



INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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DIVISION OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

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# Student & Parent Handbook

2017-2018  
Academic School Year

Empowering lifelong learners to be engaged citizens who positively impact their local and global community.

*The Denton Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities.*

*REVISED August 2017*

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## **NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, the Denton Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law, in providing education services, activities, and programs, including CTE programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended, which incorporates and expands upon the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The District designates the following person to coordinate its efforts to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, for students:

Name: Dr. Gwendolyn Perkins  
Position: Area Superintendent  
Address: 1307 North Locust Street, Denton, TX 76201  
Telephone: (940) 369-0000

The District designates the following person to coordinate its efforts to comply with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, which incorporates and expands upon the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, for students:

Name: Mrs. Mary Decker  
Position: Coordinator, 504 and Dyslexia Programs  
Address: 1307 North Locust Street, Denton, TX 76201  
Telephone: (940) 369-0000

All other concerns regarding discrimination:

Name: Dr. James K. Wilson, III  
Position: Superintendent of Schools  
Address: 1307 North Locust Street, Denton, TX 76201  
Telephone: (940) 369-0000

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



Dear Parent and Student:

The *Student and Parent Handbook* is designed to provide each family with information about the procedures that your school and your school district follow. Changes in policy or procedures that affect this document will be shared through school newsletters and other parent and student communications (available both printed and electronically). We believe that this document is a useful reference for your family.

The district requires that the school receive a signed statement from each student's parent that the *Student and Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct* have been received and reviewed. Please review the materials and sign the required form during the online registration process.

We encourage each parent to become an active member of the educational team. We hope that parents will take time to get to know their child's teachers and principal.

Our community has created a quality school system for our students. The investment that parents and the community have made combined with our district's outstanding teachers and staff makes a strong learning environment for students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in grey ink that reads 'J.K. Wilson'.

Dr. James K. Wilson, III  
Superintendent of Schools

<p><b><u>EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTERS</u></b>  Gonzalez School for Young Children  Felicia Sprayberry, Principal  1212 Long Road  Denton, TX 76207  Phone: 940-369-4360  Fax: 940-382-4285</p> <p>Windle School for Young Children  Angela Hellman, Principal  901 Audra Lane  Denton, TX 76209  Phone: 940-369-3900  Fax: 940-369-4930</p> <p><b><u>ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS</u></b>  Adkins Elementary  Emily McLarty, Principal  1701 Monahan Drive  Lantana, TX 76226  Phone: 940-369-1300  Fax: 940-584-0857</p> <p>Bell Elementary  Lauren Shapiro, Principal  601 Villa Paloma Blvd  Little Elm, TX 75068  Phone: 972-347-7200  Fax: 972-347-9990</p> <p>Blanton Elementary  Linda Bozeman, Principal  9501 Stacey Lane  Argyle, TX 76226  Phone: 940-369-0700  Fax: 940-241-1423</p> <p>Borman Elementary  Michele Sandefur, Principal  1201 Parvin St.  Denton, TX 76205-6715  Phone: 940-369-2500  Fax: 940-369-4903</p> <p>Cross Oaks Elementary  Matt Preston, Principal  600 Liberty Blvd.  Crossroads, TX 76227  Phone: 972-347-7100  Fax: 940-440-9770</p> <p>Evers Park Elementary  Dr. Linda Cavazos-Tucker, Principal  3300 Evers Parkway  Denton, TX 76207  Phone: 940-369-2600  Fax: 940-369-4906</p> <p>Ginnings Elementary  Marcy Auchter, Principal  2525 Yellowstone Place  Denton, TX 76209  Phone: 940-369-2700  Fax: 940-369-4909</p> <p>Hawk Elementary  Robin Brownell, Principal  2300 Oakmont Drive  Corinth, TX 76210  Phone: 940-369-1800  Fax: 940-369-4911</p>	<p>Hodge Elementary  Dr. Patty Jensen, Principal  3900 Grant Parkway  Denton, TX 76208  Phone: 940-369-2800  Fax: 940-369-4912</p> <p>Houston Elementary  Teresa Andress, Principal  3100 Teasley Lane  Denton, TX 76205  Phone: 940-369-2900  Fax: 940-369-4915</p> <p>Lee Elementary  Lorena Salas, Principal  800 Mack Place  Denton, TX 76209  Phone: 940-369-3500  Fax: 940-369-4918</p> <p>McNair Elementary  Lacey Hailey, Principal  1212 Hickory Creek Road  Denton, TX 76210  Phone: 940-369-3600  Fax: 940-369-4921</p> <p>Nelson Elementary  Erika Timmons, Principal  3909 Teasley Lane  Denton, TX 76210  Phone: 940-369-1400  Fax: 940-383-3534</p> <p>Paloma Creek Elementary  Natalie Mead, Principal  1600 Navo Road  Aubrey, TX 76227  Phone: 972-347-7300  Fax: 972-346-9501</p> <p>Pecan Creek Elementary  Lacey Rainey, Principal  4400 Lakeview Blvd.  Denton, TX 76208  Phone: 940-369-4400  Fax: 940-369-4904</p> <p>Providence Elementary  Jairia Diggs, Principal  1000 F.M. 2931  Aubrey, TX 76227  Phone: 940-369-1900  Fax: 940-399-2985</p> <p>E.P. Rayzor Elementary  Mary Dunlevy, Principal  377 Rayzor Road  Argyle, TX 76226  Phone: 940-369-4100  Fax: 940-455-2998</p> <p>N. Rayzor Elementary  Cecilia Holt, Principal  1400 Malone St.  Denton, TX 76201  Phone: 940-369-3700  Fax: 940-369-4924</p>	<p>Rivera Elementary  Roshaunda Thomas, Principal  701 Newton St.  Denton, TX 76205  Phone: 940-369-3800  Fax: 940-369-4927</p> <p>Ryan Elementary  Nicole Poole, Principal  201 W. Ryan Road  Denton, TX 76210  Phone: 940-369-4600  Fax: 940-369-4936</p> <p>Savannah Elementary  Michael McWilliams, Principal  1101 Cotton Exchange Drive  Aubrey, TX 76208  Phone: 972-347-7400  Fax: 972-346-3352</p> <p>Stephens Elementary  Chris Rangel, Principal  133 Garza Road  Shady Shores, TX 76208  Phone: 940-369-0800  Fax: 940-321-1318</p> <p>Wilson Elementary  Caleb Leath, Principal  1306 E. Windsor Drive  Denton, TX 76209  Phone: 940-369-4500  Fax: 940-369-4933</p> <p><b><u>MIDDLE SCHOOLS</u></b>  Calhoun Middle School  Paul Martinez, Principal  709 Congress St.  Denton, TX 76201  Phone: 940-369-2400  Fax: 940-369-4939</p> <p>Crownover Middle School  Charlene Parham, Principal  1901 Creekside Drive  Corinth, TX 76210  Phone: 940-369-4700  Fax: 940-321-0502</p> <p>Harpool Middle School  Jeff Smith, Principal  9601 Stacey Lane  Argyle, TX 76226  Phone: 940-369-1700  Fax: 940-241-1342</p> <p>McMath Middle School  Dr. Debra Nobles, Principal  1900 Jason Drive  Denton, TX 76205  Phone: 940-369-3300  Fax: 940-369-4946</p> <p>Myers Middle School  Angela Ricks, Principal  131 Garza Road  Shady Shores, TX 76208  Phone: 940-369-1500</p> <p>Navo Middle School  Beth Kelly, Principal  1701 Navo Road  Aubrey, TX 76227  Phone: 972-347-7500  Fax: 972-346-2562</p>	<p>Rodriguez Middle School  Renee Koontz, Principal  8650 Martop Road  Oak Point, TX 75068  Phone: 972-347-7050  Fax: TBD</p> <p>Strickland Middle School  Kathleen Carmona, Principal  324 E. Windsor Drive  Denton, TX 76209  Phone: 940-369-4200  Fax: 940-369-4950</p> <p><b><u>HIGH SCHOOLS</u></b>  Braswell High School  Dr. Lesli Guajardo, Principal  26750 E. University  Aubrey, TX 76227  Phone: 972-347-7700  Fax: TBD</p> <p>Denton High School  Joel Hays, Principal  1007 Fulton St.  Denton, TX 76201  Phone: 940-369-2000  Fax: 940-369-4953</p> <p>LaGrone Advanced Technology Complex  Marcus Bourland, Principal  1504 Long Road  Denton, TX 76207  Phone: 940-369-4850  Fax: 940-369-4971</p> <p>Guyer High School  Dr. Shaun Perry, Principal  7501 Teasley Lane  Denton, TX 76210  Phone: 940-369-1000  Fax: 940-369-4999</p> <p>Fred Moore High School  Marilyn Rabsatt, Principal  815 Cross Timbers St.  Denton, TX 76205  Phone: 940-369-4000  Fax: 940-369-4957</p> <p>Ryan High School  Vernon Reeves, Principal  5101 E. McKinney St.  Denton, TX 76208  Phone: 940-369-3000  Fax: 940-369-4960</p> <p><b><u>ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS</u></b>  Davis School DAEP  Buddy Dunworth, Principal  1125 Davis St.  Denton, TX 76209  Phone: 940-369-4050  Fax: 940-369-4966</p> <p>Sparks Campus  Anthony Sims, Principal  201 S. Woodrow Lane  Denton, TX 76205  Phone: 940-369-2468</p>
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## PREFACE

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to school year 2017–18! 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 Denton Independent School District Student Handbook is designed to provide basic information that you and your child will need during the school year. The handbook is divided into two sections:

**Section I—PARENTAL RIGHTS**—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, and, where possible, further divided by applicability to ages and/or grade levels, for quick access when searching for information on a specific issue.

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

Both students and parents should become familiar with the Denton ISD Student Code of Conduct, which is a document adopted by the board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document may be found on the district’s website at <http://www.dentonisd.org> and is available in hard copy upon request from the campus principal.

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

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

Also, please be aware that the Student Handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. The district encourages parents to stay informed of proposed board policy changes by attending board meetings or by consulting Board Policy Online at [www.dentonisd.org](http://www.dentonisd.org). 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 your campus principal.

## **SECTION I: PARENTAL RIGHTS**

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

### **CONSENT, OPT-OUT, AND REFUSAL RIGHTS**

#### **Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation**

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

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

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

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

#### **Consent to Receive Parenting and Paternity Awareness Instruction if Student is Under Age 14**

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

#### **Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student When Not Otherwise Permitted by Law**

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

- When it is to be used for school safety;
- When it relates to classroom instruction or a cocurricular or extracurricular activity; or
- When it relates to media coverage of the school.

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

#### **Limiting Electronic Communications with Students by District Employees**

Teachers and other approved employees are permitted by the district to use electronic communication with students within the scope of the individual's professional

Responsibilities, as described by district guidelines. For example, a teacher may set up a social networking page for his or her class that has information related to class work, homework, and tests. As a parent, you are welcome to join or become a member of such a page.

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

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 or if you have questions related to the use of electronic media by district employees, please contact the campus principal (DH Local).

### **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, permits the district to disclose appropriately designated “directory information” from a child’s education records without written consent. “Directory information” is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. This “directory information” will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

However, a parent or eligible student may object to the release of a student’s directory information. 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.

As allowed by state law, the district has identified two directory information lists—one for school-sponsored purposes and the second for all other requests. For all district publications and announcements, the district has designated the following as directory information: student name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, photograph, date of birth, major field of study, honors and awards received, dates of attendance, grade level, most recent educational institution attended, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, and enrollment status. If you do not object to the use of your child’s information for these limited school-sponsored purposes, the school will not need to ask your permission each time the district wishes to use the information for the school-sponsored purposes listed above.

For all other purposes, the district has identified the following as directory information: student name. If you do not object to the use of your child’s information for these purposes, the school must release this information when the school receives a request from an outside entity or individual.

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

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

The district is required by federal law to comply with a request by a military recruiter or an institution of higher education for students’ names, addresses, and telephone listings, unless

parents have advised the district not to release their child’s information without prior written consent. A form included in the forms packet is available if you do not want the district to provide this information to military recruiters or institutions of higher education.

### **Participation in Third-Party Surveys**

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

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

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent.
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family.
- 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 Participation in Other Types of Surveys or Screenings and the Disclosure of Personal Information***

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

- Any survey concerning the private information listed above, regardless of funding.
- School activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from your child for the purpose of marketing, selling, or otherwise disclosing that information. Note that this does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.
- Any nonemergency, 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.]

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

## **REMOVING A STUDENT FROM INSTRUCTION OR EXCUSING A STUDENT FROM A REQUIRED COMPONENT OF INSTRUCTION**

### **Human Sexuality Instruction**

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

State law requires that any instruction related to human sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, or human immunodeficiency virus 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.

