscene, that advertises or depicts tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, drugs or any substance prohibited under school policy or that suggests devil worship/occult activities, either explicitly or by innuendo. This would include skeletons, skulls or demonic representations that are commonly used by many hard-rock or other types of bands.
* Shirts that expose the midriff when the student's arms are raised. Tank-tops and jerseys may be worn over t-shirts, if otherwise appropriate.
* "Baggy", "Sagging", andoversized trousers areclearly forbidden.
* Shirt tails exceeding the bottom of the back pocket must be tucked in or at the discretion of the building principal.
* Walking shorts or split skirts (skorts) may be worn. No biker shorts, wind shorts, or “cut offs” will be allowed. Shorts/skorts and skirts/dresses must extend no higher than 3 inches from the top of the knee cap. **Shorts/Skorts may be worn from the beginning of school until Nov.1 and beginning the week after Easter until the end of school.**
* Appropriate undergarments will be worn and will not be visible.
* Clothing that is considered revealing, excessively tight, or deemed inappropriate by the building principal are strictly prohibited.
* All shirts must have sleeves. No shirts with straps are allowed. Dresses with straps must include a cover-up. **Cover ups that are “see through” are not allowed.** Shirt necks should not fall over the shoulder.
* Hats, caps, head-dress, etc., shall NOT be worn in school buildings. Caps may be worn to other school functions, but must be worn with the bill forward at all times.
* Shoes are to be worn at all times. Shoes designed for strings or buckles must be fully fastened. **House shoes are not allowed except for certain dress up days.**
* Male students are prohibited from wearing ornaments on, in, or around their ear(s).
* All students are prohibited from wearing any form of nose, eyebrow or any other body ornaments.
* Facial hair. Male students will be required to be cleanly shaven at all times.
* All students’ hair must be neatly groomed. The length and bulk of the hair will be such that it does not present a ragged, unkempt or extreme appearance.
* Students will not attend class with their hair rolled up nor will they apply makeup in the classroom.
* All male students’ hair should present a tapered appearance when combed and not fall past the middle of the ear, eyebrow, or past the collar on a normal dress shirt.
* Male students will not wear "tails" or ponytails of any form.
* There will be no designs shaved in the hair or multiple lengths of hair above the ears.
* "Chili bowl", "chopped", "cropped" or Mohawk cuts do not conform to the above policy.
* Any hair coloring not of a natural hair color or that is deemed distracting by the building principal is prohibited.
* Any clothing or grooming fashion that the building principal deems inappropriate and/or disruptive to the educational setting may be not allowed and the student may be asked to change.
* Any student with a permanent tattoo must keep it covered while participating in UIL or school related competitions.

##

## ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

### Telecommunications Devices, Including Mobile Telephones

For safety purposes, the district permits students to possess telecommunications devices, including mobile telephones; however, these devices must remain turned off during the instructional day, unless they are being used for instructional purposes approved by the teacher. All devices must be off during all testing. A student must have approval to possess other telecommunications devices such as netbooks, laptops, tablets, or other portable computers.

The use of mobile telephones in locker rooms or restroom areas at any time while at school, at a school-related, and/or school-sponsored event is strictly prohibited.

A student who uses a telecommunications device during the school day shall have the device confiscated. The parent may pick up the confiscated telecommunications device from the principal’s office at the end of that school day. The 2nd offense and thereafter will result in confiscation of the device and held in school office till the end of that week. At the end of that week, the parent may pick up the device from the principal’s office for a fee of $15.

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

Confiscated telecommunications devices that are not retrieved by the student’s parents will be disposed of after the notice required by law. [See policy FNCE.]

### Other Electronic Devices

Students are not permitted to possess such items as radios, CD players, MP3 players, video or audio recorders, DVD players, cameras, games, or other electronic devices at school, unless prior permission has been obtained from the principal. Without such permission, teachers will collect the items and turn them in to the principal’s office. The principal will determine whether to return items to students at the end of the day or to contact parents to pick up the items.

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student’s personal electronic device may be searched by authorized personnel. [See **Searches** on page 65 and policy FNF.]

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

### Instructional Use of Personal Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices

In some cases, students may find it beneficial or might be encouraged to use personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional purposes while on campus. Students must obtain prior approval before using personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional use. Students must also sign a user agreement that contains applicable rules for use (separate from this handbook). When students are not using the devices for approved instructional purposes, all devices must be turned off during the instructional day. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

### Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources

To prepare students for an increasingly technological society, the district has made an investment in the use of district-owned technology resources for instructional purposes; specific resources may be issued individually to students. Use of these technological resources, which include the district’s network systems and use of district equipment, is restricted to approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement (separate from this handbook) regarding use of these district resources. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

### Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources

Students are prohibited from possessing, sending, forwarding, posting, accessing, or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another’s reputation, or illegal. This prohibition also 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, possessing, 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.

## END-OF-COURSE (EOC) ASSESSMENTS

See **Course Credit** on page 29, **Grading Guidelines** on page 41, **Graduation** on page 43, and **Standardized Testing** on page 67.

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS

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.

Eligibility for participation in many of these activities is governed by state law and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL)—a statewide association overseeing inter-district competition. The following requirements apply to all extracurricular activities:

* A student who receives at the end of a grading period a grade below 70 in any academic class—other than an advanced placement or international baccalaureate course; or an honors or dual credit course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, or a foreign language—may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.
* A student with disabilities who fails to meet the standards in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks.
* An ineligible student may practice or rehearse.
* An absence for participation in an activity that has not been approved will receive an unexcused absence.

The District shall make no distinction between absences for UIL activities and absences for other extracurricular activities approved by the Board.

* A student involved in one major activity shall be 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 involved in two major activities shall be allowed in a school year a maximum of twelve 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. No more than 10 days not related to post-district competition may be used for any one major activity.
* A student involved in three major activities shall be allowed in a school year a maximum of thirteen 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. No more than 10 days not related to post-district competition may be used for any one major activity.

**Those absences related to Athletics, Band, and FFA will be considered a major activity absence under the following conditions:**

* Athletics – Students must participate in at least two of the following: Football, Volleyball, Basketball, and Track and/or Baseball
* Band – Students must participate in Marching Contest & Concert & Sight-Reading.

For the purpose of this policy, competition at a district contest resulting from advancement at a zone contest will be considered post district competition.

Absences for District UIL literary competition shall not count towards the 10 days not related to post-district competition.

A maximum of two days for District competition for FFA skills and judging teams shall not count toward the 10 days not related to post-district competition.

Students shall not be denied participation in a post-district competition because they are over their individual number of days.

**Please note: Sponsors of student clubs and performing groups such as the academic teams, athletic teams, band, and agricultural 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 local policy will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization’s standards of behavior.**

[For further information, see policies at FM and FO.]

### Offices and Elections

## Certain clubs, organizations, and performing groups will hold elections for student officers.

## FEES

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 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 requires 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 55.]
* 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 because of absences and whose parent chooses the program in order for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance requirement. 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 Louis Baty at 940-657-3521. [For further information, see policies at FP.]

## FUND-RAISING

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the Louis Baty at least 10 days before the event. [For further information, see policies at FJ and GE.]

## GANG-FREE ZONES

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 1000 feet of any district-owned or leased property or campus playground.

## GRADE CLASSIFICATION

After the ninth grade, students are classified according to the number of credits earned toward graduation.

 Credits Earned Classification

 5 Grade 10 (Sophomore)

 10 Grade 11 (Junior)

 15 Grade 12 (Senior)

## GRADING GUIDELINES

In grades PK– 12, achievement is reported to parents as:

**• Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten** - achievement is reported to parents as: Excellent, Satisfactory, Needs Improvement and Unsatisfactory.

• **Grades 1 – 12** - achievement shall be reported to parents as numerical grades

###### • Grade Reporting System

All grades are calculated on a percentage basis. Grades on report cards will be written in numbers and report cards will be sent home at the end of each six weeks.

Unsatisfactory progress reports will be mailed at the end of each three week period. If a students grade average in any subject or course is “borderline “ or below 75 at the end of the three weeks of any grading period the student’s parents/guardian will be notified. Parent-teacher conferences for those students that are failing are encouraged.

###### • Middle School & High School Grading Policy

 A student’s Six Weeks grade will be determined from three areas:

High School:

 1. Daily work 45%

 2. Test average 40%

 3. Six Weeks Test 15% (when applicable)

Middle School

1. Daily work 55%

 2. Test average 35%

 3. Six Weeks Test 15% (when applicable)

 A student’s Semester Grade will be determined by the following computation:

 1. Three Six Weeks Average 85%

 2. Semester Test 15%

State law requires a student’s score on an end-of-course (EOC) assessment to count as 15 percent of the student’s final grade for the course.

Also see **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 62 for additional information on grading guidelines. See **Graduation** below, **Course Credit** on page 29, and **Standardized Testing** on page 67 for additional information regarding EOC assessments

###### • Grades

* To figure a student’s grade, multiply the averages by the percentages and add.
* All decimals will be rounded using normal mathematical rounding procedures.
* Extra credit will be given only by arrangement and consent of the teacher.
* There will be a minimum of twelve daily grades per six weeks.
* The highest possible grade for a six week period will be 100.
* The two semester grades from a full year course will be averaged together to determine course credit. The average must be 70 using normal rounding procedures.

**• Six Weeks Tests**

* At the end of each six weeks grading period, the teacher will have the option of giving the students a six week test which will count fifteen (15%) of the final grade for that period.

###### Re-teaching /Re-testing

* Re-teaching and re-testing will be done during tutorials (before and after school and during the tutorial period)
* Re-testing will be at the discretion of the teacher and the building principal.
* **It is the responsibility of the student to ask for re-testing**. The highest grade granted on a retest will be a seventy (70).
* Teachers are not required to grant requests for re-testing.
* **Semester Exams (High School ONLY)**

Students may be excused/exempt from their semester test if they meet the following requirements:

* 80-85 Average
	+ No more than 1 absence in a given class
	+ No more than 3 tardies for the semester
	+ No unexcused absences
* 86-90 Average
	+ No more than 2 absence in a given class
	+ No more than 3 tardies for the semester.
	+ No unexcused absences
* 91 and above
	+ No more than 3 absences
	+ No more than 3 tardies for the semester
	+ No unexcused absences

## HONOR ROLL

After grades are posted each six-week, honor students will be recognized for their achievements during the previous grading period. There are two categories of Honor Rolls. The A Honor Roll recognizes students that made at least 90 in all subject areas the previous period. The A-B Honor Roll recognizes students that have a combination of A’s and B’s during the period.

## GRADUATION

### Requirements for a Diploma

To receive a high school diploma from the district, a student must successfully:

* Complete the required number of credits;
* Complete any locally required courses in addition to the courses mandated by the state; and
* Depending on the year in which the student is scheduled to graduate, pass a statewide exit-level exam or achieve the required cumulative scores on end-of-course (EOC) assessments.

The exit-level test, currently required for students in grade 11, covers English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies and requires knowledge of Algebra I and Geometry; Biology and Integrated Chemistry and Physics; English III; and early American and United States History, World History, and World Geography. Students in grades 10 and 11 during the 2011–2012 school year must pass the exit-level test to graduate. A student in grade 12 who has not passed the exit-level test will have opportunities to retake it.

Also see **Standardized Testing** on page 67 for more information

Beginning with students who entered grade 9 in the 2011–2012 school year, students are required, with limited exceptions, to perform satisfactorily on the following EOC assessments: English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and United States History. A student who has not achieved sufficient scores on the EOC assessments to graduate will have opportunities to retake the assessments.

If a student fails to perform satisfactorily on an EOC assessment, the district will provide remediation to the student in the content area for which the performance standard was not met. This may require participation of the student before or after normal school hours or at times of the year outside normal school operations.

Also see **Grading Guidelines** above and **Standardized Testing** on page 67 for more information.

### Graduation Programs

The district offers the graduation programs listed below. All students entering grade 9 are required to enroll in the Recommended Program or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program. Permission to enroll in the Minimum Program will be granted only if a written agreement is reached among the student, the student’s parent or person standing in parental relation, and the counselor or appropriate administrator. In order for a student to take courses under the Minimum Program, the student must be at least 16 years of age; have completed at least two credits each in English language arts, math, science, and social studies courses that are required for graduation; or have failed grade 9 one or more times. [See policy EIF(LEGAL).]

