



2024-2025 Handbook

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Hays CISD ISD Board of Education**Raul Vela, Jr.** – Board President**Byron Severance** –Vice President**Vanessa Petrea** – Board Secretary

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Marivel Sedillo	Deputy Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer
Max Cleaver	Chief Operations Officer
Tim Savoy	Chief Communication Officer
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Christina Courson	Chief Human Resources Officer

Deputy Academic Officers

Mary Noble	Deputy Academic Officer
Dr. Michael Watson	Deputy Academic Officer
Jesus Gomez	Deputy Academic Officer
David Pierce	Deputy Academic Officer

Preface - Parents and Students:

Welcome to the new school year!

Education is a team effort. Students, parents, teachers, and other staff members working together will make this a successful year.

The *Hays CISD Student Handbook* is a general reference guide that is divided into two sections:

Section One: Parental Rights describes certain parental rights as specified in state or federal law.

Section Two: Other Important Information for Parents and Students is organized alphabetically by topic. Where applicable, the topics are further organized by grade level.

Note: Unless otherwise noted, the term “parent” refers to the parent, legal guardian, any person granted some other type of lawful control of a student, or any other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

The Student Handbook is designed to align with law, board-adopted policy, and the Student Code of Conduct, a board-adopted document intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. The Student Handbook is not meant to be a complete statement of all policies, procedures, or rules in any given circumstance.

Each campus has also developed a campus handbook and the district Student Handbook should be used in conjunction with the campus handbook.

In case of conflicts between board policy (including the Student Code of Conduct) and any Student Handbook provision, the district will follow board policy and the Student Code of Conduct.

Therefore, parents and students should become familiar with the Hays CISD Student Code of Conduct. To review the Code of Conduct, visit the district’s website at <https://www.hayscisd.net/page/303>. State law requires that the Code of Conduct be prominently displayed or made available for review at each campus.

The Student Handbook is updated annually; however, policy adoption and revisions may occur throughout the year. The district encourages parents to stay informed of proposed policy changes by attending board meetings and reviewing communications explaining changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions. The district reserves the right to modify the Student Handbook at any time. Notice of revisions will be provided as is reasonably practical.

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

A hard copy of either the Student Code of Conduct or Student Handbook can be requested at each campus.

Note: *References to board policy codes are included for ease of reference. The hard copy of the district’s official policy manual is available for review in the Policy and Planning Department at 817.814.1956 and an unofficial electronic copy is available at*

<https://pol.tasb.org/PolicyOnline?key=621>.

The policy manual includes:

- Legally referenced (LEGAL) policies that contain provisions from federal and state laws and regulations, case law, and other legal authorities that provide the legal framework for school districts.
- Board-adopted (LOCAL) policies that articulate the board's choices and values regarding district practices.
- For questions about the material in this Student Handbook, please contact:

Dr. Brian Dawson
Director, Student Services
21003 IH 35, Kyle, TX 78640
brian.dawson@hayscisd.net
512-268-2141

Accessibility

If you have difficulty accessing this handbook because of a disability, please contact the campus principal.

Section One: Parental Rights

This section describes certain parental rights as specified in state or federal law.

Consent, Opt-Out, and Refusal Rights

Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation

Unless required under state or federal law, a district employee will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without obtaining prior written parental consent.

Note: An evaluation may be legally required under special education rules or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports.

Consent to Human Sexuality Instruction

Annual Notification

As a part of the district's middle school (Moving to Wellness Course) and high school (Health I Course) health curriculum, students receive instruction related to human sexuality. The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) makes recommendations for curriculum materials, and the school board adopts the materials and determines the specific content of the instruction. Recommendations are based on curriculum materials aligned to the State Board of Education's approved Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and the requirement under state law related to instruction in human sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, human immunodeficiency virus, and acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

The high school and middle school human sexuality course content outlines and descriptions will be added to this section of the student handbook upon board approval of a human sexuality education curriculum.

For further information, see the district's human sexuality instruction information on the HCISD Health and Physical Education website at <https://www.hayscisd.net/site/Default.aspx?PageID=414>.

In accordance with state law, a parent may:

- Review, receive a copy of, or purchase a copy of curriculum materials depending on the copyright of the materials.
- Remove his or her child from any part of the human sexuality instruction without academic, disciplinary, or other penalties.
- Become involved in the development of this curriculum by becoming a member of the district's SHAC or attending SHAC meetings. (See the campus principal for details.)
- Use the district's grievance procedure concerning a complaint. See **Complaints and Concerns (All Grade Levels)** on page 47 and FNG(LOCAL).

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

- Present abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice 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, if used consistently and correctly, is the only method that is 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted

- infections, and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity;
- Direct adolescents to abstain from sexual activity before marriage as 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.

[See **Consent to Instruction of Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking** on page 38.]

Consent Before Human Sexuality Instruction

Before a student receives human sexuality instruction, the district must obtain written consent from the student's parent. Parents will be sent a request for written consent at least 14 days before the instruction will begin.

Consent Before Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking

Before a student receives instruction on the prevention of child abuse, family violence, dating violence and sex trafficking, the district must obtain written consent from the student's parent. Parents will be sent a request for written consent at least 14 days before the instruction will begin.

Annual Notification

Students receive instruction related to the prevention of child abuse, family violence, dating violence, and sex trafficking. The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) makes recommendations for curriculum materials, and the school board adopts the materials and determines the specific content of the instruction.

Visit the HCISD Health and Physical Education website for a more detailed overview of each lesson at: <https://www.hayscisd.net/site/Default.aspx?PageID=414>.

The District is committed to helping our students stay safe. The “*You Deserve to Be Treated with Dignity and Respect*” initiative encourages students to make healthy decisions and ask for help when they or their friends are in need. This effort focuses on behaviors that can place a student and others at risk. These behaviors include: bullying, cyberbullying, teen dating violence, sexting, suicide, gang activity, sexual harassment, racism, human trafficking and substance abuse. For further information, see the district's abuse prevention instruction website at <https://www.hayscisd.net/Page/248>.

In accordance with state law, a parent may:

- Review, receive a copy of, or purchase a copy of curriculum materials depending on the copyright of the materials. As required by law, any curriculum materials in the public domain used in this instruction will be posted on the district's website at the location indicated above.
- Remove his or her child from any part of this instruction without academic, disciplinary, or other penalties.
- Become involved in the development of this curriculum by becoming a member of the district's SHAC or attending SHAC meetings. (See the campus principal for details.)
- Use the district's grievance procedure concerning a complaint. See **Complaints and Concerns (All Grade Levels)** on page 47 and FNG for information on the grievance and appeals process.

[See **Consent to Human Sexuality Instruction** on page 8; **Dating Violence** on page 58; and **Child Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children** on page 38]

Consent to Provide a Mental Health Care Service

The district will not provide a mental health care service to a student or conduct a medical screening of a student as part of the district's intervention procedures except as permitted by law.

The district has established procedures for recommending to a parent an intervention for a student with early warning signs of mental health concerns, substance abuse, or suicide risk. The campus counselor or designee will notify the student's parent within a reasonable amount of time after they learn that a student has displayed early warning signs and provide information about available counseling options.

The need for additional counseling and/or intervention support comes to the attention of school personnel in a variety of ways:

- A student makes a statement that is overheard by an adult or another student;
- A parent expresses concern about their child; and
- A staff member recognizes the signs of hopelessness and reaches out for support.

Every campus within the district has designated counselors or designees trained to provide information and additional counseling/intervention options and support. For more information, contact the student's home campus directly.

Campus counselors or designees can provide further information regarding these procedures as well as curriculum materials on identifying risk factors, accessing resources for treatment or support on and off campus, and accessing available student accommodations provided on campus.

[See **Mental Health Support** on page 10.]

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

Teachers may display a student's work in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement without seeking prior parental consent. These displays may include personally identifiable student information. Student work includes:

- Artwork,
- Special projects,
- Photographs,
- Original videos or voice recordings, and
- Other original works.

However, the district will seek parental consent before displaying a student's work on the district's website, a website affiliated or sponsored by the district (such as a campus or classroom website), or in district publications, which may include printed materials, videos, or other methods of mass communication.

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

A student under age 14 must have parental permission to participate in the district's Parenting and Paternity Awareness Program (<https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/child-support/programs-and-initiatives/parenting-and-paternity-awareness-papa/papa-educators/papa-curriculum>). This program was developed by the Office of the Texas Attorney General and the State Board of Education (SBOE) to be incorporated into health education classes.

Audio Recording by Non-District Personnel

1. **Disruption of the Educational Environment:** Recording someone's voice could potentially disrupt the learning environment by causing distractions or discomfort among students or teachers. This disruption can hinder the educational process and is generally discouraged.
2. **Invasion of Privacy:** Recording someone's voice without their consent can invade their privacy, especially in educational settings where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy in certain situations (like classroom discussions or interactions).
3. **Requirement of Prior Consent:** The statement emphasizes that recording individuals without their prior consent is prohibited. This requirement ensures that individuals have control over their own voice recordings and are aware of how their voice might be used.

In educational environments, these rules are typically in place to maintain a respectful and focused atmosphere conducive to learning, while also respecting individuals' rights to privacy.

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

State law permits the school to make a video or voice recording without parental permission when it:

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

In other circumstances, the district will seek written parental consent before making a video or voice recording of a student.

Please note that parents and visitors to a classroom, both virtual and in person, may not record video or audio or take photographs or other still images without permission from the teacher or other school official.

Limiting Electronic Communications between Students and District Employees

The district permits teachers and other approved employees to use electronic communications with students within the scope of professional responsibilities, as described by district guidelines.

For example, a teacher may create a social networking page for his or her class to relay information regarding class work, homework, and tests. A parent is welcome to access such a page.

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

A parent who does not want his or her child to receive one-to-one electronic communications from a district employee should contact the campus principal.

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 student's education records without written consent.

"Directory information" is information that, if released, is generally not considered harmful or an

invasion of privacy. Examples include:

- A student's photograph (for publication in the school yearbook);
- A student's name and grade level (for communicating class and teacher assignments);
- The name, weight, and height of an athlete (for publication in a school athletic program);
- A list of student birthdays (for generating schoolwide or classroom recognition),
- A student's name and photograph (posted on a district-approved and -managed social media platform); and
- The names and grade levels of students submitted by the district to a local newspaper or other community publication (to recognize the A/B honor roll for a specific grading period.)

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 this information. Any objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days of the student's first day of instruction for this school year.

The district requests that families living in a shelter for survivors of family violence or trafficking notify district personnel that the student currently resides in such a shelter. Families may want to opt out of the release of directory information so that the district does not release any information that might reveal the location of such a shelter.

As allowed by state law, the district has identified two directory information lists—one for school-sponsored purposes and a second for all other requests. For district publications and announcements, the district has designated the following as directory information: student name; address; telephone listing; electronic mail address; photograph; date and place of birth; major field of study; degree, honors, and awards received; dates of attendance; grade-level; most recent educational institution attended; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; and weight and height of members of athletic teams. If a parent does not object to the use of his or her child's information for these school-sponsored purposes, the school will not ask permission each time the district wants to use the information for these purposes.

For all other purposes, the district has identified the following as directory information: student name. If a parent does not object to the use of the student's information for these purposes, the school **must** release this information when requested by an outside entity or individual.

Note: Review **Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records** on page 16.

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

Unless a parent has advised the district not to release his or her student's information, Every *Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* requires the district to comply with requests from military recruiters or institutions of higher education to provide the following information about students:

- Name,
- Address, and
- Telephone listing.

Military recruiters may also have access to a student's district-provided email address, unless a parent has advised the district not to release this information.

[See Parent's Objection to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education, included in the forms packet.]

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

See **Consent to Human Sexuality Instruction** on page 8 and **Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking** on page 38 for information on a parent's right to remove a student from such instruction.

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

State law permits the school to make a video or voice recording without parental permission when it:

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

In other circumstances, the district will seek written parental consent before making a video or voice recording of a student.

Please note that parents and visitors to a classroom, both virtual and in person, may not record video or audio or take photographs or other still images without permission from the teacher or other school official.

Opting Out of Advanced Mathematics in Grades 6-8

The district will automatically enroll a student in grade 6 in an advanced mathematics course if the student performed in the top 40 percent on the grade 5 mathematics STAAR or a local measure that demonstrates proficiency in the student's grade 5 mathematics course work.

Enrollment in an advanced mathematics course in grade 6 will enable students to enroll in Algebra I in grade 8 and advanced mathematics in grades 9-12.

The student's parent may opt the student out of automatic enrollment in an advanced mathematics course.

Participation in Third-Party Surveys

Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) provides parents certain rights regarding participation in surveys, the collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams.

A parent has the right to consent before a student is required to submit to a survey funded by the U.S. Department of Education that concerns any of the following protected areas:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family
- Sex behavior or attitudes
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior
- Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, and ministers
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parent
- Income, except when the information is required by law and will be used to determine the student's eligibility for a program

A parent may inspect the survey or other instrument and any corresponding instructional materials used in connection with such a survey. [See policy EF(LEGAL) for more information.]

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

The PPRA gives parents the right to receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:

- Activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from the child for the purpose of marketing, selling, or otherwise disclosing that information to others.
- Any nonemergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student.

Exceptions are hearing, vision, or spinal screenings, or any physical examination or screening permitted or required under state law. [See policies EF and FFAA for more information.]

A parent may inspect:

- Protected information surveys of students and surveys created by a third party
- Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes
- Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum

The ED provides extensive information about the [Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment](https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/protection-pupil-rights-amendment-ppra-general-guidance) (<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/protection-pupil-rights-amendment-ppra-general-guidance>), including a [PPRA Complaint Form](https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/file-a-complaint) (<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/file-a-complaint>).

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

State law designates the week that includes September 17 as *Celebrate Freedom Week* and requires all social studies classes to provide the following:

- Instruction concerning the intent, meaning, and importance of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution; and
- A specific recitation from the Declaration of Independence for students in grades 3–12.

Per state law, a student may be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence if any of the following apply:

- A parent provides a written statement requesting that his or her child be excused;
- The district determines that the student has a conscientious objection to the recitation; or
- A parent is a representative of a foreign government to whom the U.S. government extends diplomatic immunity.

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

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

A parent may request that his or her child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be made in writing.

State law, however, requires that all students participate in one minute of silence following recitation of the pledges.

[See **Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence** on page 108 and policy EC(LEGAL) for more

information.]

Religious or Moral Beliefs

A parent may remove his or her child temporarily from the classroom if a scheduled instructional activity conflicts with the parent's religious or moral beliefs.

The removal may not be used to avoid a test and may not extend for an entire semester. The student must also satisfy grade-level and graduation requirements as determined by the school and by state law.

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

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

See **Consent to Human Sexuality Instruction** on page 8 and **Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking** on page 9 for information on a parent's right to remove a student from such instruction.

Tutoring or Test Preparation

A teacher may determine that a student needs additional targeted assistance for the student to achieve mastery in state-developed essential knowledge and skills based on:

- Informal observations;
- Evaluative data such as grades earned on assignments or tests; or
- Results from diagnostic assessments.

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, districts must obtain parental permission before removing a student from a regularly scheduled class for remedial tutoring or test preparation for more than ten percent of the days the class is offered.

If a district offers tutorial services to students, state law requires a student with a grade below 70 for a reporting period to attend.

[For questions about school-provided tutoring programs, contact the student's teacher and see policies EC and EHBC. See **Standardized Testing** on page 101 for information regarding required accelerated instruction after a student fails to perform satisfactorily on certain state-mandated tests.]

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

Parent Review of Instructional Materials

A parent has the 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, whether instruction is delivered in-person, virtually, or remotely.

The district will make instructional materials available for parent review no later than 30 days before the school year begins and for at least 30 days after the school year ends. However, tests that have not yet been administered will not be made available for parent examination.

A parent is also entitled to request that the school allow the student to take home instructional materials the student uses. The school may ask the student to return the materials at the beginning of

the next school day.

A school must provide printed versions of electronic instructional materials to a student if the student does not have reliable access to technology at home.

[See policy FL and EF for more information.]

District Review of Instructional Materials

A parent may request that the district conduct an instructional material review in a math, English Language Arts, science, or social studies class in which the parent's student is enrolled to determine alignment with state standards and the level of rigor for the grade level.

The district is not required to conduct an instructional material review for a specific subject area or grade level at a specific campus more than once per school year.

For more information about requesting an instructional material review, contact the campus principal.

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 the Student Code of Conduct and policy FO(LEGAL) for more information.]

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

In accordance with Every *Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*, a parent may request information regarding any federal, state, or district policy related to his or her child's participation in required assessments.

Student Records

Accessing Student Records

A parent may review his or her child's 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 the child, as the term "intervention strategy" is defined by law;
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to the child; and
- Teaching materials and tests used in the child's classroom.

Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and eligible students certain rights regarding student education records.

For purposes of student records, an “eligible” student is anyone age 18 or older or who attends a postsecondary educational institution. These rights, as discussed here and at **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 12, are the right to:

- Inspect and review student records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access;
- Request an amendment to a student record the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of FERPA;
- 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; and
- File a complaint (<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/file-a-complaint>) with the U.S. Department of Education concerning failures by the school to comply with FERPA requirements.

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 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 restricted to an eligible student or a student’s parent unless the school receives a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student’s education records. A parent’s rights regarding access to student records are not affected by the parent’s marital status.

Federal law requires that control of the records goes to the student as soon as the student:

- Reaches the age of 18;
- Is emancipated by a court; or
- Enrolls in a postsecondary educational institution.

However, the parent may continue to have access to the records 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 when school officials have what federal law refers to as a “legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records.

Legitimate educational interest may include:

- Working with the student;
- Considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student’s case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities;
- Compiling statistical data;
- Reviewing an educational record to fulfill the official’s professional responsibility; or
- Investigating or evaluating programs.

School officials may include:

- Board members and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals;
- Teachers, school counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff (including district health or

- medical staff);
- A person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a specific 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 person appointed to serve on a team to support the district's safe and supportive school program;
- 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.

FERPA also permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information without written consent:

- To authorized representatives of various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers, the U.S. Comptroller General's office, the U.S. Attorney General's office, the U.S. Secretary of Education, the Texas Education Agency, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture's office, and Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers or, in certain cases, other child welfare representatives.
- To individuals or entities granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- To another school, district/system, or postsecondary educational institution to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which the student already is enrolled.
- In connection with financial aid for which a student has applied or has received.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; administer student aid programs; or improve instruction.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- When the district discloses directory information-designated details. [See **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 12 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 and students who have graduated within the last three years at the assigned school. The Director of Student Services is the custodian of all enrollment records and transcripts for students who have withdrawn or graduated more than three years ago.

A parent or eligible student who wants to inspect the student's records should submit a written request to the custodian of records identifying the records he or she wants to inspect.

Records may be reviewed in person during regular school hours. The records custodian or designee will be available to explain the record and to answer questions.

A parent or eligible student who submits 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 the records.

You may contact the custodian of records for currently enrolled students and students who have graduated in the last three years by contacting your child's principal who serves in that capacity.

You may contact the following office for records for students who have withdrawn or graduated more than three years ago at:

Office of Student Services

21003 IH 35
Kyle, TX 78640
512-268-2141

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 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 after the hearing the records are not amended, the parent or eligible student has 30 school days to place a statement 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 complaint process found in policy FNG(LOCAL).

[See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 110, **Complaints and Concerns** on page 47, and **Finality of Grades** at policy FNG(LEGAL).]

The district's student records policy is found at policy FL(LEGAL) and (LOCAL) and is available in the office of Policy and Planning, or on the district's website at <https://pol.tasb.org/PolicyOnline?key=621>.

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

Teacher and Staff Professional Qualifications

A parent may request information regarding the professional qualifications of his or her child's teachers, including whether the teacher:

- Has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- Has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived; and
- Is currently teaching in the field or discipline of his or her certification.

The parent also has the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to the child.

A Student with Exceptionalities or Special Circumstances Children of Military Families

The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children

(<https://www.dodea.edu/partnership/interstatecompact.cfm>) entitles children of military families to flexibility regarding certain district and state requirements, including:

- Immunization requirements;
- Grade level, course, or educational program placement;
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities;
- Enrollment in the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN); and
- Graduation requirements.

The district will excuse absences related to a student visiting a parent, including a stepparent or legal guardian, who is:

- Called to active duty,
- On leave, or
- Returning from a deployment of at least four months.

The district will permit **no more than five** excused absences per year for this purpose. For the absence to be excused, the absence must occur no earlier than the 60th day before deployment or no later than the 30th day after the parent's return from deployment.

Additional information may be found at [Military Family Resources at the Texas Education Agency](https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/other-services/military-family-resources) (<https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/other-services/military-family-resources>).

Parental Role in Certain Classroom and School Assignments

Multiple-Birth Siblings

State law permits a parent of multiple-birth siblings (for example, twins, triplets) assigned to the same grade and campus to request in writing that the children be placed in either the same classroom or separate classrooms.

Written requests must be submitted by the 14th day after the students' enrollment. [See policy FDB(LEGAL) for more information.]

Safety Transfers/Assignments

The board or its designee will honor a parent's request to transfer his or her child to another classroom or campus if the district has determined that the child has been a victim of bullying, including cyberbullying, as defined by Education Code 37.0832.

The board may transfer a student who has engaged in bullying to another classroom. [If your district has more than one campus at a grade level, include the next sentence.] The board or their designee will consult with the parent of a child who has engaged in bullying before deciding to transfer the child to another campus.

Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. See the principal for more information.

[See **Bullying** on page 35, and policies FDB and FFI for more information.]

The district will honor a parent's request for the transfer of his or her child to a safe public school in the district if the child attends a school identified by the Texas Education Agency as persistently dangerous or if the child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds.

[See policy FDE for more information.]

The board will honor a parent's request for the transfer of his or her child to another district campus if the child has been the victim of 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 the assault. In accordance with FDE policy, if the victim does not wish to transfer, the board will transfer the assailant.

Student Use of a Service/Assistance Animal

A parent of a student who uses a service/assistance animal because of the student's disability must

submit a written request to the principal before bringing the service/ assistance animal on campus. The district will try to accommodate a request as soon as possible but will do so within ten district business days.

A Student in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care)

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

A student in the conservatorship (custody) of the state who enrolls in the district after the beginning of the school year will be allowed credit-by-examination opportunities at any point during the year.

The district will assess the student's available records to determine transfer of credit for subjects and courses taken before the student's enrollment in the district.

The district will award partial course credit when the student only passes one half of a two-half course. [For provisions on partial course credit for students who are not in the conservatorship of the state, see EI(LOCAL).]

A student in the conservatorship of the state who is moved outside the district's or school's attendance boundaries—or who is initially placed in the conservatorship of the state and moved outside the district's or school's boundaries—is able to remain at the school the student was attending prior to the placement or move until the student reaches the highest grade level at that particular school.

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 a diploma from the previous district if the student meets its graduation criteria.

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 applications for admission or 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 arranging for the payment of examination fees by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) (subject to the availability of funds).
- Coordinate contact between the student and a liaison officer for students formerly in the conservatorship of the state.

[See **Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration** on page 57, **Course Credit** on page 56, and **Students in Foster Care** on page 22.]

A Student Who Is Homeless

A parent is encouraged to inform the district if his or her child is experiencing homelessness. District staff can share resources that may be able to assist families.

A student who is homeless will be provided flexibility regarding certain district provisions, including:

- Proof of residency requirements;
- Immunization requirements;
- Educational program placement (if the student is unable to provide previous academic records)

- or misses an application deadline during a period of homelessness);
- Credit-by-examination opportunities at any point during the year (if the student enrolled in the district after the beginning of the school year), per State Board of Education (SBOE) rules;
- Assessment of the student's available records to determine transfer of credit for subjects and courses taken before the student's enrollment in the district;
- Awarding partial credit when a student passes only one half of a two-half course;
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities; and
- Graduation requirements.

Federal law allows a student who is homeless to remain enrolled in the "school of origin" or to enroll in a new school in the attendance area where the student is currently residing.

If a student who is homeless in grade 11 or 12 transfers to another district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, state law allows the student to request a diploma from the previous district if the student meets the criteria to graduate from the previous district.

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

For more information on services for students who are homeless, contact the district's homeless education liaison:

Stephanie Norris

Director of State/Federal Programs & Grants

District Homeless Liaison

District Foster Liaison

stephanie.norris@hayscisd.net

[See **Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration** on page 57, **Course Credit** on page 56, and **Students who are Homeless** on page 23.]

A Student Who Has Learning Difficulties or Who Needs Special Education or Section 504 Services

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

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her parent/guardian may contact the individuals listed below to learn about the school's overall general education referral or screening system for support services.

This system links students to a variety of support options, including making a referral for a special education evaluation or for a Section 504 evaluation to determine whether the student needs specific aids, accommodations, or services. A parent may request an evaluation for special education or Section 504 services at any time.

Special Education Referrals

If a parent makes a written request for an initial evaluation for special education services to the director of special education services or to a district administrative employee of the school district, the district must respond no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, the district

must give the parent prior written notice of whether it agrees or refuses to evaluate the student, along with a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*. If the district agrees to evaluate the student, it must also give the parent the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

Note: A request for a special education evaluation may be made verbally; it does not need to be made in writing. Districts must still comply with all federal prior-written notices and procedural safeguard requirements as well as the requirements for identifying, locating, and evaluating children who are suspected of having a disability and in need of special education. However, a verbal request does not require the district to respond within the 15 school-day timeline.

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

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

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

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

Contact Person for Special Education Referrals

The designated contact person regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for special education services is:

Campus Diagnostician/Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

For questions regarding post-secondary transitions, including the transition from education to employment, for students receiving special education services, contact the district's transition and employment designee:

Campus Transition Specialist

Section 504 Referrals

Each school district must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of students in the district's Section 504 program. Districts must also implement a system of procedural safeguards that includes:

- Notice;
- An opportunity for a parent or guardian to examine relevant records;
- An impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parent or guardian and representation by counsel; and
- A review procedure.

Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for Section 504 services is:

Campus 504 Case Manager

[See **A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504** on page 26.]

Visit these websites for information regarding students with disabilities and the family:

- [Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process](https://fw.esc18.net/display/Webforms/ESC18-FW-LandingPage.aspx?DT=G&LID=en) (<https://fw.esc18.net/display/Webforms/ESC18-FW-LandingPage.aspx?DT=G&LID=en>)
- [Partner Resource Network](http://prntexas.org/) (<http://prntexas.org/>)
- [SPEDTEX: Special Education Information Center](https://www.spedtex.org/) (<https://www.spedtex.org/>)
- [Texas First Project](http://www.texasprojectfirst.org/) (<http://www.texasprojectfirst.org/>)

Notification to Parents of Intervention Strategies for Learning Difficulties Provided to Students in General Education

In accordance with state law, the district will annually notify parents if their child receives assistance for learning difficulties. Details of such assistance can include intervention strategies. This notice is not intended for those students already enrolled in a special education program.

A Student Who Receives 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, state law permits the parent or guardian to request that other students residing in the household be transferred to the same campus—if the grade level for the transferring student is offered on that campus.

The student receiving special education services would be entitled to transportation; however, the district is not required to provide transportation to other children in the household.

The parent or guardian should contact the school principal regarding transportation needs prior to requesting a transfer for other children in the home. [See policy FDB(LOCAL) for more information.]

A Student Who Speaks 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 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.

[See **Emergent Bilingual Students** on page 74 and **Special Programs** on page 121.]

A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504

A student with 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 whether the student needs services and supports under Section 504 in order to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE), as defined in federal law.

[See **A Student Who Has Learning Difficulties or Who Needs Special Education or Section 504 Services** on page 23 and policy FB for more information.]

Section Two: Other Important Information for Parents and Students

This section contains important information on academics, school activities, and school operations and requirements.

It is organized alphabetically to serve as a quick-reference guide. Where applicable, the topics are further organized by grade level.

Parents and children should take a moment together to become familiar with the issues addressed in this section. For guidance on a particular topic, please contact the campus principal.

Absences/Attendance

Regular school attendance is essential. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's education. The student and parent should avoid unnecessary absences.

Two important state laws are discussed below—one dealing with compulsory attendance and the other with how attendance affects the award of a student's final grade or course credit.

A student that has had no contact, participation, or has not met the minimum criteria to be marked present for 5 consecutive school days and has made no effort to communicate with their campus could be withdrawn. Please ensure that your campus has been contacted to communicate why your student is not present at school.

Compulsory Attendance

1. **Compulsory Attendance:** Every child who resides in the district and is between the ages of six and eighteen is required to attend a public school in that district. This includes children who are at least six years old or younger than six but have previously been enrolled in first grade.
2. **Attendance Requirements:** Regular attendance and punctuality are mandatory for all students. This ensures consistent participation in educational activities and promotes a structured learning environment.
3. **Acceptable Excuses for Absences and Tardies:** The passage lists various reasons that are considered acceptable excuses for absences or tardiness. These include:
 - a. Personal illness of the student
 - b. Sickness or death in the immediate family
 - c. Quarantine
 - d. Dangerous weather or road conditions
 - e. Required legal business approved in advance by the principal
 - f. Religious holy days (with prior written request)
 - g. Temporary absence for health care appointments (student must return to school on the same day)
4. **Leaving Campus During School Hours:** Students are not permitted to leave the school campus during school hours. If students are under 19 and have an appointment during the school day, the student must be signed out by the student's parent/guardian or approved adult.
5. **Responsibility After Arrival:** Once a student arrives on campus before regular school hours, they are expected to remain on campus unless they receive permission from an administrator to leave.

These policies are designed to ensure that students attend school regularly, arrive on time, and that any absences or departures from campus are properly justified and authorized. This framework helps maintain an orderly and focused educational environment for all students.

Prekindergarten and Kindergarten

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

Ages 6–18

State law requires that a student who is at least six years of age, or who is younger than six years of age and has previously been enrolled in first grade, and who has not yet reached their 19th birthday, shall 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 a student in kindergarten–grade 2 to attend any assigned accelerated reading instruction program. Parents will be notified in writing if their child is assigned to an accelerated reading instruction program based on a diagnostic reading instrument.

A student will be required to attend any assigned accelerated instruction program before or after school or during the summer if the student does not meet the passing standards on an applicable subject area state assessment.

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 the student incurs 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 for more information.]

Compulsory Attendance—Exemptions

All Grade Levels

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for the following activities and events, as long as the student makes up all work:

- Religious holy days;
- Required court appearances;
- Appearing at a governmental office to obtain U.S. citizenship;
- Taking part in a US naturalization oath ceremony;
- Serving as an election clerk
- Health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences related to autism services;
- Absences resulting from a serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment that makes a student's attendance infeasible, with certification by a physician;
- For students in the conservatorship of the state:
 - An activity required under a court-ordered service plan; or
 - Any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the student's participation in the activity outside of school hours.

A student that is absent as the result of a serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment that makes the student's attendance infeasible. Documentation from a health care professional licensed,

certified, or registered to practice in Texas must be provided that specifies the student's illness and the anticipated period of the student's absence relating to the illness or related treatment.

A student with a mental health or substance abuse condition who is being treated for a serious illness (TEC, §25.087(b)(3)) in an outpatient day treatment program or partial hospitalization program, under the care of a healthcare professional licensed, certified, or registered to practice in Texas, shall be excused for the authorized treatment period, and shall not be withdrawn from school. The discharge summary from the outpatient day treatment or partial hospitalization program must include treatment admission and discharge dates to be provided to the school by the family or medical facility upon return to school as documentation to excuse absences for the duration of the authorized outpatient treatment plan or partial hospitalization.

For children of military families, absences of up to five days will be excused for a student to visit a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian going to, on leave from, or returning from certain deployments. [See **Children of Military Families** on page 20.]

Note that documented health-care appointments may include telehealth appointments. Students who are physically on campus will not be allowed to participate in telehealth or other online appointments without specific authorization from an appropriate administrator. Students should not use district-issued technology, including Wi-Fi or internet, for telehealth appointments because use of district-owned equipment and its network systems is not private and may be monitored by the district. For more information, see **Telecommunication and Other Electronic Devices** on page 70.

Secondary Grade Levels

The district will allow junior and senior students to be absent for up to two days per year to visit a college or university if the following conditions are met:

- The board has authorized such excused absences under policy FEA(LOCAL).
- The principal has approved the student's absence.
- The student follows campus procedures to verify the visit and makes up for any work missed.

The district will allow a student 17 years old or older to be absent for up to four days during the period the student is enrolled in high school to pursue enlistment in the U.S. armed services or Texas National Guard, provided the student verifies these activities to the district.

[See **Driver License Attendance Verification** on page 32.]

The district will allow junior and senior students to be absent for up to two days per year to visit a college or university, provided:

- The board has authorized such excused absences under policy FEA(LOCAL);
- The principal has approved the student's absence; and
- The student follows campus procedures to verify the visit and makes up any work missed.

The district will allow a student 17 years old or older to be absent for up to four days during the period the student is enrolled in high school to pursue enlistment in the U.S. armed services or Texas National Guard, provided the student verifies these activities to the district.

The district will allow a student to be absent for up to two days during the student's junior year and two days during the student's senior year for a career investigation day to visit a professional at that individual's workplace to determine the student's interest in pursuing a career in the professional's field, provided the student verifies these activities to the district.

The district will allow a student to be absent for up to two days per school year to serve 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; or

- An election clerk, if the student makes up any work missed.

The district will allow a student in grades 6–12 to be absent for the purpose of sounding “Taps” at a military honors funeral for a deceased veteran.

Compulsory Attendance—Failure to Comply

All Grade Levels

School employees must investigate and report violations of the compulsory attendance law.

A student who is absent without permission from school, any class, any required special program, or any required tutorial will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

Students with Disabilities

If a student with a disability is experiencing attendance issues, the student’s ARD or Section 504 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.

Ages 6–18

When a student ages 6–18 incurs three or more unexcused absences within a four-week period, the law requires the school to send notice to the parent.

The notice will:

- Remind the parent of his or her duty to monitor the student’s attendance and require the student to attend school;
- Request a conference between school administrators and the parent; and
- Inform the parent that the district will initiate truancy prevention measures, including a behavior improvement plan, school-based community service, referrals to counseling or other social services, or other appropriate measures.

The truancy prevention director for the district is:

Dr. Brian Dawson

Director of Student Services

21003 IH 35, Kyle, TX 78640

brian.dawson@hayscisd.net

512-268-2141

For any questions about student absences, parents should contact the director or any other campus administrator.

A court of law may impose penalties against the parent if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. The district may file a complaint against the parent if the student incurs ten or more unexcused absences within a six-month period in the same school year.

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

[See policies FEA(LEGAL) and FED(LEGAL) for more information.]

Age 19 and Older

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

Attendance for Credit or Final Grade (All Grade Levels)

To receive credit or a final grade in a class, a student must attend the class at least 90 percent of the days it is offered. A student who attends at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days may receive credit or a final grade if he or she completes a plan, approved by the principal, that allows the student to fulfill the class's instructional requirements. If a student is involved in a criminal or juvenile court proceeding, the judge presiding over the case must also approve the plan before the student receives credit or a final grade.

If a student attends fewer than 75 percent of the class days or does not complete the principal-approved plan, then the attendance review committee will determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit or a final grade. [See policy FEC for more information.]

With the exception of absences due to serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment, all absences, excused or unexcused, may be held against a student's attendance requirement. To determine whether there were extenuating circumstances for any absences, the attendance committee will consider:

- Whether the student has mastered the essential knowledge and skills and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.
- Whether the student has completed makeup work satisfactorily. If the student completes makeup work, absences listed under **Compulsory Attendance—Exemptions** on page 28 and absences for extracurricular activities will be considered extenuating circumstances.
- Whether the student or the student's parent had any control over the absences.
- Any information presented by the student or parent to the committee about the absences.

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

Official Attendance-Taking Time (All Grade Levels)

The District has identified Official Attendance Taking Times (OATT) for all Campuses. Administrators must ensure that there is no conflict with their Campus Bell Schedule and the OATT, and that average daily attendance is taken at that time daily. Students that are not physically in the classroom at the OATT must be marked absent. Students that are physically in the classroom at the OATT must be marked present. Campus personnel should never be instructed to mark all students as present.

A student absent for any portion of the day, should follow the procedures below to provide documentation of the absence.

Documentation after an Absence (All Grade Levels)

1. **Documentation of Absences:** A parent or guardian must submit written documentation

of a student's absence within five days after the date of the absence for it to be considered excused. This requirement ensures that absences are properly accounted for and validated.

2. **Attendance Percentage Requirement:** If a student's attendance drops below 90% of the days the class is offered, they, along with their parent or representative, can request credit by submitting a written petition to the attendance committee. This committee reviews the student's entire attendance record and the reasons for absences to determine whether credit should be awarded. Petitions must be submitted no later than the last day of school.
3. **Limitations on Extracurricular Absences:** A student may miss a class in a course up to thirteen times in a year for participation in extracurricular activities. However, absences for participation exceeding ten days could result in the loss of credit, emphasizing the balance between academic attendance requirements and extracurricular participation.

Note: The district is not required to excuse any absence, even if the parent provides a note explaining the absence, unless the absence is an exemption under compulsory attendance laws.

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

Within 5 days of returning to school, a student absent for more than 5 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 absence. Otherwise, the absence may be considered unexcused and 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 absence to determine whether an absence will be excused or unexcused.

Tuancy

Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance

1. **Investigation and Reporting:** School employees are mandated to investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. This includes absences without permission from school, class, required special programs (such as accelerated instruction), or tutorials.
2. **Disciplinary Actions:** Students found in violation of compulsory attendance laws are subject to disciplinary action by the school. This can include various interventions aimed at improving attendance and addressing truancy.
3. **Legal Penalties:** A court of law can impose penalties against both the student and their parents if the student is deliberately not attending school. This can involve filing complaints against parents in court.
4. **Notice to Parents:** The school sends attendance notice letters to parents under specific circumstances:
 - a. A warning letter is sent when a student is truant (absent without excuse) for 3 or more days or parts of days cumulatively in the school year.

- b. A warning notice letter is sent if the student is absent without excuse for 3 or more days cumulatively.

5. Progressive Steps for Truancy Prevention:

- a. After the 5th absence without proper excuse, a parent conference is held to implement truancy prevention measures, which may include a student attendance plan, counseling, attendance contract, and extended day programs.
 - b. A court warning notice letter is issued to the parent after the student accumulates 10 or more unexcused absences in the school year.
- 6. Parental Responsibilities:** It is the duty of parents/guardians to monitor their child's attendance and ensure their attendance at school. Failure to comply with these responsibilities may lead to legal prosecution.
- 7. Legal Consequences:** If a criminal complaint is filed due to the student's tenth unexcused absence, parents may face legal penalties. Students aged 12 to 18 who violate compulsory attendance laws may face civil offenses.

Withdrawal from School

- 1. Compulsory Enrollment:** State law mandates that all children between the ages of 6 and 18 must be enrolled in school in person. Once enrolled in pre-kindergarten or kindergarten, attendance is also required by law. This requirement extends to tutorials and extended year service programs (EYS) that students are mandated to attend.
- 2. Withdrawal Procedures:**
 - a. **Minors (ages 6 to 18):** A minor student may be withdrawn from school by their parent or guardian, who must state the reason for withdrawal. However, the student must re-enroll in another public or private school within a 5-day period after withdrawal.
 - b. **Students 19 or older:** Students in this age bracket may request withdrawal without parental or guardian signature. Notification to the principal must still be immediate when withdrawal procedures are initiated.
 - c. **Transfer Considerations:** Students who have applied for a transfer or plan to move to the residence of someone other than their parent or legal guardian should not withdraw from school unless they have obtained transfer approval.
- 3. Procedures for Moving Out of the District:** If a student is moving out of the district when schools are not in operation (such as during holidays or breaks), they should contact the school campus to officially withdraw. This ensures the student is not improperly counted as a dropout.

Certification of Absence Due to Severe Illness or Treatment

If a student is absent because of a serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment that makes a student's attendance infeasible, a parent must provide certification from a physician licensed to practice in Texas specifying the student's illness and the anticipated period of absence related to the illness or treatment.

Driver License Attendance Verification (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

A currently enrolled student seeking a driver's license shall submit the Texas Department of Public Safety Verification of Enrollment and Attendance Form (VOE), signed by the parent, to the campus central office at least 10 days before it is needed. The district will issue a VOE only if the student meets class credit or attendance requirements. The VOE form (<https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/driver/forms/VOE.pdf>) is available online.

Further information may be found on the Texas Department of Public Safety website (<https://www.dps.texas.gov/section/driver-license/how-apply-texas-driver-license-teen>).

See **Compulsory Attendance—Exemptions for Secondary Grade Levels** on page 28 for information on excused absences for obtaining a learner license or driver's license.

Accountability under State and Federal Law (All Grade Levels)

The Hays Consolidated School District and each of its campuses are held to certain standards of accountability under state and federal law. A key component of accountability is the dissemination and publication of certain reports and information, including:

- The Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) for the district, compiled by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), based on academic factors and ratings;
- A School Report Card (SRC) for each campus in the district, compiled by TEA;
- The district's financial management report, which includes 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.

Accountability information can be found on the district's website at www.hayscisd.net. Hard copies of any reports are available upon request to the district's administration office.

TEA maintains additional accountability and accreditation information at TEA Performance Reporting Division (<https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability/academic-accountability/performance-reporting>).

Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Test (Grades 10–12)

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.

Contact the principal for information about this opportunity.

Bullying and Cyber-Bullying (All Grade Levels)

Bullying and Cyber-bullying is prohibited and subject to disciplinary consequences in accordance with the district Student Code of Conduct if the conduct:

1. 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;

2. 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; or
3. occurs off school property or outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity if it constitutes cyberbullying that: (A) interferes with a student's educational opportunities; or (B) substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a classroom, school, or school-sponsored or school-related activity. TEC Sec. 37.0832, TEC Sec. 37.0052.

In addition to any disciplinary action, phones and other communication devices may be confiscated and/or searched and students should be aware that any images suspected to violate criminal laws will be referred to law enforcement authorities.

The district strives to prevent bullying, in accordance with the district's policies, by promoting a positive school culture; building healthy relationships between students and staff; encouraging reporting of bullying incidents, including anonymous reporting; and investigating and addressing reported bullying incidents.

Bullying is defined in state law 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 in state law as bullying that is done using the use of any electronic communication device, including:

- A cellular or other type of telephone
- A computer
- A camera
- Electronic mail
- Instant messaging
- Text messaging
- A social media application
- An internet website
- Any other internet-based communication tool.

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
- Ostracism.

The district will integrate into instruction research-based content designed to reduce bullying that is appropriate for students' age groups.

Students in elementary grades will participate in:

- Instruction designed so that students can recognize bullying behaviors and how to report them.
- Age-appropriate discussions that encourage peers to intervene when they observe bullying occur.
- Instruction that characterizes bullying as a behavior that results from the student's need to acquire more mature social or coping skills, not an unchangeable trait.

Students in secondary grades will participate in:

- Instruction on the brain's ability to change and grow so the student recognizes bullying behavior can come from a developmental need to acquire more social skills, can change when the brain matures and learns better ways of coping, and is not an unchangeable trait.
- Discussions that portray bullying as undesirable behavior and a means for attaining or maintaining social status at school, and that discourage students from using bullying as a tool for social status.
- Instruction designed so that students recognize the role that reporting bullying behaviors plays in promoting a safe school community.

The district will use an age-appropriate survey regarding school culture that includes relevant questions on bullying to identify and address student concerns.

Each campus has a committee that addresses bullying by focusing on prevention efforts and health and wellness initiatives. The committee will include parents and secondary students. For more information on this committee, including interest in serving on the committee, contact the campus principal.

If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying or witnesses the bullying of another student, the student or parent should notify a teacher, school counselor, principal, or another district employee as soon as possible. Any district employee aware of a report of a bullying incident will relay the report to an appropriate administrator. Procedures for reporting allegations of bullying may be found on the district's website.

A student may anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying by going to the Hays HopeLine website

<https://hayscisd.parentlink.net/tipline/?title=Hays+HopeLine&s=1%20http://hayscisd.parentlink.net/tipline/?title=Hays+HopeLine&s=1> or calling 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying and 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 within 24 hours of the initial allegation notification.

If an investigation determines that bullying occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action (guided by the District Student Code of Conduct) and may, in certain circumstances, notify law enforcement. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying.

The district will provide research-based interventions, which may include counseling options, for students who engage in bullying behaviors, students who are targeted by bullying behaviors, and any student who witnessed bullying behaviors.

Any action taken in response to bullying will comply with state and federal law regarding students with disabilities.

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

Upon recommendation of the administration, the board may transfer a student found to have engaged in bullying to another classroom at the campus. In consultation with the student's parents, the board may transfer the student to another campus in the district.

The parent of a student who has been determined to be a victim of bullying may request that the student be transferred to another classroom or campus within the district. [See **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 21.]

A copy of the district's bullying policy is available in the principal's office, the office of Student Services, and on the district's website, and is included at the end of this handbook as an appendix.

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

[See **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 21, **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 58, **Hazing** on page 90, policy FFI, the district's Student Code of Conduct, and the district improvement plan, a copy of which can be viewed in the campus office.]

Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Other Work-Based Programs (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

The district offers career and technical education programs in the following areas:

- Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources
- Architecture and Construction
- Arts, A/V Technology and Communications
- Biomedical Sciences – Project Lead the Way
- Business, Marketing and Finance
- Education and Training
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Human Services
- Law & Public Safety
- Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics – Project Lead the Way & SystemsGo
- Transportation, Distribution and Logistics

District policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap in its vocational programs, services, or activities, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups as required by Title VI

of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

District policy also prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, or age in its employment practices as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The district will take steps to assure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission or participation in all educational and vocational programs. For information about your rights or grievance procedures, contact the Title IX coordinator and the ADA/Section 504 coordinator.

[See **Nondiscrimination Statement** on page 93 for the name and contact information for the Title IX coordinator and ADA/Section 504 coordinator.]

Michelle Velasquez,
Executive Officer for Special Education
michelle.velasquez@hayscisd.net
512-268-8250

Christina Courson,
Chief of Human Resources
Director of Title IX – staff related
christina.courson@hayscisd.net

Dr. Brian Dawson,
Director of Student Services
Director of Title IX – student related
brian.dawson@hayscisd.net

[See **Nondiscrimination Statement** on page 106 for the name and contact information for the Title IX coordinator and ADA/Section 504 coordinator.]

Celebrations (All Grade Levels)

Although a parent or grandparent may provide food to share for a school-designated function or for a student's birthday, please be aware that children in the school may have severe allergies to certain food products. Discuss any classroom allergies with the teacher before bringing food to share.

Occasionally, the school or a class may host functions or celebrations tied to the curriculum that involve food. The school or teacher will notify students and parents of any known food allergies when soliciting potential volunteers to provide food.

[See **Food Allergies** on page 100.]

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

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse, trafficking, and other maltreatment of children, which may be accessed at <https://www.hayscisd.net/Page/523>.

Trafficking includes both sex and labor trafficking.

Warning Signs of Sexual Abuse

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, to report the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

A child who has been or is being sexually abused may exhibit physical, behavioral, or emotional warning signs, including:

- Difficulty sitting or walking, pain in the genital areas, and claims of stomachaches and headaches;
- 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; or
- Withdrawal, depression, sleeping and eating disorders, and problems in school.

Be aware that children and adolescents who have experienced dating violence may show similar physical, behavioral, and emotional warning signs. [See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 58 and **Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking** on page 9.]

Warning Signs of Trafficking

Child trafficking of any sort is prohibited by the Penal Code. Sex trafficking involves forcing a person, including a child, into sexual abuse, assault, indecency, prostitution, or pornography. Labor trafficking involves forcing a person, including a child, to engage in forced labor or services.

Traffickers are often trusted members of a child's community, such as friends, romantic partners, family members, mentors, and coaches. Some traffickers contact victims online.

Possible warning signs of sexual trafficking in children include:

- Changes in school attendance, habits, friend groups, vocabulary, demeanor, and attitude;
- Sudden appearance of expensive items (for example, manicures, designer clothes, purses, technology);
- Tattoos or branding;
- Refillable gift cards;
- Frequent runaway episodes;
- Multiple phones or social media accounts;
- Provocative pictures posted online or stored on the phone;
- Unexplained injuries;
- Isolation from family, friends, and community; and
- Older romantic partners.

Additional warning signs of labor trafficking in children include:

- Being unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips;
- Being employed but not having a school-authorized work permit;
- Being employed and having a work permit but clearly working outside the permitted hours for students;
- Owning a large debt and being unable to pay it off;
- Not being allowed breaks at work or being subjected to excessively long work hours;
- Being overly concerned with pleasing an employer and/or deferring personal or educational decisions to a boss;
- Not being in control of his or her own money;
- Living with an employer or having an employer listed as a student's caregiver; and
- A desire to quit a job but not being allowed to do so.

[See **Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking** on page 9.]

Reporting and Responding to Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children

Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused, trafficked, or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, to report the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

A child who has experienced sexual abuse or any other type of abuse or neglect should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Children may be more reluctant to disclose sexual abuse than physical abuse and neglect and may only disclose sexual abuse indirectly. As a parent or trusted adult, 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.

If your child is a victim of sexual abuse, trafficking, or other maltreatment, the school counselor or principal will provide information on 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](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention%20and%20Early%20Intervention/Programs%20Available%20In%20Your%20County/default.asp) (<http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention and Early Intervention/Programs Available In Your County/default.asp>).

Reports of abuse, trafficking, or neglect may be made to the CPS division of the DFPS at 1-800- 252-5400 or on the web at [Texas Abuse Hotline Website](http://www.txabusehotline.org) (www.txabusehotline.org).

Further Resources on Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children

The following websites include resources to help increase awareness of child abuse and neglect, sexual abuse, trafficking, and other maltreatment of children:

- [Child Welfare Information Gateway Factsheet](https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/whatiscan.pdf) (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/whatiscan.pdf>)
- [KidsHealth. For Parents. Child Abuse](https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/child-abuse.html) (<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/child-abuse.html>)
- [Office of the Texas Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Team](https://gov.texas.gov/organization/cjd/childsextrafficking) (<https://gov.texas.gov/organization/cjd/childsextrafficking>)

- Human Trafficking of School-aged Children
(<https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/other-services/human-trafficking-of-school-aged-children>)
- Child Sexual Abuse: A Parental Guide from the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault (<https://taasa.org/product/child-sexual-abuse-parental-guide/>)
- National Center of Safe Supportive Learning Environments: Child Labor Trafficking
(<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/human-trafficking-americas-schools/child-labor-trafficcking>)

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

The District shall use a weighted grading system to arrive at the grade point averages (GPA) to be used in determining valedictorian, salutatorian, and class ranking for high school students.

Classes shall be identified as follows:

Tier I Classes—classes designed to prepare students to take Advanced Placement (AP) exams and follow the guidelines prescribed by the College Board.

Tier II Classes—classes by curriculum design and instruction that present material at an accelerated rate and at a higher level than in regular classes.

Tier III Classes—classes by curriculum design and instruction for all students regardless of academic ability.

Tier IV Classes—classes that are developed locally for local credit, including modified Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) courses, for all students regardless of academic ability.

All semester grades, except those awarded for band, choir, drill team, cheerleading, athletics, and student aide, shall be used to compute class ranking.

All semester grades for core (English, math, social studies and science) classes and languages other than English, as defined by the Texas Education Agency in TEC §74.12. shall be used to compute class ranking.