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

The District presents abstinence as the preferred choice of behavior for unmarried persons of school age. Abstinence is also emphasized as the only method that is 100 percent effective in the prevention of pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV or AIDS. Prior to the implementation of the human sexuality education program, the District will provide every parent an opportunity for informed consent for his or her child to participate in the program. The District shall make all curriculum materials used in human sexuality education available for reasonable public inspection.

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



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

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

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

As a parent, you may request that your child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the 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** and policy EC (LEGAL).]

### **Religious or Moral Beliefs**

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

### **Tutoring or Test Preparation**

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

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

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

## **RIGHT OF ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS, CURRICULUM MATERIALS, AND DISTRICT RECORDS**

### **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.

### **Notices of Certain Student Misconduct to Noncustodial Parent**

A noncustodial 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.]

### **Student Records**

#### ***Accessing Student Records***

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

- Attendance records,
- Test scores,
- Grades,
- Disciplinary records,
- Counseling records,
- Psychological records,
- Applications for admission,
- Health and immunization information,
- Other medical records,
- Teacher and school counselor evaluations,
- Reports of behavioral patterns,
- Records relating to assistance provided for learning difficulties, including information collected regarding any intervention strategies used with your child, as the term intervention strategy is defined by law,
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child, and
- Teaching materials and tests used in your child's classroom.

#### ***Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records***

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

- The right to inspect and review student records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access.

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

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

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

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

Inspection and release of student records is primarily restricted to an eligible student or a student’s 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 postsecondary 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.

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

- When district school officials have what federal law refers to as a “legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records. School officials would include board members and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals; teachers, school counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff (including district health or district medical staff); a person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a particular institutional service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, third-party vendor that offers online programs or software, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, school resource officer, or volunteer); a parent or student serving on a school committee; or a parent or student assisting a school official in the performance of his or her duties. “Legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records includes working with the student; considering disciplinary or academic actions,

the student's case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities; compiling statistical data; reviewing an educational record to fulfill the official's professional responsibility to the school and the student; or investigating or evaluating programs.

- To authorize representatives of various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers, the U.S. Comptroller General's office, the U.S. Attorney General's office, the U.S. Secretary of Education, TEA, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture's office, and Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers or other child welfare representatives, in certain cases.
- To individuals or entities granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- To another school, school district/system, or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she is already enrolled.
- In connection with financial aid for which a student has applied or which the student has received.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; administer student aid programs; or improve instruction.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- When the district discloses information it has designated as directory information [see **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** for opportunities to prohibit this disclosure].

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

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

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

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

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

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

The district's policy regarding student records found at policy FL is available from the district's website at [www.dentonisd.org](http://www.dentonisd.org).

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.

### **Teacher and Staff Professional Qualifications**

You may request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's teachers, including whether a teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; whether the teacher has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived; and 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.

## **STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES OR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

### **Children of Military Families**

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

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

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

Additional information may be found at <http://tea.texas.gov/index2.aspx?id=7995>.

## **Parental Role in Certain Classroom and School Assignments**

### ***Multiple Birth Siblings***

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

### ***Safety Transfers/Assignments***

As a parent, you may:

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

[See **Bullying**, policy FDB, and policy FFI.]

- Request the transfer of your child to attend a safe public school in the district if your child attends school at a campus identified by TEA as persistently dangerous or if your child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds. [See policy FDE.]
- Request the transfer of your child to another district campus if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether the assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault. If the victim does not wish to transfer, the district will transfer the assailant in accordance with policy FDE.

### **Service/Assistance Animal Use by Students**

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

## **Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education Services**

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her 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 making a referral for a special education evaluation. For those students who are having difficulty in the regular classroom, schools must consider tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students, including a process based on Response to Intervention (RtI). The implementation of RtI has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of districts to meet the needs of all struggling students.

A parent may request an evaluation for special education services at any time. If a parent makes a written request to a school district's director of special education services or to a district administrative employee for an initial evaluation for special education services, the school must, not later than the 15th school day after the date the school receives the request, either give the parent prior written notice of its proposal to evaluate the student, a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards, and the opportunity for the parent to give written consent for the evaluation or must give the parent prior written notice of its refusal to evaluate the student and a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards.

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

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

Additional information regarding special education is available from the school district in a companion document titled Parent's Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process. The following websites provide information to those who are seeking information and resources specific to students with disabilities and their families:

- [Texas Project FIRST](#)
- [Partners Resource Network](#)

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

The district will notify the parent of a student, other than a student enrolled in a special education program, who receives assistance from the district for learning difficulties, including intervention strategies, that the district provides assistance to the student.

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

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

### **Students Who Speak a Primary Language Other than English**

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

### **Students With Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504**

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

The designated person to contact regarding a referral for evaluation applicable to Section 504 is the campus principal.

[Also see policy FB.]

### **Students in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care)**

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

A student who is currently in the conservatorship of the state and who is moved outside of the district's or school's attendance boundaries, or who is initially placed in the conservatorship of the state and who is moved outside the district's or school's boundaries, is entitled to continue in enrollment at the school he or she was attending prior to the placement or move until the student reaches the highest grade level at the particular school. In addition, if a student in grade 11 or 12 transfers to another district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, the student can request to receive a diploma from the previous district if he or she meets the criteria to graduate from the previous district.



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

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

## **SECTION II: OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS**

Topics in this section of the Student Handbook contain important information on academics, school activities, and school operations and requirements. Take a moment with your child to become familiar with the various issues addressed in this section. It is organized in alphabetical order to serve as a quick-reference when you or your child has a question about a specific school-related issue. Where possible, the topics are also organized to alert you to the applicability of each topic based on a student's age or grade level. Should you be unable to find the information on a particular topic, please contact your child's campus.

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

#### **Compulsory Attendance**

##### ***Age 19 and Older***

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

##### ***Between Ages 6 and 19***

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

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

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

## ***Prekindergarten and Kindergarten***

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

### **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance**

#### ***All Grade Levels***

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences if the student makes up all work. For the following exemptions, the 72 hour rule does not apply. With appropriate documentation, written excuses will be accepted at any time. These include the following activities and events:

- Religious holy days;
- Required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship;
- Documented health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders. 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.

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

#### ***Secondary Grade Levels***

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

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

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

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

An absence of a student in grades 6–12 for the purpose of sounding "Taps" at a military honors

funeral for a deceased veteran will also be excused by the district.

## **Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance**

### ***All Grade Levels***

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

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 without excuse from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six- month period in the same school year, or

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

If a student age 12 through age 19 violates the compulsory attendance law, both the parent and student could be charged with an offense.

[See policy FEA (LEGAL).]

### **Students with Disabilities**

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

### **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade (Kindergarten through Grade 12)**

To receive credit or a final grade in a class, a student in kindergarten–grade 12 must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. A student who attends at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered may receive credit or a final grade 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 or a final grade for the class.

If a student attends less than 75 percent of the days a class is offered or has not completed the 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 policy FEC.]

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

- All absences, whether excused or unexcused, must 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 extenuating circumstances for purposes of attendance for credit or the award of a final grade.

- 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 review absences incurred based on the student's participation in board-approved extracurricular activities. These absences will be considered by the attendance committee as extenuating circumstances in accordance with the absences allowed under FM(LOCAL) if the student made up the work missed in each class.
- 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 or a final grade.

The student or parent may appeal the committee's decision to the board by following policy FNG(LOCAL).

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

### **Official Attendance-Taking Time (All Grade Levels)**

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

Official attendance is taken every day at 10:00 a.m. A student absent for any portion of the day, including at the official attendance-taking time, should follow the procedures below to provide documentation of the absence.

### **Documentation after an Absence (All Grade Levels)**

When a student is absent from school, the reason for that absence must be provided in writing within 72 hours (3 school days) to the school in order to make appropriate documentation. A hand written note or email from the parent to the campus attendance secretary will be accepted. Phone calls will not be accepted as documentation. A phone call from the school verifying the parent note may be expected in some instances. 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.

The campus will document in its attendance records for the student whether the absence is considered by the district to be excused or unexcused. Please note that, unless the absence is for a statutorily allowed reason under compulsory attendance laws, the district is not required to excuse any absence, even if the parent provides a note explaining the absence.

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

Upon return to school, a student absent for five or more 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.

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 in order to determine whether the absence or absences will be excused or unexcused.

[See policy FEC(LOCAL).]

In order for an absence to be coded MED, the student must begin classes or return to school on the same day of the appointment. The appointment should be supported by a document, such as a note or fax from a health care professional. This documented medical appointment applies to any absence for the student or the student's child.

### **Driver License Attendance Verification (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

For a student between the ages of 16 and 18 to obtain a driver license, written parental permission must be provided for the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) to access the student's attendance records and, in certain circumstances, for a school administrator to provide the student's attendance information to DPS. A verification of enrollment (VOE) form may be obtained from the office, which the student will need to submit to DPS upon application for a driver license. The VOE form verifies the student's enrollment and 90% or greater attendance in the most recently completed semester of school. Students with an attendance record of less than 90% cannot be issued a VOE form and will not be able to obtain a Texas driver license.

### **Additional Attendance Guidelines and Consequences**

Generally, a student who is at least 6 years of age, or who is younger than 6 years of age and has previously been enrolled in first grade and has not yet reached the child's 18th birthday is required to attend school. (TEC 25.085A)

- A child is exempt from compulsory school attendance if the child: (TEC 25.086)
- Attends a private or parochial school
- Is eligible for Special Education services but cannot be properly served by the district.
- Has temporary physical or mental condition certified by a physician making the child's attendance infeasible.
- Is legally expelled and mandatory JJAEP attendance is not required.
- Is at least 17 years of age and:

- Is attending GED classes with parent permission, court order, is residing separate and apart from the parent, or is homeless.
- Has received a high school diploma or GED.
- Is at least 16 years of age and is attending GED classes if:
- The child is recommended by a public agency with supervision or court order.
- The child is enrolled in Job Corps.

Students may not be given credit for a class unless they are in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days the class meets. Campuses will appoint attendance committees to review circumstances where students have less than 90 percent attendance. (TEC 25.092)

In high school classes that are blocked and meet every other day, a student with more than 4 unverified absences in the fall semester or 5 unverified absences in the spring semester will lose credit in that class. Students in unblocked high school, or middle school and elementary school classes that meet every day, lose credit if they have more than 8 absences in the fall semester or 10 absences in the spring semester.

Students shall have absences excused for religious holy days including traveling for that purpose, and temporary absences resulting from health care professionals if the student returns to classes the same day of the appointment. If students satisfactorily complete make-up work for these types of excused absences, the day shall be counted as a day of compulsory attendance. Teachers and administrators will determine whether or not other temporary absences are excused. (TEC 25.087) These temporary absences may not be counted as days of compulsory attendance, but may be considered as extenuating circumstances by attendance committees when determining award of class credit in cases of less than 90 percent attendance.

If any parent of a child required to attend school fails to require the student to attend as required by law, a warning letter will be mailed after three (3) unexcused absences. If the student does not immediately return to compulsory school attendance, the school attendance officer will file a complaint against the parent and/or student in a county court, justice of the peace court, or municipal court after the fourth (4th) voluntary unexcused absence in a four week period or tenth (10th) voluntary unexcused absence in a six month period (TEC 25.093 and Section 51.03(b) (2) of the Family Code). Since the law addresses absences for "all or part" of a school day, chronic tardies may be referred to the appropriate authorities as unexcused absences. Fines for thwarting compulsory school attendance and failure to attend school may be as high as \$500 per absence. For information and/or assistance with attendance concerns contact the Campus Attendance Officer.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY UNDER STATE AND FEDERAL LAW**

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

- The Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) for the district, compiled by TEA, the state agency that oversees public education, based on academic factors and ratings;

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

Information about all of these can be found on the district’s website at [www.dentonisd.org](http://www.dentonisd.org) and copies of these reports are available upon request in each principal’s office.

TEA also maintains additional accountability and accreditation information at <http://www.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/> and <http://www.tea.texas.gov>.

### **AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

The Denton Independent School District **offers** the best possible after school program for all of our elementary students. Our Extended School Day Programs allow elementary students to remain at the school (between 3-6 p.m. Monday-Friday) in a structured program that provides academic, enrichment and recreational activities. This is an ideal situation for working or busy parents. For information about the Extended School Day Program, please contact the Community Education Department at 940-369-0080.

### **ARMED SERVICES VOCATIONAL APTITUDE BATTERY TEST**

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

Please contact the principal for information about this opportunity.

### **BICYCLES AND SKATEBOARDS**

Please make sure that your child crosses the street at the crosswalks. In addition, students should walk their bicycles at the crosswalks and on school grounds. Students are encouraged to wear an approved bicycle helmet while riding a bicycle. All bicycles must be locked and kept at the bicycle racks. No skateboards, scooters, skates or shoes with skates will be allowed on campus or in the buildings.

### **BULLYING (ALL GRADE LEVELS)**

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

- Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student’s property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student’s person or of damage to the student’s property;
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student;



- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school; or
- Infringes on the rights of the victim at school.