All students must meet the following credit and course requirements for graduation under the programs listed:

| Courses | Number of credits Minimum Program | Number of credits Recommended Program | Number of credits Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| English/Language Arts | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Mathematics | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| Science | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| Social Studies | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 |
| Economics | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| Physical Education\* | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Speech | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| Language other than English |  | 2 | 3 |
| Fine Arts | 1 (effective for grade 9 in 2010–2011 school year and thereafter) | 1 | 1 |
|  |  |  |  |
| Electives | 7.5 credits (prior to 2010–2011)6.5 credits (2010–2011 and thereafter) | 5.5 credits | 4.5 credits |
| Miscellaneous |  |  | Completion of 4 Advanced Measures\*\* |
| TOTAL | 22 credits | 26 credits | 26 credits |

**Due to the adoption of H.B. 5 the graduation requirements are subject to change**

\* 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.

\*\* State rules prohibit a student from combining a half-credit of a course for which there is an EOC assessment with another half-credit of an elective credit course to satisfy an elective credit requirement. However, the district will allow a student to satisfy a graduation requirement for which there are multiple options with one-half credit of one allowable option and one-half credit of another allowable option, if neither course has an EOC assessment.

\*\*\* A student graduating under the Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program must also achieve a combination of four of the following advanced measures:

1. An original research project or other project that is related to the required curriculum. These projects must be judged by a panel of professionals or conducted under the direction of a mentor and reported to an appropriate audience. Please note that no more than two of the four advanced measures may be received from this option.
2. Test data where a student receives:
3. A score of three or above on an Advanced Placement (AP) exam;
4. A score of four or above on an International Baccalaureate (IB) exam; or
5. A score on the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) that qualifies the student for recognition as a commended scholar or higher by the College Board and National Merit Scholarship Corporation, as part of the National Hispanic Recognition Program (NHRP) of the College Board, or as part of the National Achievement Scholarship Program of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. The PSAT/NMSQT score will count as only one advanced measure regardless of the number of honors received by the student.
6. College academic courses, including those taken for dual credit, and advanced technical courses, including locally articulated courses, provided the student scores the equivalent of a 3.0 or higher.

Information regarding specific courses required or offered in each curriculum area, along with a description of advanced measures available to students in the Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program from the options listed above, will be distributed to students each spring in order to enroll in courses for the upcoming school year.

Please be aware that not all courses are offered at every secondary campus in the district. A student who wants to take a course not offered at his or her regular campus should contact the counselor about a transfer or other alternatives. If the parents of at least 22 students request a transfer for those students to take a course in the required curriculum other than fine arts or CTE, the district will offer the course for the following year either by teleconference or at the school from which the transfers were requested.

### Certificates of Coursework Completion

A certificate of coursework completion will be issued to a senior student who successfully completes state and local credit requirements for graduation but fails to perform satisfactorily on the exit-level tests.

### Students with Disabilities

Upon the recommendation of the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee, a student with disabilities may be permitted to graduate under the provisions of his or her individualized education program (IEP).

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 only be allowed to participate in one graduation ceremony.

 [See policy FMH(LEGAL).]

Please also be aware that if an ARD committee places a student with a disability on a modified curriculum in a subject area, the student will be automatically placed in the Minimum Program, in accordance with state rules.

If a student receiving special education services is scheduled to graduate under the Minimum Program or in accordance with the provisions of his or her IEP, the student’s ARD committee will determine whether the general EOC assessment is an accurate measure of the student’s achievement and progress and, if so, whether successful performance is required for graduation, or whether an alternative assessment is more appropriate. STAAR Modified and STAAR Alternate are the alternative assessments currently allowed by the state. [See **Standardized Testing** for additional information.]

### Graduation Activities

Graduation activities will include:

* Announcement of Valedictorian and Salutatorian ( and Highest Ranking Boy or Girl, if necessary)
* Recognition of Honor Graduates and National Honor Society Members
* Presentation of Diplomas

***Promotion Ceremony for O’Brien Middle School***

A promotion ceremony will be held in William R. Baker auditorium in Knox City. The Valedictorian and Salutatorian will deliver commencement addresses. The 3rd ranking student will introduce the speaker, 4th will give the invocation, 5th will give the benediction, and the students being promoted with honors will be recognized at the ceremony. The two highest ranking girls and two highest ranking boys from the 7th grade class will serve as ushers for the ceremony.

### Graduation Speakers

Graduating students will be given an opportunity to provide opening and closing remarks during the graduation ceremony. Only those students who meet eligibility requirements are eligible to give these remarks; however, if the student was assigned to disciplinary placement at any time during the spring semester, he or she will not be eligible to speak at graduation.

Students eligible to give the opening and closing remarks will be notified by the principal and given an opportunity to volunteer. In the event there are more eligible students volunteering than there are speaking roles at the graduation ceremony, the names of all eligible students who volunteered shall be randomly drawn. The student whose name is drawn first will give the opening remarks and the student whose name is drawn second will give the closing remarks.

In addition to the opening and closing remarks, those students who have attained special positions of honor based on neutral criteria may also have speaking roles at the graduation ceremony.

[For student speakers at other school events, see STUDENT SPEAKERS on page 69.]

[See FNA(LOCAL).]

### 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 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. [See **Student Fees** on page 40.]

### Scholarships and Grants

Students who have a financial need according to federal criteria and who complete the Recommended High School Program or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement 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. [For further information, see the principal or counselor and policy EJ(LEGAL).]

## HARASSMENT

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 30.]

## HAZING

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.

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.

[Also see **Bullying** on page 21 and policies FFI and FNCC.]

## HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS

### Student Illness

When your child is ill, please contact the school to let us know he or she won’t be attending that day. It is important to remember that schools are required to 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. In addition, students with diarrheal illnesses must stay home until they are diarrhea free without 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.

The district is also 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 if you have questions or if you are concerned about whether or not your child should stay home.

### Bacterial Meningitis

State law specifically requires the district to provide the following information:

* 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 most common and the least serious. Bacterial meningitis is the most common form of serious bacterial infection with the potential for serious, long-term complications. It is an uncommon disease, but requires urgent treatment with antibiotics to prevent permanent damage or death.

* 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 1 year old) and adults with meningitis may have a severe headache, high temperature, vomiting, sensitivity to bright lights, neck stiffness or joint pains, and drowsiness or confusion. 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. The germs live naturally in the back of our noses and throats, but they do not live for long outside the body. They are spread when people exchange saliva (such as by kissing, sharing drinking containers, utensils, or cigarettes).

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?

Do not share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes. Limit the number of persons you kiss.

While there are vaccines for some other strains of bacterial meningitis, they are used only in special circumstances. These include when there is a disease outbreak in a community or for people traveling to a country where there is a high risk of getting the disease. Also, a vaccine is recommended by some groups for college students, particularly freshmen living in dorms or residence halls. The vaccine is safe and effective (85–90 percent). It can cause mild side effects, such as redness and pain at the injection site lasting up to two days. Immunity develops within seven to ten days after the vaccine is given and lasts for up to five years.

* What should you do if you think you or a friend might have bacterial meningitis?

You should seek prompt medical attention.

* More information maybe obtained from your school nurse, family doctor, and the staff at your 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 Department of State Health Services office to ask about a meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at the Web sites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov>, and the Department of State Health Services, <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/>.

\* Please note that the TDSHS requires at least one meningococcal vaccination between grades 7 and 10, and state guidelines recommend this vaccination be administered between age 11 and 12, with a booster dose at 16 years of age. 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.

Also refer to **Immunizations** on page 53 for more information

### Food Allergies

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. Please contact the school nurse or campus principal if your 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 at the office. Also see policy FFAF.

### Head Lice

Head lice, although not an illness or a disease, is very common among children and is spread very easily through head-to-head contact during play, sports, or nap time and when children share things like brushes, combs, hats, and headphones. If careful observation indicates that a student has head lice, the school nurse will contact the student’s parent to determine whether the child will need to be picked up from school and to discuss a plan for treatment with an FDA-approved medicated shampoo or cream rinse that may be purchased from any drug or grocery store. After the student has undergone one treatment, the parent should check in with the school nurse to discuss the treatment used. The nurse can also offer additional recommendations, including subsequent treatments and how best to get rid of lice and prevent their return.

More information on head lice can be obtained from the TDSHS Web site at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/lice.shtm>.

### Physical Activity for Students in Elementary and Middle School

In accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA, the district will ensure that students in kindergarten 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 or junior high school will engage in 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity per day for at least four semesters. For additional information on the district’s requirements and programs regarding elementary, middle, and junior high school student physical activity requirements, please see the principal.

### School Health Advisory Council

During the preceding school year, the district’s School Health Advisory Council held 4 meetings. Additional information regarding the district’s School Health Advisory Council is available from the school nurse. [See also policies at BDF and EHAA.]

The duties of the SHAC range from recommending curriculum to developing strategies for integrating curriculum into a coordinated school health program encompassing school health services, counseling services, a safe and healthy school environment, recess recommendations, and employee wellness. See policies at BDF and EHAA.

[See **Removing a Student from Human Sexuality Instruction** on page 6 for additional information.]

### Other Health-Related Matters

### 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 building principal to obtain the results of his or her child’s physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.

### Vending Machines

The district has adopted policies and implemented procedures to comply with state and federal food service guidelines for restricting student access to vending machines. For more information regarding these policies and guidelines see the building principal. [See policies at CO and FFA.]

#### Tobacco Prohibited

Students are prohibited from possessing or using any type of tobacco product, including electronic cigarettes, 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 tobacco products by students and others on school property and at school-sponsored and school-related activities. [See the ***Student Code of Conduct*** and policies at FNCD and GKA.]

## HOMELESS STUDENTS

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district’s Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths, Christie Howeth, at 940-657-3427.

## HOMEWORK

The Faculty may assign homework which is an extension of class work. Homework is designed to expand the learning opportunities beyond the normal classroom experience.

## 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://webds.dshs.state.tx.us/immco/affidavit.shtm>. 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, rubeola (measles), rubella (German measles), mumps, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis (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. [For further information, see policy FFAB(LEGAL) and the TDSHS Web site: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/default.shtm>.]

As noted above at **Bacterial Meningitis**, entering college students must now, with limited exception, furnish evidence of having received a bacterial meningitis vaccination prior to 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.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

### Questioning of Students

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 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 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, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, 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 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 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 required to register as a sex offender or who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors.

[For further information, see policies FL(LEGAL) and GRA(LEGAL).]

## LEAVING CAMPUS

Please remember that student attendance is crucial to learning. We ask that appointments be scheduled outside of school hours as much as reasonably possible. Also note that picking up a child early on a regular basis results in missed opportunities for learning. Unless the principal has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the school day.

State rules require that parental consent be obtained before any student is allowed to leave campus for any part of the school day. The district has put the following procedures in place in order to document parental consent:

* For students in elementary and middle school, a parent or otherwise authorized adult must come to the office and sign the student out. Please be prepared to show identification. Once an identity is verified, a campus representative will then call for the student or collect the student and bring him or her to the office. For safety purposes and stability of the learning environment, we cannot allow you to go to the classroom or other area unescorted to pick up the student. 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 also be required.
* For students in high school, the same process will be followed. If the student’s parent will authorize the student to leave campus unaccompanied, a note provided by the parent must be submitted to the main office in advance of the absence, no later than two hours prior to the student’s need to leave campus. A phone call received from the parent may be accepted, but the school may ultimately require a note to be submitted for documentation purposes. Once the office has received information that the student’s parent consents to the student leaving campus, a pass will be issued to the student to hand to his or her teacher with the necessary information. The student must sign out through the main office and sign in upon his or her return, if the student returns the same day. 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. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will be required.
* 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.

### During Lunch

* Knox City High School and O’Brien Middle School have closed campuses. Students are expected to eat in the cafeteria; they may purchase a meal from the cafeteria or bring a lunch from home.

Knox City High School is a closed campus, but those students earning A-B Honor Roll Status or other qualifying event will occasionally be rewarded with the opportunity to have off campus lunch (LOCO).  Otherwise a student will not be permitted to go off campus for lunch unless they are physically checked out by their parent.

### At Any Other Time During the School Day

Students are not authorized to leave campus during regular school hours for any other reason, except with the permission of the principal.

Students who leave campus in violation of these rules will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

## LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS

A student with limited English proficiency (LEP) 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 a LEP student.