Numerical averages shall be posted to each student's permanent record.

The high school valedictorian and salutatorian shall be selected as follows:

Semester averages in all courses taken for high school credit except as noted above (including those taken in middle school), the average of the third nine-week grading period, and the average of the first six weeks of the final nine-week grading period of the spring semester of the senior year shall be considered when arriving at an average. The sum total of grade points divided by the total number of credits taken shall represent the GPA.

All semester grades for core (English, math, social studies and science) classes and languages other than English, as defined by the Texas Education Agency in TEC §74.12 along with the averages of those classes from the third nine-week grading period and the first six weeks of the final nine-week grading period of the spring semester of the senior year shall be considered when arriving at an average. The sum total of grade points in core and LOTE classes divided by the total number of those credits taken shall represent the GPA.

To be eligible for valedictorian or salutatorian honors at a high school, a student must have been continuously enrolled in the high school for two years preceding graduation and must have

completed the Recommended Program or the Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program for graduation.

Live Oak Academy shall not identify a valedictorian or salutatorian but shall award an honors designation to the graduating senior with the highest GPA as determined in May of each year. Only a student who has been enrolled for 85 days at Live Oak Academy and who enrolled before the first day of the school year shall be eligible as an honors graduate. [See policy EIC for more information.]

Class Schedules (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

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

Schedules are determined at each campus. Additional information regarding schedules and schedule changes can be found in the Middle School Course Guide and the High School Course Guide.

Master Schedule

Each campus develops their Master schedule in the spring prior to the upcoming year, which is driven by students' course needs as indicated on their 4-year plan and selected endorsement pathways. Student course selections during the spring inform how many teachers and sections will be needed for a course. This process allows administrators to plan and to hire for optimum academic strength. Careful course selection also eliminates the need for schedule changes.

Course Selection Process

Students select courses in the spring prior to the next school year by utilizing information learned in and after discussion with counselors, parents, and teachers. Careful, thoughtful decisions must be made during this process. Student course request verifications are provided in the spring and again in the summer so each student can confirm and finalize the appropriate choices that have been selected and entered into the program.

It is important that parents and students attend the informational meetings held during the spring course selection process. Although students complete their course requests online, through the TEAMS student information system, counselors will also keep paper copies of course selection sheets on file. Students will be given a copy of their course selections in the spring so that they will have the opportunity to make changes before their schedule is finalized in the summer. A full staff of counselors is not on campus all summer, so it is best to make adjustments before school gets out.

Graduation Plan

Students develop their 4-year Graduation Plan in eighth grade on <https://www.xello.world.com> with the assistance of their middle school and high school counselors. In accordance with HB5, the Foundation High School Graduation Program, parent and student conferences will be held to plan the students 4 years in high school, including at least one endorsement.

Both parents and students can access this website and discuss their choices and plans together. During the 9th grade school year, high school counselors will meet again with students to talk about their 4-year Graduation Plan. The Graduation Plan is revisited each year during high school as a reference point with students during course selection for the upcoming school year to assure that each student is on-track-to-graduate/meeting all academic graduation requirements.

Schedule Change Process

Teacher schedules and employment are based on student requests; therefore, few schedule changes are approved. Once students receive their course request verifications, they can turn in their changes to their counselor before the end of the school year. Students also have the opportunity to change their requests during schedule pick up before school starts. Students must obtain a Schedule Change Request Form from the counselor or administrative office. The form must be filled in completely or the request will not be considered. The information includes input from the student and parents.

Schedule changes will be considered during the first 2 weeks of class for the following reasons only:

- The student is a senior not scheduled into a course needed for graduation.
- The student has already earned credit for a course in which he/she is currently scheduled or the class is listed twice on the schedule.
- The student does not have the prerequisite for a class listed on the schedule.
- The student has been dismissed from a program where approval must be granted for placement.
- The student does not have a full schedule.
- The schedule has a data entry error.
- The student needs remedial coursework for state assessment graduation requirements.
- The student is not in the appropriate class as determined by an ARD committee decision.
- The student is enrolled in a program whose sponsor, director, or teacher has requested a change.
- There has been approval by the Principal or Academic Dean for a schedule change.

Course Level Changes

Course level changes will be considered only at the end of the first 6 weeks of the first 9 week grading period for each course that offers a different level of the same course. To be considered for a transfer from an Advanced or AP course, the student must have made a sincere effort to succeed by attending tutorials, completing assignments and conferencing with the teacher. When a student moves from one level to another level, the actual grade earned in the previous class transfers with him/her to the new class, regardless of the level. The grade will be calculated into the proper grading period (9 weeks and semester). The student assumes all responsibility for the requirements in the course entered.

The parent must conference with the teacher before a course level change will be considered. If these conditions are met and all are in agreement, the student will be considered for a change. Space availability in the receiving course will be a consideration for a level change.

Changing a schedule could involve a change of more than one period, but every effort will be made to “save” the student’s schedule as approval may also depend on the number of other classes that may be affected by the level change. More information regarding schedule changes can be found in the High School Course Guide.

[See **Schedule Changes** on page 43 for information related to student requests to revise their course schedule.]

College and University Admissions and Financial Aid (All Grade Levels)

For two school years following graduation, a district student who graduates as valedictorian or in the top ten 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.

The student is ultimately responsible for meeting the admission requirements of the university or college, including timely submission of a completed application for college admissions and meeting additional requirements to be considered for highly competitive departments/college major.

If a college or university adopts 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.

The University of Texas at Austin may limit the number of automatically admitted students to 75 percent of the University's enrollment capacity for incoming resident freshmen. From the summer 2022 term through the spring 2024 term, the University will admit the top six percent of a high school's graduating class who meet the above requirements. Additional applicants will be considered by the University through a holistic review process.

As required by law, the district will provide written notice concerning the following:

- Automatic college admission;
- Curriculum requirements for financial aid;
- Benefits of completing the requirements for automatic admission and financial aid; and
- The Texas First Early High School Completion Program and the Texas First Scholarship Program, which requires a student to provide an official copy of assessment results and transcripts, as applicable, to receive credit for the assessments and credits required for early graduation under the program
- The Texas First Scholarship Program
- The Future Texas Teachers Scholarship Program.

Parents and students will be asked to sign an acknowledgment that they received this information.

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

[See **Class Rank/Highest-Ranking Student** on page 41 for information specifically related to how the district calculates a student's rank in class, and requirements for **Graduation** on page 82 for information associated with the foundation graduation program.]

[See **Students in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care)** on page 21 for information on assistance in transitioning to higher education for students in foster care.]

College Credit Courses (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

Students in grades 9–12 may earn college credit through the following opportunities:

- Certain courses taught at the high school campus, which may include courses termed dual credit, Advanced Placement (AP).
- Enrollment in AP or dual credit courses through the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN);

- Enrollment in courses taught in conjunction and in partnership with Austin Community College and the University of Texas, which may be offered on or off campus; and
- Enrollment in courses taught at other colleges or universities.

Enrollment in these programs is based on criteria set forth in the High School Course Guide.

A student may be eligible for subsidies based on financial need for AP or IB exam fees. See **Fees (All Grade Levels)** on page 76 for more information.

Under the Financial Aid for Swift Transfer (FAST) program, a student may be eligible to enroll at no cost to the student in dual credit courses at a participating institution of higher education. The FAST program allows students who are or have been educationally disadvantaged at any time during the four years preceding the student's enrollment in a dual credit course to enroll at no cost to the student. The district will determine eligibility upon the student's enrollment in the dual credit course. See the high school counselor for more information.

A student may be eligible for subsidies based on financial need for AP exam fees. See **Fees (All Grade Levels)** on page 76 for more information. A student may also earn college credit for certain Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses. See **Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Other Work-Based Programs (Secondary Grade Levels Only)** on page 38 for information on CTE and other work-based programs.

A student may be eligible for subsidies based on financial need for AP exam fees. See **Fees (All Grade Levels)** on page 76 for more information.

A student may also earn college credit for certain Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses. See **Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Other Work-Based Programs (Secondary Grade Levels Only)** on page 38 for information on CTE and other work-based programs.

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

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 (All Grade Levels)

Parent Contact Information

A parent is legally required to provide in writing the parent's contact information, including address, phone number, and email address.

A parent must provide the contact information to the district upon enrollment and again within two weeks after the beginning of each following school year while the student is enrolled in the district.

If the parent's contact information changes during the school year, the parent must update the information in writing no more than two weeks after the date the information changes.

A parent may update contact information by contacting their child's school.

Automated Emergency Communications

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

situation may include early dismissal, delayed opening, or restricted access to the campus due to severe weather, another emergency, or a security threat. It is crucial to notify your child's school when a phone number changes.

Another resource for real-time notification includes the following local services, www.warncentraltexas.org for road closure information and hazards and www.haysinformed.com for real time alerts in the Hays County area.

Automated Non Emergency Communications

Your child's school periodically sends information by automated or pre-recorded messages, text messages, or real-time phone or email communications that are closely related to the school's mission and specific to your child, your child's school, or the district.

Standard messaging rates of your wireless phone carrier may apply.

If you do not wish to receive such communications, please contact your child's principal. [See **Safety** on page 112 for information regarding contact with parents during an emergency.]

Complaints and Concerns (All Grade Levels)

The passage outlines the process for addressing complaints or concerns from students or parents within the school district, detailing both informal and formal procedures:

1. Informal Resolution:

- a. Initially, complaints or concerns are typically addressed informally. This can involve a phone call or a conference with the teacher, principal, or another staff member at the school.
- b. If a conference is preferred, parents should schedule an appointment with the appropriate school staff member to discuss the concern.

2. Formal Complaint Process (Policy FNG Local):

- a. If the concern remains unresolved after discussions with the teacher or other staff member, the district has a formal policy (FNG Local) outlining specific steps for addressing complaints.
- b. A Level One complaint form can be obtained from the district website and must be submitted to the lowest level administrator who can resolve the complaint.
- c. The complaint must be submitted within fifteen (15) business days from when the student or parent knew or should have known about the event causing the concern.
- d. A hearing is then held with the appropriate administrator within ten (10) business days of receiving the complaint form. The administrator considers the complaint and remedies sought, providing a written response within ten (10) days after the hearing.

3. Appeals Process:

- a. If the parent or student is not satisfied with the response at Level One, they may appeal by submitting a Level Two complaint form to the next appropriate designee within the same time frame as Level One.
- b. A hearing is conducted, and a response is provided within the same time frame as Level One.

- c. If resolution is not achieved at Level Two, the parent or student may appeal further to the Board of Trustees by submitting a Level Three complaint form to the superintendent's office.
- d. A hearing before the Board of Trustees is conducted, and the Board provides a response.

4. **Policy Reference:**

- a. Additional information regarding complaint procedures can be found in the district's designated board policy, FNG (Local), which is available on the district's website.

This structured approach ensures that concerns are addressed both informally and formally, providing a clear path for resolution and appeal within specified time frames and through designated administrative levels up to the Board of Trustees if necessary.

Conduct (All Grade Levels)

Applicability of School Rules

The board has adopted a Student Code of Conduct that defines standards of acceptable behavior—on and off campus, during remote and in-person instruction, and on district vehicles—and outlines 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 summer instruction, the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct in place for the school year immediately preceding the summer period shall apply, unless the district amends either or both documents for the purposes of summer instruction.

Campus Behavior Coordinator

As required by law, a person at each campus must be designated to serve as the campus behavior coordinator (CBC). The designated person may be the principal or any other campus administrator selected by the principal. The campus behavior coordinator is primarily responsible for maintaining student discipline. The district shall post on its website and in the Student Handbook, for each campus, the email address and telephone number of the person serving as CBC. Contact information may be found at and at <https://www.hayscisd.net/contacts>.

Reporting Crimes

1. **Reporting Crimes:** School administrators are mandated to report crimes as required by law. This involves adhering to legal obligations that dictate reporting procedures for criminal activities that occur on school grounds or involve students or staff.
2. **Calling Law Enforcement:** If an administrator suspects that a crime has been committed on campus, they are required to contact local law enforcement immediately. This action ensures prompt intervention and investigation by law enforcement authorities to address the situation effectively.

School District Authority and Jurisdiction

1. **Scope of Authority:**

- a. School rules and disciplinary authority apply whenever the district's interests are

involved, regardless of the location or context.

- b. This authority extends to activities during the regular school day, including remote instruction activities, and while students are commuting to and from school or participating in school-sponsored activities using district transportation.

2. **Specific Situations Covered:**

- a. ***Traveling on District Transportation:*** Disciplinary authority applies while students are traveling on district-provided transportation.
- b. ***Lunch Periods:*** The authority covers disciplinary actions during lunch periods if students are allowed to leave campus.
- c. ***School-Related Activities:*** It applies to any school-related activity, regardless of the time or location.
- d. ***Misconduct and Retaliation:*** This includes instances of school-related misconduct and retaliation against school personnel or volunteers, regardless of where or when it occurs.
- e. ***Cyberbullying:*** Disciplinary measures can be taken if a student engages in cyberbullying as defined by the Education Code.
- f. ***Criminal Offenses:*** The district retains authority when criminal offenses like criminal mischief or felonies are committed on or off school property, or at school-related events.
- g. ***Proximity to School Property:*** Certain offenses committed within 300 feet of school property are also within the district's jurisdiction.
- h. ***Felony Offenses and Sex Offender Registration:*** Disciplinary actions can be enforced if a student commits a felony or is required to register as a sex offender under state law.

1. **Community and Privacy Rights:**

- a. Community residents are entitled to privacy, protection of private property, and freedom from abusive behavior.
- b. Students who are not transported by district transportation remain the responsibility of their parents or guardians.
- c. Students are expected to conduct themselves appropriately while traveling to and from school, refraining from loitering, littering, trespassing, abusing others, or creating nuisances for community residents.

2. **District Transportation:**

- a. Eligibility for district transportation is determined by the Texas Education Code, which typically includes students residing at least two miles from their home school or those traveling hazardous routes as determined by the student's ARD (Admission, Review, and Dismissal) committee.
- b. The district does not provide transportation for students choosing to attend a campus other than their designated home school.
- c. District transportation is considered an extension of the classroom, and therefore, all district policies regarding student conduct and activities also apply on district transportation.
- d. Disciplinary actions for misbehavior on district transportation are determined by the principal, Campus Behavior Coordinator (CBC), or designated staff member based on written referrals from the transportation provider.

Administrative Processes

1. Independence of School Discipline from Criminal Proceedings:

- School discipline is separate from criminal proceedings, and disciplinary consequences are not delayed or affected by the outcome of any criminal case.
- The district does not wait for the conclusion of criminal proceedings before initiating its own administrative processes related to student misconduct.

2. Administrative Processes:

- The district conducts its own administrative processes, which are independent of juvenile or adult court proceedings.
- To take disciplinary action, the district only needs to establish by a preponderance of evidence that a student violated the Student Code of Conduct, a lower standard than proof beyond a reasonable doubt required in criminal cases.

3. Actions Based on Arrest/Charge:

- If a student is arrested or charged with a penal code violation by law enforcement, the district can proceed with disciplinary actions based on that arrest or charge.
- The district may also act upon receiving notice under Article 15.27 of the Texas Education Code, which pertains to specific notifications related to certain criminal proceedings involving students.

4. Continuation of Administrative Discipline Process:

- The district continues its administrative discipline process regardless of the outcome of criminal proceedings. This includes scenarios where:
 - The district attorney decides not to prosecute.
 - The case is non-suited (dismissed), reduced in severity, or cleared by exception.
 - The police do not file a report.
 - The grand jury does not indict (no-bills) in adult proceedings.

This approach ensures that the district can address student behavior promptly and independently, focusing on maintaining a safe and orderly educational environment while adhering to its own policies and procedures regarding student conduct. It underscores that school discipline is distinct from legal proceedings and operates under its own standards of evidence and administrative processes.

Searches and Interviews

1. Investigation Authority:

- a. Principals, Campus Behavior Coordinators (CBCs), or their designees have the legal authority and responsibility to investigate violations of the Student Code of Conduct.
- b. They may interview students regarding their own conduct or the conduct of others **without prior notice to parents/guardians or their consent.**

- c. This authority is exercised to maintain school safety, security, and to prevent disruptions to instructional programs.

2. Notification to Parents/Guardians:

- a. Parents/guardians will be notified at the discretion of the administrator conducting the investigation and when it is appropriate to do so without interfering with the investigation.
- b. This notification aims to balance the need for transparency with the integrity of the investigation process.

3. Searches and Inspections:

- a. District officials may conduct searches of students, their belongings, and their vehicles in accordance with state and federal law and district policy.
 - Refusal to engage in the search or inspection may result in further disciplinary action.
 - Elopement to avoid/prevent search or inspection will result in disciplinary response - up to and including *In School Suspension*, *Out of School Suspension*, and/or placement in the *District Alternative Education Program*.

b. Disciplinary Response:

- If a student elopes (runs away from/hides), is caught hiding prohibited/illegal items, and/or flushes items down a toilet/throws away prohibited/illegal items to avoid or prevent a search or inspection, the district's disciplinary actions may include:
 1. ***In School Suspension (ISS)***: Temporary removal of the student from regular classroom settings to an assigned area within the school.
 2. ***Out of School Suspension (OSS)***: Temporary exclusion of the student from attending school and school-related activities for a specified period.
 3. ***Placement in the District Alternative Education Program (DAEP)***: Transfer of the student to an alternative educational setting designed to address behavioral issues while continuing their education.
- Searches must be conducted in a reasonable and nondiscriminatory manner, and they require reasonable suspicion or voluntary consent from the student.
- School property such as desks, lockers, district-provided technology, and similar items are subject to search or inspection at any time without notice, as they are provided for student use as a matter of convenience.

c. Purpose of Disciplinary Response:

- The disciplinary measures are intended to deter elopement and maintain compliance with district policies regarding searches and inspections.
- They also aim to uphold the safety and security of the school environment and ensure that all students adhere to established rules and regulations.

4. *Vehicle Searches:*

- a. Vehicles driven to school by students and parked on school property may be searched if there is reasonable suspicion to believe they contain prohibited items.
- b. If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the student may be asked to unlock it.
 - Refusal may lead to involvement of parents/guardians and potentially local law enforcement.

5. *Personal Telecommunication Devices:*

- a. Under limited circumstances and in accordance with applicable law, a student's personal telecommunication device may be searched if there is reason to suspect it contains evidence of wrongdoing.

6. *Blanket Searches and Campus Security:*

- a. For safety and security reasons, principals/CBCs or their designees may conduct blanket searches of all students' backpacks or bags, classrooms, wings, departments, sections, or designated key access points throughout the school year, as deemed appropriate.

7. *Criteria for Reasonable Search:*

- a. A search is considered reasonable if:
 - There are reasonable grounds to suspect that the search will uncover evidence of a Student Code of Conduct violation or criminal offense.
 - The scope of the search is reasonably related to the circumstances justifying it, taking into account factors such as the student's age, sex, and the nature of the violation.

8. *Lockers and Desks:*

- a. Lockers and desks are the property of the district and are subject to inspection or search at any time, without notice, consent, or a search warrant.

For any school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location. The District has the right:

- 1. To limit a student's participation in graduation activities for violating the District's Student Code of Conduct. Participation might include a speaking role, as established by District policy and procedures.
- 2. To refuse entry onto school or District grounds to persons who do not have legitimate business at the school or the District facility.
- 3. To revoke parking privileges.
- 4. To revoke the intra-district or interdistrict transfer of a student.
- 5. To search a student or vehicle driven to school by a student and parked on school property whenever there is reasonable suspicion to believe it contains articles or materials prohibited by the District.
- 6. To search or inspect at any time, without notice, desks, lockers, District-provided technology, or similar items that are the property of the District and are provided for student use as a matter of convenience.

Trained Dogs

1. *Purpose and Scope of Use:*

- a. Trained dogs are utilized to alert district staff to the presence of prohibited or illegal items, specifically including drugs and alcohol.
- b. They may be deployed at any time around lockers and the areas surrounding vehicles parked on district property.

2. *Searches Conducted by Trained Dogs:*

- a. Trained dogs may conduct searches in classrooms, common areas, or student belongings when students are not present.
- b. If a trained dog alerts to an item in a classroom, locker, or vehicle, school officials are authorized to conduct a search of that specific item.

3. *Implementation of Searches:*

- a. The use of trained dogs enhances the district's ability to detect and address issues related to prohibited substances and items.
- b. Searches initiated by alerts from trained dogs are conducted within the parameters of district policies and legal requirements.

4. *Purpose of Searches:*

- a. The primary goal of using trained dogs is to maintain a safe and secure school environment by detecting and addressing the presence of prohibited substances or items.

Overall, the district employs trained dogs strategically to support its efforts in maintaining a drug-free and safe learning environment. The procedures outlined ensure that searches initiated by trained dogs are conducted in accordance with established protocols and respect for student rights within the framework of maintaining school safety.

Wands

1. *Purpose of Random Screening:*

- a. The district conducts periodic random screenings of classrooms to identify and prevent the presence of weapons or other potentially dangerous prohibited items.

2. *Notification and Randomization:*

- a. Principals or their designees receive no advance notice of which classrooms will undergo screening.
- b. Screenings are randomized to ensure fairness and to prevent any classroom or student from being intentionally or repeatedly selected.

3. *Parental Consent and Student Participation:*

- a. Parental consent is not required for students to participate in the random screening process.
- b. Students cannot refuse to participate if selected to be wanded during these screenings.

4. *Implementation and Safety Initiative:*

- a. The use of wand screenings is part of the district's broader efforts to maintain a safe and secure learning environment for all students and staff.
- b. By conducting these screenings randomly and without advance notice, the district aims to deter and detect the presence of prohibited items effectively.

Security Personnel

1. *Primary Responsibilities:*

- a. SROs are tasked with ensuring the security and protection of students, staff, and district property.
- b. They are responsible for investigating criminal, safety, and security-related matters within the school environment.

2. *Enforcement and Prevention:*

- a. SROs play a crucial role in enforcing laws, resolving problems, and preventing or reducing incidents of school violence.

3. *Community Engagement:*

- a. They establish positive relationships with students and the community, fostering trust and cooperation.

4. *Support and Coordination:*

- a. SROs assist in planning and coordinating security measures for major school events and extracurricular activities.
- b. They collaborate with school officials in conducting drills and simulations related to crisis management, emergency response, and threat mitigation.

5. *Education and Resource:*

- a. SROs serve as educational resources for campus and district staff on school safety practices and recognizing criminal behavior.
- b. They educate students through relevant and informative programs aimed at promoting safety and awareness.

SROs contribute to the overall safety and well-being of the school community by integrating law enforcement expertise with educational support and community engagement. Their multifaceted role helps to create a secure environment conducive to learning and positive student development.

Deliveries

Except in emergencies, delivery of messages or packages to students will not be allowed during instructional time. A parent may leave a message or a package, such as a forgotten lunch, for the student to pick up from the front office during a passing period or lunch.

Delivery Services for Student Meals

As part of enhanced safety at campuses, beginning in the 2022-2023 school year, all Hays CISD campuses will no longer accept deliveries from meal delivery services or restaurants for student lunches. And, campuses will no longer have drop-off tables for meals. Parents may still bring outside food for their children if they plan to deliver the meals directly to their child's designated lunch period. All guests are required to follow existing safety protocols and check in with ID at the front office.

Social Events

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

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

A parent interested in serving as a chaperone for any school social events should contact the campus principal and must be registered in the VIP's system (Volunteer in Public Schools) at <https://www.hayscisd.net/Page/113>

Counseling

The district has a comprehensive school counseling program that includes:

- A guidance curriculum to help students develop their full educational potential, including the student's interests and career objectives;
- A responsive services component to intervene on behalf of any student whose immediate personal concerns or problems put the student's continued educational, career, personal, or social development at risk;
- An individual planning system to guide a student as the student plans, monitors, and manages the student's own educational, career, personal, and social development; and
- Systems to support the efforts of teachers, staff, parents, and other members of the community in promoting the educational, career, personal, and social development of students.

The district will make a preview of the program, including all materials and curriculum, available to parents to review during school hours.

Academic Counseling

Elementary and Middle School Grade Levels

The school counselor will provide information to students and parents about college and university admissions and the importance of planning for postsecondary education, including appropriate coursework and financial aid availability and requirements.

In both grade 7 and 8, each student will receive instruction on how to best prepare for high school,

college, and a career; this includes an overview of endorsements and Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways as well as all other advance course options available to them during their 4 years in high school.

High School Grade Levels

High school students and their parents are encouraged to talk with a school counselor, teacher, or principal to learn more about course offerings, graduation requirements, and early graduation procedures.

Each year, high school students will be provided information on anticipated course offerings for the next school year, how to make the most of academic and career and technical education (CTE) opportunities, and the importance of postsecondary education.

The school counselor will also provide information each year a student is enrolled in high school regarding:

- The importance of postsecondary education;
- The advantages of earning an endorsement and completing the foundation program with the distinguished level of achievement;
- The disadvantages of pursuing a high school equivalency exam (GED) as opposed to earning a high school diploma;
- Financial aid eligibility and how to apply for financial aid;
- Automatic admission to state-funded Texas colleges and universities;
- Eligibility requirements for the TEXAS Grant;
- Availability of district programs that allow students to earn college credit;
- Availability of tuition and fee assistance for postsecondary education for students in foster care; and
- Availability of college credit awarded by institutions of higher education to veterans and military service members for military experience, education, and training.

Additionally, the school counselor can provide information about workforce opportunities after graduation or technical and trade school opportunities, including opportunities to earn industry-recognized certificates and licenses.

[See **Scholarships and Grants** on page 90 for more information.]

Personal Counseling (All Grade Levels)

The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal, social, and family concerns, including emotional or mental health issues and substance abuse. A student who wishes to meet with the school counselor should contact the counseling office. 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.

If your child has experienced trauma, contact the school counselor for more information.

[See **Mental Health Support** on page 96, **Child Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children** on page 39, and **Dating Violence** on page 58.]