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

The district is required to adopt policies and procedures regarding:

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

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

If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying or has witnessed bullying of another student, it is important for the student or parent to notify a teacher, school counselor, principal, or another district employee as soon as possible to obtain assistance and intervention. The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying or other related misconduct. The district will also provide notice to the parent of the alleged victim and the parent of the student alleged to have engaged in bullying. A student may anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying by *SafeSchools Alert*. Information is located in the Student Code of Conduct.

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

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

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

A copy of the district’s policy is available in the principal’s office, superintendent’s office, and on the district’s website, and is included at the end of this handbook in the form of an appendix.

Procedures related to reporting allegations of bullying may also be found on the district’s website.

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

[See **Safety Transfers/Assignments Error! Bookmark not defined.**, **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation, Hazing**, policy FFI, and the district improvement plan, a copy of which can be viewed in the campus office.]

## **CAFETERIASERVICES**

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. To apply for free and reduced- price meals, please contact the Denton ISD Child Nutrition Office at 369-0270.

The schools serve delicious breakfasts and lunches, as well as a la carte items daily. Students are encouraged to deposit money in advance in their lunch spending accounts. Should the account be overdrawn, one lunch may be charged. Subsequently, a cheese sandwich and milk will be offered instead of a hot lunch until the negative balance has been paid.

A copy of the school menu is available at [www.dentonisd.org](http://www.dentonisd.org)

### **Meal Prices**

	<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>Elementary School</b>	\$1.10	\$2.75
<b>Middle School</b>	\$1.35	\$3.00
<b>High School</b>	\$1.35	\$3.00
<b>Adults/Guests</b>	\$2.00	\$3.75

Parents can monitor their student’s lunch activity, pay for meals using a debit or credit card, set up automated payments, combine payments for multiple students, view and print student activity, receive low account balance reminders, and receive immediate email confirmation of all transactions by visiting: [www.parentonline.net](http://www.parentonline.net). A minimal processing/transaction fee may apply.

Competitive foods are defined as food and beverages sold or made available to students that compete with the school’s operation of the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, and/or After School Snack Program. Competitive foods include snacks provided by teachers, parents, or sources other than the Child Nutrition Program. For elementary and middle schools, these foods and beverages will not be allowed during meal periods. For high schools, these foods and beverages will not be allowed during meal periods in areas where school meals are served.

## **CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) PROGRAMS (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

The district offers career and technical education programs in the following career clusters: Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources, Architecture & Construction, Arts, A/V Technology & Communications, Business Management & Administration, Education & Training, Finance, Government & Public Administration, Health Science, Hospitality & Tourism, Human Services, Information Technology, Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security, Manufacturing, Marketing, Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics, Transportation, Distribution & Logistics. Admission to these programs is based on completion of required prerequisites, student interest and aptitude, age appropriateness and class space availability.

These programs will be offered without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, or disability. The Denton Independent School District will take steps to ensure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and CTE programs. [Also see **Nondiscrimination Statement** for the name and contact information for the Title IX coordinator and Section 504 coordinator, who will address certain allegations of discrimination.]

## **CELEBRATIONS (All Grade Levels)**

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

## **CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND OTHER MALTREATMENT OF CHILDREN**

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children, which may be accessed at [www.dentonisd.org](http://www.dentonisd.org). As a parent, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. A person who compels or encourages a child to engage in sexual conduct commits abuse. It is illegal to make or possess child pornography or to display such material to a child. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

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

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

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

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

- [Child Welfare Information Gateway Factsheet](#)
- [KidsHealth, For Parents, Child Abuse](#)
- [Texas Association Against Sexual Assault, Resources](#)
- [Texas Attorney General, What We Can Do About Child Abuse Part 1](#)
- [Texas Attorney General, What We Can Do About Child Abuse Part 2](#)

Reports of abuse or neglect may be made to:

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

## **CLASS RANK / HIGHEST RANKING STUDENT**

Each high school shall have a valedictorian and a salutatorian. Candidates for the honor of valedictorian and salutatorian must be in attendance at the awarding high school for the entire school year in which the honor is bestowed, reasonable and ordinary absences are exceptions. Candidates must be classified as senior(s) during both the fall and spring semesters of the graduating and awarding year. Alternatively, individuals who will not be classified as senior(s) during both the fall and spring semesters of the graduating and awarding year may qualify and become eligible for the honor of valedictorian and salutatorian by filing a written declaration of intent to graduate, with the building principal, on or before the tenth day of school.

Calculation and determination of the valedictorian and salutatorian shall be made based upon the highest and next highest grade point average, respectively, as of the close of school, seven days before the last regular day of attendance for seniors. In the event of ties, there shall be multiple valedictorians and multiple salutatorians. The method by which the grade point average will be calculated shall be the same for all candidates. The GPA of candidates with grade 9 entry dates subsequent to those candidates who are graduating in four years (ie. eight semesters) shall be calculated and determined based upon the same criteria, classes, and basis as those graduating in four years (ie. eight semesters).

Class rank shall be determined based on the highest grades and grade points in four courses in language arts and social studies, four courses in science which must include one each in biology or environmental science, chemistry, and physics, four courses in math, and two courses in world languages. A senior must carry at least six classes each semester in order to be eligible

for honors. Any exception must be approved by the administration (e.g., students receiving homebound instruction or concurrently enrolled in a university course).

The intent of the policy was to establish a clear and consistent process for determining which courses would be used in earning grade points and in determining rank in class. In studying this issue, it is clear that the process for calculating the rank in class for a student and in determining a student's grade point average will vary depending on the year of calculation and on where a particular student is in completing his or her course of study. For purposes of making this process understandable, a student will carry an earned grade point average (GPA for courses completed within the prescribed board approved courses divided by the courses attempted) and a ranking GPA (GPA process that is the same for all students and is used to calculate the final rank in class). For this process, each should be examined differently.

**Earned GPA**– This GPA simply takes the courses completed within the defined allotment of 18 courses or 36 semesters and divides by the number of attempts. For a freshman who takes one course in each of the core areas of language arts, math, science, social studies, and world languages, the earned GPA would be the number of grade points earned divided by the 10 semesters taken. For the freshman who takes one course each in the areas of language arts, math, science, and social studies, the earned GPA would be the number of grade points earned divided by the 8 semesters taken. It is necessary to calculate an Earned GPA because it would not be feasible to use a divisor of 18 courses or 36 semesters until the senior year. It also would not be feasible to assume a standard divisor for each year, because not all students take the prescribed courses in the same order, sequence, or year. The Earned GPA shall be used both for reporting and ranking purposes until a final ranking GPA using a standard 36 semesters is utilized in the senior year. For transcript purposes the Earned GPA shall be the recorded GPA.

**Ranking Index (GPA)**– This is the calculation that will be used to determine a final rank in class. The final rank in class for graduating seniors will be determined by using a consistent process that will be applicable to all students. As stated above, the Board approved 18 courses consisting of 36 semester grades that would be used in determining class rank. The intent of the Board was to encourage students to complete a rigorous course of study. The final Ranking Index for all students will be calculated using the grade points earned within the allowable 18 courses (36 semesters) and a constant divisor of 36 (representing the Board approved courses). For example, for a student who completes a rigorous course of study including all 36 identified semesters, the Ranking Index is calculated using total grade points in 36 semesters divided by 36. For another student who completes only 30 of the identified semesters Ranking Index is calculated using total grade points earned in those 30 semesters divided by 36. Thus, a student who is successful in the more rigorous curriculum will have a higher Ranking Index than a student who, although successful in the courses taken as indicated in the Earned GPA, has not completed the Board approved recommended course of study. This process is used only in determining the final rank in class. The Ranking Index will always use the same 36 semesters as the divisor. Again, please remember that the Ranking Index becomes the final determinant of the official rank in the class for graduating seniors. Preliminary rankings for students in the freshman, sophomore and junior classes will be based on the Earned GPA. While the Ranking Index will be calculated and monitored

throughout the traditional four-year high school program, the Index will be used only to determine the final rank in class.

The Board of Trustees has also adopted a policy regarding students ranked in the top 10% of their senior class. Only students who have completed the course work for the Distinguished Achievement Program are eligible for graduating honors and for designation as graduating in the top 10% of the senior class.

**Transfer Courses** – Foundation courses will be calculated whether the student took the class during the regular school year, in summer school, by correspondence, by course exam, or by dual enrollment. Foundation courses transferred in from other public schools are counted as part of the established 18 courses (36 semesters). For states or schools that do not use numeric grades, a conversion process will be established. Additionally, the only Honors, Pre-AP, or AP transfer courses that will be recognized for weighted points will be those courses that also carry weighted points for Denton ISD students. Final determination of how transfer courses will be counted for GPA will be made by the Superintendent of Schools or designee.

**Ties** – The philosophical change in the way rank is calculated creates the potential for many students to share the same ranking index. The fact that many students could be tied throughout the system is recognized as one of the strengths, not weaknesses, of the system. Internally, there is no desire or need to break ties merely for the sake of breaking ties. Externally, in the case of scholarships or college admissions, there may be the need or requirement on the part of the external agency to break ties. For this purpose, a procedure to address ties is needed. Since the actual ranking index is based on a specific set of core or foundation courses, it is appropriate to use the grades in these same courses in addressing ties. The actual numeric grades within the approved courses being used in the calculation of the Earned GPA and/or Ranking Index will be averaged and used to break ties as needed. In the event two or more students have the same Earned GPA and/or same Ranking Index and the same numeric average over the established courses, no further tiebreakers will be utilized and the students will be considered officially tied. Again, ties will be addressed only as required for external uses. Students with the same ranking index will be considered tied for Denton ISD recognition purposes.

**Conversions** – As grades are received from non-Denton ISD institutions, it may become necessary to convert grades from colleges, exams, public or private schools to the Denton ISD system. Since the systems used by outside institutions vary, different conversion methods may be needed. The district shall always encourage the non-Denton ISD institution to supply numeric grades based on our system. However, in the event numeric grades are not provided, the following conversions shall apply to these specific situations:

**Conversion of University Letter Grades** – Universities typically use standard letter grades without the use of + (pluses) or – (minuses). These grades will be easy to use in the assignment of grade points unless it becomes necessary to break ties. Since the approved GPA policy calls for university level courses to carry honors GPA, this numeric conversion shall apply if needed. [For further information, see policy EIC.]

Students entering grade 9 in the 2014–15 school year will be under a different graduation program than previous school years. Therefore, class-ranking procedures may be adjusted by the district based on the new graduation plan. As these decisions are made, the district will make the information available to the students affected by these changes.

### **CLASS SCHEDULES (Secondary Only)**

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

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

### **CLOSED CAMPUS**

Students are not allowed to leave the school campus during the school day. Students who leave campus during the school day are in violation of the Student Code of Conduct. The campus principal may allow students to leave campus with parental consent and notification.

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

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

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

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

Students and parents should contact the school counselor for further information about

automatic admissions, the application process, and deadlines.

[See also **Class Rank/Highest Ranking Student** for information specifically related to how the district calculates a student's rank in class and **Graduation Requirements** for information associated with the foundation graduation program].

## **COLLEGE CREDIT COURSES**

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

- Certain courses taught at the high school campus, which may include courses termed dual credit, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or college preparatory;
- Enrollment in an AP or dual credit course through the Texas Virtual School Network;
- Enrollment in courses taught in conjunction and in partnership with North Central Texas College, Texas Woman's University, and the University of North Texas, which may be offered on or off campus;
- Enrollment in certain CTE courses taught at the high school campuses or at the DISD Advanced Technology Complex.

Note that if a student wishes to enroll in a community college course that also results in the award of high school course credit at a college that does not include the high school within its service area, the student is limited by state law to enroll in no more than three courses at that particular college.

All of these methods have eligibility requirements and must be approved prior to enrollment in the course. All expenses associated with Dual Credit are the responsibility of the student. Upon completion of dual credit course work, the student must submit the college transcript to the counseling office before the end of the college semester.

Please see the school counselor for more information. Depending on the student's grade level and the course, a state-mandated end-of-course assessment may be required for graduation.

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

## **COMMUNICATIONS—AUTOMATED**

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



**Nonemergency:** A new section about communications using automated systems for emergency and nonemergency purposes has been added. Your child’s school will request that you provide contact information, such as your current phone number and e-mail address, in order for the school to communicate items specific to your child, your child’s school, or the district. If you consent to receive such information through a landline or wireless phone, please ensure that you notify the school’s administration office immediately upon a change in or disconnection of your phone number. The district or school may generate automated or pre-recorded messages, text messages, or real-time phone or e-mail communications that are closely related the school’s mission, so prompt notification of any change in contact information will be crucial to maintain timely communication with you. Standard messaging rates of your phone carrier may apply. If you have specific requests or needs related to how the district contacts you, please contact your child’s principal.