In order 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 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-L, as mentioned at **Standardized Testing**, below, may be administered to a LEP student, or, for a student up to grade 5, a Spanish version of STAAR. In limited circumstances, a student’s LPAC may waive certain graduation requirements related to the English I and II end-of-course (EOC) assessments. The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) will also be administered to LEP students who qualify for services.

If a student is considered LEP and receives special education services because of a qualifying disability, the student’s ARD committee will make these decisions in conjunction with the LPAC.

## LOST AND FOUND

A “lost and found” collection box is located in the campus office. If your child has lost an item, please encourage him or her to check the lost and found box. The district discourages students from bringing to school personal items of high monetary value, as the district cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items. The campus will dispose of lost and found items at the end of each semester.

## MAKEUP WORK

### Makeup Work Because of Absence

If a student misses class for any reason, the teacher may assign the student makeup work that is based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course and the needs of the individual student in mastering the essential knowledge and skills or in meeting subject or course requirements.

* A student will be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work in a satisfactory manner. The student will be given a minimum of one extra day for each day missed to complete the makeup work [For further information, see policy EIAB(LOCAL).]
* A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted by the teacher will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.
* A student is encouraged to speak with his or her teacher if the student knows of an absence ahead of time, including absences for extracurricular activities, so that the teacher and student may plan any work that can be completed before or shortly after the absence. Please remember the importance of student attendance at school and that, even though absences may be excused or unexcused, all absences account for the 90 percent threshold in regards to the state laws surrounding “attendance for credit or final grade.” [See also **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade** on page 17.]
* A student involved in an extracurricular activity must notify his or her teachers ahead of time about any absences.
* A student will be permitted to make up tests and to turn in projects due in any class missed because of absence. Teachers may assign a late penalty to any long-term project in accordance with time lines approved by the principal and previously communicated to students.

### DAEP Makeup Work

A student removed to a disciplinary alternative education 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, distance learning, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. [See policy FOCA(LEGAL).]

### In-school Suspension Makeup Work

A student removed from the regular classroom to in-school suspension or another setting, other than a DAEP, will have an opportunity to complete before the beginning of the next school year each course the student was enrolled in at the time of removal from the regular classroom. The district may provide the opportunity by any method available, including a correspondence course, distance learning, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. [See policy FO(LEGAL).]

## MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

District employees will not give a student prescription medication, nonprescription medication, herbal substances, anabolic steroids, or dietary supplements, with the following exceptions:

* Only authorized employees, in accordance with policies at FFAC, may administer:
* Prescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent, along with a written request.
* Prescription medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse or another qualified district employee from the original, properly labeled container.
* Nonprescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request.
* Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student’s individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.
* In certain emergency situations, the district will maintain and administer to a student nonprescription medication, but only:
* In accordance with the guidelines developed with the district’s medical advisor; and
* When the parent has previously provided written consent to emergency treatment on the district’s form.

A student with asthma or severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) may be permitted to possess and use prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication at school or school-related events only if he or she has written authorization from his or her parent and a physician or other licensed health-care provider. The student must also demonstrate to his or her physician or health-care provider and to the school nurse the ability to use the prescribed medication, including any device required to administer the medication.

If the student has been prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication for use during the school day, the student and parents should discuss this with the school nurse and/or principal.

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 the school nurse and/or principal for information. [See policy FFAF(LEGAL).]

### Psychotropic Drugs

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

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 are not permitted to 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. [For further information, see policies at FFAC.]

## NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, **Knox City - O'Brien CISD** does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The following district staff members have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements:

* Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of gender: Louis Baty, Superintendent of Schools, 606 East Main, Knox City, TX , 940-657-3521.
* Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Louis Baty, Superintendent of Schools, 606 East Main, Knox City, TX , 940-657-3521.
* All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the superintendent Louis Baty at 940-657-3521.

## NONTRADITIONAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

[See **Requirements for a Diploma** on page 43.]

## PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS / HEALTH SCREENINGS

Students may be required to secure physical examinations and provide written documentation prior to participation in a school activity.

## PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States 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 **Excusing a Student from Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags** on page 07.]

One minute of silence will 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. [See policy EC(LEGAL) for more information.]

## PRAYER

Each student has a right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or 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

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level, the recommendation of the student’s teacher, the score received on any criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessment, and any other necessary academic information as determined by the district. To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards.

In grades 5 - 8, promotion is based on earning a minimum grade of 70 in 3 of the 4 classes listed below:

Mathematics Language Arts (average of English & Reading Grades)

Science Social Studies

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.\*

* 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 assessments 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 assessments 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 or in a course intended for students above the student’s current grade level in which the student will be administered a state mandated assessment, 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 only be required to take an applicable state mandated assessment for the course in which he or she is enrolled, unless otherwise required to do so by federal law.

[See **Standardized Testing** on page 67.]

Parents of a student who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her 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 violations 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 policies at EIE.]

Students will also have multiple opportunities to retake EOC assessments. [See **Graduation** on page 43 and **Standardized Testing** on page 67 for more information about EOC assessments.]

Certain students—some with disabilities and some with limited English proficiency—may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing. For more information, see the principal, counselor, or special education director.

A Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) will be prepared for any student in a middle school or beyond who did not perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated assessment or 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 guidance 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 [counselor or principal] and 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.

## RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL

[See **Leaving Campus** on page 55.]

## REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES

Report cards with each student’s grades or performance and absences in each class or subject are issued to parents at least once every 6 weeks.

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period, parents will be given a written progress report if their child’s performance in any course is near or below 70, or is below the expected level of performance. If the student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent will be requested to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject. [Please see **Working Together** on page 3 for how to schedule a conference.]

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the local school board and are designed to reflect each student’s academic achievement for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district’s grading policy. [See policy EIA(LOCAL).]

Questions about grade calculation should first be discussed with the teacher; if the question is not resolved, the student or parent may request a conference with the principal in accordance with FNG(LOCAL).

The report card or unsatisfactory progress report will state whether tutorials are required for a student who receives a grade lower than 70 in a class or subject.

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and should be returned to the school within three days.

## RETALIATION

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 30.]

## SAFETY

Student safety on campus and at school-related events 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 should:

* 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 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

Soon after the school year begins, parents will have the opportunity to purchase low-cost accident insurance that would help meet medical expenses in the event of injury to their child.

### Drills: Fire, Tornado, and Other Emergencies

From time to time, students, teachers, and other district employees will participate in drills of emergency procedures. When the alarm is sounded, students should follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

#### Fire Drill Bells

3 bells leave the building

1 bell halt; stand at attention

2 bells return to the classroom

#### Tornado Drill Bells

1 continuous bell move quietly but quickly to the designated locations

2 bells return to the classroom

### 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 would need to have written 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 the teacher needs to know.

### Emergency School-Closing Information

Parents and students are encouraged to listen to the news media for bulletins from the Superintendent’s office concerning the opening or closing of school in the event of severe weather. Local radio station KVRP – 97.1 FM from Haskell or Abilene television stations will be informed of emergency closings.

## SAT, ACT, AND OTHER STANDARDIZED TESTS

See **Standardized Testing** on page

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## SCHOOL FACILITIES

### Use By Students Before and After School

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.

The following areas are open to students before school, beginning at 7:25 a.m.

* Knox City Cafeteria
* O’Brien Cafeteria

Unless the teacher or sponsor overseeing the 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, and unless involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher, students must leave campus immediately.

### Conduct Before and After School

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

Loitering or standing in the halls during class is not permitted. During class time, a student must have a hall pass to be outside the classroom for any purpose. Failure to obtain a pass will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the ***Student Code of Conduct***.

### Cafeteria Services

The district participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced lunches daily. Free and reduced-price lunches are available based on financial need. Information about a student’s participation is confidential. See school secretary to apply.

The District will provide a free breakfast to all students. All students must report to the cafeteria at the designated time to eat breakfast. To enable the District to participate in this program, all parents/guardians are encouraged to complete an application for the National School Lunch Program

Breakfast and lunch will be served to all students who wish to eat in the cafeteria. Charges for meals may be paid by the day, week, or month. **All charges must be paid in 30 days.**

**LUNCH PRICES** **BREAKFAST**

 $ 2.20 Student (Free)

 $ 0.40 Reduced (Free)

 $ 3.00 Adult/Teacher $ 1.75 Adult/Teacher

The district follows the federal and state guidelines regarding foods of minimal nutritional value being served or sold on school premises during the school day. [For more information, see policy CO(LEGAL).]

### Library

The library is a learning laboratory with books, computers, magazines, and other materials available for classroom assignments, projects, and reading or listening pleasure. The library is open for independent student use anytime during the regular school day.

### Meetings of Non-curriculum-Related Groups

Student-organized, student-led noncurriculum-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 from time to time conduct searches. Such searches are conducted without a warrant and as permitted by law.

### Students’ Desks and Lockers

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 cause 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.

### Electronic Devices

Use of district-owned equipment and its network systems is not private and will be monitored by the district. [See policy CQ for more information.]

Any searches of personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices will be conducted in accordance with law, and the device may be confiscated in order to perform a lawful search. A confiscated device may be turned over to law enforcement to determine whether a crime has been committed.

[See policy FNF(LEGAL) for more information.]

### Vehicles on Campus

Vehicles parked on school property are under the jurisdiction of the school. School officials may search any vehicle any time there is reasonable cause 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.

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

### Trained Dogs

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.

### Metal Detectors

[For further information, see policy FNF(LOCAL).]

### Drug-Testing

[For further information, see policy FNF(LOCAL). Also, see **Steroids**, on page 69.]

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 30.]

## SPECIAL PROGRAMS

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, homeless students, bilingual students, migrant students, students with limited English proficiency, dyslexic students, 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 building principal.

## STANDARDIZED TESTING

### 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 counselor early during their junior year to determine the appropriate exam to take; these exams are usually taken at the end of the junior year.

The ACT or SAT may be available at no cost to students. In addition, students in grades 8 and 10 may have the opportunity to take the corresponding preparation assessments at no charge. Please check with the counselor for details.

### 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 will take state-mandated assessments, such as the 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, unless the student is enrolled in a reading or math course intended for students above the student’s current grade level, in order for the student to be promoted to the next grade level. See **Promotion and Retention** on page 60 for additional information.

STAAR Modified and STAAR Alternate, for students receiving special education services, will be available for eligible students, as determined by the student’s ARD committee.

STAAR-L is a linguistically accommodated assessment that is available for certain limited English proficient (LEP) students, as determined by the student’s Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC). A Spanish version of STAAR is also available to students through grade 5 who need this accommodation.

The 2011–2012 school year was the first year of implementation of the STAAR testing program. For students who took the STAAR assessments required for grades 3–8 in spring 2012, parents will be informed of their child’s performance once the results of these assessments are received by the district, expected in January 2013.

#### End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments for Students in Grades 9–12

Beginning with ninth graders in the 2011–2012 school year and, as modified by House Bill 5, end-of-course (EOC) assessments are administered for the following courses:

* Algebra I
* English I and English II,
* Biology
* United States History

Satisfactory performance on the applicable assessments will be required for graduation.

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 Modified and STAAR Alternate, for students receiving special education services, will be available for eligible students, as determined by the student’s ARD committee. These particular EOC assessments may have different testing windows than the general assessments, and the ARD committee will determine whether successful performance on the assessments will be required for graduation.

STAAR-L, which is a linguistically accommodated assessment, will be available for students who have been determined to be limited English proficient (LEP) and who require this type of testing accommodation.

Also see **Graduation** on page 43 for additional information.

### TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills)

TAKS is a state-mandated assessment currently being transitioned to the STAAR program.

Except in limited circumstances, a student in grade 12 during the 2013–2014 school year will be required to retake what is termed the “exit-level” TAKS in the subject areas of mathematics, English/language arts, social studies, and/or science, for which satisfactory performance is required for graduation, if the student did not pass any of these areas while in grade 11.

Also see **Graduation** on page 43 for more information

### 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. Beginning in fall 2013, all Texas public colleges and universities will begin administering a new TSI assessment, which will assist as one of several factors in determining whether the student is considered ready to enroll in college-level courses or whether the student needs to enroll in what is termed developmental education courses prior to enrollment in college level courses.

## STEROIDS

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.