Course Credit (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

A student at any grade level enrolled in a high school course will earn credit for the course only if the final grade is 70 or above. For a two-part (two-semester, 1-credit course), the student's grades from both halves (semesters) will be averaged and credit will be awarded if the combined average is 70 or above. If the student's combined average is less than 70, the student will be awarded

credit only for the half (semester) with the passing grade.

Credit by Examination—If a Student Has Taken the Course/Subject (Grades 6–12)

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 or a final grade by passing an examination approved by the district's board of trustees on the essential knowledge and skills defined for that course or subject.

Examples of prior instruction include incomplete coursework due to a failed course or excessive absences, homeschooling, or coursework by a student transferring from a nonaccredited school. The opportunity to earn credit by examination after the student has had prior instruction is sometimes referred to as "credit recovery."

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

If a student is granted approval to take an examination for credit, the student must score at least 70 on the examination to receive credit for the course or subject.

[See the school counselor and policy EHDB(LOCAL) for more information.]

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

Students may take Credit by Exam to earn credit in a course in which they have had NO prior instruction (i.e., for advancement or to accelerate to the next grade level). Credit by Exam is offered through the University of Texas at Austin or Texas Tech University, but administered on the Hays CISD high school campuses.

A student will be permitted to earn credit by examination for an academic course or subject area for which the student had no prior instruction for advancement or to accelerate to the next grade level.

The school district pays for the cost for Exams for Acceleration and will provide dates during the year for students to test. The dates for testing are published on the District's website. If a student wants to take an Examination for Acceleration during the school year, he or she must contact his or her counselor to make arrangements to take the test. If a student plans to take an examination, the student or parent must register with the school counselor no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. A student may take a specific examination only once per testing window.

The only exceptions to the published testing windows will be for examinations administered by another entity or to accommodate a student experiencing homelessness or a student involved in the foster care system.

When another entity administers an examination, the student and the district must comply with the testing schedule of the other entity.

If a student plans to take an examination, the student or parent must register with the school counselor no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. [See policy EHDC for more information.]

Alternative Credit Options

Several options are open to students who want to earn credit outside the traditional classroom. Students may take correspondence courses, examinations for credit recovery or acceleration,

participate in dual credit or concurrent enrollment courses, or participate in Hays CISD online learning opportunities. Online coursework is offered on Edgenuity: (<https://www.hayscisd.net/digitallearning>).

Students should contact their counselor for more information about these alternatives as not all courses are allowed for alternative credit options. Students are not allowed to take more than two online courses in one semester or more than two dual credit courses in one semester. Please see your school counselor for more information and approval for enrolling in these classes.

Students who are registered with NCAA should check with their counselor before enrolling in any distance learning or online class because Edgenuity (<http://www.edgenuity.com/solutions/ncaa/>) and the University of Texas at <https://highschool.utexas.edu/> offers online courses that are taught by approved NCAA instructors.

Not all online programs nor the Hays CISD Edgenuity courses are approved for NCAA eligibility. Taking a non-approved NCAA course online could negatively impact a student's NCAA eligibility.

Students who are registered with the NCAA should not enroll in online credit recovery. There are online programs that are approved for NCAA credit eligibility. Students should check with their counselor for more information.

Students in Grades 1–5

A student in elementary school is eligible to accelerate to the next grade level if:

- The student scores at least an 80 on each examination in the subject areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies;
- A district administrator recommends that the student be accelerated; and
- The student's parent gives written approval of the grade advancement.

Students in Grades 6–12

A student in grade 6 or above is eligible to earn course credit with:

- A passing score of at least 80 on an examination approved by the board; or
- A scaled score of 50 or higher on an examination administered through the College Level Examination Program (CLEP); or
- A score of 3 or higher on an AP examination, as applicable.

A student may take an examination to earn high school course credit no more than twice. If a student fails to achieve the designated score on the applicable exam before the beginning of the school year in which the student would need to enroll in the course according to the school's high school course sequence, the student must complete the course.

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

The District emphasizes its commitment to providing a safe and discrimination-free environment for all students, particularly regarding sexual harassment. Students learn best, and their welfare is best served, in a school environment that is free from dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

Students are expected to treat peers and district employees with courtesy and respect, avoid offensive behaviors, and stop those behaviors as directed. District employees are likewise expected to treat students with courtesy and respect.

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly address inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are based on a person's race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law. A copy of the district's policy is available on the district's website at <https://www.hayscisd.net/Bullying>. [See policy FFH for more information.]

Dating Violence

Dating violence will not be tolerated at school. To report dating violence, see **Reporting Procedures** on page 58.

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 past or current dating partner;
- Attempts to isolate the student from friends and family;
- Stalking; or
- Encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

The potential exists that the actions and/or behavior may require notification to law enforcement as a violation of Texas law. There are criminal ramifications for this behavior and the district will cooperate with the law enforcement investigation.

Local assistance and information can be obtained from Hays Caldwell Women's Center, <https://www.hcwc.org/>

In accordance with law, when the district receives a report of dating violence, a district official will immediately notify the parent of the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator.

The counselor's office has information about the dangers of dating violence and resources for seeking help.

For more information on dating violence, see:

- Texas Attorney General's office [recognizing and responding to dating violence flier](https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/sites/default/files/files/child-support/papa/session%2010/recognizing-relationship-violence-en.pdf) (<https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/sites/default/files/files/child-support/papa/session%2010/recognizing-relationship-violence-en.pdf>)
- The CDC's [Preventing Teen Dating Violence](https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/teendatingviolence/fastfact.html) (<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/teendatingviolence/fastfact.html>).

[See **Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking** on page 8.]

Discrimination

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

Disruptions

1. **Maintaining Discipline:** Discipline and order must be upheld during school hours and at school events to ensure a conducive learning environment and safe conditions for all.
2. **Disruptions Defined:** Disruption of school operations is explicitly prohibited and may constitute a misdemeanor offense. Actions constituting disruption include:
 - a. Interfering with movement in exits, entrances, or hallways of school buildings without authorization.
 - b. Seizing control of all or part of a building to interfere with authorized activities.
 - c. Using force, violence, or threats to prevent participation in authorized assemblies or causing disruption during such events.
 - d. Interfering with movement at exits or entrances to district property.
 - e. Using force, violence, or threats to prevent individuals from entering or leaving district property without authorization.
 - f. Disrupting classes or other school activities within or near district property, which may include making loud noises, attempting to entice students away from required activities, or entering classrooms without authorization and causing disruptions.
3. **Protection of Constitutional Rights:** These provisions are designed not to infringe upon any rights of free speech or expression guaranteed by the United States or state constitutions. However, conduct by students, whether inside or outside of class, that significantly disrupts classwork, causes substantial disorder, or invades the rights of others is prohibited.
4. **Public and School Property:** These rules apply not only to school property but also extend to public property within 500 feet of school grounds or buildings used for school-related activities.
5. **Bus Safety and Seatbelts:** Students are required to wear seat belts properly while on district buses. Failure to comply can result in disciplinary actions such as suspension or revocation of transportation privileges.
6. **Disruption of Transportation:** Intentionally disrupting or interfering with lawful student transportation to and from school or school-sponsored activities is a misdemeanor offense, except for children under 12 engaging in such conduct.
7. **Disruption by False Alarm or Terroristic Threat:** Engaging in conduct involving false alarms or terroristic threats related to a public school is a serious offense under Texas Penal Code, ranging from state jail felonies to third-degree felonies depending on the severity.
8. **Disruption by Exhibition of Firearms:** Intentionally exhibiting, using, or threatening to use a firearm in a manner that causes alarm, personal injury, or property damage on school premises or during school-sponsored activities is a third-degree felony under Texas Education Code.

These provisions are designed to maintain a safe and orderly environment conducive to learning, while also ensuring that serious disruptions or threats to school safety are swiftly addressed through legal and disciplinary measures.

Drug/Alcohol Use

1. **Prohibited Substances:** Students are prohibited from possessing, using, transmitting, selling, or being under the influence of the following substances:
 - a. Any controlled substance or dangerous drug as defined by Texas Health and Safety Code, Section 481.002, including but not limited to marijuana, narcotics, hallucinogens, stimulants, depressants, amphetamines, or barbiturates. Exceptions include students with valid prescriptions for low-THC cannabis as authorized by Chapter 487 of the Health and Safety Code.
 - b. Alcohol or any alcoholic beverage.
 - c. Abusable volatile chemicals listed under sections 485.031 through 485.034 of the Texas Health and Safety Code.
 - d. Any other intoxicant, mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior-altering drug.
 - e. Drug paraphernalia as defined in Texas Health and Safety Code, Section 481.002.
2. **Prescription Drugs:** Students using prescription drugs on school property must provide the medication in its original container, properly labeled, to the school nurse. This must be accompanied by a written request from the parent, legal guardian, or another authorized individual for administration.
3. **Consequences:** Violations of this policy can result in disciplinary actions by the school and may also lead to criminal prosecution.
4. **Searches:** Cars, lockers, common areas, and classrooms may be searched for alcohol and drugs as outlined in Board Policy. This is conducted in accordance with established procedures to ensure compliance with school rules and safety.

Ejection or Exclusion from School Property

This policy outlines the procedures and authority for school administrators or peace officers to refuse entry or eject individuals from district property under specific circumstances, as governed by Texas Education Code § 37.105. Here are the key points:

1. **Authority for Refusal or Ejection:** A school administrator or peace officer has the authority to refuse entry or eject a person from district property if:
 - a. The person refuses to leave peaceably upon request, and
 - b. Either poses a substantial risk of harm to any person, or behaves in a manner inappropriate for the school setting after receiving a verbal warning from the administrator or officer.
2. **Verbal Warning and Written Explanation:** Before ejection or exclusion, the administrator or peace officer must issue a verbal warning to the individual and provide a written explanation of the appeal process at the time of ejection or exclusion.
3. **Duration of Ejection/Exclusion:** Ejection or exclusion from district property may not exceed two years. If the individual being ejected is a parent, accommodations must be made to ensure their participation in ARD (Admission, Review, and Dismissal) or 504 committee meetings as required by law.

4. **Written Log of Verbal Warnings:** The administrator or peace officer must maintain a written log that includes the individual's name, the date of the verbal warning, and a brief description of the inappropriate behavior leading to the warning.
5. **Appeal Process:** Individuals who have been refused entry or ejected from district property may appeal the decision according to district policies outlined in FNG (LOCAL) or GF (LOCAL), as applicable. The timelines for grievance procedures will be adjusted as necessary to allow the person to address the board in person within 90 days, unless the complaint is resolved before a board hearing.

Harassment

Engaging in harassing behavior that threatens harm or bodily injury to another student, subjects them to physical confinement or restraint, or significantly harms their physical or emotional well-being is expressly prohibited within the school's policies.

Harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects a 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.

Sexual Harassment and Gender-Based Harassment

The below statement outlines a clear and strict policy against sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, and sexual abuse within a school or district setting. Here's a breakdown of the key points:

1. **Definition of Sexual Harassment:** It includes any unwanted physical, verbal, or visual sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other sexually-oriented conduct that is offensive or objectionable to the recipient. This definition covers a broad range of behaviors including epithets, derogatory comments, slurs, gestures, and offensive imagery.
2. **Prohibition of Harassment:** The policy explicitly prohibits sexual harassment and gender-based harassment by anyone within the school community, including employees, volunteers, and students. It emphasizes that such conduct, whether verbal, physical, or through gestures, is strictly prohibited.
3. **Expectations of Behavior:** All students are expected to treat others (students, employees, volunteers, and board members) with courtesy and respect. They are required to avoid offensive behaviors and to cease such behaviors immediately when asked or instructed to stop.

4. **Responsibility to Report:** It's implied that there is a responsibility for individuals who experience or witness harassment to report it to appropriate authorities within the school or district. Reporting mechanisms and procedures are typically outlined elsewhere in official documents or policies.
5. **Accountability and Consequences:** The policy likely includes information about the consequences for violating these guidelines, which may range from disciplinary actions to legal consequences depending on the severity and nature of the harassment.

This policy not only defines what constitutes sexual harassment but also sets clear expectations for behavior and consequences for non-compliance. It aims to create a safe and respectful environment within the school community by addressing and prohibiting any form of sexual or gender-based harassment.

Examples of sexual harassment may include, but are not 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 that a reasonable person would not construe as sexual in nature, such as comforting a child with a hug or taking the child's hand. However, romantic, sexual, and other inappropriate social relationships between students and district employees are prohibited, even if consensual.

Gender-based harassment includes physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on a student's gender, the student's expression of characteristics perceived as stereotypical for the student's gender, or the student's failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity.

Gender-based harassment can occur regardless of the student's or the harasser's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a student may include, but are not 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 or participates in an investigation of discrimination, harassment, or dating violence is prohibited. A person who makes a false claim, 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.

Terroristic Threat

The definition of a terroristic threat as per Penal Code § 22.07 is quite comprehensive and covers various scenarios where threatening behavior is considered illegal. Here's a breakdown of what constitutes a terroristic threat based on the provided text:

1. **Intent and Threat:** A person commits a terroristic threat by threatening to commit any offense involving violence to any person or property.
2. **Intent to Cause Reaction:** The threat must be made with the intent to:
 - a. Cause a reaction by an official or volunteer agency organized to deal with emergencies.
 - b. Place any person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury.
 - c. Prevent or interrupt the occupation or use of various places such as buildings, places of assembly, places of employment, vehicles, public places, etc.
 - d. Cause impairment or interruption of public services like communications, transportation, utilities (water, gas, power), or other public services.
 - e. Place the public or a substantial group of the public in fear of serious bodily injury.
 - f. Influence the conduct or activities of a branch or agency of the federal government, state government, or political subdivision.
3. **Scope of Threat:** The definition covers a wide range of potential threats, from individual harm to public safety, and aims to prevent any behavior that induces fear, disrupts public services, or influences governmental activities.
4. **Legal Consequences:** In legal terms, making a terroristic threat is a serious offense and can lead to criminal charges. The severity of consequences can vary depending on the specifics of the threat and the resulting impact.

Reporting Procedures

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

Upon receiving a report, the district will determine whether the allegations, if proven, constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH. If not, the district will refer to policy FFI to determine whether the allegations, if proven, constitute bullying, as defined by law and policy FFI. If the alleged prohibited conduct also meets the statutory and policy definitions for bullying, an investigation of bullying will also be conducted. [See **Bullying** on page 35]

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

Investigation of Report

Allegations of prohibited conduct, which includes dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, will be promptly investigated.

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 comply with law.

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 its investigation at the conclusion of the agency's investigation.

During 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 was not unlawful.

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

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

Discrimination

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 58.]

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

Hays CISD has established its own Virtual School modeled after the a la carte model of the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN). A student has the option, with certain limitations, to enroll in a course offered through the Hays CISD Virtual School to earn course credit for graduation.

Courses in the Hays CISD Virtual School are subject to the "no pass, no play" rules. [See **Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations** on page 74.] Enrollment is requested through the Virtual School request form, and is approved by the high school counselor. Students may enroll in one course at a time. During the summer, and with prior approval from their counselor, a student may enroll in two courses at the same time.

A parent may ask questions or request that their child be enrolled in a TXVSN course by contacting the school counselor. Unless an exception is made by the *[insert position]*, 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 addressing distance learning will be distributed to parents of middle and high school students at least once each year. If you do not receive a copy or have questions about this policy, please contact *[insert a position, such as "the principal"]*.

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, newspapers, yearbooks, brochures, flyers, and the like.

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 more than 10 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. Approval will be granted or denied within two school days.

The campus principal has designated locations as the location for approved non-school materials to be placed for voluntary viewing or collection by students. [See policy FNAA for more information.]

A student may appeal a decision in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL). 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.

[See policy FNG(LOCAL) for student complaint procedures.]

From Others

No person or group will sell, circulate, distribute, or post on any district premises written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials that is not sponsored by the district or by a district-affiliated school-support organization, 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 Principal for prior review. The Principal will approve or reject the materials within two school days of the time the materials are received. The requestor may appeal a rejection in accordance with the appropriate district complaint policy. [See policies DGBA or GF for more information.]

The Principal has designated the locations 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 non-curriculum-related student group meeting held in accordance with policy 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)

Purpose:

The District's student dress code supports equitable educational access and is written in a manner that does not reinforce stereo-types and prioritizes building positive relationships between educators and students. To ensure effective and equitable enforcement of this dress code, campus administrators shall enforce the dress code consistently and in a manner that does not (i) reinforce

or increase marginalization of any group, (ii) result in body shaming based on body size or type, or (iii) discriminate against students due to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or disability.

General Guidelines:

Students shall be dressed and groomed in a manner that is clean and neat and that will not be a health or safety hazard to themselves or others. The District prohibits any clothing or grooming that in the principal's judgment may reasonably be expected to cause disruption of or interference with normal school operations.

1. Basic Principle:

- a. Certain body parts must be covered for all students.
- b. Clothes must be worn in a way such that the genitals, buttocks, breasts, and nipples are fully covered with opaque fabric.
- c. All items listed in the "must wear" and "may wear" categories below must meet this basic principle.

2. Students Must Wear, while following the basic principle of Section 1 above:

- a. A shirt; and
- b. Pants/jeans or the equivalent (for example, a skirt, sweatpants, leggings, a dress, or shorts); and
- c. Shoes

3. Students May Wear, as long as these items do not violate Section 1 above:

- a. Religious headwear.
- b. Hats facing straight forward or straight back that must allow the face and ears to be visible to staff and not interfere with the line of sight;
- c. Hoodie sweatshirts (wearing the hood over the head is not allowed),
- d. Fitted pants, including opaque leggings, yoga pants, and "skinny jeans";
- e. Ripped jeans, as long as underwear and buttocks are not exposed;
- f. Tank tops, including spaghetti straps and halter tops;
- g. Athletic attire; and
- h. Hairstyles of any length and style.

4. Students Cannot Wear:

- a. Violent language or images.
- b. Images or language depicting drugs or alcohol (or any illegal item or activity) or any other substance prohibited under policy FNCF(LEGAL);
- c. Clothing that promotes gang affiliation.
- d. Hate speech, profanity, or pornography.
- e. Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class or consistently marginalized groups.
- f. Any clothing that reveals visible undergarments
- g. Swimsuits (except as required in class, field trips, or athletic practice)
- h. Accessories that could be considered dangerous or could be used as a weapon; or
- i. Any item that obscures the face or ears (except as a religious observance).

The student and parent may determine the student's personal dress and grooming standards, provided that they comply with the general guidelines set out above and with the student dress code outlined in the student handbook.

Enforcement

Dress code enforcement shall be the responsibility of the administrators on campus.

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, or another location, for the remainder of the day or until the problem is corrected, or 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. Repeated or severe offenses may result in more serious disciplinary action in accordance with the Hays CISD Student Code of Conduct and Student Handbook.

Students in violation of Section 1 and/or 4 shall be provided three options to be dressed more to code during the school day:

- a. Students shall be asked to put on their own alternative clothing, if already available at school, to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day.
- b. Students shall be provided with temporary school clothing to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day.
- c. If necessary, the student's parent may be called during the school day to bring alternative clothing for the student to wear for the remainder of the day.

Student ID's

The district's dress code includes proper display of the student's campus identification card (ID). All students are expected to wear the campus-issued SmartTag ID while on campus. More information on SmartTag here <https://www.hayscisd.net/smarttag>.

Exceptions

Exceptions to these dress requirements are to be made as necessary to allow students to observe religious customs or beliefs and as necessary to accommodate medical or health needs.

Campus Options

Campuses may not impose more prescriptive or standard dress code requirements. The intent is to provide a prescriptive dress code that is consistent across all campuses throughout the district. The only exception to this would be students attending DAEP/Impact.

Extracurricular Activities

The principal, in cooperation with the sponsor, coach, or other person in charge of an extracurricular activity, may regulate the dress and grooming of students who participate in the activity. Students who violate dress and grooming standards established for such an activity may

be removed or excluded from the activity for a period determined by the principal or sponsor and may be subject to other disciplinary action, as specified in the Student Code of Conduct. [See FO series]

Dress-Up/Costumes

Costume-related clothing and accessories are strictly prohibited unless they are part of a teacher-approved or campus-sanctioned event. Masks that fully cover the face are not permitted at any time, including on designated dress-up days.

Student ID Requirements

All students (PK – 12th) will be issued a Hays CISD identification card (ID) for the academic year. The ID will designate their assigned campus, name, academic year, grade, legislatively mandated information and student ID number. The ID is to be worn at all times while on campus or utilizing campus transportation. Any campus activity that utilizes the student ID # will rely on the presence of the ID for tracking purposes, i.e. bus transportation, café, library, etc.

In the event the students loses, misplaces, forgets an ID, they will be expected to report to their designated campus location to immediately receive a replacement. The cost of a replacement ID will be \$5.00. This price is determined by the costs associated for supplies including card, lanyard, sleeve and printing.

Disciplinary Actions

All students are expected to comply with the ID standard. The presence of a person on a campus with a valid, current ID card is the most easily recognizable security action that can be utilized. The district recognizes that tracking unauthorized persons on a campus including students is one of the most effective ways to account for campus safety. Additionally, it is imperative that students have their IDs readily available daily when boarding and exiting their bus to expedite unnecessary roadway traffic delays.

The following actions will result in disciplinary action regarding campus ID violations.

1. Failure to have ID properly displayed and worn around the neck.
 - a. The ID must be worn at all times. It is not to be worn inside a shirt or jacket nor placed in a pocket.
 - b. It is to be visible at all times.
 - c. Includes district transportation (bus drivers will document and forward to campus team)
 - d. Exceptions include athletic activities.
2. Failure to have ID
 - a. Includes district transportation (bus drivers will document and forward to campus team)
 - b. This requires a student to immediately report to their designated campus office to obtain a replacement ID for a fee. This includes a “forgotten” ID.
 - c. The current cost is \$5.00 per ID.
 - i. This fee is determined by the cost of supplies to replace the ID.
3. Tampering with an ID
 - a. This includes any intentional destruction, defacing, removal of information and/or

stickers.

Campuses (PK – 12th grade) *Fees immediately assessed for a lost ID.

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 1 st | Verbal Warning (Forgotten ID – warning with temporary ID issued to student) |
| 2 nd | Verbal Warning (Communication with parent & same as above) |
| 3 rd | Written Documentation (Communication with parent & same as above) |
| 3+ | Written Documentation (Potential loss of transportation privileges for a period of time and other disciplinary action) |

Impact Procedure

Any student that is placed at Impact for a disciplinary action will adhere to the following guidelines:

The home campus will seize the campus ID and hold it until the student returns to their home campus. The student will receive a new “Impact” campus ID for the period of their placement. The student will surrender their Impact ID to Impact staff upon successful completion of their time. The student will report to the designated official upon their return to their home campus to obtain their original campus ID. Impact will retain the student’s ID for the school year in the event the student returns to Impact for the academic year.

Electronic Devices and Technology Resources (All Grade Levels)

Possession and Use of Personal Telecommunications Devices, Including Cell Phones, and Other Electronic Devices

The district permits students to possess personal cell phones for safety purposes; however, these devices must remain turned off during the instructional day, including during all testing, unless they are being used for approved instructional purposes. [See **Textbooks, Electronic Textbooks, Technological Equipment, and Other Instructional Materials** on page 123 for graphing calculator applications on computing devices.]

This policy is intended to support student learning while minimizing student distractions and disruptions. Teachers are expected to incorporate technology as a part of their lesson plans as long as it supports the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Students may use their own technology (cell phones, laptops, iPad, etc.) to support the learning objectives in the classroom. The teacher has the final authority in his/her classroom of acceptable cell phone usage.

A student must have approval to possess other personal telecommunications devices on campus such as laptops, tablets, or other portable computers.

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.

The use of cell phones 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.

If a student uses a telecommunications device without authorization during the school day, the device will be confiscated.

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student’s personal telecommunications device may be searched by authorized personnel. [See **Searches** on page 119 and policy FNF for more information.]

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

Elementary

Student use guidelines during the school day

- Students may use their personal electronics on campus with adult supervision and permission.
- Cell phones must be out of sight and silenced in the classroom unless otherwise instructed.

Violation of electronics policy:

Elementary students who violate the policy will have the following consequences:

- 1st Offense – Conference with the student and parent contact.
- 2nd Offense - Confiscation of the device. ***Device returned at the end of the day.***
- 3rd Offense - Confiscation of the device. ***Device returned at the end of the day.***

Students who fail to surrender devices will elevate consequences immediately. Confiscated phone must be picked up by the parent or guardian listed on the student contact information.

Parents can help their child support this policy, the learning environment, and our school's mission by:

- Discussing the school expectation with your child.

Middle School Campus

This procedure is intended to support student learning while minimizing student distractions and disruptions. The procedure will also support and enhance current safety procedures and protocols. Teachers are expected to incorporate technology as a part of their lesson plans as long as it supports the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Students may use their own technology (laptops or iPad) to support the learning objectives in the classroom

Student use guidelines during the school day (8:10 AM-3:35 PM)

- Students may use their personal electronics on campus before 8:00 AM and after 3:35 PM.
- Cell phones must be out of sight and on airplane mode in the classroom.
- Students will not have their cell phones out during class or passing periods.
- Cell Phone use is prohibited in bathrooms, locker rooms, changing areas or any area considered private.
- Principals may allow students to use their cell phones during lunch time.

Violation of electronics procedure

Students who violate the procedure will have the following consequences.

- 1st Offense – Warning
- 2nd Offense – Confiscation of the device. ***Device returned at the end of the day.***
- 3rd Offense – Confiscation of the device and parent notified. ***Device returned at the end of the day.***
- 4th Offense – Confiscation of the device, mandatory parent meeting. Assign one hour of after school detention. ***Device returned at the end of the day.***
- Multiple Offenses – Confiscation of the device, may charge a \$10 fee, and be assigned

In-School Suspension. ***Device returned at the end of the day.***

Students who fail to surrender devices will elevate consequences immediately. Confiscated phone will be returned to the student at the end of day.