## **COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS**

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed informally by a phone call or a conference with the teacher or principal. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled so easily, the board has adopted a standard complaint policy at FNG(LOCAL) in the district’s policy manual. A copy of this policy may be obtained in the principal’s office or on the district’s website at [www.dentonisd.org](http://www.dentonisd.org).

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

## **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 as well as on district vehicles—and consequences for violation of these standards. The district has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards set out in the Student Code of Conduct, as well as campus and classroom rules. During any periods of instruction during the summer months, the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct in place for the year immediately preceding the summer period shall apply, unless the district amends either or both documents for the purposes of summer instruction. 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.

## **Campus Behavior Coordinator**

By law, each campus has a campus behavior coordinator to apply discipline management techniques and administer consequences for certain student misconduct, as well as provide a point of contact for student misconduct. Contact your campus principal to find the designated campus behavior coordinator.

## **Disruptions of School Operations**

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

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

## **Social Events**

School rules apply to all school social events. Guests attending these events are expected to observe the same rules as students, and a student inviting a guest will share responsibility for the conduct of his or her guest. Students seeking to bring a guest to a social event should follow the guidelines established by the campus. Anyone leaving before the official end of the event will not be readmitted.

Please contact the campus principal if you are interested in serving as a chaperone for any school social events.

## **COUNSELING**

### **Academic Counseling**

#### ***Elementary and Middle School Grade Levels***

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

### ***High School Grade Levels***

High school students and their parents are encouraged to talk with a school counselor, teacher, or principal to learn more about course offerings, graduation requirements, and early graduation procedures. Each year, students in grades 5-12 will be provided information on anticipated course offerings for the next school year and other information that will help them make the most of academic and CTE opportunities, as well as information on the importance of postsecondary education.

The school counselor can also provide information about entrance exams and application deadlines, as well as information about automatic admission, financial aid, housing, and scholarships as these relate to state colleges and universities. The school counselor can also provide information about workforce opportunities after graduation or technical and trade school opportunities, including opportunities to earn industry-recognized certificates and licenses.

### **Personal Counseling**

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

[Also see **Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention** and **Suicide Awareness**.]

### **CREDIT BY EXAM —If a Student Has Taken the Course/Subject**

A student who has previously taken a course or subject—but did not receive credit or a final grade for it—may, in circumstances determined by the principal or attendance committee, be permitted to earn credit by passing an exam approved by the district's board of trustees 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, homeschooling, or coursework by a student transferring from a nonaccredited school. The opportunity to take an examination to earn credit for a course or to be awarded a final grade in a subject after the student has had prior instruction is sometimes referred to as “credit recovery.”

The school 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.

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

## **CREDIT BY EXAM FOR ADVANCEMENT/ACCELERATION—If a Student Has Not Taken the Course/Subject**

A student will be permitted to take an exam to earn credit for an academic course or subject area for which the student has had no prior instruction, i.e., for advancement or to accelerate to the next grade level. The exams offered by the district are approved by the district's board of trustees, and state law requires the use of certain exams, such as College Board Advanced Placement (AP) and College Level Examination Program (CLEP) tests, when applicable. The dates on which exams are scheduled during the 2017–18 school year will be published in appropriate district publications and on the district's website. The only exceptions to the published dates will be for any exams administered by another entity besides the district. In this case, a student and the district must comply with the testing schedule of the other entity. During each testing window provided by the district, a student may attempt a specific exam only once.

If a student plans to take an exam, the student (or parent) must register with the school counselor no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. [For further information, see policy EHDC.]

### **Students in Grades 1–5**

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

### **Students in Grades 6–12**

A student in grade 6 or above will earn course credit with a passing score of at least 80 on the exam, a scaled score of 60 or higher on an exam administered through the CLEP, or a score of 3 or higher on an AP exam, as applicable. A student may take an exam to earn high school course credit no more than twice. If a student fails to achieve the designated score on the applicable exam before the beginning of the school year in which the student would need to enroll in the course according to the school's high school course sequence, the student must complete the course.

## **DATING VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION (All Grade Levels)**

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

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly respond to inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are based on a person's race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law. A copy of the

district's policy is available at [www.dentonisd.org](http://www.dentonisd.org) [See policy FFH.]

### **Dating Violence**

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

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

### **Discrimination**

Discrimination is defined as any conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, 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.

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

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

### **Sexual Harassment and Gender-Based Harassment**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Retaliation**

Retaliation against a person who makes a good faith report of discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, is prohibited. Retaliation against a person who is participating in an investigation of alleged discrimination or harassment is also prohibited. A person who makes a false claim or offers false statements or refuses to cooperate with a district investigation, however, may be subject to appropriate discipline.

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

### **Reporting Procedures**

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

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

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

## **Investigation of Report**

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **DISTANCE LEARNING**

### **All Grade Levels**

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

The distance learning opportunities that are available to students are described in the district's High School Course Catalog and Planning Guide.

If a student wishes to enroll in a correspondence course or a distance learning course that is not provided through the Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN), as described below, 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 may not recognize and apply the course or subject toward graduation requirements or subject mastery.

### **Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN) (Secondary Grade Levels)**

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

Depending on the TxVSN course in which a student enrolls, the course may be subject to the

“no pass, no play” rules. In addition, for a student who enrolls in a TxVSN course for which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment is required, the student must still take the corresponding EOC assessment.

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

A copy of policy EHDE is available for review by all parents at [www.dentonisd.org](http://www.dentonisd.org).

## **DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE, PUBLISHED MATERIALS, OR OTHER DOCUMENTS (All Grade Levels)**

### **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. The school newspaper and the yearbook are available to students. All school publications are under the supervision of a teacher, sponsor, and the principal.

### **Non-school Materials**

#### ***From Students***

Students must obtain prior approval from the campus principal before selling, posting, circulating, or distributing copies of written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, 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 principal has designated a specific location at each campus for approved non-school materials to be placed for voluntary viewing or collection by students. [See policy FNAA.]

Any student who sells, posts, circulates, or distributes non-school material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without approval will be removed.

#### ***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 district’s office of Student Services for prior review.

The principal has designated specific location at each campus for approved non-school materials to be placed for voluntary viewing or collection.

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 noncurriculum- 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 (All Grade Levels)**

The Denton ISD dress code is established to teach hygiene, instill self-discipline, prevent disruptions, promote safety, and provide an environment for learning. The responsibility for adhering to the dress code begins with each student and parent. Enforcement of the code is the responsibility of the classroom teachers and administrators. The principal, in cooperation with the Campus Leadership Team may add detail to the following dress code and the details may be gender specific.

If the principal determines that a student's grooming or clothing violates the school's dress code, the student will be given an opportunity to correct the problem at school. If not corrected, the student will be assigned to in-school suspension for the remainder of the day, until the problem is corrected, or until a parent or designee brings an acceptable change of clothing to the school.

The Board, at the recommendation of the superintendent, approves campus dress code details. On each campus, the principal will have the final say as to the appropriateness of any dress code question.

The following guidelines are to assist students and parents in selecting appropriate attire (**as determined by campus administration**):

1. All students are to present a clean, well-groomed appearance at school and school activities. All clothing must be sized to fit properly.
2. The following items have been determined to be unacceptable for wear at school:
  - bike pants
  - bare midriffs
  - halter tops or tank tops see-through apparel short shorts/skirts mesh/net clothing saggy/baggy pants bandanas
  - pajamas, slippers or house shoes sunglasses
  - strapless dresses/blouses
  - unnatural hair color
  - unnatural cosmetic contact lens colors accessories which create a disruption display of undergarments
  - any headgear other than part of approved school uniform
  - chains or accessories which can be used as a weapon (such as spiked collars/bracelets)
  - shirts open at the sides (excessively large armholes)

- flip-flops (except in high schools, or as determined by administration on all campuses) Tattoos and body art, which promote nudity, obscenity, or gang activity, must be covered. Steel-toed shoes (except in identified CTE classes)
  - ragged or intentionally cut/torn clothing as determined inappropriate by the campus principal or designee.
  - garments containing offensive or obscene words or phrases, pictures, symbols, or images
  - garments which promote or advertise alcohol, tobacco, or other prohibited products
  - accessories applied to the facial area, tongue, or body such as safety pins to the eye area, studs, or rings through the nose
3. Additional details, including those that are gender specific, may be added at the campus level.

Enforcement of the dress code is the responsibility of both classroom teachers and school administrators. If the principal determines that a student's grooming or clothing violates the school's dress code, the student will be given an opportunity to correct the problem at school. If not corrected, the student may be assigned to in-school suspension for the remainder of the day, until the problem is corrected, or until a parent or designee brings an acceptable change of clothing to the school. Repeated offenses may result in more serious disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The principal has the final authority to determine the appropriateness of all dress code issues.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES (All Grade Levels)**

### **Possession and Use of Personal Telecommunications Devices, Including Mobile Telephones**

For instructional and safety purposes, the district permits students to possess personal mobile telephones; however, these devices must remain turned off during the instructional day, including during all testing, unless they are being used for approved instructional purposes. The use of mobile telephones or any device capable of capturing images is strictly prohibited in locker rooms or restroom areas while at school or at a school-related or school-sponsored event.

Except when being used for principal/teacher-approved purposes, telecommunications and electronic devices shall not be visible, audible, or used during school hours as determined by the principal. Campuses may require students to store these devices in school issued lockers.

If a student violates this policy, the device will be confiscated. The parent may pick up the confiscated telecommunications/electronic device from the principal's office for a fee of \$15.00. Confiscated telecommunications devices that are not retrieved by the student or the student's parents will be disposed of after the notice required by law. [See policy FNCE.] The school assumes no responsibility or liability for lost, stolen, or confiscated electronic or telecommunications devices.

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, authorized personnel may search a student's personal telecommunications device. [See **Searches** and policy FNF.]

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Possession and Use of Other Personal Electronic Devices**

Except as described below, students are not permitted to possess or use personal electronic devices such as MP3 players, video or audio recorders, DVD players, cameras, games, e-readers, or other electronic devices at school, unless prior permission has been obtained. 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** and policy FNF.]

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The district is not 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 **Graduation** and **Standardized Testing**.]

### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS (All Grade Levels)**

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

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

Eligibility for initial and continuing participation in many of these activities is governed by state law and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL)—a statewide association overseeing interdistrict competition. If a student is involved in an academic, athletic, or music activity governed by UIL, the student and parent are expected to know and follow all rules of the UIL organization. Students involved in UIL athletic activities and their parents can access the UIL Parent Information Manual at <https://www.uil texas.org/athletics/manuals>; a hard copy can be provided by the coach or sponsor of the activity on request. To report a complaint of alleged noncompliance with required safety training or an alleged violation of safety rules required by law and the UIL, please contact the curriculum division of TEA at (512) 463-9581 or [curriculum@tea.state.tx.us](mailto:curriculum@tea.state.tx.us).

[See <http://www.uil texas.org> for additional information on all UIL-governed activities.]

In addition, the following provisions 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 language other than English—may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.
- A student who receives special education services and 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 but may not participate in any competitive activity.
- A student is allowed in a school year up to 10 absences not related to post-district competition, a maximum of 4 absences for post-district competition prior to state, and a maximum of 2 absences for state competition. All extracurricular activities and public performances, whether UIL activities or other activities approved by the board, are subject to these restrictions.
- An absence for participation in an activity that has not been approved will receive an unexcused absence.
- Students must meet the following eligibility criterion at the beginning of each school year:
  - Grades 6–9 - Must have been regularly promoted from previous grade. Must have overall average of 70 and grades of 70 or higher in three of four core subjects of English, math, science, and social studies to be regularly promoted.
  - H.S. 2nd year – Must have earned at least 6 credits
  - H.S. 3rd year – Must have earned at least 12 credits.
  - H.S. 4th year – Must have earned at least 18 credits.

### **Standards of Behavior**

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

To be considered for an elected honor, a student must be regularly enrolled as a student in the school. Students holding positions of honor and who are determined to have engaged in serious misconduct may be removed from the position of honor.

### **FEES (All Grade Levels)**

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

- Costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities.
- Security deposits.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.

- Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance.
- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance, when uniforms are provided by the district.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Parking fees and student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Fees for driver training courses, if offered.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that require use of facilities not available on district premises.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A fee not to exceed \$50 for costs of providing an educational program outside of regular school hours for a student who has lost credit or has not been awarded a final grade because of absences 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 principal. [For further information, see policy FP.]

## **FUNDRAISING**

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fundraising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the principal at the beginning of the semester. [For further information, see policies 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 1,000 feet of any district-owned or leased property or campus playground.

## **GENDER-BASED HARASSMENT**

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

## **GRADE LEVEL CLASSIFICATION**

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

Credits Earned	Classification
6	Grade 10 (Sophomore)
12	Grade 11 (Junior)
18	Grade 12 (Senior)

## **GRADING GUIDELINES (All Grade Levels)**

Grading guidelines for each grade level or course will be communicated and distributed by the classroom teacher. These guidelines have been reviewed by the district curriculum department and approved by the campus principal. They establish how each student’s mastery of concepts and achievement will be communicated (i.e., letter grades, numerical averages, checklist of required skills, etc.) and how students may qualify to relearn and reassess over content when their first grade indicates non-mastery of critical course content.