Body building, 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 participating in UIL athletic competition may be subject to random steroid testing. More information on the UIL testing program may be found on the UIL Web site at <http://www.uil.utexas.edu/athletics/health/steroid_information.html>.

## STUDENTS IN PROTECTIVE CUSTODY OF THE STATE

In an effort to provide educational stability, the district strives to assist any student who is currently placed or newly placed in either temporary or permanent conservatorship (custody) of the state of Texas with the enrollment and registration process, as well as other educational services throughout the student’s enrollment in the district.

A student who is placed in the custody of the state and who is moved outside of the district’s attendance boundaries is entitled to continue in enrollment at the school he or she was attending prior to the placement until the student reaches the highest grade level at the particular school. In addition, if a student in grade 11 or 12 is transferred to another district and does not meet the graduation requirements of the transferring 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.

Please contact Christie Howeth, who has been designated as the district’s liaison for children in the conservatorship of the state, at 940-657-3427 with any questions.

## STUDENT SPEAKERS

As determined by the principal, students who have been selected for special honors, such as captain of an athletic team, student council officers, leaders of school-sponsored organizations, homecoming king or queen, or prom king or queen may also address school audiences at designated events. See building principal for additional information on student speakers.[See FNA(LOCAL).]

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

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 TDSHS maintains information regarding children’s mental health and substance abuse intervention services on its Web site: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/mhsa-child-adolescent-services/>.

## SUICIDE AWARENESS

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 <http://www.texassuicideprevention.org> or contact the school counselor for more information related to suicide prevention services available in your area.

## SUMMER SCHOOL

Summer school may be offered for remediation, TAKS tutorials and to provide an opportunity for students that exceeded the attendance rule to make up class-time, as per the decisions of the Campus Attendance Committee. A $50.fee/day will be charged for those students attending to make up class time).

## TAKS (TEXAS ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS)

See **Standardized Testing** on page 67

## TARDINESS

Generally speaking, a tardy may be defined as any student who is not in his or her classroom at the time that the bell rings. (though individual teachers may require students to be in their school desks when the bell rings). Tardies are normally unexcused unless a student has been detained by a faculty member ( a note from that faculty member should accompany the student.)

A student who is tardy to class will be assigned to detention hall. Repeated instances of tardiness will result in more severe disciplinary action, in accordance with the ***Student Code of Conduct***.

###### Unexcused tardy will result in the following disciplinary actions:

1st Offense – Verbal warning 4th Offense – 5 days discipline detention and contact parents.

2nd Offense – 1 day discipline detention 5th Offense – **Severe Disciplinary Action**

3rd Offense – 3 days discipline detention [See **Detention** and **Attendance for Credit**.]

In some instances corporal punishment may be chosen by the student instead of detention.

## TEXTBOOKS, ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS, AND TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT

State-approved textbooks are provided to students free of charge for each subject or class. Books must be covered by the student, as directed by the teacher, and treated with care. Electronic textbooks and technological equipment may also be provided to students, depending on the course and course objectives. A student who is issued a damaged item should report the damage to the teacher. Any student failing to return an item in acceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until the item is returned or paid for by the parent; however, the student will be provided textbooks and equipment for use at school during the school day.

## TRANSFERS

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

[See **School Safety Transfers**, on page 8, Bullying, on page 21, and **Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education Services**, on page 9, for other transfer options.]

## TRANSPORTATION

### School-Sponsored Trips

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation provided by the school to and from the event.

The parent should present—before the scheduled trip (24 hours)—a written request to the event sponsor (coach, teacher, etc.) or the building principal that the student be permitted to ride with the parent.

Generally, an exception will be made, if the parent/guardians and the student are traveling from the event to another destination. The principal, however, may make an exception if the parent makes a written request to the administrator on duty that the student be released to the parent after the school sponsored event is over. The student will ONLY be released to the student’s parent or legal guardian.

The District will NOT be liable for any injuries that occur to students riding in transportation that is not provided by the school.

### Buses and Other School Vehicles

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living two or more miles from school. This service is provided at no cost to students. Bus routes and any subsequent changes are posted at the school.

A parent may also designate a child-care facility or grandparent’s residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated facility or residence must be on an approved stop on an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off location, you may contact Louis Baty, Superintendent of Schools at 940-657-3521.

See the ***Student Code of Conduct*** for provisions regarding transportation to the disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP).

Students are expected to assist district staff in ensuring that buses remain in good condition and that transportation is provided safely. When riding in district vehicles, students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook and the ***Student Code of Conduct***. Students must:

* Follow the driver’s directions at all times.
* Enter and leave the bus or van in an orderly manner at the designated stop.
* Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
* Not deface the bus, van, or its equipment.
* Not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the bus or van.
* Not possess or use any form of tobacco on school buses.
* Observe all usual classroom rules.
* Be seated while the vehicle is moving.
* Fasten their seat belts, if available.
* Wait for the driver’s signal upon leaving the bus or van and before crossing in front of the vehicle.

Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the ***Student Code of Conduct***; bus-riding privileges may be suspended.

**Student Driving on Campus**

Students will not be allowed to drive on any school property without having a valid driver’s license.

A copy of the student’s driver’s license and current insurance information must be on file in the principal’s office.

Students driving on campus without proper license will be reported to the local law enforcement.

## VANDALISM

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

For safety purposes, video/audio equipment may be 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 principal will review the video/audio recordings routinely and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the ***Student Code of Conduct***.

## VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

### 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 principal’s office and must comply with all applicable district policies and procedures.

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher and only so long as their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

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

### Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students

On High School Career Day and on special occasions, the district invites representatives from colleges and universities and other higher education institutions, prospective employers, and military recruiters to present information to interested students.

## VOLUNTEERS

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 principals for more information and to complete an application.

**WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL**

A student under 18 may be withdrawn from school only by a parent. The school requests notice from the parent at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. The parent may obtain a withdrawal form from the principal’s office.

On the student’s last day, the withdrawal form must be presented to each teacher for current grade averages and book clearance; to the librarian to ensure a clear library record; to the clinic for health records; to the counselor for the last report card and course clearance; and finally, to the principal. A copy of the withdrawal form will be given to the student, and a copy will be placed in the student’s permanent record.

A student who is 18 or older, who is married, or who has been declared by a court to be an emancipated minor, may withdraw without parental signature.

# 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.

**ACT** refers to one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions exams: the American College Test. The test may be a requirement for admission to certain colleges or universities.

**ARD** is the admission, review, and dismissal committee convened for each student who is identified as needing a full and individual evaluation for special education services. The eligible student’s parents are part of the committee.

**Attendance Review Committee** is sometimes responsible for reviewing a student’s absences when the student’s attendance drops below 90 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 lost because of absences.

**DAEP** stands for disciplinary alternative education program, a placement for students who have violated certain provisions of the ***Student Code of Conduct***. Students in the DAEP will be separated from students not assigned to the program. The DAEP will focus instruction on English language arts, mathematics, science, history, and self-discipline, and provide for students’ educational and behavior needs, as well as supervision and counseling.

**EOC assessments** are end-of-course tests, which are state-mandated, and are part of the STAAR program. Successful performance on EOC assessments will be required for graduation beginning with students in grade 9 during the 2011–2012 school year. These exams will be given in English I, English II, English III, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, World Geography, World History, and United States History.

**FERPA** refers to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act that 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** is the written record of the Individualized Education Program 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 districtwide tests, etc.

**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.

**LAT** stands for Linguistically Accommodated Testing, which is an assessment process for recent immigrant English language learners who are required to be assessed in certain grades and subjects under the NCLB Act.

**NCLB Act** is the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

**Personal Graduation Plan (PGP)** is recommended for all students entering grade 9 and is required by state law for any student in middle school or higher 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.

**SAT** refers to one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions exams: the Scholastic Aptitude Test. The test may be a requirement 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.

**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, effective beginning with certain students for the 2011–2012 school year.

**STAAR Alternate** 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 Modified** is an alternative state-mandated assessment based on modified achievement standards that is administered to eligible students receiving special education services, as determined by the student’s ARD committee.

**STAAR Linguistically Accommodated (STAAR L)** is an alternative state-mandated assessment with linguistic accommodations designed for certain recent immigrant English language learners.

**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 grade 11 exit-level test 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; identifies the circumstances, consistent with law, when a student may be removed from the classroom or campus. 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, and states whether self-defense is a consideration in suspension, DAEP placement, or expulsion. The ***Student Code of Conduct*** also addresses notice to the parent regarding a student’s violation of one of its provisions.

**TAKS** is the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, the state’s standardized achievement test currently given to students in certain subjects in grades 3–11.

**TAKS-Accommodated** is a state mandated assessment based on the same grade-level academic achievement standards of TAKS available to certain students who receive special education services who need specific accommodations, as determined by the student and his or her ARD committee.

**TAKS-Alternate** is an alternate state mandated assessment designed for students with severe cognitive disabilities receiving special education services who meet the participation requirements, as determined by the student and his or her ARD committee.

**TAKS-Modified** is an alternate state mandated assessment based on modified achievement standards and is administered to eligible students receiving special education services, as determined by the student and his or her ARD committee.

**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.

**TxVSN** is 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.

# Knox City – O’Brien

CISD

Student

Code of Conduct

2013 – 2014

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Student Code of Conduct

Dear Student and Parent:

As required by state law, the board of trustees has officially adopted the Student Code of Conduct in order to promote a safe and orderly learning environment for every student.

We urge you to read this publication thoroughly and to discuss it with your family. If you have any questions about the required conduct and consequences for misconduct, we encourage you to ask for an explanation from the student’s teacher or campus administrator.

The student and parent should each sign this page in the space provided below, and then return the page to the student’s school.

Thank you.

Marsha McGaughey

Mark Tucker

Ricky Moeller

# STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

## Purpose

The Student Code of Conduct is the district’s response to the requirements of Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code.

The Code provides methods and options for managing students in the classroom and on school grounds, disciplining students, and preventing and intervening in student discipline problems.

The law requires the district to define misconduct that may—or must—result in a range of specific disciplinary consequences including removal from a regular classroom or campus, out-of-school suspension, placement in a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP), or expulsion from school.

This Student Code of Conduct has been adopted by the Knox City - O'Brien CISD Board of Trustees and developed with the advice of the district-level committee. This Code provides information to parents and students regarding standards of conduct, consequences of misconduct, and procedures for administering discipline. It remains in effect during summer school and at all school-related events and activities outside of the school year until an updated version adopted by the board becomes effective for the next school year.

In accordance with state law, the Code shall be posted at each school campus or shall be available for review at the office of the campus principal. Parents shall be notified of any conduct violation that may result in a student being suspended, placed in a DAEP, or expelled.

Because the Student Code of Conduct is adopted by the district’s board of trustees, it has the force of policy; therefore, in case of conflict between the Code and the student handbook, the Code shall prevail.

**Please Note:** The discipline of students with disabilities who are eligible for services under federal law (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) is subject to the provisions of those laws.

# School District Authority and Jurisdiction

School rules and the authority of the district to administer discipline apply whenever the interest of the district is involved, on or off school grounds, in conjunction with or independent of classes and school-sponsored activities.

The district has disciplinary authority over a student:

1. During the regular school day and while the student is going to and from school or a school-sponsored or school-related activity on district transportation;
2. During lunch periods in which a student is allowed to leave campus;
3. While the student is in attendance at any school-related activity, regardless of time or location;
4. For any school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location;
5. When retaliation against a school employee or volunteer occurs or is threatened, regardless of time or location;
6. When criminal mischief is committed on or off school property or at a school-related event;
7. For certain offenses committed within 300 feet of school property as measured from any point on the school’s real property boundary line;
8. For certain offenses committed while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity of another district in Texas;
9. When the student commits a felony, as provided by Education Code 37.006 or 37.0081; and
10. When the student is required to register as a sex offender.

The district has the right to search a vehicle driven to school by a student and parked on school property whenever there is reasonable cause to believe it contains articles or materials prohibited by the district.

The district has the right to search a student’s locker or desk when there is reasonable cause to believe it contains articles or materials prohibited by the district.

## Reporting Crimes

School administrators shall report crimes as required by law and shall call local law enforcement when an administrator suspects that a crime has been committed on campus.

## Revoking Transfers

The district has the right to revoke the transfer of a nonresident student for violating the district’s Code.