Parent expectations

Parents can help their child support this policy, the learning environment, and our school's mission by:

- Discussing the school expectation with your child
- Picking up confiscated devices in a timely manner between 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM

High School Campus

This procedure is intended to support student learning while minimizing student distractions and disruptions. The procedure will also support and enhance current safety procedures and protocols. Teachers are expected to incorporate technology as a part of their lesson plans as long as it supports the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Students may use their own technology (laptops or iPads) to support the learning objectives in the classroom.

Student use guidelines during the school day (8:45am-4:10pm)

- Students may use their personal electronics on campus before 8:45 AM and after 4:10 PM.
- Students will not have their cell phones out during class.
- Cell phones must be out of sight and on airplane mode in the classroom.
- Cell phone use is prohibited in bathrooms, locker rooms, changing areas or any area considered private, and while driving on campus.
- Students are not allowed to have cell phones out during passing periods.
- Principals may allow students to use their cell phones during lunch time.

Violation of electronics procedure

Students who violate the procedure will have the following consequences.

- 1st Offense – Warning
- 2nd Offense – Confiscation of the device. ***Device returned at the end of the day.***
- 3rd Offense – Confiscation of the device and assigned one-hour after school detention. ***Device returned at the end of the day.***
- 4th Offense – Confiscation of the device and assigned In-School Suspension. ***Device returned at the end of the day.***
- Multiple Offenses – Confiscation of the device and may charge a \$10 fee. ***Device returned at the end of the day.***
 - Loss of privileges
 - Other consequences as assigned by the administration

Students who fail to surrender devices will elevate consequences immediately. Confiscated phone will be returned to the student at the end of the day.

Parent expectations

Parents can help their child support this policy, the learning environment, and our school's mission by:

- Discussing the school expectation with your child
- Call the campus if you have any questions at (512) 268-2911 for Hays HS, (512) 268-8454 for Lehman HS, and (512) 268-8462 for Live Oak

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

Instructional Use of Personal Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices

Students must obtain prior approval to use personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional purposes while on campus. Students must also sign a user agreement that contains applicable rules for use (separate from this handbook).

All personal devices must be turned off during the instructional day when not in use for approved instructional purposes. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources

District-owned technology resources may be issued to individual students for instructional purposes. Use of the district's network systems and equipment is restricted to approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign an acceptable use policy (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 on district-owned or personally owned equipment, 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 in accordance with 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.

This type of behavior may constitute bullying or harassment, as well as impede future endeavors of a student. We encourage parents to review with their child the ["Before You Text" Sexting Prevention Course](https://txssc.txstate.edu/tools/courses/before-you-text/) (<https://txssc.txstate.edu/tools/courses/before-you-text/>), a state-developed program that addresses the consequences of sexting.

In accordance with state law, the district prohibits the installation or use of TikTok or any successor application or service on a district device, along with any other social media application or service determined by the governor.

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. In some cases, the consequence may be expulsion.

The potential exists that the actions and/or behavior may require notification to law enforcement as a violation of Texas law. There are criminal ramifications for this behavior and the district will cooperate with the law enforcement investigation.

End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments

[See **Graduation** on page 82 and **Standardized Testing** on page 121.]

Emergent Bilingual Students (All Grade Levels)

A student who is an emergent bilingual (EB) student is entitled to receive specialized services from the district, such as Dual Language Immersion or English as a Second Language (ESL) Education. A Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC), consisting of both district personnel and at least one parent representative, will determine whether the student qualifies for services based on state-established criteria. The student's parent must consent to any services recommended by the LPAC. However, pending the receipt of parental consent or denial of services, an eligible student will receive the services to which the student is entitled.

To determine a student's level of proficiency in English, the LPAC will use information from assessments administered upon initial enrollment to Texas schools. If the student qualifies for services, and once a level of proficiency has been established, the LPAC will designate instructional and linguistic accommodations or program placement that the student will require to eventually become proficient at grade level work in English. Each year, the LPAC will review assessment data to determine a student's continued eligibility for the program.

The LPAC will also determine whether certain accommodations are necessary for any state-mandated assessments. The STAAR Spanish, as mentioned at **Standardized Testing** on page 121, may be administered to an EB student in grades 3 - 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 emergent bilingual students who qualify for services.

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

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

Participation in school-sponsored activities is an excellent way for a student to develop talents, receive individual recognition, and build strong friendships. Some extracurricular activities may include off-campus events. Students are required to use transportation provided by the district to and from the events. Exceptions may only be made with the approval of the activity's coach or sponsor. [See **Transportation** on page 124.]

Eligibility for 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 and parents can access the UIL Parent Information Manual (<https://www.uil texas.org/athletics/manuals>) online. A hard copy can be provided by the coach or sponsor of the activity on request.

To report alleged noncompliance with required safety training or an alleged violation of safety rules required by law and the UIL, please contact the curriculum division of TEA at (512) 463-9581 or curriculum@tea.texas.gov.

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

Student safety in extracurricular activities is a priority of the district. Parents are entitled to review the

district's records regarding the age of each football helmet used by the campus, including when a helmet has been reconditioned.

Generally, a student who receives a grade below 70 at the end of a grading period in any academic class may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.

However, if a student receives a grade below 70 at the end of a grading period in an Advanced Placement (AP) or an honors or dual credit course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, or languages other than English, the student remains eligible for participation in all extracurricular activities.

If a student is enrolled in a state-approved music course that participates in UIL Concert and Sight-reading Evaluation, and the student receives a grade below 70 in any course at the end of a grading period, the student may perform with the ensemble during the UIL evaluation performance, but is ineligible for other extracurricular activities for at least three weeks.

In addition, the following applies to all extracurricular activities:

- 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 5 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 be considered an unexcused absence.

If a student is enrolled in a state-approved course that requires demonstration of the mastery of an essential knowledge and skills in public performance and the student receives a grade below 70 in any course at the end of the grading period, the student may participate in a performance so long as the general public is invited.

If a student is enrolled in a state-approved music course that participates in UIL Concert and Sight-reading Evaluation, and the student receives a grade below 70 in any course at the end of a grading period, the student may perform with the ensemble during the UIL evaluation performance, but is ineligible for other extracurricular activities for at least three weeks.

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.

Offices and Elections

Certain clubs, organizations, and performing groups may hold elections for student officers. If you would like to know what these groups are, please contact the campus principal.

Fees (All Grade Levels)

Basic educational program materials are provided at no charge to a student. However, a student is expected to provide his or her own supplies, such as pencils, paper, erasers, and notebooks. A student may also be required to pay certain other costs, fees, or deposits, including:

- Materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations.
- Admission fees to extracurricular activities.
- Security deposits.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, and the like.
- Voluntarily purchased student health and accident insurance.
- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance when uniforms are provided by the district.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Parking fees and student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Fees for driver training courses.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that require use of facilities not available on district premises.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A reasonable fee for providing transportation to a student who lives within two miles of the school. [See **Buses and Other School Vehicles** on page 124.]
- A maximum fee of \$50 for 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 for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance requirements. 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. [See policy FP for more information.]

Fighting

Scuffling, fighting, and other physical contact between students is prohibited. Fighting is defined as a physical conflict between two or more individuals. The student under attack should detach from the situation and get an adult to help.

A fight occurs when the student strikes back and actively engages in the altercation. Each student is responsible for making every effort to avoid the use of any force and is advised to remove themselves from the situation if at all possible. The district does not condone or authorize students to use force against another individual, even if that individual provokes or instigates a fight or altercation.

Self-Defense

Self-defense is the use of force against another to the degree a person reasonably believes the force is immediately necessary to protect himself or herself. When a claim of self-defense is made, we may consider the following:

- The force being used against the student is lawful.
- The student has an opportunity to avoid force or to inform a school official of threatened use of force.
- The student uses force after the other party abandons or attempts to abandon a fight or confrontation.

The principal or other appropriate administrator makes the disciplinary determination on the basis of the severity of the misconduct.

Disciplinary Options/Responses may include: (*this is not an all-inclusive list of responses*)

- *Required administrator/student/parent conference*
- *Restitution or restoration, as applicable, for inappropriate aggressive behaviors*
- *Exclusion from extracurricular activities, such as field trips, and commencement exercises/award ceremonies*
- *Placement of the student in in-school suspension*
- *Suspension for up to three school days per occurrence*
- *Removal of transportation services for up to one year*
- *Referral to a district Disciplinary Alternative Education Program*
- *Petition to District Attorney for a Class C Misdemeanor*

Fundraising (All Grade Levels)

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fundraising drives for approved school purposes in accordance with administrative regulations. [See policies FJ and GE for more information.]

Gang-Free Zones (All Grade Levels)

1. *Gang-Free School Zone:*

- a. Under Penal Code section 71.028, certain criminal activities related to gangs that occur in or near school property (within 1,000 feet) carry enhanced punishments.
- b. Offenses committed in or near school property may result in increased penalties, equivalent to the next highest category of offense.

2. *Board Policy FNCC (Legal):*

- a. A gang is defined as any group of two or more individuals whose purposes may include the commission of illegal acts. This aligns with the definition under Texas Education Code 37.121, which prohibits fraternities or societies engaged in prohibited activities.
- b. The Board of Trustees explicitly prohibits the existence of gangs and gang activities within the school district.

3. *Specific Prohibited Actions:*

- a. Students are not allowed to wear, possess, use, distribute, display, or sell any clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, signs, graffiti, or other items associated with gang affiliation.
- b. Any verbal or nonverbal expressions (gestures, handshakes, etc.) that indicate membership or affiliation with a gang are prohibited.
- c. Activities such as soliciting others for gang membership, intimidating or threatening others for protection payments, inciting violence, or engaging in physical altercations are strictly forbidden.
- d. Any illegal acts or violations of school district policies committed in association with gang activities are prohibited.

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

Gender-Based Harassment

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 58.]

Grade-Level Classification (Grades 9–12 Only)

After grade 9, students are classified according to the number of credits earned toward graduation.

Credits Earned	Classification
6 to 11.5	Grade 10 (Sophomore)
12 to 17.5	Grade 11 (Junior)
18 plus credits	Grade 12 (Senior)

Grading Guidelines (All Grade Levels)

Grading guidelines for each grade level or course will be communicated and distributed to students and their parents by the campus. These guidelines establish the minimum number of assignments, projects, and examinations required for each grading period. In addition, these guidelines establish how the student's mastery of concepts and achievement will be communicated (i.e., letter grades, numerical averages, checklist of required skills, etc.). Grading guidelines also outline in what circumstances a student will be allowed to redo an assignment or retake an examination for which the student originally made a failing grade. Procedures for a student to follow after an absence will also be addressed.

Grading Standards – Elementary

Hays CISD expects students to give their best effort the first time an assignment is made or a project or test is given. To ensure this quality of work, the following rules apply:

1. Teachers are required to record a minimum of one daily grade per week and a minimum of three major grades per grading period for each content area.
2. Daily grades will count for 75% and major grades will count for 25% of the overall grade for a grading period.
3. Teacher discretion may be used to determine what assignments constitute a daily or major grade, except for district-required Curriculum Based Assessments, which are to be recorded as a daily grade and eligible for reassessment.
4. Homework may be assigned and rewards or consequences given for completion or non-completion. Homework may not receive a numerical grade in the gradebook.
5. Students may not receive grades for participation without demonstrating mastery of the objective standards and district curriculum or as documented in their IEP.
6. Students have five school days from the time an assignment or test is returned to the student to receive re-teaching and to re-do the daily grade assignments.
7. Students may re-submit daily grade assignments and re-test only one time per assignment.
8. Students may receive a maximum grade of 75 on all re-submitted daily grade assignments and tests.
9. Major grades are not eligible for re-do.
10. Assessments given within the last week of the grading period will be recorded in the following grading period.

Re-teaching and Reassessment for Mastery – Elementary

Students not mastering an objective standard will have the opportunity to be re-taught and reassessed a second time. Re-teaching may occur in a variety of ways and in different settings. This may or may not be scheduled during class time, but must be pre-announced so that students may plan accordingly. Since a single skill is addressed numerous times throughout a grade level curriculum, a student has many opportunities to demonstrate mastery of that skill. The number of re-teaching opportunities such as independent practice, activities, and/or ongoing homework, depends upon the professional judgment of the teacher and are required to strengthen skills prior to a second assessment. For reassessment, the teacher may or may not use the same assessment to determine mastery.

Late and Make-up Assignments – Elementary

Students are expected to complete all assignments. If a student is unable to complete their work during allotted time, teachers will provide opportunities during normal school hours to complete their assignments with ongoing communication to parents and guardians.

1. Students will be expected to make up assignments and tests after an absence. Teachers will communicate and provide the make-up assignments required to be completed and communicate a reasonable amount of time to complete the assignments.
2. Each Campus will provide additional and timely interventions to ensure that missed or late assignments are completed and skills are mastered.
3. The District shall not impose a grade penalty for make-up assignments after an unexcused absence.
4. The District shall not impose a grade penalty for make-up assignments after an absence because of suspension.
5. Conduct will be reported separately from academic grades. Conduct codes reflect behavior, class or group participation, and completion of assignments.

6. Any assignments not completed and submitted may be given the grade of a zero.

Grading Standards – Secondary

Hays CISD expects students to give their best effort the first time an assignment is made or a project or test is given. To ensure this quality of work, the following rules apply:

1. Teachers are required to record a minimum of one minor grade per week and a minimum of three major grades per grading period for each content area.
2. Minor grades will count for 40% and major grades will count for 60% of the overall grade for a nine-weeks grading period. All semester exam grades will count as 1/7 of the semester grade.
3. Teacher discretion may be used to determine what assignments constitute a minor or major grade, except for district-required Curriculum Based Assessments which are to be recorded as a major grade and eligible for reassessment.
4. Students have five school days from the time an assignment or test is returned to the student to receive re-teaching and to re-do assignments or take re-tests. The re-teaching, re-submitting, and re-testing within the five school days is scheduled at the discretion of the teacher.
5. Corrections made to an assessment do not constitute a reassessment. Students must participate in re-teaching prior to any assessment.
6. Students may re-submit assignments and re-test only one time per assignment. The following assignments are not eligible for resubmission: major projects and midterm, final, and benchmark assessments. Grades on benchmark assessments will be derived from material that has only been previously taught.
7. Students have two class meetings from the time a missing grade is posted in the grade book to make up the missing work.
8. Students may receive a maximum grade of 75 on all missing or re-submitted assignments and tests. When a re-test or re-assessment occurs, grades should be assigned in the following manner:
 - If a student scores a grade of 75-100; a grade of 75 should be entered in the gradebook
 - If a student scores a grade of 0-74; the higher of the two scores (original grade or re-test) should be recorded in the gradebook.

Re-teaching and Reassessment for Mastery – Secondary

Students not mastering an objective standard will have the opportunity to be re-taught and reassessed a second time. Re-teaching may occur in a variety of ways and in different settings. This may or may not be scheduled during class time, but must be pre-announced so that students may plan accordingly. The number of re-teaching opportunities such as independent practice, activities, and/or ongoing homework, depends upon the professional judgment of the teacher and are required to strengthen skills prior to a second assessment. For reassessment, the teacher may not use the same assessment to determine mastery.

Late and Make-up Assignments – Secondary

Students are expected to complete all assignments. If a student fails to complete assignments or if late assignments become a concern for that student, teachers will notify the parent or guardian and the campus designee.

1. Students will be expected to make up assignments and tests after an absence. A student shall be responsible for obtaining and completing the make-up assignments in a satisfactory manner and within the reasonable amount of time specified by the teacher.
2. The District shall not impose a grade penalty for make-up assignments after an unexcused absence.
3. The District shall not impose a grade penalty for make-up assignments after an absence because of suspension.
4. Students may be required to attend a teacher or campus program to complete any missing and/or unsatisfactory assignments turned in after the due date for a maximum grade of 75. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action.
5. Any assignments not completed and submitted may be given the grade of a zero.

Academic Dishonesty

In accordance with EIA (local) policy, a student found to have engaged in academic dishonesty shall be subject to grade penalties on assignments or tests and disciplinary penalties in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Academic dishonesty includes cheating or copying the work of another student, plagiarism, and unauthorized communication between students during an examination. The determination that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty shall be based on the judgment of the classroom teacher or another supervising professional employee, taking into consideration written materials, observation, or information from students.

Graduation

Graduation ceremonies hold a special significance in marking the completion of a student's journey through public school education. They serve as a pivotal moment where students, along with their families and educators, reflect on the culmination of years of hard work, growth, and achievements.

These ceremonies are not just formalities; they are important rituals that celebrate the dedication and perseverance of students. They provide a platform to acknowledge their accomplishments, whether academic, artistic, athletic, or personal, and to honor their contributions to the school community.

Beyond recognition, graduation ceremonies also symbolize transitions. They signify the readiness of students to move on to the next phase of their lives, equipped with the knowledge, skills, and experiences gained during their time in school.

Graduation Ceremony:

The graduation ceremony stands as the pinnacle of our end-of-year festivities, marking a profound moment in the lives of our seniors as they transition from high school to the next chapter of their journey. This event is more than just a formal occasion; it is a culmination of years of hard work, growth, and achievements.

During the ceremony, each senior is individually honored and celebrated for their academic accomplishments, leadership qualities, and contributions to our school community. As they walk across the stage, they symbolize not only their personal achievements but also the collective success of their class.

The graduation ceremony holds deep symbolic significance. It represents the completion of an

important chapter in their educational journey and signifies their readiness to embrace new challenges and opportunities ahead. It is a moment of pride for families, teachers, and peers alike, who have supported and nurtured these students throughout their high school years.

Caps and Gowns:

In adherence to tradition, **the graduation ceremony exclusively reserves the distinguished cap and gown attire for seniors**. This symbolic attire not only marks the culmination of their academic journey but also represents their preparedness to embrace new challenges beyond high school.

The cap and gown hold significant meaning, embodying years of hard work, perseverance, and academic achievement. They serve as a visual representation of the senior class's collective accomplishments and serve to honor each individual as they cross the threshold into the next phase of their lives.

While **younger grades do not wear caps and gowns during their completion/rising ceremonies**, they are encouraged to engage in a symbolic gesture of aspiration and motivation. Prior to their respective ceremonies, younger students may have the opportunity to take pictures with caps and gowns; **they may not wear them in their completion/rising ceremonies**.

Participating in Graduation Activities

The district's policies regarding student participation in graduation activities, particularly with respect to speaking roles, are clearly outlined to maintain standards of conduct and academic excellence. Here are the key points based on the provided information:

1. **Limitation of Participation:** The district reserves the right to limit a student's participation in graduation activities if they have violated the district's Code of Conduct. This could include restrictions on speaking roles and other ceremonial activities.
2. **Notification for Speaking Roles:** Students eligible to give opening and closing remarks at graduation will be notified by the campus principal. This indicates that such roles are considered significant and are governed by specific district procedures.
3. **Eligibility Criteria for Speaking Roles:**
 - a. To be eligible for speaking roles (such as opening and closing remarks), a student must not have engaged in any misconduct that resulted in an out-of-school suspension, removal to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP), or expulsion during the semester immediately preceding graduation.
 - b. This criterion underscores the district's emphasis on maintaining a record of good conduct and academic integrity for students who represent the school in such prominent roles.
4. **Valedictorian and Salutatorian Speaking Roles:** The valedictorian and salutatorian, who traditionally have significant speaking roles at graduation, are also subject to similar eligibility criteria. They must not have been involved in any serious misconduct leading to DAEP placement or expulsion during the semester prior to graduation.

Disqualification from Graduation Activities

The district's policy regarding seniors facing felony charges under the Penal Code is clear and has significant implications for participation in graduation activities. Here are the key points based on the provided information:

1. **Felony Charge Disqualification:** If a senior is charged with a felony violation of the Penal Code, the Superintendent or the Chief Academic Officer/Deputy Academic Officer may disqualify the student from participating in graduation ceremonies. This disqualification applies to ceremonies including commencement, prom, Project-Graduation, and potentially other senior privileges.
2. **Definition of Charge vs. Referral:**
 - a. **Referral:** This refers to the district notifying the District Attorney or other prosecutor to recommend a criminal investigation.
 - b. **Charge:** A charge is a formal accusation made by a governmental authority, such as a grand jury, based on evidence suggesting probable cause that a crime has been committed.
3. **Approval Process for Disqualification:**
 - a. If a student is referred for a felony or misdemeanor and charges are expected, and there is reasonable belief that a criminal offense has occurred, the Superintendent or designee must approve the decision to prohibit the student from participating in graduation activities.
 - b. This decision ensures that participation in these celebratory events is aligned with the district's standards of conduct and the legal implications of criminal charges.
4. **Notification to Parents/Guardians:** The campus principal is responsible for notifying the parents/guardians if it is determined that the student will not be allowed to participate in any or all graduation activities due to the pending felony charge.

(Secondary Grade Levels Only)

Requirements for a Diploma

A student must meet the following requirements to receive a high school diploma from the district:

- Achieve passing scores on certain end-of-course (EOC) assessments or approved substitute assessments, unless specifically waived as permitted by state law;
- Complete the required number of credits established by the state and any additional credits required by the district;
- Complete any locally required courses in addition to the courses mandated by the state;
- Demonstrate proficiency, as determined by the district, in the specific communication skills required by the State Board of Education (SBOE); and
- Complete and submit a free application for federal student aid (FAFSA) or a Texas application for state financial aid (TASFA).
- Starting with 2023 Incoming 9th grade Students are required to complete 40 hours of Volunteer/Service hours during high school per EIF Local Policy. Students will submit documentation/verification through SchoolLinks. It is recommended that students complete 10 each year.

Testing Requirements for Graduation

Students are required, with limited exceptions and regardless of graduation program, to perform satisfactorily on EOC assessments in:

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

A student who does not achieve a sufficient score will have opportunities to retake an assessment.

State law allows a student to meet EOC requirements by substituting satisfactory performance on approved national standardized assessments or on the state-developed assessment used for entrance into Texas public universities. [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 in the applicable content area. This may require the student's participation outside normal school operating times.

In limited circumstances, a student who fails to demonstrate proficiency on up to two of the required assessments may still be eligible to graduate if an individual graduation committee, formed in accordance with state law, unanimously determines that the student is eligible to graduate.

[See **Standardized Testing** on page 121.]

Foundation Graduation Program

Every Texas public school student will graduate under the foundation graduation program. The foundation graduation program features endorsements, which are paths of interest that include:

- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM);
- Business and Industry;
- Public Service;
- Arts and Humanities; and
- Multidisciplinary Studies.

Endorsements earned by a student will be noted on the student's transcript.

A student can complete the foundation graduation program with a "distinguished level of achievement," which reflects the completion of at least one endorsement and Algebra II as one of the required advanced mathematics credits.

Both of these programs require 26 credits. If a student enters his/her senior year with 18 credits, he/she will need to take 8 classes in order to graduate. This means 7 classes will be taken during the school day and one class outside of the school day.

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 a distinguished level of achievement. Attainment of the distinguished level of achievement is a requirement for 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/guardian. Before the end of grade 9, a student and his or her parent/guardian will be required to sign off on a personal graduation plan that promotes college and workforce readiness, promotes career placement and advancement, and facilitates the transition from secondary to postsecondary education.

The student's personal graduation plan will outline an appropriate course sequence based on the student's choice of endorsement.

Please review TEA's Graduation Toolkit

(<https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/news-and-multimedia/brochures/tea-brochures>).

A student may amend his or her personal graduation plan after this initial confirmation. The school will send written notice of any such amendment to the student's parent/guardian.

State law generally prohibits a student from graduating solely under the foundation graduation program without an endorsement. However, after the student's sophomore year, the student and student's parent/guardian may request that the student graduate without an endorsement. The district will advise the student and the student's parent/ guardian of the specific benefits of graduating with an endorsement. The student and the student's parent must then submit written permission to the school counselor for the student to graduate without an endorsement. A student who wishes to attend a four-year university or college after graduation must carefully consider whether graduation under the foundation program without an endorsement will satisfy the admission requirements of the student's desired college or university.

A student graduating under the **foundation graduation program** can also earn performance acknowledgments on his or her transcript. Performance acknowledgments are available for outstanding performance in bilingualism and biliteracy, in a dual credit course, on an AP examination, on certain national college preparatory and readiness or college entrance examinations, or for earning a license or certificate recognized at the state, national, or international level. The school counselor can provide more information about these acknowledgments.

A student is not required to complete an Algebra II course to graduate under the foundation graduation program, and the district will annually notify a student's parent of this fact. However, not taking Algebra II will make a student ineligible for automatic admission to four-year public universities and colleges in Texas and for certain financial aid and grants while attending those institutions.

A school district will permit a student to satisfy the curriculum requirements for graduation under the foundation program with the distinguished level of achievement, including an endorsement, by successfully completing courses in the core curriculum of a public Texas institution of higher education. Please see your counselor for more information.