### **Grades Pre-K through Five Grade Reporting**

Standards Based report cards will be sent home every six weeks.

### **Grades Six-Twelve Grade Reporting**

The purpose of the grading system (including progress reports and report cards) is to provide accurate and timely information regarding students’ mastery of course standards so that students may continuously improve their academic performance and their understanding of course content. Teachers’ grading practices are designed to provide students with feedback regarding their academic progress so that they will be more aware of what they have learned well and what might require greater effort. Clear feedback helps students identify academic strengths and areas for improvement and promotes students to become more self-directed learners.

During each academic grading period, students will learn new content through a variety of teacher designed experiences. These experiences will include reading, studying and completing assignments as directed by the teacher in class and independently outside of school. Thorough completion of these assignments is expected and is essential for students to be fully prepared to demonstrate their learning on the quizzes, tests, projects, and presentations that are the summative measures of their learning and make up their grades for each course.

Because we know that students learn in different ways and at different rates and because we believe our students strive to do well, our teachers are committed to assisting students who continue to demonstrate improved understanding of difficult course content during a grading period. Students who have invested the necessary effort to meet deadlines and complete any regularly assigned or additional work in a high quality manner, may reassess on a summative assignment to demonstrate their improved learning. Specific processes for reassessment and each students’ readiness to reassess will be determined by the classroom teacher. Students who do not complete work according to deadlines established by the teacher will not fully benefit from course instruction and may be subject to academic and behavioral interventions.

In each course, students will be graded on a numerical scale with 100 being the highest grade. A grade of less than 70 is considered failing. There are two grading periods in the fall semester

and two in the spring. Report cards are issued each grading period. Students in danger of failing will be issued a progress report at the midpoint of each grading period. Parents are encouraged to access to their student's grades and attendance 24/7 via the *Home Access Center* available at [www.dentonisd.org](http://www.dentonisd.org). Parents are also encouraged to request email notifications through the Home Access Center to inform them when their students do not complete an assignment on time or when the grade earned does not meet the minimum passing standard. Instructions for accessing this system will be provided by each campus.

## **GRADUATION**

### **Requirements for a Diploma Beginning with the 2014–15 School Year**

Beginning with students who entered grade 9 in the 2014–15 school year, a student must meet the following requirements to receive a high school diploma from the district:

- Complete the required number of credits established by the state and any additional credits required by the district;
- Achieve passing scores on certain end-of-course (EOC) assessments or approved substitute assessments, unless specifically waived as permitted by state law; and
- Demonstrate proficiency, as determined by the district, in the specific communication skills required by the State Board of Education.

### **Testing Requirements for Graduation**

Students are required, with limited exceptions and regardless of graduation program, 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. State law and state rules also provide for certain scores on norm-referenced national standardized assessments to substitute for the requirement to meet satisfactory performance on an applicable EOC assessment should a student choose this option. See the school counselor for more information on the state testing requirements for graduation.

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.

### **Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Graduation Programs**

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:



- a. A score of three or above on an Advanced Placement (AP) exam;
  - b. A score of four or above on an International Baccalaureate (IB) exam; or
  - c. 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.
3. 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.

### **Foundation Graduation Program**

Every student in a Texas public school who entered grade 9 in the 2014–15 school year and thereafter will graduate under a new program called the “foundation graduation program.” Within the foundation graduation program are “endorsements,” which are paths of interest that include Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM); Business and Industry; Public Services; Arts and Humanities; and Multidisciplinary Studies. Endorsements earned by a student will be noted on the student’s transcript and diploma. The foundation graduation program also involves the term “distinguished level of achievement,” which reflects the completion of at least one endorsement and Algebra II as one of the required advanced mathematics credits. A personal graduation plan will be completed for each high school student. State law and rules prohibit a student from graduating solely under the foundation graduation program without an endorsement unless, after the student’s sophomore year, the student and student’s parent are advised of the specific benefits of graduating with an endorsement and submit written permission to the school counselor for the student to graduate without an endorsement. A student who anticipates graduating under the foundation graduation program without an endorsement and who wishes to attend a four-year university or college after graduation must carefully consider whether this will satisfy the admission requirements of the student’s desired college or university.

Graduating under the foundation graduation program will also provide opportunities to earn “performance acknowledgments” that will be acknowledged on a student’s diploma and transcript. Performance acknowledgments are available for outstanding performance in bilingualism and biliteracy; in a dual credit course; on an AP or IB exam; on the PSAT, ACT-Aspire, SAT, or ACT exam, which are national exams; or for earning a nationally or internationally recognized license or certificate. The criteria for earning these performance acknowledgments are prescribed by state rules, and the school counselor can provide more information about these acknowledgments.

### ***Personal Graduation Plans***

A personal graduation plan will be developed for each high school student. The district

encourages all students to pursue a personal graduation plan that includes the completion of at least one endorsement and to graduate with the distinguished level of achievement. Attainment of the distinguished level of achievement entitles a student to be considered for automatic admission to a public four year college or university in Texas, depending on his or her rank in class. The school will review personal graduation plan options with each student entering grade 9 and his or her parent. Before the end of grade 9, a student and his or her parent will be required to sign off on a personal graduation plan that includes a course of study that promotes college and workforce readiness and career placement and advancement, as well as facilitates the transition from secondary to postsecondary education. The student's personal graduation plan will denote an appropriate course sequence based on the student's choice of endorsement.

Please also review TEA's Graduation Toolkit, available here:  
<http://tea.texas.gov/communications/brochures.aspx>.

A student may, with parental permission, amend his or her personal graduation plan after the initial confirmation.

### **Available Course Options for all Graduation Programs**

Information regarding specific courses required or offered in each curriculum area 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 school 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 not be issued to a student who has successfully completed state and local credit requirements for graduation but has not yet demonstrated satisfactory performance on the state-mandated tests required for graduation.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Upon the recommendation of the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee, a student with a disability who receives special education services may be permitted to graduate under the provisions of his or her IEP and in accordance with state rules.

A student who receives special education services and has completed four years of high school, but has not met the requirements of his or her IEP, may participate in graduation ceremonies and receive a certificate of attendance. Even if the student participates in graduation ceremonies to receive the certificate of attendance, he or she may remain enrolled to complete the IEP and earn his or her high school diploma; however, the student will only be allowed to participate in one graduation ceremony. [See policy FMH(LEGAL).]

ARD committees for students with disabilities who receive special education services will make instructional and assessment decisions for these students in accordance with state law

and rules. In order to earn an endorsement under the foundation program, a student must perform satisfactorily on the EOC assessments and receive no modified curriculum in the student's chosen endorsement area.

### **Graduation Activities**

Students who have met coursework requirements for graduation but have not yet demonstrated satisfactory performance on end-of-course assessments will be allowed to participate in graduation activities. However, please keep in mind that participating in the activities and ceremonies is not synonymous with graduating. Ultimately, the final awarding of a diploma will be contingent upon the student's completion of all applicable requirements for graduation.

### **Graduation Speakers**

Certain graduating students will be given an opportunity to have speaking roles at graduation ceremonies. A student must meet local eligibility criteria, which may include requirements related to student conduct, to have a speaking role. Only those students who are identified by FNA (LOCAL) will be 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 for speaking roles 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, the students who have attained special positions of honor based on neutral criteria as identified by FNA (LOCAL)] may also have speaking roles at the graduation ceremony. [See FNA (LOCAL) and the Student Code of Conduct.]

### **Graduation Expenses**

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

### **Scholarships and Grants**

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

## **HARASSMENT**

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

## **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.

## **HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS**

Licensed nurses provide many health services for DISD students including:

- Emergency first aid, safety awareness & accident prevention
- Assessment of individual health concerns, with appropriate nursing intervention and referral
- Vision screening, hearing screening, risk assessment for diabetes type 2, and spinal screening required by the state
- Serving as a health resource for students, parents, and staff, including health counseling individually and classroom education program

In the event of injury or illness at school, the campus nurse, campus principal or designee will be responsible for following emergency procedures established by the District.

### **Bacterial Meningitis**

State law requires the district to provide information about bacterial meningitis:

- **What is meningitis?**  
Meningitis is an inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by viruses, parasites, fungi, and bacteria. Viral meningitis is common and most people recover fully. Parasitic and fungal meningitis are very rare. Bacterial meningitis is very serious and may involve complicated medical, surgical, pharmaceutical, and life support management.
- **What are the symptoms?**  
Someone with meningitis will become very ill. The illness may develop over one or two days, but it can also rapidly progress in a matter of hours. Not everyone with meningitis will have the same symptoms.  
Children (over 2 years old) and adults with bacterial meningitis commonly have a severe headache, high fever, and neck stiffness. Other symptoms might include nausea, vomiting, discomfort looking into bright lights, confusion, and sleepiness. In both

children and adults, there may be a rash of tiny, red-purple spots. These can occur anywhere on the body. The diagnosis of bacterial meningitis is based on a combination of symptoms and laboratory results.

- **How serious is bacterial meningitis?**

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

- **How is bacterial meningitis spread?**

Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as diseases like the common cold or the flu, and they are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been. They are spread when people exchange respiratory or throat secretions (such as by kissing, coughing, or sneezing). The germ does not cause meningitis in most people. Instead, most people become carriers of the germ for days, weeks, or even months. The bacteria rarely overcome the body's immune system and cause meningitis or another serious illness.

- **How can bacterial meningitis be prevented?**

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

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

- **Where can you get more information?**

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 websites 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>.

\* Note: DSHS requires at least one meningococcal vaccination on or after the student's 11th birthday, unless the student received the vaccine at age 10. 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.

### **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 the school nurse suspects that a student may have a contagious disease based on signs or symptoms the student has, (s)he will exclude the student from attendance until all suspicious symptoms are gone, or the child's physician documents that the child may return to school. If a parent suspects that his or her child has a contagious disease, the parent should keep the child home, consult with the child's physician, and contact the school nurse or principal so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted if a confirmed diagnosis is made.

DISD follows guidelines from the Texas Department of Health Services and all information regarding exclusion from school may be found on the DISD health services webpage.

### **First Aid/School Exclusion for Health Reasons**

In case of serious illness or injury:

1. A parent will be called at once. It is critical that school officials have the names and the current home, work, and cell phone numbers for all parents and guardians. Students must be excluded from school according to state law for signs and symptoms associated with certain contagious diseases. The campus registered nurse will make that decision based on his/her assessment and observation of those signs and symptoms.
2. If neither parent can be reached, an emergency contact will be made. Please make sure the school has the phone number of your doctor and three other names and phone numbers of neighbors or relatives who have agreed to be contacted.
3. If neither parent nor emergency contacts can be reached, the student will be taken by ambulance to the emergency room written on the health card. The nurse or someone designated by the principal will stay with the student until a responsible adult arrives to be with the student. The parent is responsible for incurred costs.
4. A student may not leave school or be taken home by any school personnel unless an adult has been contacted or will be at home to receive the student. Any exception to this policy will be approved by the principal. School nurses cannot provide transportation.

### **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 by contacting your campus nurse. [Also see policy FFAF and **Celebrations.**]

### **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. After the student has undergone one treatment, the parent should check in with the school nurse to ensure treatment has been effective. More information on head lice can be obtained from the TDSHS website at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/lice.shtm>. Notice will also be provided to parents of elementary school students in the affected classroom.

### **Immunizations**

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, the district can honor only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS), Immunization Branch. 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/default.aspx>. The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or school nurse within 90 days of notarization. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required are: diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis; rubeola (measles), mumps, and rubella; polio; hepatitis A; hepatitis B; varicella (chicken pox); and meningococcal. The school nurse can provide information on age-appropriate doses or on an acceptable physician-validated history of illness required by the TDSHS. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

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

As noted in **Bacterial Meningitis**, students who are entering college must also, with limited exception, furnish evidence of having received a bacterial meningitis vaccination within the five

years prior to enrolling in and attending classes at an institution of higher education. A student wanting to enroll in a dual credit course taken off campus may be subject to this requirement. [For further information, see policy FFAB (LEGAL) and the TDSHS website: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/default.shtm>.]

### **Mental Health Intervention/Suicide Prevention**

The district has implemented a program for early mental health intervention and suicide prevention for all students that include training campus staff on early warning signs and the possible need for intervention. If you are concerned about your child or have concerns for friends or associates of your child, you may contact your campus counselor for information related to suicide prevention and other mental health services in your area. The campus counselor is designated as the campus liaison for mental health intervention and suicide prevention services. When s/he receives a report that a student is possibly in need of mental health intervention or at risk of committing suicide, s/he shall notify the student's parent and provide information about available community-based counseling options. S/he is also required to report the concern to the District's Mental Health Services Liaison.