## Participating in Graduation Activities

The district has the right to limit a student’s participation in graduation activities for violating the district’s Code.

Participation might include a speaking role, as established by district policy and procedures.

Students eligible to give the opening and closing remarks at graduation shall be notified by the campus principal. Notwithstanding any other eligibility requirements, in order to be considered as an eligible student to give the opening or closing remarks, a student shall not have engaged in any misconduct in violation of the district’s Code resulting in an out-of-school suspension, removal to a DAEP, or expulsion during the semester immediately preceding graduation.

The valedictorian and salutatorian may also have speaking roles at graduation. No student shall be eligible to have such a speaking role if he or she engaged in any misconduct in violation of the district’s Code resulting in an out-of-school suspension, removal to a DAEP, or expulsion during the semester immediately preceding graduation.

See **DAEP—Restrictions During Placement** on page 14, for information regarding a student assigned to DAEP at the time of graduation.

# Standards for Student Conduct

Each student is expected to:

* Demonstrate courtesy, even when others do not.
* Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising self-discipline.
* Attend all classes, regularly and on time.
* Prepare for each class; take appropriate materials and assignments to class.
* Meet district and campus standards of grooming and dress.
* Obey all campus and classroom rules.
* Respect the rights and privileges of students, teachers, and other district staff and volunteers.
* Respect the property of others, including district property and facilities.
* Cooperate with and assist the school staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline.
* Adhere to the requirements of the Student Code of Conduct.

# General Conduct Violations

The categories of conduct below are prohibited at school, in vehicles owned or operated by the district, and at all school-related activities, but the list does not include the most severe offenses. In the subsequent sections on Out-of-School Suspension, DAEP Placement, Placement and/or Expulsion for Certain Offenses, and Expulsion, certain offenses that require or permit specific consequences are listed. Any offense, however, may be severe enough to result in Removal from the Regular Educational Setting as detailed in that section.

## Disregard for Authority

Students shall not:

* Fail to comply with directives given by school personnel (insubordination).
* Leave school grounds or school-sponsored events without permission.
* Disobey rules for conduct on district vehicles.
* Refuse to accept discipline management techniques assigned by a teacher or principal.

## Mistreatment of Others

Students shall not:

* Use profanity or vulgar language or make obscene gestures.
* Fight or scuffle. (For assault see DAEP Placement and Expulsion.)
* Threaten a district student, employee, or volunteer, including off school property, if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
* Engage in bullying, harassment, or making hit lists. (See glossary for all three terms.)
* Engage in conduct that constitutes sexual or gender-based harassment or sexual abuse, whether by word, gesture, or any other conduct, directed toward another person, including a district student, employee, or volunteer.
* Engage in conduct that constitutes dating violence. (See glossary.)
* Engage in inappropriate or indecent exposure of private body parts.
* Participate in hazing. (See glossary.)
* Cause an individual to act through the use of or threat of force (coercion).
* Commit extortion or blackmail (obtaining money or an object of value from an unwilling person).
* Engage in inappropriate verbal, physical, or sexual conduct directed toward another person, including a district student, employee, or volunteer.
* Record the voice or image of another without the prior consent of the individuals being recorded or in any way that disrupts the educational environment or invades the privacy of others.

## Property Offenses

Students shall not:

* Damage or vandalize property owned by others. (For felony criminal mischief see DAEP Placement or Expulsion.)
* Deface or damage school property—including textbooks, technology and electronic resources, lockers, furniture, and other equipment—with graffiti or by other means.
* Steal from students, staff, or the school.
* Commit or assist in a robbery or theft even if it does not constitute a felony according to the Texas Penal Code. (For felony robbery, aggravated robbery, and theft see DAEP Placement and Expulsion.)

## Possession of Prohibited Items

Students shall not possess or use:

* Fireworks of any kind, smoke or stink bombs, or any other pyrotechnic device;
* A razor, box cutter, chain, or any other object used in a way that threatens or inflicts bodily injury to another person;
* A “look-alike” weapon;
* An air gun or BB gun;
* Ammunition;
* A stun gun;
* A pocketknife or any other small knife;
* Mace or pepper spray;
* Pornographic material;
* Tobacco products, including electronic cigarettes;
* Matches or a lighter;
* A laser pointer for other than an approved use; or
* Any articles not generally considered to be weapons, including school supplies, when the principal or designee determines that a danger exists. (For weapons and firearms see DAEP Placement and Expulsion.)

## Possession of Telecommunications or Other Electronic Devices

Students shall not:

* Display, turn on, or use a telecommunications device, including a cellular telephone, or other electronic device on school property during the school day.

## Illegal, Prescription, and Over-the-Counter Drugs

Students shall not:

* Possess or sell seeds or pieces of marijuana in less than a usable amount. (For illegal drugs, alcohol, and inhalants see DAEP Placement and Expulsion.)
* Possess, use, give, or sell paraphernalia related to any prohibited substance. (See glossary for “paraphernalia.”)
* Possess or sell look-alike drugs or attempt to pass items off as drugs or contraband.
* Abuse the student’s own prescription drug, give a prescription drug to another student, or possess or be under the influence of another person’s prescription drug on school property or at a school-related event. (See glossary for “abuse.”)
* Abuse over-the-counter drugs. (See glossary for “abuse.”) Be under the influence of prescription or over-the-counter drugs that cause impairment of the physical or mental faculties. (See glossary for “under the influence.”)
* Have or take prescription drugs or over-the-counter drugs at school other than as provided by district policy.

## Misuse of Technology Resources and the Internet

Students shall not:

* Violate policies, rules, or agreements signed by the student or the student’s parent regarding the use of technology resources.
* Attempt to access or circumvent passwords or other security-related information of the district, students, or employees or upload or create computer viruses, including off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
* Attempt to alter, destroy, or disable district technology resources including but not limited to computers and related equipment, district data, the data of others, or other networks connected to the district’s system, including off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
* Use the Internet or other electronic communications to threaten district students, employees, or volunteers, including off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
* Send, post, or possess electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another’s reputation, or illegal, including cyberbullying and “sexting,” either on or off school property, if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
* Use e-mail or Web sites to engage in or encourage illegal behavior or threaten school safety, including off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

## Safety Transgressions

Students shall not:

* Possess published or electronic material that is designed to promote or encourage illegal behavior or that could threaten school safety.
* Engage in verbal (oral or written) exchanges that threaten the safety of another student, a school employee, or school property.
* Make false accusations or perpetrate hoaxes regarding school safety.
* Engage in any conduct that school officials might reasonably believe will substantially disrupt the school program or incite violence.
* Throw objects that can cause bodily injury or property damage.
* Discharge a fire extinguisher without valid cause.

## Miscellaneous Offenses

Students shall not:

* Violate dress and grooming standards as communicated in the student handbook.
* Cheat or copy the work of another.
* Gamble.
* Falsify records, passes, or other school-related documents.
* Engage in actions or demonstrations that substantially disrupt or materially interfere with school activities.
* Repeatedly violate other communicated campus or classroom standards of conduct.

The district may impose campus or classroom rules in addition to those found in the Code. These rules may be posted in classrooms or given to the student and may or may not constitute violations of the Code.

# Discipline Management Techniques

Discipline shall be designed to improve conduct and to encourage students to adhere to their responsibilities as members of the school community. Disciplinary action shall draw on the professional judgment of teachers and administrators and on a range of discipline management techniques. Discipline shall be correlated to the seriousness of the offense, the student’s age and grade level, the frequency of misbehavior, the student’s attitude, the effect of the misconduct on the school environment, and statutory requirements.

Because of these factors, discipline for a particular offense, including misconduct in a district vehicle owned or operated by the district, unless otherwise specified by law, may bring into consideration varying techniques and responses.

Since the district’s primary responsibility in transporting students in district vehicles is to do so as safely as possible, the operator of the vehicle must focus on driving and not have his or her attention distracted by student misbehavior. Therefore, when appropriate disciplinary management techniques fail to improve student behavior or when specific misconduct warrants immediate removal, the principal may restrict or revoke a student’s transportation privileges, in accordance with law.

## Students with Disabilities

The discipline of students with disabilities is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Code of Conduct. To the extent any conflict exists, state and/or federal law shall prevail.

In accordance with the Education Code, a student who is enrolled in a special education program may not be disciplined for conduct meeting the definition of bullying, harassment, or making hit lists (see glossary) until an ARD committee meeting has been held to review the conduct.

In deciding whether to order suspension, DAEP placement, or expulsion, regardless of whether the action is mandatory or discretionary, the district shall take into consideration a disability that substantially impairs the student’s capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of the student’s conduct.

## Techniques

The following discipline management techniques may be used—alone or in combination—for behavior prohibited by the Student Code of Conduct or by campus or classroom rules:

* Verbal correction, oral or written.
* Cooling-off time or “time-out.”
* Seating changes within the classroom or vehicles owned or operated by the district.
* Temporary confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process.
* Rewards or demerits.
* Behavioral contracts.
* Counseling by teachers, school counselors, or administrative personnel.
* Parent-teacher conferences.
* Grade reductions for cheating, plagiarism, and as otherwise permitted by policy.
* Detention, including outside regular school hours.
* Sending the student to the office or other assigned area, or to in-school suspension.
* Assignment of school duties such as cleaning or picking up litter.
* Withdrawal of privileges, such as participation in extracurricular activities, eligibility for seeking and holding honorary offices, or membership in school-sponsored clubs and organizations.
* Penalties identified in individual student organizations’ extracurricular standards of behavior.
* Restriction or revocation of district transportation privileges.
* School-assessed and school-administered probation.
* Corporal punishment, unless the student’s parent or guardian has provided a signed statement prohibiting its use.
* Out-of-school suspension, as specified in the Out-of-School Suspension section of this Code.
* Placement in a DAEP, as specified in the DAEP section of this Code.
* Placement and/or expulsion in an alternative educational setting, as specified in the Placement and/or Expulsion for Certain Offenses section of this Code.
* Expulsion, as specified in the Expulsion section of this Code.
* Referral to an outside agency or legal authority for criminal prosecution in addition to disciplinary measures imposed by the district.
* Other strategies and consequences as determined by school officials.

## Notification

The principal or appropriate administrator shall notify a student’s parent by phone or in writing of any violation that may result in a detention outside of regular school hours, out-of-school suspension, placement in a DAEP, or expulsion. Notification will be made within three school days after the administrator becomes aware of the violation.

## Appeals

Questions from parents regarding disciplinary measures should be addressed to the teacher or campus administration, as appropriate. Appeals or complaints regarding the use of specific discipline management techniques should be addressed in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL). A copy of the policy may be obtained from the principal’s office or the central administration office. Consequences shall not be deferred pending the outcome of a grievance.

# Removal from the School Bus

A bus driver may refer a student to the principal’s office to maintain effective discipline on the bus. The principal must employ additional discipline management techniques, as appropriate, which can include restricting or revoking a student’s bus riding privileges.

# Removal from the Regular Educational Setting

In addition to other discipline management techniques, misconduct may result in removal from the regular educational setting in the form of a routine referral or a formal removal.

## Routine Referral

A routine referral occurs when a teacher sends a student to the principal’s office as a discipline management technique. The principal may then employ additional techniques.

## Formal Removal

A teacher or administrator **may** remove a student from class for a behavior that violates this Code to maintain effective discipline in the classroom. A teacher **may** also initiate a formal removal from class if:

1. The student’s behavior has been documented by the teacher as repeatedly interfering with the teacher’s ability to teach his or her class or with the student’s classmates’ ability to learn; or
2. The behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that the teacher cannot teach, and the students in the classroom cannot learn.

A teacher or administrator **must** remove a student from class if the student engages in behavior that under the Education Code requires or permits the student to be placed in a DAEP or expelled. When removing for those reasons, the procedures in the subsequent sections on DAEP or expulsion will be followed. Otherwise, within three school days of the formal removal, the appropriate administrator shall schedule a conference with the student’s parent; the student; the teacher, in the case of removal by a teacher; and any other administrator.

At the conference, the appropriate administrator shall inform the student of the misconduct for which he or she is charged and the consequences. The administrator shall give the student an opportunity to give his or her version of the incident.

When a student is removed from the regular classroom by a teacher and a conference is pending, the principal may place the student in:

* Another appropriate classroom.
* In-school suspension.
* Out-of-school suspension.
* DAEP.