Credits Required

The foundation graduation program requires completion of the following credits:

Course Area	Number of Credits: Foundation Graduation Program	Number of Credits: Foundation Graduation Program with an Endorsement	Number of credits FHSP (Distinguished Level of Achievement) Program with an Endorsement*
English/Language Arts	4	4	4

Course Area	Number of Credits: Foundation Graduation Program	Number of Credits: Foundation Graduation Program with an Endorsement	Number of credits FHSP (Distinguished Level of Achievement) Program with an Endorsement*
Mathematics*	3	4	4 (Algebra II)
Science	3	4	4
Social Studies including 1 sem. of Economics/1 sem. of U.S. Govt.). Students are highly encouraged to take 4 credits of Social studies	3	3	3
Physical Education**	1	1	1
Languages other than English***	2	2	2
Fine Arts	1	1	
Professional Communications	.5	.5	.5
Health	.5	.5	.5
Electives	5	5 or 6 if only 3 credits of social studies	6
Miscellaneous		Available Endorsements****: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Business and Industry Public Services Arts and Humanities Multidisciplinary	Available Endorsements****: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Business and Industry Public Services Arts and Humanities Multidisciplinary
Total	22 credits	26 credits	26 credits

Additional considerations apply in some course areas, including:

- **Mathematics.** To obtain the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation graduation program, a student must complete an endorsement and take Algebra II as one of the 4 mathematics credits. A student's completion of the distinguished level of achievement is a requirement to be considered for automatic admission to a Texas four-year college or university and will be included on a student's transcript.
- **Physical education.** A student who is unable to participate in physical activity due to a disability or illness may be able to substitute a course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, or another locally determined credit-bearing course for the required credit of physical education. This determination will be made by the student's ARD committee, Section 504 committee, or other campus committee, as applicable.
- **Languages other than English.** Students are required to earn 2 credits in the same language other than English to graduate. Any student may substitute computer programming languages for these credits.

- A student may satisfy one of the 2 required credits by successfully completing in elementary school a dual language immersion program or a course in American Sign Language.
- In limited circumstances, a student may be able to substitute this requirement with other courses, as determined by a district committee authorized by law to make these decisions for the student.

Available Course Options for All Graduation Programs

Each spring, the district will update students on the courses required or offered in each curriculum area so students can enroll for the upcoming school year.

Note: The district may require the completion of certain courses for graduation even if these courses are not required by the state for graduation.

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.

Financial Aid Application Requirement

FASFA submission is now a high school graduation requirement. Per the House Bill 3 Legislation ((HB 3, Sect 2.015, TEC Sect. 28.0256); beginning with the Class of 2022, all seniors must comply with completing their FASFA/TASFA electronic application to assure that they have access to all types of financial aid options for attendance in college and/or trade schools that accept the FAFSA form.

The **FAFSA application** form for the 2022-2023 financial aid year goes live on **Oct. 1st**.

Resources to help students complete their FASFA/TASFA online application:

Through the senior year Economics/U.S. Govt. class, students will have the opportunity to begin their FAFSA/TASFA application during the months of October and November. Each college and career counselor is readily available to assist students at each campus and also make available each year multiple help sessions for seniors and their parents by hosting at least 5 FASFA help Saturday and/or evening events. Please contact your HS College & Career Counselor for more information about other opportunities to get help.

A student is not required to complete and submit a FAFSA or TASFA if:

- The student's parent submits a form provided by the district indicating that the parent authorizes the student to opt out;
- A student who is 18 years of age or older or a legally independent minor submits a form provided by the district indicating that the student opts out; or
- A school counselor authorizes the student to opt out for a good cause.

Please contact the school counselor and/or their college & career counselor for more information.

The district will confirm that a student has completed and submitted a FAFSA in accordance with TEA guidance. To confirm that a student has completed and submitted a TASFA, for 2022-2023 if an electronic version of the TASFA is not yet available from The Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), the senior student must submit an electronic copy or paper copy of their TASFA to their College & Career Counselor for documentation purposes.

Per HB 5, a personal graduation plan will be developed for each high school student.

In effort to ensure that each and every Hays CSID middle school student begins making the needed plans and course preparation to meet high levels of college and career readiness by the time they

enter 9th grade; the middle school counselor with the guidance of the high school counseling team will guide all 7th graders during the spring semester to begin mapping a 5-year Personal Graduation Plan PGP).

In accordance with HB5, the Foundation High School Graduation Program, during eighth grade, the school counselor will hold student and parent conferences to plan the students 4 years in high school, including at least one endorsement. Both parents and 8th grade students can now access the college and career planning online dashboard Xello (<https://www.xello.world.com>).

During the 9th grade school year, high school counselors will meet again with students to talk about their 4-year Personal Graduation Plan. Before the end of grade 9, a student and his or her parent/guardian will be required to sign off on a personal graduation plan that promotes college and workforce readiness, promotes career placement and advancement, and facilitates the transition from secondary to postsecondary education.

The district encourages all students to pursue a personal graduation plan that includes the completion of at least one endorsement and to graduate with a 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 student's personal graduation plan will outline an appropriate course sequence based on the student's choice of endorsement.

Please review [TEA's Graduation Toolkit](#).

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

Available Course Options for All Graduation Programs

Each spring, the district will update students on the courses required or offered in each curriculum area so students can enroll for the upcoming school year.

Note: The district may require the completion of certain courses for graduation even if these courses are not required by the state for graduation.

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.

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

Admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committees will make instructional and assessment decisions for students with disabilities who receive special education services in accordance with state law.

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

A student who receives special education services may earn an endorsement under the foundation

program. If the student's curriculum requirements for the endorsement were modified, the student's ARD committee will determine whether the modified curriculum is sufficiently rigorous to earn the endorsement. The ARD committee must also determine whether the student must perform satisfactorily on any end-of-course assessment to earn an endorsement.

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. The student may then remain enrolled to complete the IEP and earn his or her high school diploma but will only be allowed to participate in one graduation ceremony.

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

Students who have met coursework requirements for graduation but have not yet demonstrated satisfactory performance on end-of-course assessments or been declared eligible to graduate by an individual graduation committee, **if applicable**, may be allowed to participate in graduation activities. Keep in mind that participating in the ceremonies is not the same as graduating. Ultimately, the final awarding of a diploma will be contingent upon the student's completion of all applicable requirements for graduation. *The campus principal will make the final decision regarding student participation in graduation ceremonies.*

Students who are eligible to graduate but are assigned to a disciplinary alternative education program and have not successfully completed their assigned days at the end of the school year will not be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony and related graduation activities. *The campus principal will make the final decision regarding student participation in graduation ceremonies.*

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 TEXAS Grant Program, Teach for Texas Grant Program, and Future Texas Teachers Scholarship Program for scholarships and grants toward tuition and fees to Texas public universities, community colleges, and technical schools, as well as to private institutions. Certain students who graduate early may also be eligible for the Texas First Scholarship Program.

See **College and University Admissions and Financial Aid (All Grade Levels)** on page 44 for more information.

Contact the school counselor for information about other scholarships and grants available to students.

Harassment

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 58.]

Hazing (All Grade Levels)

Hazing is defined as an intentional, knowing, or reckless act, on or off campus, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student for the purpose of pledging, initiation into, affiliation with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in a student organization if the act meets the elements in Education Code 37.151, including:

- Any type of physical brutality;
- An activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the student's mental or physical health, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement to small spaces, calisthenics, or consumption of food, liquids, drugs, or other substances;

- An activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to perform a duty or task that violates the Penal Code; and
- Coercing a student to consume a drug or alcoholic beverage in an amount that would lead a reasonable person to believe the student is intoxicated.

The district will not tolerate hazing. Disciplinary consequences for hazing will be 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, superintendent, or law enforcement official.

[See **Bullying** on page 35 and policies FFI and FNCC for more information.]

Health—Physical and Mental

Illness (All Grade Levels)

When your child is ill, please contact the school to let us know he or she will not be attending that day.

State rules require schools to exclude students with certain illnesses from school for certain periods of time. For example, if a child has a fever over 100 degrees, he or she must stay out of school until fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medications. Students with diarrheal illnesses must stay home until they are diarrhea-free without use of diarrhea-suppressing medications for 24 hours.

A full list of conditions for which the school must exclude children can be obtained from the school nurse or from the Texas Department of State Health Services at https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/IDCU/health/schools_childcare/School-Health.aspx.

If a student becomes ill during the school day and the school nurse determines that the child should go home, the nurse will contact the parent.

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

The school nurse is available to answer any questions for parents who are concerned about whether or not their child should stay home.

Emergency Medical Treatment and Information (All Grade Levels)

If a student should have a medical emergency at school or at 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.

Therefore, parents/guardians are required to complete the consent portion of the Emergency Health Information Card, an official registration document. Parents should keep emergency care information up-to-date (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies to medications, medical conditions, etc.) If changes are necessary, please contact the school nurse to update any information. Care will be provided to students based on nursing assessment and standing orders from the Hays CISD Medical Adviser. If, in the opinion of the campus administrator or school nurse, a life-threatening emergency occurs, EMS will be called.

At least one automated external defibrillator will be made available on each campus in the district as well as Shelton Stadium, in compliance with UIL regulations. For more information regarding the

requirements and rules regarding automated external defibrillators on a school district campus, contact the campus administration.

Immunization (All Grade Levels)

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized.

For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. You may access the DSHS exemption form (<https://dshs.texas.gov/immunize/school/exemptions.aspx>) online or by writing to this address:

Texas Department of State Health Services Immunization Section, Mail Code 1946
P.O. Box 149347
Austin, Texas 78714-9347

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
- Polio
- Measles, mumps, and rubella
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella (chicken pox)uil eligibility waiver for advanced courses
- Meningococcal
- Hepatitis A

Information in English and Spanish is available on an easy-to-read chart on the TDSHS website at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/IMMUNIZE/school/default.shtm> or you may acquire this information from a campus nurse. Additionally, go to the District's website <https://www.hayscisd.net/site/Default.aspx?PageID=417> for information regarding the following:

- The immunizations required for admissions to public school.
- Any immunizations or vaccines recommended for public school students by the Department of State Health Services;
- Health clinics in the district or known to the district that offer the influenza vaccine; and
- A link to the Department of State Health Services Internet website.

The school nurse can provide information on immunization requirements. 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. registered and licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required is medically contraindicated or 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 lifelong condition.

For information on immunization against bacterial meningitis and college enrollment and attendance, see **Bacterial Meningitis** on page 98.

[See the DSHS website: [Texas School & Child Care Facility Immunization Requirements](#) and policy FFAB(LEGAL) for more information.]

Lice (All Grade Levels)

Head lice is very common among children. Although not an illness or a disease, it spreads easily through head-to-head contact during play, sports, nap time, and when children share things like brushes, combs, hats, and headphones.

The district does not require or recommend that students be removed from school because of lice or nits. School nurses do not conduct routine classroom checks for head lice since it takes away valuable instruction time in the classroom and is not proven to be an effective way to control lice (supported by The American Academy of Pediatrics).

If careful observation indicates that a student has head lice, the school nurse will contact the student's parent to discuss a treatment plan using an FDA-approved medicated shampoo or cream rinse that may be purchased from any drug or grocery store. After the student undergoes one treatment, the parent should provide documentation of the treatment used. The nurse can also offer additional recommendations, including subsequent treatments, how best to get rid of lice, and how to prevent lice from returning.

The district will provide notice to parents of elementary school students in an affected classroom without identifying the student with lice.

More information on head lice can be obtained from the DSHS website [Managing Head Lice in School Settings and at Home](#).

(<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/texas-school-health/skilled-procedures-texas-school-health/managing-head-lice-school>) and from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website Head Lice Information for Parents (<https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/parents.html>).

[See policy FFAA for more information.]

Medicine at School (All Grade Levels)

All medication, whether prescription or nonprescription, must be kept in the nurse's office and be administered by the school nurse or another authorized district employee. A student may be authorized to self-carry certain medications while on campus or at a campus related event. These medications may include anaphylaxis, asthma, and diabetes medications. The student must demonstrate to the student's physician or other licensed healthcare provider and the school nurse the skill level necessary to self-administer the prescription medication, including the use of any device required to administer the medication. All narcotic medication/controlled medication, i.e. Ritalin, Adderall, must be kept in the nurse's clinic at all times. All medication to be administered by District staff and nurses shall be provided according to the Medication Policy FFAC. First doses of medications will not be given at school. Expired medications will not be given, and no more than a 30-day supply of medications may be kept on campus.

Nursing licensure requires prescription and over the counter medication to have both a licensed healthcare provider's signature and parent written request on a Medication Authorization Form. All medication must be in the originally marked labeled container and must be provided by the parent or guardian. District employees will not give a student prescription medication, nonprescription medication, herbal substances, anabolic steroids, or dietary supplements, except as outlined below.

In accordance with policy FFAC, authorized employees may administer:

- Prescription medication in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request. Nursing licensure requires a healthcare provider's order and is required in addition to the parent written request on the Medication Authorization Form.
- Prescription medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse or another qualified district employee from the original, properly labeled container provided by the parent along with a written request and healthcare provider's order.
- Nonprescription medication in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request and healthcare provider's order.
- Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities along with a written request and healthcare provider's order.
- Standing medical delegated orders signed by the Hays CISD Medical Adviser allow for over-the-counter medications to be administered to students whose parents provide permission via the Emergency Health Card in registration. Examples include hydrocortisone cream for itching, oral acetaminophen (generic Tylenol) for fever and/or certain pain and oral Benadryl for localized allergic reaction, to be given according to age/weight directions on the bottle labels only with parental consent as well as other options.
- Standing medical delegated orders signed by the Hays CISD Medical Adviser allow for unassigned Epinephrine to be administered via an epinephrine auto-injector by authorized and trained school district personnel to persons reasonably believed to be actively experiencing anaphylaxis on a Hays CISD Campus (See FFAC (LOCAL)). This is not intended to substitute for epinephrine management orders for known severe/anaphylactic reactions.
- Standing medical delegated orders signed by the Hays CISD Medical Adviser allow for unassigned Epinephrine Opioid Antagonists, i.e. Narcan, to be administered intranasally by authorized and trained school district personnel to persons reasonably believed to be actively experiencing an opioid overdose on a Hays CISD Campus (See FFAC (LOCAL)).

An elementary or secondary student may possess and self-apply sunscreen to avoid overexposure to the sun. An elementary student's teacher or other district personnel will apply sunscreen to the student's exposed skin if the student brings the sunscreen to school and asks for help applying it. If a secondary student needs assistance with sunscreen application, please address the need with the school nurse. Whether a student is at the elementary or secondary level, if sunscreen needs to be administered to treat any type of medical condition, this should be handled through communication with the school nurse so that the district is made aware of any safety and medical issues.

Asthma and Severe Allergic Reactions

A student with asthma or severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) may 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/guardian and a physician or other licensed health-care provider. The student must also demonstrate to his or her health-care provider and the school nurse the ability to use the prescribed medication, including any device required to administer the medication.

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

Unassigned Epinephrine Auto-injectors

In accordance with Chapter 38, Subchapter E of the Education Code, the board has adopted a policy to allow authorized school personnel who have been adequately trained to administer an unassigned epinephrine auto-injector to a person who is reasonably believed to be experiencing a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis).

An “unassigned epinephrine auto-injector” is an epinephrine auto-injector prescribed by an authorized health-care provider in the name of the school issued with a non-patient-specific standing delegation order for the administration of an epinephrine auto-injector.

Epinephrine auto-injectors include brand-name devices such as EpiPens®.

Authorized and trained individuals may administer an epinephrine auto-injector at any time to a person experiencing anaphylaxis on a school campus.

The district will ensure that at each campus a sufficient number of [school personnel and/or school volunteers] are trained to administer epinephrine so that at least one trained individual is present on campus during regular school hours and whenever school personnel are physically on site for school-sponsored activities.

Authorized and trained individuals may administer an unassigned epinephrine auto-injector to a person experiencing anaphylaxis [at an off-campus school event or while in transit to or from a school event] when an unassigned epinephrine auto-injector is available.

For additional information, see FFAC(LOCAL).

Unassigned Opioid Antagonists

In accordance with Chapter 38, Subchapter E of the Education Code, the board has adopted a policy to allow authorized and trained school personnel at each campus that serves students in grades 6-12 to administer an opioid antagonist, such as Narcan or Naloxone, to an individual who is reasonably believed to be experiencing an opioid-related drug overdose.

In accordance with Chapter 38, Subchapter E of the Education Code, the board has adopted a policy to allow authorized and trained [school personnel and/or school volunteers] at each campus to administer an opioid antagonist, such as Narcan or Naloxone, to an individual who is reasonably believed to be experiencing an opioid-related drug overdose.

One or more authorized and trained individuals will be present on each campus subject to this policy during regular school hours.

Steroids (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

State law prohibits students from possessing, dispensing, delivering, or administering an anabolic steroid. Anabolic steroids are for physician-prescribed medical use only.

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

A student participating in UIL sanctioned athletic activities may be required to participate in random testing for illegal steroid use in accordance with state law and rules. For more detailed information, contact the athletic director, coach or the UIL website at <https://www.uil texas.org/health/steroid-information.html>.

Mental Health Support (All Grade Levels)

The district has implemented programs to address the following mental health, behavioral health, and substance abuse concerns:

- Mental health promotion and early intervention;

- Building skills to manage emotions, establish and maintain positive relationships, and engage in responsible decision-making;
- Substance abuse prevention and intervention;
- Suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention (interventions after a suicide in a community);
- Grief, trauma, and trauma-informed care;
- Positive behavior interventions and supports;
- Positive youth development; and
- Safe, supportive, and positive school climates.

If a student has been hospitalized or placed in residential treatment for a mental health condition or substance abuse, the district has procedures to support the student's return to school. Please contact the district's mental health liaison for further information.

Teachers and other district employees may discuss a student's academic progress or behavior with the student's parents or another employee as appropriate; however, they are not permitted to recommend use of psychotropic drugs. A psychotropic drug is a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease or as a component of a medication that is intended to alter perception, emotion, mood, or behavior.

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. [See policy FFEB for more information.]

For related information, see:

- **Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation** on page 8 and **Consent to Provide a Mental Health Care Service** on page 8 for the district's procedures for recommending a mental health intervention and the mental health liaison's contact information;
- **Counseling** on page 55 for the district's comprehensive school counseling program;
- **Physical and Mental Health Resources** on page 101 for campus and community mental and physical health resources; and
- **Policies and Procedures that Promote Student Physical and Mental Health** on page 102 for board-adopted policies and administrative procedures that promote student health.

At the secondary level, a student may possess and apply sunscreen when necessary. If the student needs assistance with sunscreen application, please address the need with the school nurse.

Whether a student is at the elementary or secondary level, if sunscreen needs to be administered to treat any type of medical condition, this should be handled through communication with the school nurse so that the district is made aware of any safety and medical issues.

Physical Activity Requirements

Elementary School

The district will ensure that students in full-day prekindergarten–grade 5 engage in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day or 135 minutes per week, in accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA.

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

Junior High/Middle School

The district will ensure that students in middle or junior high school will engage in at least 225 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity within each two-week period for at least four semesters, in accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA.

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

Temporary Restriction from Participation in Physical Education

Students who are temporarily restricted from participation in physical education will not actively participate in skill demonstration but will remain in class to learn the concepts of the lessons.

Physical Fitness Assessment (Grades 3–12)

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

Physical Health Screenings/Examinations

Athletics Participation (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

For certain extracurricular activities, a student must submit certification from an authorized health-care provider. The certification must state that the student has been examined and is physically able to participate in the relevant program, including:

- A district athletics program.
- District marching band.
- Any district extracurricular program identified by the superintendent. This examination is required to be submitted annually to the district.

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.

Students should be aware of the rare possibility of sudden cardiac arrest, which in athletes is usually caused by a previously unsuspected heart disease or disorder. A student may request an electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG) to screen for such disorders, in addition to his or her required physical examination.

See the UIL's explanation of sudden cardiac arrest (<https://www.uiltexas.org/health/info/sudden-cardiac-death>) for more information.

Spinal Screening Program

School-based spinal screening helps identify adolescents with abnormal spinal curvature at an early stage when the curve is mild and may go unnoticed. Early detection is key to controlling spinal deformities. Spinal screening is non-invasive and conducted in accordance with the most recent nationally accepted and peer-reviewed standards.

All students who meet the Texas Department of State Health Services criteria will be screened for abnormal spinal curvature before the end of the school year. As appropriate, students will be referred for follow-up with their physician.

For information on spinal screening by an outside professional or exemption from spinal screening based on religious beliefs, contact the superintendent or see policy FFAA(LEGAL).

Other Examinations and Screenings (All Grade Levels)

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.

[See policy FFAA for more information.]

Special Health Concerns (All Grade Levels)

MENINGITIS, Viral and Bacterial

State law requires the district to provide the following information.

- **What is meningitis?**

Meningitis is an inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by viruses, parasites, fungi, and bacteria. Viral meningitis is common and most people recover fully. Bacterial meningitis is very serious and may involve complicated medical, surgical, pharmaceutical, and life support management.

- **What are the symptoms and when might I see them?**

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.

Symptoms of viral meningitis typically take 3-6 days to appear after exposure. It can take between 3-10 days after exposure for symptoms of bacterial meningitis to appear. If your child has symptoms and a fever, they should stay home until they are fever free for 24 hours. In most cases there is no specific treatment for viral meningitis and most people completely recover in 7-10 days.

The diagnosis of bacterial meningitis is based on a combination of symptoms and laboratory results and may require antibiotics.

- **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 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 is 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 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 Texas Department of Health office to ask about the meningococcal vaccine.

Additional information may also be found at the following websites:

Hays County Health Department Information:

<http://www.co.hays.tx.us/epidemiology-and-disease-surveillance.aspx>

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Bacterial Meningitis Information:

<http://www.cdc.gov/meningitis/bacterial.html>

State of Texas Meningitis Information: <https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/IDCU/disease/Bacterial-Meningitis/>

State of Texas Immunizations Information: <https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/>

CDC Immunizations Information: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/>

Note: 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.

[See **Immunization** on page 92.]

Diabetes

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 or principal for information. [See policy FFAF(LEGAL) for more information.]

Food Allergies (All Grade Levels)

Parents should notify the district when a student has been diagnosed with a food allergy, especially an allergy that could result in dangerous or life-threatening reactions either by breathing, eating, or touching 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, based on the Texas Department of State Health Services' (DSHS) *Guidelines for the Care of Students with Food Allergies At-Risk for Anaphylaxis* found on the DSHS [Allergies and Anaphylaxis](https://www.dshs.texas.gov/schoolhealth/allergiesandanaphylaxis/) website (<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/schoolhealth/allergiesandanaphylaxis/>)

When the district receives information that a student has a food allergy that puts the student at risk for anaphylaxis, an individual care plan will be developed to assist the student in safely accessing the school environment. The district's food allergy management plan can be accessed at [\[https://www.fwisd.org/Page/6159\]](https://www.fwisd.org/Page/6159)

[See policy FFAF for more information.]

Seizures (All Grade Levels)

To address the care of a student with a seizure disorder while at school or participating in a school activity, a parent may submit a seizure management and treatment plan to the district before the beginning of the school year, upon enrollment of the student, or as soon as practicable following diagnosis of a seizure disorder.

[See **A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504** on page 26 and contact the school nurse for more information.]

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

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

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

Updated Law pertaining to E-Cigarettes (*nicotine-based*)

The below policy pertains to the possession, use, and distribution of nicotine-based e-cigarettes within the school district's jurisdiction.

1. Prohibited Actions:

- a. Possession: Students are prohibited from possessing e-cigarettes that are solely nicotine-based.
- b. Use: Using nicotine-based e-cigarettes is prohibited.
- c. Distribution: Distributing nicotine-based e-cigarettes is also prohibited.

2. Scope of Application:

- a. On-Campus: These prohibitions apply while on school grounds.
- b. District-Sponsored Events: They also apply during extracurricular district-sponsored events.
- c. Near School Property: The restrictions extend to within 300 feet of school or district property boundaries.

3. **Consequences:**

- a. Mandatory Placement to DAEP: Violation of these rules regarding nicotine-based e-cigarettes results in mandatory placement in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP).
- b. No Exceptions: The policy does not provide any exceptions or allowances for possession, use, or distribution of nicotine-based e-cigarettes in the specified locations.

This policy aims to enforce a strict prohibition against nicotine-based e-cigarettes to maintain a healthy and safe environment for students within the school district's jurisdiction. The inclusion of DAEP placement (*mandated by Texas Education Code Chapter 37*) as a mandatory consequence underscores the seriousness with which the district addresses violations of this policy.

Health-Related Resources, Policies, and Procedures

Physical and Mental Health Resources (All Grade Levels)

Parents and students in need of assistance with physical and mental health concerns may contact the school nurse or school counselor. Below are additional resources for students and parents:

- The local public health authority, Hays County Health Department which may be contacted at 512-393-5520.

Policies and Procedures that Promote Student Physical and Mental Health (All Grade Levels)

The district has adopted board policies that promote student physical and mental health. (LOCAL) policies on the topics below can be found in the district's policy manual, available at <https://pol.tasb.org/home/index/1101>.

- Food and nutrition management: CO, COA, COB
- Wellness and Health Services: FFA
- Physical Examinations: FFAA
- Immunizations: FFAB
- Medical Treatment: FFAC
- Communicable Diseases: FFAD
- School-Based Health Centers: FFAE
- Care Plans: FFAF
- Crisis Intervention: FFB
- Trauma-informed Care: FFBA
- Student Support Services: FFC
- Student Safety: FFF
- Child Abuse and Neglect: FFG
- Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation: FFH
- Freedom from Bullying: FFI
- Local Wellness Policy: FFA

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

The district's School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) is required to meet at least 4 times per year. Additional information regarding the district's SHAC is available from the district website under health services. For information call the Director of Student Health Services, at 512-268- 2141. The duties of the SHAC range from making recommendations for health- related curriculum to developing

strategies for integrating curriculum into a coordinated school health program encompassing school health services, counseling services, a safe and healthy school environment, recess recommendations, improving student fitness, mental health concerns, and employee wellness.

[See policies BDF and EHAA]

Notification of upcoming SHAC meetings will be posted at each campus administrative office at least 72 hours before the meeting. Notification of upcoming SHAC meetings, meeting minutes, and a recording of each meeting will be posted on the district website

<https://www.hayscisd.net/Page/419>

[See **Consent to Human Sexuality Instruction** on page 8 and policies BDF and EHAA. for more information.]

Student Wellness Policy/Wellness Plan (All Grade Levels)

To encourage healthy habits in our students, the district has developed a board-adopted wellness policy at FFA(LOCAL) and corresponding plans and procedures to implement it.