### **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 full-day prekindergarten through grade 5 engage in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day or 135 minutes per week. Students in middle or junior high school will engage in 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity per day for at least four semesters OR at least 225 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity within each two-week period for at least four semesters.

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.

### **Physical Fitness Assessment**

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

### **Psychotropic Drugs**

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. 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.

### **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)**

Parents are encouraged to participate in this district advisory committee. The duties of the



SHAC range from recommending curriculum to developing strategies for integrating curriculum into a coordinated school health program encompassing issues such as school health services, counseling services, a safe and healthy school environment, recess recommendations, improving student fitness, mental health concerns, and employee wellness. Additional information is available at [www.dentonisd.org](http://www.dentonisd.org). See policies at BDF and EHAA.

### **Student Health and Safety — When Behavior is a Concern**

When a student displays behaviors of concern in the school environment, it is the responsibility of Denton ISD to ascertain the nature of the behavior as quickly and objectively as possible, especially in the situation where students may be getting behind the wheel to drive or operating other machinery. There are many reasons why a student might be behaving in an “untoward” manner – lack of sleep, effects of prescription medicine, emotional issues, mental illness, substance abuse or low blood sugar to name a few. Any of these reasons could cause that student and others to be in an unsafe situation if not acknowledged and addressed appropriately.

### **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.

### **Substance Abuse Prevention**

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 website: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/mhsa-child-adolescent-services/>.

### **Tobacco Prohibited**

Students are prohibited from possessing or using any type of tobacco product, including electronic cigarettes or any other electronic vaporizing device, while on school property at any time or while attending an off campus school-related activity. The district and its staff strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of all tobacco products, including electronic cigarettes or any other electronic vaporizing device, 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.]

### **Vending Machines**

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

### **Asbestos Management Plan**

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. A copy of the district's Asbestos Management Plan is available in at each district facility. If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please call the district's designated asbestos coordinator at (940) 369-0200.

### **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. 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 may contact the district's IPM coordinator, at (940) 369- 0200.

### **HOMELESS STUDENTS**

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's homeless education liaison at (940) 369-0000

### **HOMEWORK**

Homework may be any preparation, work, or activity that a pupil does on non-school time as requested by the teacher or with teacher consent. This definition is broad in meaning to allow

for many different types of homework assignments. Homework may include the following categories:

- library research;
- make-up work when absent;
- limited remedial work;
- special reports and long-range study assignments;
- drill on basic skills;
- collections or “show and tell” materials;
- guided and recreational reading;
- creative writing;
- recommended TV programs, movies, plays;
- use of community resources; and
- unfinished work assigned in class.

## **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 a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision.
- By a 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 taken into custody, arrested, or referred to the juvenile court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors.
- All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a student who is thought to have committed certain offenses or who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors.
- All appropriate district personnel in regards to a student who is required to register as a sex offender.

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

### **School Resource Officer**

Secondary campuses are staffed with a School Resource Officer (SRO). School Resource Officers are police officers licensed by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLEOSE) assigned to the schools in the Denton Independent School District. Each officer is a direct, full-time, employee of his or her respective Departments. As certified police officers they have arrest powers endorsed by the State of Texas and are authorized to use the force necessary to effect arrests and protect third parties and themselves. They may be authorized by their department to carry the following equipment: firearms, Oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray, impact batons, Tasers, handcuffs, and portable radios and body cameras.

School Resource Officers are responsible for promoting a safe environment for students, faculty and staff, reducing criminal offenses committed by juveniles and young adults by diversion or detention/arrest, and establishing rapport with students, faculty, administrative staff and parents.

### **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.

### **English Language Learners (All Grade Levels)**

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

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 that the student will require to eventually become proficient at grade level work in English. Ongoing assessments will be conducted to determine a student's continued eligibility for the program.

The LPAC will also determine whether certain accommodations are necessary for any state-mandated assessments. The STAAR Spanish, as mentioned at **Standardized Testing**, may be administered to an English language learner for a student up to grade 5. In limited circumstances, a student's LPAC may exempt the student from an otherwise required state-mandated assessment or may waive certain graduation requirements related to the English I end-of-course (EOC) assessment. The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) will also be administered to English language learners who qualify for services. If a student is considered an English language learner and receives special education services because of a qualifying disability, the student's ARD committee will make instructional and assessment decisions in conjunction with the LPAC.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

A "lost and found" collection area is located at each campus. 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 is not 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**

For any class missed, the teacher may assign the student makeup work 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 and within the time specified by the teacher.

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."

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.

## **DAEP Makeup Work**

### ***Elementary and Middle School Grade Levels Grades 9–12***

A high school 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, another distance learning option, 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 (ISS) Makeup Work (All Grade Levels)**

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, another distance learning option, 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 (All Grade Levels)**

Our medication policies are written with safety in mind and to help students become more self-responsible as they get older. Although following them may be inconvenient at times, we feel strongly that safe administration is important. Please discuss any medication concerns with the campus RN, and make sure that the student health card reflects all medications your child is taking at home as well as during the school day. This information will help the school nurse monitor effectively for any side effects, any adverse reactions, and that the medicines are working to benefit your child as prescribed. No district employee shall give any student prescription medication, non-prescription medications, herbal substances, anabolic steroids, or dietary supplements of any type, except as provided below.

- All medicines, including prescription, over-the-counter, self-administered, or those requiring administration by another party, brought to district campuses (including school activities) must be in the original, properly-labeled container, with the student's name, prescribed dosage, and dosing instructions.
- Students may not share medicine with another student under any circumstance. Violations shall be subject to consequences in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and discipline management program.
- Dietary/herbal supplements are not regulated by the FDA to ensure quality standards, nor have they been tested for safety or effectiveness on school-aged children. This includes herbal and dietary supplements of any type, anabolic steroids, vitamins, weight reduction or enhancement supplements, muscle-building and performance-enhancing aids; these

are not considered essential during school hours or school activities and will not be allowed unless administered by a parent.

Exceptions to this policy are rare. No exceptions can be made unless a discussion with the student's doctor, parents, and school nurse occurs, the request is made in writing, and it is required by the Individual Education Plan or Section 504 Plan of a student with disabilities.

In our district, the school RN usually administers medication at elementary and middle school levels (See more information below for high school students). There are times at campuses when school employees other than the school nurse may administer medication; in those circumstances the nurse will provide training to school personnel who are assigned to administer medications in order to ensure safe administration and accurate dosage. Non-nursing school staff may be assigned to administer medications:

- When the campus nurse is not available or states that he or she is unable to do so safely. [See DG (LEGAL)] or in accordance with the Texas Nurse Practice Act.
- When a student suffers from a life-threatening condition, including, but not limited to, diabetes (hyperglycemia or hypoglycemia) and/or severe allergies (anaphylaxis).
- When a student is unable to go to the health room for his or her medication without experiencing discomfort or a significant loss of instructional time, provided it is agreed upon by the parent and/or included in the student's individualized health plan (IHP).

### **Elementary Medications**

When a parent or guardian is unable to administer required medication, he or she may make arrangements with the nurse to administer the medication. The parent shall be responsible for bringing the medication to school and picking it up at the end of the school year. Medication shall not be given unless it is in the original, properly marked container and the names and dosages on the labels of medicine containers and parent request forms match. Any change in the medication prescription shall require a newly-labeled container that reflects the change.

All prescription medications administered at elementary school by school personnel shall be accompanied by a doctor's order. Medication shall not be administered at school unless it is essential to the health of the child and/or the student's ability to function successfully in the classroom.

Elementary students may carry diabetic testing supplies and inhalers, and they may self-administer prescription medication for asthma and/or anaphylaxis under certain circumstances. An elementary student may carry no other medications. Medication not picked up by parents at the end of the school year shall be discarded after parent notification.



## **Secondary Medications**

To promote a safe and healthy school environment, and to support our “drug-free” philosophy, we want to minimize as much as possible the amount of medicine brought to secondary campuses each day. We also want to help our secondary students become more responsible for self-care and healthy decision-making as they get older. Our policy is designed to accomplish those things, and allows secondary students to bring/take only those medicines that are essential to their health and ability to function well and safely at school.

Secondary students may, with their parent’s permission, carry small amounts (limited to a week’s supply) of over the counter medication such as ibuprofen, aspirin, and acetaminophen and self-administer according to the directions on the container. The container must be the original container and be labeled with the student’s name.

## **Middle School Medications**

Middle school students are required to come to the health room for administration of prescription medications; however, with doctor’s orders they may carry and self-administer inhalers, self-care supplies for type 1 diabetes and/or medication for anaphylaxis. Parents may request (on the Medication Administration Request form) that non-prescription medication be stored and administered by the school nurse if the parent does not want the student to carry the medication with him/her. At the middle school level, non-prescription medication may be administered by the nurse without a physician’s order according to label directions.

## **High School Medications**

High school students will carry and self-administer their own prescription and non-prescription medications. They may carry only the day’s dose; it must be in the original, properly labeled container and administered according to label directions.

High school nurses do not administer or routinely store student medications. It is important for students at this age to begin to learn to manage their own medications in preparation for that responsibility after graduation. Should a student need assistance with managing his/her medications, please contact the school nurse.

Students whose schedules provide for regular time spent outdoors, including for recess and physical education classes, should apply sunscreen before coming to school. For students at the elementary level, the student’s teacher or other district personnel will apply sunscreen to a student’s exposed skin if the student brings the sunscreen to school and requests assistance with the application of the sunscreen. Nothing prohibits a student at this level from applying his or her own sunscreen if the student is capable of doing so. For students at the secondary level, a student may possess and apply sunscreen when necessary. If the student will need assistance with this application, please address the need for assistance with the school nurse.

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. 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 for information. [See policy FFAF (LEGAL).]

## **PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT (All grade levels)**

### **Working Together**

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

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the school counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Reviewing the requirements and options for graduation with your child in middle school and again while your child is enrolled in high school.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed.
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, school counselor, or principal, please call the school office for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school.
- Becoming a school volunteer. [For further information, see policy GKG and Volunteers.]
- Participating in campus parent organizations.
- 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.

- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction and other wellness issues. [See policies at BDF, EHAA, FFA, and information in this handbook at School Health Advisory Council.]
- 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.]

### **Parent Involvement Coordinator**

The Parent Involvement Coordinator, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs may be contacted through the campus principals.

## **PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS / HEALTH SCREENINGS**

### **Athletics’ Participation**

A student who wishes to participate in, or continue participation in, the district’s athletics program governed by the UIL must submit certification from a health-care provider authorized under UIL rules that the student has been examined and is physically able to participate in the athletic program.

This examination is required in the first year of middle school competition and the first and third years of high school competition. During the alternate years, the student must complete a medical appraisal form, and the results of this appraisal may prompt the district to require a physical examination.

### **Other Exams and Screenings**

Students are required to undergo a risk assessment for type 2 diabetes at the same time the district screens students for hearing and vision issues, or for abnormal spinal curvatures.

[Also see policy FFAA.]

## **PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE (All Grade Levels)**

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.

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

## **PRAYER**

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.

### **Elementary and Middle Grade Levels**

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.

In grades 6-8, mastery of course standards shall be determined as follows:

- Course assignments and unit evaluation shall be given to determine student grades in a subject. An average of 70 or higher shall be considered a passing grade.
- Mastery of the skills necessary for success at the next level shall be validated by assessments that may either be incorporated into unit, grading period, and final exams, or may be administered separately. Mastery of at least 70 percent of the objectives shall be required.

Students in grades 6-8 must have an overall average of 70 or above and have grades of 70 or above in three of the four core subjects of English (including reading), math, science, and social studies in order to be promoted to the next grade.

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.

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 policy EIE.]

If a student in grade 5 or 8 is enrolled in a course that earns high school credit and for which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment will be administered, the student will not be subject to the promotion requirements described above for the relevant grade 5 or 8 assessments. However, for federal accountability purposes, the student may be required to take both the grade level assessment and EOC assessment.

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

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

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

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

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

A Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) will be prepared for any student at the middle school level 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 school counselor, teacher, or other staff member designated by the principal. The plan will, among other items, identify the student's educational goals, address the parent's educational expectations for the student, and outline an intensive instruction program for the student.

## High School Grade Levels

To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards.

A student in grades 9–12 will be advanced a grade level based on the number of course credits earned. Students in grades 9-12 must accumulate a specified number of credits to be classified in the next higher grade as indicated below:

10th Grade.....	6 Credits
11th Grade.....	12 Credits
12th Grade.....	18 Credits
Graduate.....	26 Credits

Students are usually re-classified at the beginning of each school year. The principal has the final authority to determine grade placement and reclassification. In extreme circumstances, students may be reclassified at mid-term. 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.

Students will also have multiple opportunities to retake EOC assessments.

## 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 grading period.

At the end of the first three weeks of a six-weeks grading period or at the midpoint of a nine-weeks 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. [See **Working Together** for how to schedule a conference.]