## Returning Student to Classroom

When a student has been formally removed from class by a teacher for conduct against the teacher containing the elements of assault, aggravated assault, sexual assault, aggravated sexual assault, murder, capital murder, or criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder, the student may not be returned to the teacher’s class without the teacher’s consent.

When a student has been formally removed by a teacher for any other conduct, the student may be returned to the teacher’s class without the teacher’s consent, if the placement review committee determines that the teacher’s class is the best or only alternative available.

# Out-of-School Suspension

## Misconduct

Students may be suspended for any behavior listed in the Code as a general conduct violation, DAEP offense, or expellable offense.

In deciding whether to order out-of-school suspension, the district shall take into consideration:

1. Self-defense (see glossary),
2. Intent or lack of intent at the time the student engaged in the conduct, and
3. The student’s disciplinary history.

## Process

State law allows a student to be suspended for no more than three school days per behavior violation, with no limit on the number of times a student may be suspended in a semester or school year.

Before being suspended a student shall have an informal conference with the appropriate administrator, who shall advise the student of the conduct of which he or she is accused. The student shall be given the opportunity to explain his or her version of the incident before the administrator’s decision is made.

The number of days of a student’s suspension shall be determined by the appropriate administrator, but shall not exceed three school days.

The appropriate administrator shall determine any restrictions on participation in school-sponsored or school-related extracurricular and co curricular activities.

Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) Placement

The DAEP shall be provided in a setting other than the student’s regular classroom. An elementary school student may not be placed in a DAEP with a student who is not an elementary school student.

For purposes of DAEP, elementary classification shall be kindergarten–grade 5 and secondary classification shall be grades 6–12.

Summer programs provided by the district shall serve students assigned to a DAEP in conjunction with other students.

A student who is expelled for an offense that otherwise would have resulted in a DAEP placement does not have to be placed in a DAEP in addition to the expulsion.

In deciding whether to place a student in a DAEP, regardless of whether the action is mandatory or discretionary, the district shall take into consideration:

1. Self-defense (see glossary),
2. Intent or lack of intent at the time the student engaged in the conduct, and
3. The student’s disciplinary history.

## Discretionary Placement: Misconduct That May Result in DAEP Placement

A student **may** be placed in a DAEP for behaviors prohibited in the General Conduct Violations section of this Code.

### Misconduct Identified in State Law

In accordance with state law, a student **may** be placed in a DAEP for any one of the following offenses:

* Involvement in a public school fraternity, sorority, or secret society, including participating as a member or pledge, or soliciting another person to become a pledge or member of a public school fraternity, sorority, secret society, or gang. (See glossary.)
* Involvement in criminal street gang activity. (See glossary.)
* Any criminal mischief, including a felony.
* Assault (no bodily injury) with threat of imminent bodily injury.
* Assault by offensive or provocative physical contact.

In accordance with state law, a student **may** be placed in a DAEP if the superintendent or the superintendent’s designee has reasonable belief (see glossary) that the student has engaged in conduct punishable as a felony, other than aggravated robbery or those listed as offenses involving injury to a person in Title 5 (see glossary) of the Texas Penal Code, that occurs off school property and not at a school-sponsored or school-related event, if the student’s presence in the regular classroom threatens the safety of other students or teachers or will be detrimental to the educational process.

The appropriate administrator **may**, but is not required to, place a student in a DAEP for off-campus conduct for which DAEP placement is required by state law if the administrator does not have knowledge of the conduct before the first anniversary of the date the conduct occurred.

## Mandatory Placement: Misconduct That Requires DAEP Placement

A student **must** be placed in a DAEP if the student:

* Engages in conduct relating to a false alarm or report (including a bomb threat) or a terroristic threat involving a public school. (See glossary.)

* Commits the following offenses on school property or within 300 feet of school property as measured from any point on the school’s real property boundary line, or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property:
* Engages in conduct punishable as a felony.
* Commits an assault (see glossary) under Texas Penal Code 22.01(a)(1).
* Sells, gives, or delivers to another person, or possesses, uses, or is under the influence of marijuana, a controlled substance, or a dangerous drug in an amount not constituting a felony offense. (School-related felony drug offenses are addressed in the Expulsion section.) (See glossary for “under the influence.”)
* Sells, gives, or delivers to another person an alcoholic beverage; commits a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol; or possesses, uses, or is under the influence of alcohol, if the conduct is not punishable as a felony offense. (School-related felony alcohol offenses are addressed in the Expulsion section.)
* Behaves in a manner that contains the elements of an offense relating to abusable volatile chemicals.
* Behaves in a manner that contains the elements of the offense of public lewdness or indecent exposure.
* Engages in expellable conduct and is between six and nine years of age.
* Commits a federal firearms violation and is younger than six years of age.
* Engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of retaliation against any school employee or volunteer on or off school property. (Committing retaliation in combination with another expellable offense is addressed in the Expulsion section of this Code.)
* Engages in conduct punishable as aggravated robbery or a felony listed under Title 5 (see glossary) of the Texas Penal Code when the conduct occurs off school property and not at a school-sponsored or school-related event and:
1. The student receives deferred prosecution (see glossary),
2. A court or jury finds that the student has engaged in delinquent conduct (see glossary), or
3. The superintendent or designee has a reasonable belief (see glossary) that the student engaged in the conduct.

## Sexual Assault and Campus Assignments

If a student has been convicted of continuous sexual abuse of a young child or children or convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for sexual assault or aggravated sexual assault against another student on the same campus, and if the victim’s parent or another person with the authority to act on behalf of the victim requests that the board transfer the offending student to another campus, the offending student shall be transferred to another campus in the district. If there is no other campus in the district serving the grade level of the offending student, the offending student shall be transferred to a DAEP.

## Emergencies

In an emergency, the principal or the principal’s designee may order the immediate placement of a student in a DAEP for any reason for which placement in a DAEP may be made on a nonemergency basis.

## Process

Removals to a DAEP shall be made by the principal or superintendent.

## Conference

When a student is removed from class for a DAEP offense, the appropriate administrator shall schedule a conference within three school days with the student’s parent, the student, and the teacher, in the case of a teacher removal.

At the conference, the appropriate administrator shall inform the student, orally or in writing, of the reasons for the removal and shall give the student an explanation of the basis for the removal and an opportunity to respond to the reasons for the removal.

Following valid attempts to require attendance, the district may hold the conference and make a placement decision regardless of whether the student or the student’s parents attend the conference.

### Placement Order

After the conference, if the student is placed in the DAEP, the appropriate administrator shall write a placement order. A copy of the DAEP placement order shall be sent to the student and the student’s parent.

Not later than the second business day after the conference, the board’s designee shall deliver to the juvenile court a copy of the placement order and all information required by Section 52.04 of the Family Code.

If the student is placed in the DAEP and the length of placement is inconsistent with the guidelines included in this Code, the placement order shall give notice of the inconsistency.

### Coursework Notice

The parent or guardian of a student placed in DAEP shall be given written notice of the student’s opportunity to complete a foundation curriculum course in which the student was enrolled at the time of removal and which is required for graduation, at no cost to the student. The notice shall include information regarding all methods available for completing the coursework.

## Length of Placement

The duration of a student’s placement in a DAEP shall be determined by the principal or superintendent.

The duration of a student’s placement shall be determined on a case-by-case basis. DAEP placement shall be correlated to the seriousness of the offense, the student’s age and grade level, the frequency of misconduct, the student’s attitude, and statutory requirements.

The maximum period of DAEP placement shall be one calendar year except as provided below.

The district shall administer the required pre- and post-assessments for students assigned to DAEP for a period of 90 days or longer in accordance with established district administrative procedures for administering other diagnostic or benchmark assessments.

### Exceeds One Year

Placement in a DAEP may exceed one year when a review by the district determines that:

1. The student is a threat to the safety of other students or to district employees, or
2. Extended placement is in the best interest of the student.

The statutory limitations on the length of a DAEP placement do not apply to a placement resulting from the board’s decision to place a student who engaged in the sexual assault of another student so that the students are not assigned to the same campus.

### Exceeds School Year

Students who commit offenses requiring placement in a DAEP at the end of one school year may be required to continue that placement at the start of the next school year to complete the assigned term of placement.

For placement in a DAEP to extend beyond the end of the school year, the principal or superintendent must determine that:

1. The student’s presence in the regular classroom or campus presents a danger of physical harm to the student or others, or
2. The student has engaged in serious or persistent misbehavior (see glossary) that violates the district’s Code.

### Exceeds 60 Days

For placement in a DAEP to extend beyond 60 days or the end of the next grading period, whichever is sooner, a student’s parent shall be given notice and the opportunity to participate in a proceeding before the board or the board’s designee.

## Appeals

Questions from parents regarding disciplinary measures should be addressed to the campus administration.

Appeals regarding the decision to place a student in a DAEP should be addressed to the principal’s office or the central administration office in accordance with policy FOC(LEGAL).

Student or parent appeals regarding the process used for the placement decision, such as issues related to the administrator’s handling of the conference or proper notice being provided, should be addressed in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL). A copy of this policy may be obtained from the principal’s office or the central administration office or through Policy On Line at the following address: www.knoxcityschools.net .

Disciplinary consequences shall not be deferred pending the outcome of an appeal. The decision to place a student in a DAEP cannot be appealed beyond the board.

## Restrictions during Placement

The district does not permit a student who is placed in a DAEP to participate in any school-sponsored or school-related extracurricular or cocurricular activity, including seeking or holding honorary positions and/or membership in school-sponsored clubs and organizations.

A student placed in a DAEP shall not be provided transportation unless he or she is a student with a disability who has transportation designated as a related service in the student’s IEP.

For seniors who are eligible to graduate and are assigned to a DAEP at the time of graduation, the last day of placement in the program shall be the last instructional day, and the student shall be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony and related graduation activities unless otherwise specified in the DAEP placement order.

## Placement Review

A student placed in a DAEP shall be provided a review of his or her status, including academic status, by the principal or superintendent at intervals not to exceed 120 days. In the case of a high school student, the student’s progress toward graduation and the student’s graduation plan shall also be reviewed. At the review, the student or the student’s parent shall be given the opportunity to present arguments for the student’s return to the regular classroom or campus. The student may not be returned to the classroom of a teacher who removed the student without that teacher’s consent.

## Additional Misconduct

If during the term of placement in a DAEP the student engages in additional misconduct for which placement in a DAEP or expulsion is required or permitted, additional proceedings may be conducted, and the appropriate administrator may enter an additional disciplinary order as a result of those proceedings.

## Notice of Criminal Proceedings

The office of the prosecuting attorney shall notify the district if a student was placed in a DAEP for certain offenses including any felony, unlawful restraint, indecent exposure, assault, deadly conduct, terroristic threats, organized crime, certain drug offenses, or possession of a weapon, and:

1. Prosecution of a student’s case was refused for lack of prosecutorial merit or insufficient evidence and no formal proceedings, deferred adjudication (see glossary), or deferred prosecution will be initiated; or
2. The court or jury found a student not guilty, or made a finding that the student did not engage in delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision, and the case was dismissed with prejudice.

If a student was placed in a DAEP for such conduct, on receiving the notice from the prosecutor, the superintendent or designee shall review the student’s placement and schedule a review with the student’s parent not later than the third day after the superintendent or designee receives notice from the prosecutor. The student may not be returned to the regular classroom pending the review.

After reviewing the notice and receiving information from the student’s parent, the superintendent or designee may continue the student’s placement if there is reason to believe that the presence of the student in the regular classroom threatens the safety of other students or teachers.

The student or the student’s parent may appeal the superintendent’s decision to the board. The student may not be returned to the regular classroom pending the appeal. In the case of an appeal, the board shall, at the next scheduled meeting, review the notice from the prosecutor and receive information from the student, the student’s parent, and the superintendent or designee, and confirm or reverse the decision of the superintendent or designee. The board shall make a record of the proceedings.

If the board confirms the decision of the superintendent or designee, the student and the student’s parent may appeal to the Commissioner of Education. The student may not be returned to the regular classroom pending the appeal.

## Withdrawal during Process

When a student violates the district’s Code in a way that requires or permits the student to be placed in a DAEP and the student withdraws from the district before a placement order is completed, the district may complete the proceedings and issue a placement order. If the student then reenrolls in the district during the same or a subsequent school year, the district may enforce the order at that time, less any period of the placement that has been served by the student during enrollment in another district. If the appropriate administrator or the board fails to issue a placement order after the student withdraws, the next district in which the student enrolls may complete the proceedings and issue a placement order.