Law Enforcement Agencies (All Grade Levels)

Questioning of Students by Outside Authorities

1. *Child Abuse Investigation:*

- a. The principal will fully cooperate with authorities regarding interviews related to child abuse investigations.

2. *Other Circumstances:*

- a. **Verification and Notification:** The principal will verify the identity of the officer or authority and ask for reasons why the student needs to be interviewed at school. Efforts will be made to notify the student's parents unless the interviewer provides a valid reason not to.
- b. **Presence of Principal or Designee:** Normally, the principal or a designated school staff member will be present during the questioning or interview. However, if the interviewer objects for a valid reason, the interview may proceed without the presence of school personnel.
- c. **Miranda Rights:** It is the responsibility of the police officer to inform the student of their rights (Miranda Warning) if required by law. Once questioning begins, the responsibility for the process lies with the police officer.

3. *Non-School-Related Matters:*

- a. If a law enforcement officer has a subpoena, court order, warrant, or directive to apprehend the student, or intends to remove the student from campus for investigation regarding a non-school-related matter, the school will not impede the questioning. The officer will be requested to follow school procedures for checking the student out of school.
- b. In the absence of such provisions (subpoena, court order, etc.), parental permission must generally be obtained before allowing an interview for non-school-related matters.

Students Taken into Custody

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

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

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

The principal will immediately notify the superintendent and will attempt to notify the parent, unless the legally 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 legally authorized person, 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 has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors that occur in school, on school property, or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property. These personnel will also be notified if the principal has reasonable grounds to believe the student has engaged in certain conduct.
- All appropriate district personnel regarding a student who is required to register as a sex offender.

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

Leaving Campus (All Grade Levels)

Student attendance is crucial. Appointments should be scheduled outside of school hours if possible. Except for extenuating circumstances, students will not regularly be released before the end of the school day.

Parental consent is required before any student leaves campus for any part of the school day.

For students in elementary and middle school, a parent or authorized adult must come to the office and show identification to sign the student out. A campus representative will ask the student to report to the office. For safety purposes and stability of the learning environment, we cannot allow any unescorted adult to go to the classroom or other area 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.

The same process applies to students in high school if a parent picks the student up from campus. If the student's parent authorizes the student to leave campus unaccompanied, a note provided by the parent must be submitted to the main office no later than two hours prior to the student's need to leave campus. A phone call from the parent may be accepted, but the school may ultimately require a note for documentation purposes. 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 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 the parent directs district personnel to release the student unaccompanied, the parent or other authorized adult must follow the sign-out procedures listed above. If a student is permitted by his or her parent/guardian to leave campus unaccompanied, the nurse will document the time of day the student was released. Under no circumstances will a student in elementary or middle school be released unaccompanied.

If a student is 18 years of age or is an emancipated minor, the student may sign him- or herself out of school. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will be required.

At Any Other Time during the School Day

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

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

Lost and Found (All Grade Levels)

A lost and found collection box is located in the campus office. A student who loses an item should check the lost and found box. The district discourages bringing personal items of high monetary value to school, 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 (All Grade Levels)

A teacher may assign makeup work to a student who misses class based on instructional objectives and the needs of the student in mastering the essential knowledge and skills or meeting subject or course requirements.

The student will be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work within the time specified by the teacher. A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted by the teacher will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.

The student is encouraged to speak with his or her teacher if the student knows of an absence ahead of time so that the teacher and student may plan any makeup work. Please remember the importance of student attendance at school. With limited exceptions, all absences count for the 90 percent threshold set in state law regarding attendance for credit or final grade. [See **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade** on page 31.]

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 turn in projects due in any class missed because of absence. Teachers may assign a late penalty to any long-term project in accordance with timelines approved by the principal and previously communicated to students.

DAEP Makeup Work

Elementary and Middle/Junior High School Grade Levels

The academic mission of DAEP shall be to enable students to perform at grade level. A DAEP shall focus on English language arts, mathematics, science, history, and self-discipline. Students enrolled in DAEP are expected to participate and complete all assignments.

Grades 9–12

If a high school student is enrolled in a foundation curriculum course at the time of removal to a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP), he or she will have an opportunity to complete the course before the beginning of the next school year. 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) for more information.]

In-School Suspension (ISS) and Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) Makeup Work (All Grade Levels)

Alternative Means to Receive Coursework

While a student is in ISS or OSS, the district will provide the student with all course work for the student's foundation curriculum classes that the student misses as a result of the suspension.

Opportunity to Complete Courses

A student removed from the regular classroom to ISS 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) for more information.]

Nondiscrimination Statement (All Grade Levels)

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, the district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law in providing education services, activities, and programs, including Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. The district provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

In accordance with Title IX, the district does not and is required not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. The requirement not to discriminate extends employment.

Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the district's Title IX Coordinator (see below), to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both.

Other federal laws that prohibit discrimination include Title VI, Section 504, the Age Discrimination Act, the Boy Scouts Act, and Title II.

The district has designated and authorized the following employee as the Title IX Coordinator to address concerns or inquiries regarding discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, or gender-based harassment: Dr. Brian Dawson, Director of Student Services, brian.dawson@hayscisd.net, 512-268-2141

The following district representatives have been designated to address concerns or inquiries about other kinds of discrimination:

- For concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability, see the ADA/Section 504 Coordinator: Michelle Velasquez, Executive Director of Special Education 512-268-8250
- For all other concerns regarding discrimination, see Christina Courson, Chief Human Resources Officer, 512-268-2141:

[See policies FB, FFH, and GKD for more information.]

Parent and Family Engagement (All Grade Levels)

Working Together

Experience and research tell us that a child succeeds in education with good communication and a strong partnership between home and school. A parent's involvement and engagement in this partnership may include:

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child every day 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 your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the school counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Reviewing the requirements and options for graduation with your child in middle school and again while your child is enrolled in high school.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed. [See **Academic Counseling** on page 55.]
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, school counselor, or principal, please call the school office for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school. [See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 110.]
- Becoming a school volunteer. [See **Volunteers** on page 126 and policy GKG for more information.]
- Participating in campus parent organizations. Parent organizations include: Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), Boosters, and Parent, Teacher, Student Organization (PTSA).
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees that develop educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For more

information, see policies BQA and BQB.

- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and assisting the district in aligning local community values with health education instruction, human sexuality instruction, instruction on prevention of child abuse, family violence, dating violence, and sex trafficking, and other wellness issues. [See **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)** on page 102 and policies BDF, EHAA, FFA for more information.]
- Being aware of the school's ongoing bullying and harassment prevention efforts.
- Contact school officials if you are concerned with your child's emotional or mental well-being.
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations.

Parking and Parking Permits (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

A student must present a valid driver's license and proof of insurance to be eligible for a parking permit.

Students must request a parking permit and pay a fee to park in a school parking lot. So long as space is available, parking permits may be issued throughout the year. Contact the school principal for specific details about fees for the specific campus.

Students will not be permitted to:

- Speed.
- Double-park.
- Park across a white or yellow line.
- Park in a fire lane.
- Sit in parked cars during school hours.

Students may be subject to disciplinary action for violation of these rules. The district may tow cars that are parked in violation of these rules.

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

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge. [See **Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags** on page 108.]

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 in remembrance of those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001, at the beginning of the first class period when September 11 falls on a regular school day.

[See policy EC for more information.]

Prayer (All Grade Levels)

Each student has a right to pray individually, voluntarily, and silently or to meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt school activities. The school will not encourage, require, or coerce a student to engage in or 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 proficiency. In making promotion decisions, the district will consider:

- Teacher recommendation,
- Grades,
- Scores on criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessments, and
- Any other necessary academic information as determined by the district.

Prekindergarten — Grade 3

A parent may request in writing that a student repeat prekindergarten, kindergarten, or grade 1, 2, or 3. Before granting the request, the district may convene a retention committee to meet and discuss the request and will invite the parent to participate.

Elementary and Middle School Levels

A parent may request in writing that a student repeat grade 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. Before granting the request, the district may convene a retention committee to meet and discuss the request and will invite the parent to participate.

In grades 2-8, promotion is based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade level standards for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in three of the following areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. [See policy EIE (LOCAL).]

For the 2021–22 school year, a parent may request in writing that a student repeat grade 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8 that the student was enrolled in during the 2020-21 school year. Before granting the request, the district may convene a retention committee to meet and discuss the request and will invite the parent to participate.

High School Grade Levels

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

A student in grades 9–12 will be advanced a grade level based on the number of course credits earned. [See **Grade-Level Classification** on page 78.]

Students will also have multiple opportunities to retake EOC assessments. [See **Graduation** on page 82 and **Standardized Testing** on page 121.]

Repeating a High School Credit Course

A parent may request in writing that a student repeat a high-school credit course in which the student was enrolled during the previous school year unless the district determines that the student has met all requirements for graduation.

Before granting the request, the district may convene a retention committee to meet and discuss the request and will invite the parent to participate.

Only the student's first passing grade will be included in the calculation of class ranking.

Release of Students from School

[See **Leaving Campus** on page 104.]

Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences (All Grade Levels)

Report cards with each student's grades or performance and absences in each class or subject are issued to parents at least once every nine weeks. For students in grades 6-12, at the end of the first three weeks of a grading period, parents will be given a progress report if their child's performance [in any course OR in English language arts, mathematics, science or social studies] is 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 may be requested to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject. Students in grades 3 through 6 will receive a progress report at the end of the first four and a half weeks of a grading period.

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. [See policy EIA (LOCAL)]

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

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 58.]

Required State Assessments

STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) for 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
- Science in grades 5 and 8
- Social Studies in grade 8

Standardized Testing for a Student Enrolled Above Grade Level

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.

A student in grades 3-8 shall be assessed at least once in high school with the ACT or the SAT if the student completes the high school end-of-course assessments in mathematics, reading/language arts, or science prior to high school.

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

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

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

Satisfactory performance on the applicable assessments is required for graduation, unless 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. The windows occur in the fall, spring, and summer months. If a student does not meet satisfactory performance, the student will have opportunities to retake the assessment.

Requesting Administration of STAAR/EOC in Paper Format (All Grade Levels)

STAAR and EOC assessments are administered electronically.

A parent or teacher may request that a STAAR or EOC be administered to a student in paper format. The district may grant this request for any single administration for up to three percent of the number of students enrolled in the district. Requests will be granted in the order in which they are received.

Requests for paper format for a fall administration of a STAAR or EOC must be submitted no later than September 15 each school year.

Requests for paper format for a spring administration of a STAAR or EOC must be submitted no later than December 1 each school year.

Standardized Testing for a Student in Special Programs

Certain students — some with disabilities and some classified as emergent bilingual students — may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing. For more information, see the principal, school counselor, or special education director.

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

An admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee for a student in grades 9-12 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 (PGP). [See Graduation on page 82.] STAAR Spanish is available for eligible students for whom a Spanish version of STAAR is the most appropriate measure of their academic progress.

For more information, see the principal, school counselor, or special education director.

Failure to Perform Satisfactorily on STAAR or EOC

If a student does not perform satisfactorily on a required state assessment in any subject, the district will provide accelerated instruction for the student in the subsequent school year by:

- Assigning the student to a teacher who is certified as a master, exemplary, or recognized teacher if one is available in the grade and subject matter of the state assessment on which the student did not perform satisfactorily, or
- Providing supplemental instruction.

A student may be required to attend any assigned supplemental instruction program before or after school or during the summer.

When a student fails to perform satisfactorily on a required state assessment in the same subject area for two or more years, the district shall develop an accelerated education plan. Parents are encouraged to participate in developing this plan.

Personal Graduation Plans — [See Personal Graduation Plans on page 85 for information related to the development of personal graduation plans for high school students.]

Retaliation

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 58.]

Safety (All Grade Levels)

Student safety on campus, at school-related events, and in district vehicles is a high priority of the district. 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 all behavioral standards in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct or set by district employees.
- Help secure the campus by keeping all exterior doors closed, latched, and locked unless the door is actively monitored by a district employee.
- Follow instructions from teachers and other district employees regarding classroom doors.
- Remain alert to any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student or staff member, and promptly report any incidents to a district employee. The Texas Suspicious Activity Reporting Network iWatchTexas website (<https://iwatchtx.org/index.html>) is a place you can report suspicious activities or behaviors that may indicate criminal, terroristic, or school safety-related threats. This site is not designed to report emergencies. If this is an emergency, call 911.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Every report will be reviewed by analysts. Although not required, providing your contact information will allow follow up questions, and if you prefer to report by telephone, please contact 844-643-2251. Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

Accident Insurance

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

Insurance for Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs

The district may purchase accident, liability, or automobile insurance coverage for students and businesses involved in the district's CTE programs.

Preparedness Drills: Evacuation, Severe Weather, and Other Emergencies

Periodically, the school will conduct 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.

Preparedness Training: CPR

The district will offer instruction in CPR and the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED) at least once to students enrolled in grades 7-12. The instruction can be provided as part of any course and is not required to result in CPR or AED certification.

The district will annually offer students in grades 7-12 instruction on the use of bleeding control stations to respond to traumatic injury. For more information, see:

- [Homeland Security's Stop the Bleed](https://www.dhs.gov/stopthebleed) (<https://www.dhs.gov/stopthebleed>)
- [Stop the Bleed Texas](https://stopthebleedtexas.org/) (<https://stopthebleedtexas.org/>)

Emergency Medical Treatment and Information

All parents are asked each year to complete a medical care authorization form, providing written parental consent to obtain emergency treatment and information about allergies to medications or drugs. Parents should contact the school nurse to update emergency care information (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, and the like).

The district may consent to medical treatment, which includes dental treatment, if necessary, for a student if:

- The district has received written authorization from a person having the right to consent;
- That person cannot be contacted; and
- That person has not given the district actual notice to the contrary.

The emergency care authorization form will be used by the district when a student's parent or authorized designee cannot be contacted. A student may provide consent if authorized by law or court order.

Regardless of parental authorization for the district to consent to medical treatment, district employees will contact emergency medical services to provide emergency care when required by law or when deemed necessary, such as to avoid a life-threatening situation.

Emergency School Closing Information

Each year, parents are asked to complete an emergency release form to provide contact information in the event that the district needs to notify parents of early dismissal, delayed opening, or restricted access to a campus because of severe weather, a security threat, or another emergency cause.

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. It is crucial to notify your child's school when a phone number changes. State law requires parents to update contact information within two weeks after the date the information changes.

If the campus must close, delay opening, or restrict access to the building because of an emergency, the district will also alert the community in the following ways: the district website, www.hayscisd.net; district smart phone app push notification system and on the district social media sites, including Facebook (www.facebook.com/haysconsolidatedisd) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/HaysCISD). Information will also be distributed to area newspapers, radio and television stations for broadcast at their discretion.

[See **Parent Contact Information** on page 46 and **Automated Emergency Communications** on page 46.]

SAT, ACT, and Other Standardized Tests

[See **Standardized Testing** on page 121.]

Schedule Changes (Middle and High School Grade Levels)

Teacher schedules and employment are based on student requests; therefore, few schedule changes are approved. Once students receive their course request verifications, they can turn in their changes to their counselor before the end of the school year. Students also have the opportunity to change their requests during schedule pick up before school starts.

Students must obtain a *Schedule Change Request Form* from the counselor or administrative office. The form must be filled in completely or the request will not be considered. The information includes input from the student and parents.

Schedule changes will be considered during the first 2 weeks of class for the following reasons only:

- The student is a senior not scheduled into a course needed for graduation.
- The student has already earned credit for a course in which he/she is currently scheduled or the class is listed twice on the schedule.
- The student does not have the prerequisite for a class listed on the schedule.
- The student has been dismissed from a program where approval must be granted for placement.
- The student does not have a full schedule.
- The schedule has a data entry error.
- The student needs remedial coursework for state assessment graduation requirements.
- The student is not in the appropriate class as determined by an ARD committee decision.
- The student is enrolled in a program whose sponsor, director, or teacher has requested a change.
- There has been approval by the Principal or Academic Dean for a schedule change.

School Facilities

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. A copy of the district's asbestos management plan is available in the Maintenance & Operations office. If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please contact the district's designated asbestos coordinator: *Supervisor, Safety/Compliance*, 155 Beacon Hill Rd., Buda, TX 78610, Maintenance.operations@hayscisd.net 512-268-8442, ext. 46106

Asbestos Management Plan (All Grade Levels)

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. A copy of the district's asbestos management plan is available in the central administrative office. If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please contact the district's designated asbestos coordinator:

Maintenance.operations@hayscisd.net

Food and Nutrition Services (All Grade Levels)

The district participates in the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced meals daily in accordance with standards set forth in state and federal law.

Some students are eligible for free and reduced-price meals based on financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential. The district may share information such as a student's name and eligibility status to help enroll eligible children in Medicaid or the state children's health insurance program (CHIP) unless the student's parent requests the student's information not be disclosed.

Participating students will be offered the same meal options as their peers and will not be treated differently from their peers.

To apply for free or reduced-price meal services, contact: Janie Lopez, Applications Clerk, 5750 Dacy Lane, Janie.lopez@hayscisd.net, 512-268-1336.

Parents should continually monitor their child's meal account balance. When a student's meal account is depleted, the district will notify the parent. The student may continue to purchase meals according to the grace period set by the school board. The district will present the parent with a schedule of repayment for any outstanding account balance and an application for free or reduced meals.

If the district is unable to work out an agreement with the student's parent on replenishment of the meal account and payment of any outstanding balance, the student will receive a meal. The district will make every effort to avoid bringing attention to the student.

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at:

<https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. email:

Program.Intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The responsible state agency that administers the program is the Texas Department of Agriculture (<https://www.texasagriculture.gov/Home/Contact-Us>), which can be reached at (800) TELL-TDA (835-5832) or (800) 735-2989 (TTY).

The local agency that administers the program is the district. See **Nondiscrimination Statement** on page 106 for the name and contact information for the Title IX coordinator, ADA/Section 504 coordinator, and superintendent for other concerns about discrimination.

The Hays CISD child nutrition department is committed to providing safe and nutritious food to students, staff, and parents in a respectful environment. We will provide students with the opportunity to reach their maximum potential through healthy food choices that encourage lifelong healthy eating habits.

The district follows all applicable federal and state guidelines regarding foods sold and/or given away on school premises during the school day. You may refer to the Nutrition Guidelines and Celebrations section of the student handbook for additional information. [See policies FFA and CO] For more information, please see the frequently asked questions (FAQ) below.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How do I set up a lunch account for my child?

A: When you enroll, your child will be issued a 6-digit student ID number that will also serve as their lunch account number as long as they are enrolled at Hays CISD. If you need assistance contact the child nutrition office at 512-268-1336.

Q: What types of payment methods are accepted?

A: Cash or check may be accepted on campus. Checks may be made payable to Hays CISD including your child's name and ID number. For credit or debit payment, go online to schoolcafe.com. Processing fees may apply. Q: Does my student's account balance roll over to the next school year?

A: Yes. The account balance follows the student ID number. Therefore, even when the student moves to a new school, their account balance will still be active. Once your student graduates, you can transfer their remaining funds to another student or request a refund with the Child Nutrition office.

Q: Am I able to request certain account restrictions?

A: As a parent, you may restrict your student from certain purchases. For example, an account restriction may include: cash only for a la carte items, lunch meal only, or vegetarian meal only. Please talk with your café manager at your campus to determine the account restriction that works best for you. You may also contact the Child Nutrition office for assistance.

Q: How do I apply for free/reduced meals? How do I know if I qualify?

A: Paper applications are available on your campus. To expedite this process, go to schoolcafe.com to fill out the online application. You are welcome to use computers at the child nutrition office or on your school campus. Letters of approval or denial will be sent to your household. Application processing may take up to 10 business days.

Q: Do I have to fill out a free/reduced meal application every year?

A: Yes. A new application is needed on file for your student(s) each school year. Q: What happens if my child runs out of money?

A: Once an account reaches a negative \$10.00 balance, a modified meal will be issued. A modified meal includes a sandwich, a choice of milk, access to fresh fruits and vegetables, and the hot vegetable of the day.

Q: Can I donate to student accounts?

A: Yes. There is a process for donating unused or additional funds to a student's account balance. The Child Nutrition program is federally funded by USDA and, therefore, has strict guidelines regarding how these types of funds may be distributed. If you are interested in donating, please contact the Child Nutrition office for more information.

Q: What if my child has a food allergy?

A: Please be sure to provide the district this information to ensure the appropriate precautions are in place. Your campus nurse is a great place to start. You may also reach out to the Child Nutrition office directly.

Q: How do I find more information? 5

A: Visit <https://www.hayscisd.net/> scroll over parent and student tab then click on Child Nutrition. You will find monthly menus, nutrition and allergen information, our schoolcafe.com system, and more. School cafe is an online system that allows you to fill out a free/reduced meal application, monitor your student's balance, set up email alerts for low balances, make online payments, and see a detailed breakdown of your child's transactions. You are welcome to call the Child Nutrition office at 512-268-1336 for more information.

School Parties, Celebrations, and Deliveries

The following guidelines must be followed:

- Foods otherwise restricted by the smart snacks rule are permitted in elementary classroom student birthday parties, if the school authorizes such activities. Classroom celebrations must be held during the last 15 minutes of the school day. The Child Nutrition Department can help with these events by taking your order, preparing and delivering it to the classroom. Please call 512-268-1336.
- Deliveries to students, such as flowers, cookie bouquets, etc., should not be made to campuses.

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.

Vending Machines (All Grade Levels)

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

Pest Management Plan (All Grade Levels)

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

All pesticides used are registered for their intended use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and are applied only by certified pesticide applicators. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before indoor application. All outdoor applications will be posted at the time of treatment, and signs will remain until it is safe to enter the area.

Parents who have questions or who want to be notified of the times and types of applications prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact the district's IPM

coordinator: Supervisor IPM, 155 Beacon Hill Rd., Buda, Texas 78710
Maintenance.operations@hayscisd.net

Conduct Before and After School (All Grade Levels)

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at before- or after-school activities. Whether a school activity is on or off district premises, students must follow the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day. Misbehavior 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.

Library (All Grade Levels)

The school library media center is a learning laboratory with books, computers, magazines, and other materials available for classroom assignments, projects, and reading or listening pleasure. The library is open for independent student use during the times that have been designated by each campus.

Use of Hallways during Class Time (All Grade Levels)

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

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

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are required to remain in the area where their activity is scheduled to take place.

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.

Students must leave campus immediately after dismissal from school in the afternoon, unless the student is involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher or other authorized employee or adult.

Meetings of Noncurriculum-Related Groups (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

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

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

School-Sponsored Field Trips (All Grade Levels)

The district periodically takes students on field trips for educational purposes. A parent must provide permission for a student to participate in a field trip.

The district may ask the parent to provide information about a student's medical provider and insurance coverage and may also ask the parent to sign a waiver allowing for emergency medical treatment in the case of a student accident or illness during the field trip.

The district may require a fee for student participation in a field trip that is not required as part of a basic educational program or course to cover expenses such as transportation, admission, and meals.

The district is not responsible for refunding fees paid directly to a third-party vendor.

Searches

Searches in General (All Grade Levels)

In the interest of promoting student safety and drug-free schools, district officials may occasionally conduct searches.

District officials may search students, their belongings, and their vehicles in accordance with law and district policy. Searches of students will be conducted without discrimination, based on, for example, reasonable suspicion or voluntary consent or pursuant to district policy providing for suspicion-less security procedures, including the use of metal detectors.

In accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, students are responsible for prohibited items found in their possession, including items in their personal belongings or in vehicles parked on district property.

If there is reasonable suspicion to believe that searching a student's person, belongings, or vehicle will reveal evidence of a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, a district official may conduct a search in accordance with law and district regulations.

District Property (All Grade Levels)

Desks, lockers, district-provided technology, and similar items are the property of the district and are provided for student use as a matter of convenience. District property is subject to search or inspection at any time without notice. Students have no expectation of privacy in district property.

Students are responsible for any item found in district property provided to the student that is prohibited by law, district policy, or the Student Code of Conduct.

Metal Detectors (All Grade Levels)

To maintain a safe and disciplined learning environment, the district reserves the right to subject students to metal detector searches when entering a district campus and at off-campus, school-sponsored activities.

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. [See policy CQ for more information.]

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

[See **Electronic Devices and Technology Resources** on page 70 and policy FNF(LEGAL) for more information.]

Trained Dogs (All Grade Levels)

The district may use trained dogs to screen for concealed, prohibited items, including drugs and alcohol. Screenings conducted by trained dogs will not be announced in advance. The dogs will not be used with students, but students may be asked to leave personal belongings in an area that is going to be screened, such as a classroom, a locker, or a vehicle. If a dog alerts to an item or an area, it may be searched by district officials.

Motor Vehicle Privileges (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

This policy outlines the rules and expectations regarding student parking and vehicle use on school property:

1. ***Parking Requirements:***

- a. Students who drive to school must park on school property.
- b. They are required to purchase and display a current parking decal on their vehicle.

2. ***Disciplinary Actions:***

- a. Students who park improperly, illegally, or fail to display the required parking decal may face disciplinary action.

3. ***Towing Policy:***

- a. Vehicles parked improperly or illegally on school property may be towed at the owner's expense.
- b. Vehicles parked off school property may be towed at the discretion of the property owner.

4. ***Safe Driving Expectations:***

- a. Student drivers are expected to operate their vehicles safely at all times.
- b. They are expected to drive in a courteous and responsible manner.

5. ***Vehicle Security:***

- a. Students are responsible for the security of their vehicles.
- b. They should ensure that their vehicles are locked, and keys are not given to others.

6. ***Liability for Vandalism or Theft:***

- a. Schools are not responsible for vandalism or burglary of items inside vehicles parked on school property.

If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the student will be asked to unlock the vehicle. If the student refuses, the district will contact the student's parents. If the parents also refuse to permit the vehicle to be searched, the district may turn the matter over to law enforcement. The district may contact law enforcement even if permission to search is granted.