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the principal pursuant to the board-adopted policy and are designed to reflect each student’s relative mastery of each assignment 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.

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 returned to the school within 3 days.

## **SAFETY**

Denton ISD takes the responsibility for student safety very seriously. Campus administrators are required to conduct safety drills including building and site evacuations, shelters in place, duck and cover exercises, lockdowns, and reverse evacuations for many different situations including fires, weather emergencies, intruders on campus, etc. The district's Emergency Operations Plan is developed with city and county emergency planners and responders, and is reviewed annually.

For a variety of safety and logistical reasons, it is not the practice in Denton ISD to have late starts to the school day or unscheduled early closings due to emergency or weather-related events. Parents may, however, choose to pick up their children from school at any time during a critical event, as long as usual safety procedures are followed and immediate access does not compromise overall campus or individual student safety.

In an event when an emergency or weather-related circumstance causes the need for an early dismissal, the district shall inform families whose children receive district transportation of any changes in those measures through email. Announcements will also be made through the district website and through social media channels. Families are also highly encouraged to register for additional efforts provided by their respective campus(es) to contact them as Denton ISD will only use district-wide communication measures if an emergency or weather-related event affects all of the district's students.

For emergency situations affecting only an individual student or family, the impacted student's family will attempt to contact authorized parents or guardians first. If an authorized parent or guardian cannot be reached, the campus will attempt to reach any authorized persons as listed by the parent or guardian during the registration process. Families are welcome to add additional authorized persons as emergency contacts at their respective campus(es) at any time, but must do so in person for security reasons.

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

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or others at risk.
- Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, 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**

The school district is not liable for costs associated with accidents or injuries at school. Information about low-cost student accident insurance that could help meet medical expenses in the event of injury is available at [www.dentonisd.org](http://www.dentonisd.org).

## **Preparedness Drills: Evacuation, Severe Weather, and Other Emergencies**

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

## **Emergency Medical Treatment and Information**

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school may have to rely on previously provided written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment, and information about allergies to medications, foods, insect bites, etc. Therefore, 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**

Each year, parents are asked to complete an emergency release form to provide contact information in the event that school is dismissed early or opening is delayed because of severe weather or another emergency, or if the campus must restrict access due to a security threat.

If the campus must close, delay opening, or restrict access to the building because of an emergency, the district will alert the community in the following ways: Radio Stations: WBAP 820, KRLD 1080, KNTU 88.1, and TV Channels 4, 5, 8, and 11. This information can also be found at the district's website, [www.dentonisd.org](http://www.dentonisd.org). Parents are also encouraged to sign up online to receive automated emails and phone alerts. Calling the schools could result in unnecessary delays. Please do not leave children at the bus stops if there is a possibility that schools will close. Make-up days for inclement weather have been included in the school calendar.

## **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. Unless the teacher or sponsor overseeing an activity gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the building or campus.

After dismissal of school in the afternoon, unless a student is involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher or other authorized employee or adult, or unless students are



granted permission to remain on campus in accordance with policy FNAB, students must leave campus immediately.

### **Conduct Before and After School**

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. These activities include: 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. They 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.

### **Elementary Student Day**

7:40 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. ....Kindergarten through Grade Five

7:40 A.M. - 11:20 A.M. ....Morning Pre-Kindergarten

11:20 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. ....Afternoon Pre-Kindergarten

Students must be picked up at 3:00 P.M. If you want to pick up your child who rides the bus, please call before 2:00 P.M. If you are not there by 3:00 P.M., dismissal time, your child may get on the bus.

Morning pre-kindergarten students must be picked up at 11:20 A.M. dismissal time. Adults will not be available to supervise them after 11:30 A.M. Afternoon pre-kindergarten students must not arrive before 11:20 A.M.

### **Secondary Student Day**

8:15 a.m. - 3:35 p.m..... Middle Schools

8:50 a.m. - 4:10 p.m..... High Schools

Students should not arrive at school before 8:00 a.m. No adult will be there before that time to supervise them. Breakfast will be available for students at 8:00 a.m. at Middle Schools and at 8:25 a.m. at High Schools.

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

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

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

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

## **SEARCHES**

In the interest of promoting student safety and attempting to ensure that schools are safe and drug free, district officials may from time to time conduct searches. Such searches are conducted without a warrant and as permitted by law. School officials may search a student's outer clothing, pockets, or property by establishing reasonable cause or securing the student's voluntary consent. Searches will be conducted out of view of other students. A person of the same gender will conduct the search with a witness present in the room at all times. Administrators and teachers have the right to question students regarding their conduct or the conduct of others outside of the presence of parents.

### **Students' Desks and Lockers**

Students' desks and lockers and cubicles 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 and cubicles. Students must be certain that their lockers are locked, and that the combinations are not available to others.

Searches of desks or lockers may be conducted at any time there is reasonable suspicion to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by policy, whether or not a student is present. Students are responsible for any prohibited items found in their lockers, desks, cubicles, or vehicles parked on school property.

A parent will be notified if any prohibited items are found in a student's desk, locker, cubicle, or vehicle.

### **Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices (All Grade Levels)**

Use of district-owned equipment and its network systems is not private and will be monitored by the district.

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.

### **Vehicles on Campus (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

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

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

## **Trained Dogs**

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 (All Grade Levels)**

The District employs both walk-through and hand-held metal detectors at the District's secondary schools. The purpose of these devices is to provide for a higher level of safety for students and staff. Walk-through detectors are used regularly on a random basis throughout the year. The hand held detectors are used after an alert is sounded by the walk-through device to pinpoint the location of the item that is triggering the detector.

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, homeless students, students in foster care, bilingual students, migrant students, students with limited English proficiency or who are English language learners, students diagnosed with dyslexia, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact the coordinators of these programs at (940) 369- 0000.

## **Bilingual/ESL**

BIL/ESL is a program to ensure that all English Language Learners (ELLs) have the opportunity to acquire and develop competency in the English language through a Bilingual or ESL program, which will empower them to be successful in their content area courses and post-secondary studies, valuing each student's rich cultural heritage and language background.

Districts will report annually to parents the progress of their child as a result of participation in the program offered to English Language Learners in English and the home language. Parents will receive information on their child's progress on language proficiency and academic performance. For more information, contact the DISD Director of Bilingual/ESL Programs at 940-369-0590.

## **Communities in Schools**

Communities in Schools of North Texas is administered by the Texas Education Agency and is part of an innovative national approach to dropout prevention. Daytime mentoring and social service support programs through CISNT. CISNT programs offer services through six components: supportive guidance and counseling; health and human services; parental and family involvement; career awareness and employment; enrichment activities and educational enhancement. For more information about Communities in Schools, North Texas visit. [www.cisnt.org](http://www.cisnt.org).

## **Two-Way Dual Language**

The district offers a two-way dual language model, which serves two distinct groups of students in one instructional setting; half English monolingual speakers and half Spanish speakers. Student instruction is delivered 50% in English and 50% in Spanish starting in kindergarten and adding a grade level each year through at least the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Currently, Woodrow Wilson offers this model K-5 and Pecan Creek K-3. The goal of the two-way dual language model is for students to become bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural in this global society.

## **Dyslexia Program**

Dyslexia is a specific language-based disorder of constitutional origin characterized by difficulties in single-word decoding, usually reflecting insufficient phonological processing. These difficulties in single-word decoding are often unexpected in relation to the child's age and other cognitive and academic abilities. Dyslexia is manifested by variable difficulty with different forms of language, problems in reading, and frequently a lack of proficiency in writing and spelling.

The Denton Independent School District offers dyslexia services in English to students in grades 2-8 and in Spanish in grades 2-5 who meet the eligibility criteria. The Alphabetic Phonics program, which uses multi-sensory techniques to teach the structure of the English or Spanish language, is the intervention model. The small-group instruction is intensive, systematic, sequential and cumulative.

Program instructional components include, but are not limited to:

- Phonological Awareness
- History of the English Language
- Alphabet/Dictionary
- Automaticity of grapheme and phoneme recognition
- Discovery of new graphemes/concepts
- Reading/Reading Comprehension/Fluency
- Spelling
- Handwriting
- Verbal/Written expression
- Listening

Students in the dyslexia program will be given support and appropriate modifications in order to be successful in their academic programs.

## **EXPO Program for Gifted and Talented Students**

A special program is provided for academically talented students in all grades who have demonstrated EXceptional POtential. Teachers who have received extensive training, work with the students in developing higher level thinking skills and creative problem solving abilities. Referrals may come from faculty/staff, parents, community members, or at the

secondary level, by self-referral. Please refer to the EXPO website for referring and testing windows. Persons referring students must complete a general Referral Form and submit it to the school office. Go to <http://www.dentonisd.org/expo> for more information.

### **Read 180**

READ 180 is an intensive reading intervention program that uses whole-group direct instruction and small-group direct instruction. In addition, READ 180 software uses an independent reading and whole-group wrap-up to serve students whose reading achievement is below the proficient level. The program directly addresses individual needs through adaptive and instructional software, high interest literature, and direct instruction in reading, writing, and vocabulary skills.

The READ 180 Software continually adjusts the level of instruction based on student performance. Diagnostic reports and periodic checkpoints alert teachers to students' needs and direct them to resources for individualizing instruction. This program serves reluctant and struggling readers in grades 6 through 12, as identified by the campus.

### **Reading Recovery/Descubriendo La Lectura (DLL)**

Denton ISD offers a short-term intervention for English-speaking or Spanish-speaking first graders who are struggling with the acquisition of literacy skills. In Reading Recovery and Descubriendo La Lectura, individual students receive a half-hour lesson each school day for 12 to 20 weeks with a specially trained Reading Recovery/DLL teacher. As soon as students reach grade-level literacy expectations and demonstrate that they can continue to learn through their own efforts, their lessons are discontinued, and new students begin individual instruction. The Reading Recovery/DLL teacher also works with small groups of kindergarten, first and second grade students needing supplemental literacy instruction.

### **Reading and Math Intervention – Grades 3-5**

Reading and Math intervention will be provided for students performing below proficient levels in grades 3-5. Scientifically based research methods will be utilized to provide fast-paced lessons to help students accelerate their academic growth.

### **Section 504**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that the Denton Independent School District not discriminate on the basis of handicap in any District program or activity. The District will identify, evaluate and provide appropriate public education to students who are handicapped under Section 504, including homeless children. For additional information about the rights of parents of eligible children or for answers to any questions you might have about identification, evaluation and placement into Section 504 program, please contact the Denton ISD Section 504 school liaison at 940-369- 0000, or the school campus most near you.

## **Special Education**

The district offers a continuum of Special Education services for students with disabilities. Please contact your school principal to learn about the district's overall general education referral process and screening system for support services. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other support services that are available to all 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 evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within 60 calendar days from the date the district receives written consent. The district must discuss the findings of the evaluation with the parent/ guardian. After the discussion, the district will then provide a copy of the report to the parent.

### ***Child Find Procedures***

Denton ISD is required to implement a comprehensive Child Find Process in which district personnel actively search for all individuals, birth through 21 years of age with disabilities [32 CFR §300.111(a-c), and §300.131(b); 300§534]; [19 TAC §89.1011].

The Child Find process is to identify, locate and evaluate all children with disabilities who are in need of special education and related services who reside within the school district's boundaries.

Denton ISD offers a comprehensive system of "Child Find" for identifying, locating, and evaluating all individuals ages birth through 21. The Denton ISD Child Find process seeks to identify all individuals who fall within the district's jurisdiction regardless of whether they may or may not be in school and severity of the disability. As is required by law, Child Find activities apply to high mobility children with disabilities, such as children who are migrant or homeless, and to children who are suspected of having a disability although they are advancing from grade to grade.

Denton ISD promotes "Child Find" through public awareness activities and through ongoing contact with childcare facilities, preschools, private schools, parochial schools, home schools and nursing homes when applicable. These activities are comparable to the "Child Find" activities utilized to identify children with disabilities who are in public school. Denton ISD consults with representatives from private schools and other agencies to determine how to best carry out these activities.

If you determine that you are knowledgeable about an individual who may need special education or related services and that individual is between the ages of birth and 21 years, please contact Denton ISD special education services at 940-369-4099, or the school campus most near you.

## **Student Tutorial Program**

The district offers tutoring services for any student not meeting grade level academic standards or earning less than 75 on the report card in integrated language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies. A student may also receive tutoring if the regular school work has been changed to meet individual needs. This is a program where students may choose to receive extra help at least twice a week. A notice will be enclosed in the report card if a student qualifies for the tutorial program for the next grading period. Each school will provide more information.

## **Summer School**

The district offers several summer programs for elementary students. Summer school will be offered for students not meeting the specified requirements on the STAAR. A special four-week, full-day bilingual/ESL program is available for students who are entering kindergarten and first grade. Notes will be sent home in May about summer school registration. Please call the school for more information.