## Newly Enrolled Students

The district shall continue the DAEP placement of a student who enrolls in the district and was assigned to a DAEP in an open-enrollment charter school or another district.

A newly enrolled student with a DAEP placement from a district in another state shall be placed as any other newly enrolled student if the behavior committed is a reason for DAEP placement in the receiving district.

If the student was placed in a DAEP by a school district in another state for a period that exceeds one year, this district, by state law, shall reduce the period of the placement so that the total placement does not exceed one year. After a review, however, the placement may be extended beyond a year if the district determines that the student is a threat to the safety of other students or employees or the extended placement is in the best interest of the student.

## Emergency Placement Procedure

When an emergency placement occurs, the student shall be given oral notice of the reason for the action. Not later than the tenth day after the date of the placement, the student shall be given the appropriate conference required for assignment to a DAEP.

# Placement and/or Expulsion for Certain Offenses

This section includes two categories of offenses for which the Education Code provides unique procedures and specific consequences.

## Registered Sex Offenders

Upon receiving notification in accordance with state law that a student is currently required to register as a sex offender, the administration must remove the student from the regular classroom and determine appropriate placement unless the court orders JJAEP placement.

If the student is under any form of court supervision, including probation, community supervision, or parole, the placement shall be in either DAEP or JJAEP for at least one semester.

If the student is not under any form of court supervision, the placement may be in DAEP or JJAEP for one semester or the placement may be in a regular classroom. The placement may not be in the regular classroom if the board or its designee determines that the student’s presence:

1. Threatens the safety of other students or teachers,
2. Will be detrimental to the educational process, or
3. Is not in the best interests of the district’s students.

### Review Committee

At the end of the first semester of a student’s placement in an alternative educational setting and before the beginning of each school year for which the student remains in an alternative placement, the district shall convene a committee, in accordance with state law, to review the student’s placement. The committee shall recommend whether the student should return to the regular classroom or remain in the placement. Absent a special finding, the board or its designee must follow the committee’s recommendation.

The placement review of a student with a disability who receives special education services must be made by the ARD committee.

### Newly Enrolled Student

If a student enrolls in the district during a mandatory placement as a registered sex offender, the district may count any time already spent by the student in a placement or may require an additional semester in an alternative placement without conducting a review of the placement.

### Appeal

A student or the student’s parent may appeal the placement by requesting a conference between the board or its designee, the student, and the student’s parent. The conference is limited to the factual question of whether the student is required to register as a sex offender. Any decision of the board or its designee under this section is final and may not be appealed.

## Certain Felonies

Regardless of whether placement or expulsion is required or permitted by one of the reasons in the DAEP Placement or Expulsion sections, in accordance with Education Code 37.0081, a student **may** be expelled and placed in either DAEP or JJAEP if the board or its designee makes certain findings and the following circumstances exist in relation to aggravated robbery or a felony offense under Title 5 (see glossary) of the Texas Penal Code. The student must:

* Have received deferred prosecution for conduct defined as aggravated robbery or a Title 5 felony offense;
* Have been found by a court or jury to have engaged in delinquent conduct for conduct defined as aggravated robbery or a Title 5 felony offense;
* Have been charged with engaging in conduct defined as aggravated robbery or a Title 5 felony offense;
* Have been referred to a juvenile court for allegedly engaging in delinquent conduct for conduct defined as aggravated robbery or a Title 5 felony offense; or
* Have received probation or deferred adjudication or have been arrested for, charged with, or convicted of aggravated robbery or a Title 5 felony offense.

The district may expel the student and order placement under these circumstances regardless of:

1. The date on which the student’s conduct occurred,
2. The location at which the conduct occurred,
3. Whether the conduct occurred while the student was enrolled in the district, or
4. Whether the student has successfully completed any court disposition requirements imposed in connection with the conduct.

### Hearing and Required Findings

The student must first have a hearing before the board or its designee, who must determine that in addition to the circumstances above that allow for the expulsion, the student’s presence in the regular classroom:

1. Threatens the safety of other students or teachers,
2. Will be detrimental to the educational process, or
3. Is not in the best interest of the district’s students.

Any decision of the board or the board’s designee under this section is final and may not be appealed.

### Length of Placement

The student is subject to the placement until:

1. The student graduates from high school,
2. The charges are dismissed or reduced to a misdemeanor offense, or
3. The student completes the term of the placement or is assigned to another program.

### Newly Enrolled Students

A student who enrolls in the district before completing a placement under this section from another school district must complete the term of the placement.

# Expulsion

In deciding whether to order expulsion, regardless of whether the action is mandatory or discretionary, the district shall take into consideration:

1. Self-defense (see glossary),
2. Intent or lack of intent at the time the student engaged in the conduct, and
3. The student’s disciplinary history.

## Discretionary Expulsion: Misconduct That May Result in Expulsion

### Any Location

A student **may** be expelled for:

* Engaging in the following, no matter where it takes place:
* Conduct that contains the elements of assault under Penal Code 22.01(a)(1) in retaliation against a school employee or volunteer.
* Criminal mischief, if punishable as a felony.
* Engaging in conduct that contains the elements of one of the following offenses against another student, without regard to where the conduct occurs:
* Aggravated assault.
* Sexual assault.
* Aggravated sexual assault.
* Murder.
* Capital murder.
* Criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder.
* Aggravated robbery.
* Breach of computer security.
* Engaging in conduct relating to a false alarm or report (including a bomb threat) or a terroristic threat involving a public school.

### At School, Within 300 Feet, or at a School Event

A student **may** be expelled for committing any of the following offenses on or within 300 feet of school property, as measured from any point on the school’s real property boundary line, or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property:

* Selling, giving, or delivering to another person, or possessing, using, or being under the influence of marijuana, a controlled substance, or a dangerous drug, if the conduct is not punishable as a felony. (See glossary for “under the influence.”)
* Selling, giving, or delivering to another person, or possessing, using, or being under the influence of alcohol; or committing a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol, if the conduct is not punishable as a felony.
* Engaging in conduct that contains the elements of an offense relating to abusable volatile chemicals.
* Engaging in conduct that contains the elements of assault under Section 22.01(a)(1) against an employee or a volunteer.
* Engaging in deadly conduct. (See glossary.)

### Within 300 Feet of School

A student **may** be expelled for engaging in the following conduct while within 300 feet of school property, as measured from any point on the school’s real property boundary line:

* Aggravated assault, sexual assault, or aggravated sexual assault.
* Arson. (See glossary.)
* Murder, capital murder, or criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder.
* Indecency with a child, aggravated kidnapping, manslaughter, criminally negligent homicide, or aggravated robbery.
* Continuous sexual abuse of a young child or children.
* Felony drug- or alcohol-related offense.
* Use, exhibition, or possession of a firearm (as defined by state law), an illegal knife, a club, or prohibited weapon, or possession of a firearm (as defined by federal law).

### Property of Another District

A student **may** be expelled for committing any offense that is a state-mandated expellable offense if the offense is committed on the property of another district in Texas or while the student is attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity of a school in another district in Texas.

### While in DAEP

A student **may** be expelled for engaging in documented serious misbehavior that violates the district’s Code, despite documented behavioral interventions while placed in a DAEP. For purposes of discretionary expulsion from a DAEP, serious misbehavior means:

1. Deliberate violent behavior that poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others;
2. Extortion, meaning the gaining of money or other property by force or threat;
3. Conduct that constitutes coercion, as defined by Section 1.07, Penal Code; or
4. Conduct that constitutes the offense of:
5. Public lewdness under Section 21.07, Penal Code;
6. Indecent exposure under Section 21.08, Penal Code;
7. Criminal mischief under Section 28.03, Penal Code;
8. Personal hazing under Section 37.152; or
9. Harassment under Section 42.07(a)(1), Penal Code, of a student or district employee.

## Mandatory Expulsion: Misconduct That Requires Expulsion

A student must be expelled under federal or state law for any of the following offenses that occur on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property:

#### Under Federal Law

* Bringing to school a firearm, as defined by federal law. “Firearm” under federal law includes:
* Any weapon (including a starter gun) that will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive.
* The frame or receiver of any such weapon.
* Any firearm muffler or firearm weapon.
* Any destructive device, such as any explosive, incendiary or poison gas bomb, or grenade.

#### Under the Texas Penal Code

* Using, exhibiting, or possessing the following, as defined by the Texas Penal Code:

* A firearm (any device designed, made, or adapted to expel a projectile through a barrel by using the energy generated by an explosion or burning substance or any device readily convertible to that use), unless the use, exhibition, or possession of the firearm occurs at an off-campus approved target range facility while participating in or preparing for a school-sponsored shooting sports competition or a shooting sports educational activity that is sponsored or supported by the Parks and Wildlife Department or a shooting sports sanctioning organization working with the department.
* An illegal knife, such as a knife with a blade over 5½ inches; hand instrument, designed to cut or stab another by being thrown; dagger, including but not limited to a dirk, stiletto, and poniard; bowie knife; sword; or spear.
* A club (see glossary) such as an instrument specially designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury or death by striking a person with the instrument, including a blackjack, nightstick, mace, and tomahawk.
* A prohibited weapon, such as an explosive weapon, a machine gun, a short-barrel firearm, a firearm silencer, knuckles, armor-piercing ammunition, a chemical dispensing device, a zip gun, or a tire deflation device. (See glossary.)

* Behaving in a manner that contains elements of the following offenses under the Texas Penal Code:
* Aggravated assault, sexual assault, or aggravated sexual assault.
* Arson. (See glossary.)
* Murder, capital murder, or criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder.
* Indecency with a child.
* Aggravated kidnapping.
* Aggravated robbery.
* Manslaughter.
* Criminally negligent homicide.
* Continuous sexual abuse of a young child or children.
* Behavior punishable as a felony that involves selling, giving, or delivering to another person, or possessing, using, or being under the influence of marijuana, a controlled substance, a dangerous drug, or alcohol; or committing a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol.
* Engaging in retaliation against a school employee or volunteer combined with one of the above-listed mandatory expulsion offenses.

## Under Age Ten

When a student under the age of ten engages in behavior that is expellable behavior, the student shall not be expelled, but shall be placed in a DAEP. A student under age six shall not be placed in a DAEP unless the student commits a federal firearm offense.

## Emergency

In an emergency, the principal or the principal’s designee **may** order the immediate expulsion of a student for any reason for which expulsion may be made on a nonemergency basis.

## Process

If a student is believed to have committed an expellable offense, the principal or other appropriate administrator shall schedule a hearing within a reasonable time. The student’s parent shall be invited in writing to attend the hearing.

Until a hearing can be held, the principal may place the student in:

* Another appropriate classroom.
* In-school suspension.
* Out-of-school suspension.
* DAEP.

### Hearing

A student facing expulsion shall be given a hearing with appropriate due process. The student is entitled to:

1. Representation by the student’s parent or another adult who can provide guidance to the student and who is not an employee of the district,
2. An opportunity to testify and to present evidence and witnesses in the student’s defense, and
3. An opportunity to question the witnesses called by the district at the hearing.

After providing notice to the student and parent of the hearing, the district may hold the hearing regardless of whether the student or the student’s parent attends.

The hearing shall be conducted by the board of trustees and the decision to expel shall be made by the board.

### Board Review of Expulsion

After the due process hearing, the expelled student may request that the board review the expulsion decisions. The student or parent must submit a written request to the superintendent within seven days after receipt of the written decision. The superintendent must provide the student or parent written notice of the date, time, and place of the meeting at which the board will review the decision.

The board shall review the record of the expulsion hearing in a closed meeting unless the parent requests in writing that the matter be held in an open meeting. The board may also hear a statement from the student or parent and from the board’s designee.

The board shall hear statements made by the parties at the review and will base its decision on evidence reflected in the record and any statements made by the parties at the review. The board shall make and communicate its decision orally at the conclusion of the presentation. Consequences shall not be deferred pending the outcome of the hearing.

### Expulsion Order

After the due process hearing, if the student is expelled, the board or its designee shall deliver to the student and the student’s parent a copy of the order expelling the student.

Not later than the second business day after the hearing, the superintendent shall deliver to the juvenile court a copy of the expulsion order and the information required by Section 52.04 of the Family Code.