In addition, the district also provides summer school opportunities for high school students. A tuition based summer school program is offered to students who are unsuccessful with their course work, or for families who desire additional academic time for their students. Several courses are also offered for credit advancement. For information please contact a high school campus.

High school summer school programs are offered to students in need of credit retrieval and drop-out prevention. In addition, TAKS and STAAR/EOC preparation programs take place to provide students the needed assistance. For additional information, please contact the high school campuses.

## **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

### **Locally Adopted Assessments**

Locally-adopted assessments include the ELI (Early Literary Inventory) and SELI (Spanish Early Literary Inventory) in K through 2, Assessing Math Concepts in K through 2, Scholastic Reading Inventory and a school ability test offered to selected grades also during the fall. The locally- adopted assessments are used to provide data for placement in and evaluation of special programs when the state mandated tests are not appropriate or available. These assessments are given throughout the year and the results are shared with parents after each administration.

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

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

obtained on these assessments from the school counselor.

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

### **TSI (Texas Success Initiative) Assessment**

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

### **STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness)**

#### ***Grades 3–8***

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

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

Successful performance on the reading and math assessments in grades 5 and 8 is required by law, 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.

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

A student's ARD committee for students receiving special education services will determine whether successful performance on the EOC assessments will be required for graduation within the parameters identified in state rules and the student's personal graduation plan.

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

A student’s ARD committee for students receiving special education services will determine whether successful performance on the EOC assessments will be required for graduation within the parameters identified in state rules and the student’s personal graduation plan.

## **STERIODS**

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 IN FOSTER CARE**

In an effort to provide educational stability, the district will assist any student who is currently placed or newly placed in foster care (temporary or permanent custody of the state) 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 foster care 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 the district’s foster care liaison, at (940) 369-0000 with any questions.

## **STUDENT SPEAKERS**

The district provides students the opportunity to introduce a number of school events. If a student meets the eligibility criteria and wishes to introduce a school event, the student should submit his or her name in accordance with policy 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 website: <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.

## **TEXTBOOKS, ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS, TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT, AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS (All Grade Levels)**

Textbooks and other district-approved instructional materials are provided to students free of charge for each subject or class. Any 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 the damage paid for by the parent; however, the student will be provided the necessary instructional resources and equipment for use at school during the school day.

## **TRANSFERS**

The District provides opportunities for students to transfer from one school to another if space is available and all applicable requirements are met. Please view information at [dentonisd.org](http://dentonisd.org) under student transfer information.

Students shall not be eligible to participate in UIL activities in any high school other than the one that serves the area in which the student resides and under the eligibility rules set forth by the UIL.

The first time a new student to the District participates in UIL high school athletic practice or begins classes, the student will establish eligibility in that high school by the location of the student's bona fide residence.

The first time a current District student participates in an eighth grade District-approved

athletic activity, the student will establish his or her athletic eligibility in high school based upon the attendance zone in which the student's residence is located. (Residence as defined by the UIL Constitution and Contest Rules). If a student's residence changes from one attendance zone to another, he or she will be eligible at either high school and shall submit his or her preference of eligibility in writing within 30 calendar days to the principal of the school from which he or she moved.

If a student's residence changes from one attendance zone to another, and he or she has represented another school (8th grade or above) the current or previous year in any UIL athletic activity, he or she is ineligible for one varsity school calendar year during the student's junior or senior year in all sports participated until: 1) the parents have a bona fide residence in the attendance zone; 2) the student's parents sign a statement (in the presence of school officials or a notary) that the parents reside in a bona fide residence within the zone and that the change of schools was not made for athletic purposes; and 3) the student's change is approved by the UIL district executive committee before the student competes at the varsity level. [See the current Edition of the Constitution and Contest Rules of the University Scholastic League]

A student's request to transfer to a safe public school in the District shall be granted in accordance with Policy FDB (Local) if the student is either enrolled in a campus identified by the Texas Education Agency as persistently dangerous or if the student has been a victim of a violent crime while in school or on the grounds of the school the student attends. The transfer to another campus must be agreeable to the parent or other person authorized to act on the student's behalf. If the victim does not want to transfer, the Board or designee is required to transfer the student who engaged in the conduct to a different campus.

Upon request of a parent or other person with authority to act on behalf of a student who is the victim of bullying, the Board's designee shall transfer the victim to another classroom at the campus to which the student was assigned at the time the bullying occurred or a campus in the school district other than the campus to which the student was assigned at the time the bullying occurred after verifying that the student has been a victim of bullying. A student's past behavior may be considered when identifying a bully. The determination of the Board's designee is final and may not be appealed. Transportation of transfer students under this provision is the responsibility of the parent.

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

## **TRANSPORTATION (All Grade Levels)**

### **School-Sponsored Trips**

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

### **Buses and Other School Vehicles**

Transportation by bus is provided for those students living two or more miles from their school (not including transfer students), and by ARD or Section 504 Committee decision, for Special Education or Section 504 students who require transportation as an educational need. All students riding District provided school buses or charters are expected to follow rules posted on the bus or described by teachers. Included in those rules are expectations for behavior as well as expectations regarding items that can be transported.

All items carried on the bus must fit in the student's lap or under the seat. Items such as large gym bags, book bags, or musical instruments must follow those rules and cannot take a seat space from another student. Bus drivers are in charge of student behavior on the bus and their instructions must be followed. Disciplinary action, including temporary or permanent removal from the bus may be taken against any student violating bus rules. To register and determine eligibility for transportation services and secure routing information, contact DISD Transportation at 940-369-0300.

During the Fall of the 2010-2011 school year, Denton ISD Transportation implemented a Bus Student Access Card Program. Students who have registered for bus services will be assigned a Bus Student Access Card. This program allows the DISD Transportation Department to promote student safety and security through the daily monitoring of fleet operations and ridership. The program will provide accurate information as to the location of all school buses & where and what time a student gets-on or off the bus at a bus stop. Students will be required to carry their "*Bus Student Access Card* every time they ride a Denton ISD bus.

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.
- Maintain their assigned *Bus Student Access Card* on their person when boarding or off-loading a district school bus.
- Enter and leave the bus or van in an orderly manner at the designated stop nearest home.
- 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.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the bus or van and before crossing in front of the vehicle.
- Follow any other rules established by the operator of the vehicle

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

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 stops will be designated annually, and any subsequent changes will be posted at the school and on the district's website. For the safety of the operator of the vehicle and all passengers, students must board buses or other vehicles only at authorized stops, and drivers must unload passengers only at authorized stops.

## **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 (All Grade Levels)**

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

The principal will review the video and audio recordings routinely and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Due to federal privacy legislation, parents are not allowed to view video that contains the images of any unrelated students.

## **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL**

### **General Visitors**

Parents and others are welcome to visit district schools. Classroom visits should be scheduled through the principal and teacher at least one day in advance and are typically limited to one class period or 45 minutes in length. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must first report to the main office and must comply with all applicable district policies and procedures. When arriving on campus, all parents and other visitors should be prepared to show identification.

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. Even if the visit is approved prior to the visitor's arrival, the individual must check in at the main office first.

Visits by school-age friends are not allowed and deliveries for students will not be accepted.

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

## **UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS**

In accordance with Education Code 37.105, a school administrator, school resource officer (SRO), or district police officer has the authority to refuse entry or eject a person from district property if the person refuses to leave peaceably on request and:

- The person poses a substantial risk of harm to any person; or
- The person behaves in a manner that is inappropriate for a school setting and the person persists in the behavior after being given a verbal warning that the behavior is inappropriate and may result in refusal of entry or ejection.

Appeals regarding refusal of entry or ejection from district property may be filed in accordance with FNG(LOCAL) or GF(LOCAL).

### **Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students**

As part of our college and career preparation efforts, the district invites representatives from colleges and universities and other higher education institutions, prospective employers, and military recruiters to present information to interested students throughout the year.

### **Business, Civic, and Youth Groups**

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

## **VOLUNTEERS**

We appreciate so much the efforts of parent, grandparent, and community volunteers that are willing to serve our district and students. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact any campus principal or the Public Information and Community Relations director for more information and to complete an application. Comprehensive background checks will be completed before volunteer assignments can be provided.

## **VOTER REGISTRATION**

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

## **WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL**

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 and equipment clearance; to the librarian to ensure a clear library record; to the clinic for health records; to the school 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 and/or as a result of a student not meeting the passing standard on a state-mandated assessment.

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

**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 and his or her parents are members of the committee.

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

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

**EOC assessments** are end-of-course tests, which are state-mandated, and are part of the STAAR program. Successful performance on EOC assessments are required for graduation. These exams will be given in English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, 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; whether successful completion of state-mandated assessments is required for graduation, 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.

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

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

**PSAT** is the preparatory and readiness assessment for the SAT.

**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, along with providing assistance with other student and employee wellness issues.

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

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

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

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

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

**Student Code of Conduct** is developed with the advice of the district-level committee and adopted by the board and identifies the circumstances, consistent with law, when a student may be removed from a classroom, campus, or district vehicle. It also sets out the conditions that authorize or require the principal or another administrator to place the student in a DAEP. It outlines conditions for out-of-school suspension and for expulsion. The Student Code of Conduct also addresses notice to the parent regarding a student's violation of one of its provisions.

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



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

**TxVSN** 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.

## APPENDIX I: Freedom from Bullying Policy

Note that school board policies may be revised at any time. For legal context and the most current copy of the local policy, visit the Board Policy link at <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/383>. Below is the text of Denton ISD’s policy FFI (LOCAL) as of the date that this handbook was finalized for this school year.

**STUDENT WELFARE: FREEDOM FROM BULLYING**

**FFI(LOCAL)**

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

BULLYING  
PROHIBITED

The District prohibits bullying as defined by this policy. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of District policy and is prohibited.

DEFINITION

Bullying occurs 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 that:

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 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.

EXAMPLES

Bullying of a student may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, or ostracism.

RETALIATION

The District prohibits retaliation by a student or District employee against any person who in good faith makes a report of bullying, serves as a witness, or participates in an investigation.

EXAMPLES	Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.
FALSE CLAIM	A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a District investigation regarding bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.
TIMELY REPORTING	Reports of bullying shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. A failure to immediately report may impair the District's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.
REPORTING PROCEDURES	To obtain assistance and intervention, any student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, counselor, principal, or other District employee.
STUDENT REPORT	Any District employee who suspects or receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the principal or designee.
EMPLOYEE REPORT	A report may be made orally or in writing. The principal or designee shall reduce any oral reports to written form.
REPORT FORMAT	The principal or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH, including dating violence and harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, or disability. If so, the District shall proceed under policy FFH. If the allegations could constitute both prohibited conduct and bullying, the investigation under FFH shall include a determination on each type of conduct.
PROHIBITED CONDUCT	The principal or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report. The principal or designee shall promptly take interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate.
INVESTIGATION OF REPORT	Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within ten District business days from the date of the initial report alleging bullying; however, the principal or designee shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation.
CONCLUDING THE INVESTIGATION	The principal or designee shall prepare a final, written report of the investigation. The report shall include a determination of whether bullying occurred, and if so, whether the victim used reasonable self-defense. A copy of the report shall be sent to the Superintendent or designee.

NOTICE TO PARENTS	If an incident of bullying is confirmed, the principal or designee shall promptly notify the parents of the victim and of the student who engaged in bullying.
DISTRICT ACTION BULLYING	If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, the District shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the District’s Student Code of Conduct and may take corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct.
DISCIPLINE	A student who is a victim of bullying and who used reasonable self-defense in response to the bullying shall not be subject to disciplinary action.
CORRECTIVE ACTION	The discipline of a student with a disability is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Code of Conduct.
TRANSFERS COUNSELING	Examples of corrective action may include a training program for the individuals involved in the complaint, a comprehensive education program for the school community, follow-up inquiries to determine if any new incidents or any instances of retaliation have occurred, involving parents and students in efforts to identify problems and improve the school climate, increasing staff monitoring of areas where bullying has occurred, and reaffirming the District’s policy against bullying.
IMPROPER CONDUCT	The principal or designee shall refer to FDB for transfer provisions. The principal or designee shall notify the victim, the student who engaged in bullying, and any students who witnessed the bullying of available counseling options.
CONFIDENTIALITY	If the investigation reveals improper conduct that did not rise to the level of prohibited conduct or bullying, the District may take action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct or any other appropriate corrective action.
APPEAL	To the greatest extent possible, the District shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.
RECORDS RETENTION ACCESS TO POLICY AND PROCEDURES	A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through FNG(LOCAL), beginning at the appropriate level.  Retention of records shall be in accordance with CPC(LOCAL). This policy and any accompanying procedures shall be distributed annually in the employee and student handbooks. Copies of the policy and procedures shall be posted on the District’s Web site, to the extent practicable, and shall be readily available at each campus and the District’s administrative office.



# Student & Parent Handbook

2017-2018  
Academic School Year

Empowering lifelong learners to be engaged citizens who positively impact their local and global community.

*The Denton Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities.*