If the length of the expulsion is inconsistent with the guidelines included in the Student Code of Conduct, the expulsion order shall give notice of the inconsistency.

## Length of Expulsion

The length of an expulsion shall be correlated to the seriousness of the offense, the student’s age and grade level, the frequency of misbehavior, the student’s attitude, and statutory requirements.

The duration of a student’s expulsion shall be determined on a case-by-case basis. The maximum period of expulsion is one calendar year except as provided below.

An expulsion may not exceed one year unless, after review, the district determines that:

1. The student is a threat to the safety of other students or to district employees, or
2. Extended expulsion is in the best interest of the student.

State and federal law require a student to be expelled from the regular classroom for a period of at least one calendar year for bringing a firearm, as defined by federal law, to school. However, the superintendent may modify the length of the expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

Students who commit offenses that require expulsion at the end of one school year may be expelled into the next school year to complete the term of expulsion.

## Withdrawal during Process

When a student has violated the district’s Code in a way that requires or permits expulsion from the district and the student withdraws from the district before the expulsion hearing takes place, the district may conduct the hearing after sending written notice to the parent and student.

If the student then reenrolls in the district during the same or subsequent school year, the district may enforce the expulsion order at that time, less any expulsion period that has been served by the student during enrollment in another district.

If the appropriate administrator or the board fails to issue an expulsion order after the student withdraws, the next district in which the student enrolls may complete the proceedings.

## Additional Misconduct

If during the expulsion, the student engages in additional conduct for which placement in a DAEP or expulsion is required or permitted, additional proceedings may be conducted, and the appropriate administrator or the board may issue an additional disciplinary order as a result of those proceedings.

## Restrictions during Expulsion

Expelled students are prohibited from being on school grounds or attending school-sponsored or school-related activities during the period of expulsion.

No district academic credit shall be earned for work missed during the period of expulsion unless the student is enrolled in a JJAEP or another district-approved program.

## Newly Enrolled Students

The district shall decide on a case-by-case basis the placement of a student who is subject to an expulsion order from another district or an open-enrollment charter school upon enrollment in the district.

If a student expelled in another state enrolls in the district, the district may continue the expulsion under the terms of the expulsion order, may place the student in a DAEP for the period specified in the order, or may allow the student to attend regular classes if:

1. The out-of-state district provides the district with a copy of the expulsion order, and
2. The offense resulting in the expulsion is also an expellable offense in the district in which the student is enrolling.

If a student is expelled by a district in another state for a period that exceeds one year and the district continues the expulsion or places the student in a DAEP, the district shall reduce the period of the expulsion or DAEP placement so that the entire period does not exceed one year, unless after a review it is determined that:

1. The student is a threat to the safety of other students or district employees, or
2. Extended placement is in the best interest of the student.

## Emergency Expulsion Procedures

When an emergency expulsion occurs, the student shall be given verbal notice of the reason for the action. Within ten days after the date of the emergency expulsion, the student shall be given appropriate due process required for a student facing expulsion.

## DAEP Placement of Expelled Students

The district may provide educational services to any expelled student in a DAEP; however, educational services in the DAEP must be provided if the student is less than ten years of age.

# Glossary

The glossary provides legal definitions and locally established definitions and is intended to assist in understanding terms related to the Student Code of Conduct.

**Abuse** is improper or excessive use.

**Aggravated robbery** is defined in part by Texas Penal Code 29.03(a) when a person commits robbery and:

1. Causes serious bodily injury to another;
2. Uses or exhibits a deadly weapon; or
3. Causes bodily injury to another person or threatens or places another person in fear of imminent bodily injury or death, if the other person is:
4. 65 years of age or older, or
5. A disabled person.

**Armor-piercing ammunition** is handgun ammunition used in pistols and revolvers and designed primarily for the purpose of penetrating metal or body armor.

**Arson** is:

1. A crime that involves starting a fire or causing an explosion with intent to destroy or damage:
2. Any vegetation, fence, or structure on open-space land; or
3. Any building, habitation, or vehicle:
4. Knowing that it is within the limits of an incorporated city or town,
5. Knowing that it is insured against damage or destruction,
6. Knowing that it is subject to a mortgage or other security interest,
7. Knowing that it is located on property belonging to another,
8. Knowing that it has located within it property belonging to another, or
9. When the person starting the fire is reckless about whether the burning or explosion will endanger the life of some individual or the safety of the property of another.
10. A crime that involves recklessly starting a fire or causing an explosion while manufacturing or attempting to manufacture a controlled substance and the fire or explosion damages any building, habitation, or vehicle; or
11. A crime that involves intentionally starting a fire or causing an explosion and in so doing:
12. Recklessly damages or destroys a building belonging to another, or
13. Recklessly causes another person to suffer bodily injury or death.

**Assault** is defined in part by Texas Penal Code §22.01(a)(1) as intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing bodily injury to another; §22.01(a)(2) as intentionally or knowingly threatening another with imminent bodily injury; and §22.01(a)(3) as intentionally or knowingly causing physical contact with another that can reasonably be regarded as offensive or provocative.

**Bullying** is when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by the district and a school district’s board of trustees or the board’s designee determines that the behavior:

1. 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; or
2. Is sufficiently severe, persistent, and pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.

This conduct is considered bullying if it:

1. Exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator who is engaging in bullying and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and
2. Interferes with a student’s education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school.

**Chemical dispensing device** is a device designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of causing an adverse psychological or physiological effect on a human being. A small chemical dispenser sold commercially for personal protection is not in this category.

**Club** is an instrument specially designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury or death. A blackjack, mace, and tomahawk are in the same category.

**Criminal street gang** is three or more persons having a common identifying sign or symbol or an identifiable leadership who continuously or regularly associate in the commission of criminal activities.

**Cyberbullying** is the use of any electronic communication device to engage in bullying or intimidation.

**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 another 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, as defined by Section 71.0021 of the Family Code.

**Deadly conduct** occurs when a person recklessly engages in conduct that places another in imminent danger of serious bodily injury, such as knowingly discharging a firearm in the direction of an individual, habitation, building, or vehicle.

**Deferred adjudication** is an alternative to seeking a conviction in court that may be offered to a juvenile for delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision.

**Deferred prosecution** may be offered to a juvenile as an alternative to seeking a conviction in court for delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision.

**Delinquent conduct** is conduct that violates either state or federal law and is punishable by imprisonment or confinement in jail. It includes conduct that violates certain juvenile court orders, including probation orders, but does not include violations of traffic laws.

**Discretionary** means that something is left to or regulated by a local decision maker.

**Explosive weapon** is any explosive or incendiary bomb, grenade, rocket, or mine and its delivery mechanism that is designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury, death, or substantial property damage, or for the principal purpose of causing such a loud report as to cause undue public alarm or terror.

**False Alarm or Report** occurs when a person knowingly initiates, communicates, or circulates a report of a present, past, or future bombing, fire, offense, or other emergency that he or she knows is false or baseless and that would ordinarily:

1. Cause action by an official or volunteer agency organized to deal with emergencies;
2. Place a person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury; or
3. Prevent or interrupt the occupation of a building, room, or place of assembly.

**Firearm silencer** means any device designed, made, or adapted to muffle the report of a firearm.

**Graffiti** are markings with paint, an indelible pen or marker, or an etching or engraving device on tangible property without the effective consent of the owner. The markings may include inscriptions, slogans, drawings, or paintings.

**Harassment** is:

1. Conduct that meets the definition established in district policies DIA(LOCAL) and FFH(LOCAL); or
2. Conduct that threatens to cause harm or bodily injury to another student, is sexually intimidating, causes physical damage to the property of another student, subjects another student to physical confinement or restraint, or maliciously and substantially harms another student’s physical or emotional health or safety.

**Hazing** is an intentional or reckless act, on or off campus, by one person alone or acting with others, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, initiation into, affiliation with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization.

**Hit list** is a list of people targeted to be harmed, using a firearm, a knife, or any other object to be used with intent to cause bodily harm.

**Knuckles** are any instrument consisting of finger rings or guards made of a hard substance and designed or adapted for inflicting serious bodily injury or death by striking a person with a fist enclosed in the knuckles.

**Machine gun** is any firearm that is capable of shooting more than two shots automatically, without manual reloading, by a single function of the trigger.

**Mandatory** means that something is obligatory or required because of an authority.

**Paraphernalia** are devices that can be used for inhaling, ingesting, injecting, or otherwise introducing a controlled substance into a human body.

**Possession** means to have an item on one’s person or in one’s personal property, including but not limited to clothing, purse, or backpack; a private vehicle used for transportation to or from school or school-related activities, including but not limited to an automobile, truck, motorcycle, or bicycle; telecommunications or electronic devices; or any other school property used by the student, including but not limited to a locker or desk.

**Public school fraternity, sorority, secret society, or gang** means an organization composed wholly or in part of students that seeks to perpetuate itself by taking additional members from the students enrolled in school based on a decision of its membership rather than on the free choice of a qualified student. Educational organizations listed in Section 37.121(d) of the Education Code are excepted from this definition.

**Reasonable belief** is a determination made by the superintendent or designee using all available information, including the information furnished under Article 15.27 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

**Self-defense** is the use of force against another to the degree a person reasonably believes the force is immediately necessary to protect himself or herself.

**Serious misbehavior** means:

1. Deliberate violent behavior that poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others;
2. Extortion, meaning the gaining of money or other property by force or threat;
3. Conduct that constitutes coercion, as defined by Section 1.07, Penal Code; or
4. Conduct that constitutes the offense of:
5. Public lewdness under Section 21.07, Penal Code;
6. Indecent exposure under Section 21.08; Penal Code;
7. Criminal mischief under Section 28.03, Penal Code;
8. Personal hazing under Section 37.152; or
9. Harassment under Section 42.07(a)(1), Penal Code, of a student or district employee.

**Serious or persistent misbehavior** includes but is not limited to:

* Behavior that is grounds for permissible expulsion or mandatory DAEP placement.
* Behavior identified by the district as grounds for discretionary DAEP placement.
* Actions or demonstrations that substantially disrupt or materially interfere with school activities.
* Refusal to attempt or complete school work as assigned.
* Insubordination.
* Profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures.
* Leaving school grounds without permission.
* Falsification of records, passes, or other school-related documents.
* Refusal to accept discipline assigned by the teacher or principal.

**Short-barrel firearm** is a rifle with a barrel length of less than 16 inches or a shotgun with a barrel length of less than 18 inches, or any weapon made from a rifle or shotgun that, as altered, has an overall length of less than 26 inches.

**Terroristic threat** is a threat of violence to any person or property with intent to:

1. Cause a reaction of any type by an official or volunteer agency organized to deal with emergencies;
2. Place any person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury;
3. Prevent or interrupt the occupation or use of a building; room, place of assembly, or place to which the public has access; place of employment or occupation; aircraft, automobile, or other form of conveyance; or other public place;
4. Cause impairment or interruption of public communications, public transportation, public water, gas, or power supply or other public service;
5. Place the public or a substantial group of the public in fear of serious bodily injury; or
6. Influence the conduct or activities of a branch or agency of the federal government, the state, or a political subdivision of the state (including the district).

**Tire deflation device** is defined in part by Section 46.01 of the Penal Code as a device, including a caltrop or spike strip, that, when driven over, impedes or stops the movement of a wheeled vehicle by puncturing one or more of the vehicle’s tires.

**Title 5 offenses** are those that involve injury to a person and include murder; kidnapping; assault; aggravated assault; sexual assault; aggravated sexual assault; unlawful restraint; indecency with a child; injury to a child, an elderly person, or a disabled person; abandoning or endangering a child; deadly conduct; terroristic threat; aiding a person to commit suicide; and tampering with a consumer product. [See FOC(EXHIBIT)]

**Under the influence** means lacking the normal use of mental or physical faculties. Impairment of a person’s physical or mental faculties may be evidenced by a pattern of abnormal or erratic behavior, the presence of physical symptoms of drug or alcohol use, or by admission. A student “under the influence” need not be legally intoxicated to trigger disciplinary action.

**Use** means voluntarily introducing into one’s body, by any means, a prohibited substance.

**Zip gun** is a device or combination of devices, not originally a firearm, but adapted to expel a projectile through a smooth-bore or rifled-bore barrel by using the energy generated by an explosion or burning substance.