Sexual Harassment

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 58.]

Special Programs (All Grade Levels)

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

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission's Talking Book Program provides audiobooks free of charge to qualifying Texans, including students with visual, physical, or reading disabilities such as dyslexia.

Standardized Testing

PSAT/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. These assessments are usually taken at the end of the junior year. Students are encouraged to talk with the school counselor early during their junior year to learn about these assessments and determine the appropriate examination to take. The Preliminary SAT (PSAT) and ACT-Aspire are the corresponding preparatory and readiness assessments for the SAT and ACT.

Note: These assessments may qualify a student to receive a performance acknowledgment on the student's 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.

TSIA 2.0 (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 Assessment 2.0 (TSIA). The TSIA assesses the reading, mathematics, and writing skills that first-year students need to perform effectively as undergraduates in Texas public colleges and universities. This assessment may also be required before a student enrolls in a dual credit course offered through the district. Achieving certain benchmark scores on this assessment may also waive certain end-of-course assessment requirements in limited circumstances.

Student Speakers (All Grade Levels)

The district provides students the opportunity to introduce various school events.

If a student meets eligibility criteria and wishes to introduce one of the school events, the student should submit his or her name in accordance with policy FNA (LOCAL).

[See **Graduation** on page 82 for information related to student speakers at graduation ceremonies and policy FNA(LOCAL) regarding other speaking opportunities.]

Tardies (All Grade Levels)

The Texas Education Agency's Student Attendance Accounting Handbook §3.6.8: Tardies, states:

For official attendance accounting and Foundation School Program (FSP) purposes, tardies do not exist. However, locally designed codes may be implemented to indicate that the following occurred:

- A student arrived late to class before official roll call and was counted present for ADA and FSP purposes, or
- A student arrived late to class after the official roll call and was counted absent for ADA and FSP purposes.

The Texas Education Agency's Correspondence regarding truancy on November 13, 2021, states:

There have also been reports regarding classifying a student's tardiness to class as an absence for

the purpose of compulsory enforcement. In a 1993 opinion, the attorney general concluded that absences generally do not include tardiness to class, especially if the student is present on the campus but late to class. The particular circumstances of a child's tardiness on a certain day may be sufficiently egregious to constitute an absence, but school districts should not routinely classify each instance of tardiness as an absence for purposes of truancy. A district may of course provide disciplinary consequences for tardiness under its locally adopted Code of Conduct.

Protocol and Procedures

Tardy Protocol

Tardiness is defined as arriving to the classroom after the official start time of school and/or class period. Excessive tardiness may result in disciplinary action as determined by the individual campus.

Tardy Procedures

Students who arrive to the classroom after the official start of school and/or class period should have their attendance marked as Tardy in FOCUS. The only exception is the Official Attendance Taking Time (OATT). At the OATT, students are either marked Present or Absent.

Tardiness is defined as arriving to the classroom after the official start time of school and/or class period. Excessive tardiness may result in disciplinary action as determined by the individual campus.

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

Instructional materials are any resources used in classroom instruction as part of the required curriculum, such as textbooks, workbooks, computer software, or online services.

The district selects instructional materials in accordance with state law and policy EFA.

The district provides approved instructional materials to students free of charge for each subject or class. Students must treat instructional materials with care, as directed by the teacher.

If a student needs a graphing calculator for a course and the district does not provide one, the student may use a calculator application with graphing capabilities on a phone, laptop, tablet, or other computing device, except during testing.

A student who is issued a damaged item should report the damage to the teacher.

Any student who does not return an item or returns an item in an unacceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until the item is returned or the damage is 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 (All Grade Levels)

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

The superintendent or his designee is authorized to investigate and approve transfers between schools.

[See **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 20, **Bullying** on page 35, and **A Student Who Has Learning Difficulties or Who Needs Special Education or Section 504 Services** on page 23, for other transfer options.]

Transportation (All Grade Levels)

School-Sponsored Trips

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use school-provided transportation to and from the event. However, in accordance with campus procedures, a parent may provide written consent for his or her child to ride with or be released after the event to the parent or another adult designated by the parent. [See **School- Sponsored Field Trips** on page 123.]

Buses and Other School Vehicles

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living two or more miles from school and to any students who are experiencing homelessness. This service is provided at no cost to students.

Bus routes and stops will be designated annually. Any subsequent changes will be posted at the school and on the district's website. For the safety of the driver and all passengers, students must board district vehicles only at authorized stops and drivers must unload passengers only at authorized stops.

The district has identified the following areas where hazardous traffic conditions and/or a high risk of violence exist for students who live within two miles of the campus:

<https://www.hayscisd.net/Page/913>

Because students in these areas might encounter hazardous traffic conditions or be subject to a high risk of violence when walking to and from school, the district will provide transportation to these students. For additional information, please contact: Filiberto Bonilla, Director of transportation at Filiberto.Bonilla@hayscisd.net 512-268-8456

A parent may designate a child-care facility or grandparent's residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated location must be an approved stop on an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off location, contact Diana Jimenez at (512-268-8476).

Students are expected to assist district staff in ensuring that buses and other district vehicles are clean and safe. When riding in district vehicles, students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct. Students must:

- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Enter and leave the vehicle in an orderly manner at the designated stop.
- Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- Not deface the vehicle 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 vehicle.
- Not possess or use any form of tobacco or e-cigarettes in any district vehicle.
- Observe all usual classroom rules.
- Be seated while the vehicle is moving.
- Fasten their seat belts, if available.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the vehicle and before crossing in front of the vehicle.
- A student may not bring a skateboard onto a bus unless it is either (1) enclosed in a student backpack/bag or (2) tightly secured to the student's backpack. This is to prevent potential accidents from happening due to unsecured movement of skateboards while the bus is in motion.
- Follow any other rules established by the operator of the vehicle.

Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, including loss of the privilege to ride in a district vehicle.

[See the Student Code of Conduct for provisions regarding transportation to the DAEP.]

Use of Covert Listening Devices

For parents electing to use a GPS and/or covert listening device for the safety of their own child; the school should be notified that your child is using such a device. Additionally, the covert listening feature (1-way or 2-way communication) must be disabled during the school day to ensure that the privacy of all other students is maintained.

Vandalism (All Grade Levels)

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, the district uses video and audio recording equipment 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 as needed and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

In accordance with state law, a parent of a student who receives special education services, a staff member (as this term is defined by law), a principal or assistant principal, or the board may make a written request for the district to place video and audio recording equipment in certain self-contained special education classrooms. The district will provide notice before placing a video camera in a classroom or other setting in which a child receives special education services. For more information or to request the installation and operation of this equipment, contact the principal or a Special Education Director that the district has designated to coordinate the implementation of and compliance with this law.

[See policy EHBAF(LOCAL) for more information.]

[See **Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student when Not Already Permitted by Law** on page 13 for video and other recordings by parents or visitors to virtual or in-person classrooms.]

Visitors to the School (All Grade Levels)

General Visitors

Parents and others are welcome to visit district schools. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must:

- Request entry to the school at the primary entrance unless otherwise directed by a district employee.
- Report to the main office.
- Be prepared to show identification.
- Exit the school at the primary entrance and leave all exterior doors closed, latched, and locked unless actively monitored by a district employee.
- Comply with all applicable district policies and procedures.

If requested by a district employee, a visitor must provide identification such as a driver's license, other picture identification issued by a government entity, or employee or student identification issued by the district. A person who refuses to provide identification and who reasonably appears to have no legitimate reason to be on district property may be ejected from district property.

Individuals may visit classrooms or observe virtual instruction during instructional time only with approval of the principal and teacher. Visitors may not interfere with instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct. Disruptive behavior or violations of student privacy will not be permitted.

[See **Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student when Not Already Permitted by Law** on page for video and other recordings by parents or visitors to virtual or in-person classrooms.]

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 to 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 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 policies FNG(LOCAL) or GF(LOCAL), as appropriate. However, the timelines for the district's grievance procedures shall be adjusted as necessary to permit the person to address the board in person within 90 calendar days, unless the complaint is resolved before a board hearing.

Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students

Business, Civic, and Youth Groups

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

Career Day

On Career Ready Educated Workforce Day, CREW Day, and Career on Wheels Day, COW Day, the district invites representatives from colleges and universities and other higher education institutions, prospective employers, and military recruiters to present information to interested students.

Volunteers (All Grade Levels)

The district invites and appreciates the efforts of volunteers who are willing to serve our district and students.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact: Harvest Coates, Community Relations, Director, 21003 IH 35, Kyle, TX 78640, harvest.coates@hayscisd.net, 512-268-2141 ext. 46078

Subject to exceptions in accordance with state law and district procedures, the district requires a state criminal history background check for each volunteer, including parents, guardians, or grandparents of a child enrolled in the district. The volunteer must pay all costs for the background check.

HAYS CISD Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS)

A **volunteer** is someone that contributes their time, skills and experience to an organization or group and gives their time for free. Volunteers can be any parent, guardian, community partner, or district employee who has completed the volunteer registration process and has been approved through a criminal history background check. Volunteers may also be mentors, tutors, guest speakers, booster club and PTA members.

Students enrolled at Hays CISD may volunteer in our district under the supervision of a district employee.

All volunteers must register in the Hays CISD VIPs system

Registration requirements include:

1. All volunteers must complete the on-line application at <https://www.hayscisid.net/Page/130> .
2. Select the schools and activities that interest you most.
3. The VIPs system is used to communicate with volunteer about volunteer opportunities
4. When a volunteer registers, their details are immediately submitted for screening. Screening includes a criminal history background check run in real time against the largest commercial database in the US.
5. If approved, the volunteer will receive an email message with approval status and login credentials for their volunteer account.
6. If a criminal conviction is found, the Hays CISD Human Resource (HR) Office is notified automatically. The HR Office will manually review the results and determine whether to approve or deny the application. Hays CISD policy DBAA local is used to make final decisions.

Volunteer Badge Requirements

1. Once approved by the VIP criminal history background check a volunteer badge will be issued.
2. As part of the standard school safety practices, all volunteers will be issued a volunteer badge with a photo. The volunteer badge must be worn during all volunteer hours whether on or off campus.
3. The ID badge is proof that a criminal history background check has been processed and approved.
4. The ID badge also helps identify who is on campus or volunteering for events after school hours.

Mentors Matter

Who is qualified to be a mentor?

A mentor is someone who cares, listens and offers encouragement. Mentors help children develop their strengths and talents by supporting the efforts of other significant people such as parents and teachers. Mentors are people willing to give a little of their time to make a difference in a child's life.

What do mentors do?

Mentors provide constant encouragement and emotional support for their students. Mentors help students to:

- Accept responsibility
- Use good study habits
- Make positive choices
- Learn problem solving skills

- Have better peer relationships

Requirements:

- Register in the VIPs system.
- Criminal history background check must be approved.
- Make a 1-year commitment to meet with a student once a week for 30 minutes
- Attend one (1) training session

Research repeatedly shows that having a mentor helps a child to be more successful in school. Children are not the only ones whose lives can be changed by mentoring. For many mentors, the rewards of reaching out to another and building a close, trusting relationship are great, including an increase in personal enrichment, happiness and self-knowledge. In fact, mentoring benefits all of society. Healthy, educated and nurtured children tend to grow up to be productive adults and responsible parents. They may even grow up to be mentors themselves. For more information, please call 512-268-2141, ext. 46078.

HAYS CISD Education Foundation

The following outlines the functions of the Hays CISD Education Foundation:

- It is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit tax-exempt philanthropic organization of citizens
- Shares a vision of enhancing education in Hays CISD
- Works to increase private support for educational activities in Hays CISD
- Benefits Hays CISD students and staff personnel by supporting activities above and beyond those funded by tax dollars
- Fosters creative approaches to education through private grants and involvement Awards Foundation funds through a volunteer Board of Directors made up of business, community and educational leaders

If you are interested in getting involved with the Hays CISD Education Foundation, please call 512-268-2141, ext. 46078.

Parent Teacher Associations (PTA)

Each campus in the district maintains a local chapter of PTA or PTSA (Parent-Teacher-Student Association) through the national and state PTA organization. PTA is a grassroots organization made up of parents, teachers and others around the state that have a special interest in children, families and schools. PTA membership is as diverse as Texas is in cultures, education levels and parenting skills. By joining a PTA, a member automatically becomes part of the largest child-advocacy organization in the state—over 630,000 strong across Texas. If you are interested in getting involved in your campus PTA, please contact the principal. Additionally, the district supports the PTA Council, which provides support to each campus PTA. The council meets twice a year and provides campus PTA groups training.

All volunteers are highly encouraged to record their volunteer hours in the VIPs system. The district will submit your hours for consideration in the President's Volunteer Service Award Program. If the numbers of hours you completed in a 12-month period meet criteria, you will be awarded a President's Volunteer Service Award at either the: Gold, Silver, or Lifetime Achievement levels.

Voter Registration (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

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

Withdrawing from School (All Grade Levels)

To withdraw a student under age 18 from school, the parent or guardian must submit a written request to the principal specifying the reasons for withdrawal and the final day the student will be in attendance. Withdrawal forms are available from the principal's office.

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

Please provide the school at least three days' notice of withdrawal so that records and documents may be prepared.

Glossary

Accelerated instruction, including supplemental instruction, is an intensive educational program designed to help an individual student acquire the knowledge and skills required at his or her grade level. It is required when a student does not meet the passing standard on a state-mandated assessment. Accelerated instruction may be provided by assigning a student to a classroom teacher who is certified as a master, exemplary, or recognized teacher or by providing supplemental instruction in addition to regular instruction.

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

ACT-Aspire is designed as a preparatory and readiness assessment for the ACT. This is usually taken by students in grade 10.

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

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

CPS stands for Child Protective Services.

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

DFPS stands for the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

DPS stands for the Texas Department of Public Safety.

DSHS stands for the Texas Department of State Health Services.

ED stands for the U.S. Department of Education.

Emergent bilingual student refers to a student of limited English proficiency. Other related terms include English learner, English language learner, and limited English proficient student.

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

ESSA is the federal Every Student Succeeds Act.

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

IEP stands for individualized education program and is the written record prepared by the ARD committee for a student with disabilities who is eligible for special education services.

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

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

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

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

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

SHAC stands for School Health Advisory Council, a group of at least five members, a majority of whom must be parents, appointed by the school board to help ensure that local community values and health issues are reflected in the district's health education instruction, as well as assist 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. Except under limited circumstances, students must pass the STAAR EOC assessments to graduate. Students have multiple opportunities to take the tests, if necessary, for 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; sets out the conditions that authorize require the principal or another administrator to place the student in a DAEP; and outlines

conditions for out-of-school suspension and for expulsion. The Student Code of Conduct also addresses notice to the parent regarding a student's violation of one of its provisions.

TAC stands for the Texas Administrative Code.

TEA stands for the Texas Education Agency, which oversees primary and secondary public education in Texas.

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

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

TXVSN stands for the Texas Virtual School Network, which provides online courses for Texas students to supplement the instructional programs of public school districts. Courses are taught by qualified instructors and 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 A: Freedom from Bullying Policy

Hays CISD
105906

FFI

STUDENT WELFARE FREEDOM FROM BULLYING

(LOCAL)

Note:

This policy addresses bullying of District students. For purposes of this policy, the term bullying includes cyber-bullying.

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.

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

Bullying Prohibited

The District prohibits bullying, including cyberbullying, as defined by state law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of District policy and is prohibited.

Example: Bullying of a student could occur by physical contact or through electronic means and may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demand for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, or ostracism.

Minimum Standards

In accordance with law, the Superintendent shall develop administrative procedures to ensure that minimum standards for bullying prevention are implemented.

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.

Example: Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reduction. 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, school counselor, principal, or other District employee. The Superintendent shall develop procedures allowing a student to anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying.
<i>Student Report</i>	
Employee Report	Any District employee who suspects or receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the principal or designee.
<i>Report Form</i>	A report may be made orally or in writing. The principal or designee shall reduce any oral reports to written form.
Periodic Monitor	The Superintendent shall periodically monitor the reported counts of bullying incidents, and that declines in the count may represent not only improvements in the campus culture because bullying declines but also declines in the campus culture because of a decline in openness to report incidents.
Notice of Report	When an allegation of bullying is reported, the principal or designee shall notify parent of the alleged victim on or before the third business day after the incident reported. The principal or designee shall also notify a parent of the student alleged to have engaged in the conduct within a reasonable amount of time after the incident is reported.
Prohibited Conduct	The principal or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy <u>FFH</u> , including dating violence and harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, or disability. If so, the District shall proceed under policy <u>FFH</u> . If the allegations could constitute both prohibited conduct and bullying, the investigation under <u>FFH</u> shall include a determination on each type of conduct.
Investigation of Report	The principal or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report. The principal or designee shall promptly take interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate.

Concluding the Investigation	Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within ten District business days from the date of the initial report alleging bullying; however, the principal or designee shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation.
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	If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, the District shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the District's Student Code of Conduct and may take corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct. The District may notify law enforcement in certain circumstances.
<i>Bully</i>	
<i>Discipline</i>	<p>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.</p> <p>The discipline of a student with a disability is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Code of Conduct.</p>
<i>Corrective Action</i>	Examples of corrective action may include a training program for the individuals involved in the complaint, a comprehensive education program for the school community, follow-up inquiries to determine whether any new incidents or any instances of retaliation have occurred, involving parents and students in efforts to identify problems and improve the school climate, increasing staff monitoring of areas where bullying has occurred, and reaffirming the District's policy against bullying.
<i>Transfers</i>	The principal or designee shall refer to <u>FDB</u> for transfer provisions.
<i>Counsel</i>	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.
<i>Improper Conduct</i>	If the investigation reveals improper conduct that did not rise to the level of prohibited conduct or bullying, the District may take action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct or any other appropriate corrective action.
Confidentiality	To the greatest extent possible, the District shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.
Appeal	A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through <u>ENG</u> (LOCAL), beginning at the appropriate level.

Records Retention

Retention of records shall be in accordance with CPC(LOCAL).

Access to Policy and Procedures

This policy and any accompanying procedures shall be distributed annually in the employee and student handbooks. Copies of the policy and procedures shall be posted on the District's website, to the extent practicable, and shall be readily available at each campus and the District's administrative offices.

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Appendix B: Freedom from Bullying Procedures

Bullying Procedures

Definitions of Bullying

Bullying occurs when a student or a group of students engages in written or verbal expression or physical conduct that:

- 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 so sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student; or
- Has the effect of substantially negatively impacting a student's emotional or mental well-being.

The following definitions shall apply:

- Bullying means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students.
 - o Bullying of a student may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, extortion, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, ridicule, name-calling, rumor spreading, slurs, jokes, innuendos, demeaning comments, and ostracism of the person or another.
- It is further defined as any unwanted purposeful gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e., Internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand-held device) that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, ethnicity, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, socio-economic background, social/family background, linguistic preference, political beliefs, or a mental, physical, or sensory disability, difference, or impairment; or by any other distinguishing characteristic or because of one's association with a particular person or group of persons.
- Bullying also includes, but is not limited to, any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by a student, that has the potential to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment or cause long-term damage, cause discomfort or humiliation, or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation, or is carried out repeatedly and is often characterized by an imbalance of power.

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 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.

- 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.

Other Bullying Related Definitions

- **Cyberbullying** is defined as willful harassment and intimidation of a person through the use of digital technologies, including, but not limited to, e-mail, blogs, texting on cell phones, social Websites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, SnapChat and the like), chat rooms, “sexting”, instant messaging, or video voyeurism by accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the District network system.
- **Cyberstalking** means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at or about a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.
- **Prohibited Harassment** includes, but is not limited to, oral, written, psychological, physical (both climate and contact), and other demonstrative actions with regard to race, creed, ethnic origin, religious preference, gender, disability, or sexual orientation that is harassing. [See Board Policy FFH(LOCAL)]
- **Accused** is defined as any district student in the school or outside the school at school-sponsored events, on school buses, or at training facilities or training programs sponsored by the district who is reported to have committed an act of bullying, whether formally or informally, verbally, or in writing.
- **Complainant** is defined as any individual who has a complaint or concern.
- **Victim** is defined as any district student who is reported to have been the target of an act of bullying during any educational program or activity.

No matter what problems you are dealing with, by calling 1-800-273-TALK (8255) you'll be connected to a skilled, trained counselor at a crisis center in your area, anytime 24/7.

How to Report Bullying at Hays CISD

If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying or has witnessed the bullying of another student, it is important for the student or parent to notify a teacher, counselor, principal, or another district employee as soon as possible. Parents are also strongly encouraged to contact their child's school if he or she reports bullying to you. The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying and will take appropriate disciplinary action if an investigation indicates that bullying has occurred. Bullying may also be reported using the [Hays Hopeline](#).

Reports of bullying shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act (within 24 hours of notification - absent extenuating

circumstances). A failure to immediately report may impair the District's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.

To obtain assistance and intervention, any student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, school counselor, principal, or other District employee. Concerns about student safety or well-being may also be reported using the Hays Hopeline

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.

A report may be made orally or in writing. The principal or designee shall reduce any oral reports to written form.

Administrator Investigation

1. When an allegation of bullying is reported, the principal or designee shall notify a parent of the alleged victim within 24 hours after the incident is reported (absent extenuating circumstances). The principal or designee shall also notify a parent of the student alleged to have engaged in the conduct within a reasonable amount of time after the incident is reported.
2. The principal or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH, including dating violence and harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.

After 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.

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.

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, the District shall

promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the District's Student Code of Conduct and may take corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct. The District may notify law enforcement in certain circumstances.

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.

Discipline

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.

The discipline of a student with a disability is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Code of Conduct.

Corrective Actions

Examples of corrective action may include:

- a training program for the individuals involved in the complaint,
- a comprehensive education program for the school community,
- follow-up inquiries to determine whether any new incidents or any instances of retaliation have occurred,
- involving parents and students in efforts to identify problems and improve the school climate,
- increasing staff monitoring of areas where bullying has occurred, and
- reaffirming the District's policy against bullying.
- Progressive discipline measures that align to the District Student Code of Conduct

Transfers

The principal or designee shall refer to FDB for transfer provisions.

Counseling

The principal or designee shall notify the victim, the student who engaged in bullying, and any students who witnessed the bullying of available counseling options.

Confidentiality

To the greatest extent possible, the District shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

Appeal

A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through ENG(LOCAL), beginning at the appropriate level.

Records

Retention of records shall be in accordance with CPC(LOCAL).

These procedures shall be distributed annually in the employee and student handbooks. Copies of the policy and procedures shall be posted on the District's website, to the extent practicable, and shall be readily available at each campus and the District's administrative office.

What is Hays CISD doing to address and prevent bullying?

In Hays CISD, we are committed to taking care of the whole child. That includes nurturing their social and emotional health and building relationships with families.

On our campuses and in our classrooms, we establish and enforce clear behavioral expectations and boundaries for our students. By establishing a culture of mutual respect, we aim to prevent bullying by defusing such destructive behavior. When misconduct occurs, there are serious consequences that vary according to the nature of the offense. Those consequences are spelled out in detail in the Student Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct provides methods and options for managing students in the classroom and on school grounds, disciplining students, and preventing and intervening in student discipline problems. The law requires the district to define misconduct that may—or must—result in a range of specific disciplinary consequences including removal from a regular classroom or campus, out-of-school suspension, placement in a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP), or expulsion from school.

Staff Training and Classroom Instruction

Hays CISD will provide age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention and provide professional development to build the skills of staff members, as required by law. The Superintendent will develop a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan which shall set forth the administrative guidelines and procedures for the implementation of this policy. Such Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan shall include, but not be limited to:

- procedures for reporting,
- responding to and investigating reports of bullying or retaliation;
- the range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against a perpetrator for bullying or retaliation or against someone for making a false accusation of bullying;
- procedures for remedying incidents of bullying and restoring a sense of safety for a victim and assessing that victim's needs for protection;
- strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a person who reports bullying or provides information during an investigation; any notification requirements consistent with state and federal law;
- a strategy for providing counseling or referral to appropriate services for perpetrators, victims and family members; and
- provisions for educating and informing parents about bullying and the District's

bullying prevention curriculum.

Hays CISD Bullying Investigation Protocol

Step 1: Reporting Bullying

- o If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying or witnesses the bullying of another student, the student or parent should notify a teacher, school counselor, principal, or another district employee as soon as possible. A student may anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying by filling out an anonymous incident report form and placing it in a locked box outside the counselor's office. They may also anonymously report it online [Hays Hopeline](#).

Step 2: Investigation by School Staff

- o The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying and 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.

Step 3: Bullying Determination & Notification of Findings

- o If an investigation determines that bullying occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action and may, in certain circumstances, notify law enforcement. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying.

Step 4: Consequences for Bullying:

- o Consequences will be assigned as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. Targets of bullying will not be punished.
- o Rights to appeal are explained to all parties.
- o Retaliation against students who report bullying will not be tolerated.

How do we investigate bullying in Hays CISD?

Bullying Checklist for School

This checklist is an overall general guide to assist administrators in complying with legal and policy requirements as they document, investigate and respond to reports of bullying or harassment. The recommended steps are not all inclusive and you may need to take other steps as you proceed with the investigation. The goal of your investigation is to gather as much information as possible regarding the complaint so that you can form a conclusion and determine a plan of action. Investigations should be completed within 10 business days. Be sure also to review policy FFH (Local) and FFI (Local) as appropriate.

- **Step 1** Obtain details regarding the allegations and ask that they be put in writing. Note that the law does not require that complaints be written, so even if the reporting party refuses to put the allegations in writing, the administrator has a responsibility to investigate the allegations. If the reporting party refuses to put the allegations in writing,

the administrator should reduce the allegations to writing himself or herself.

- **Step 2** Receive or complete the Bullying/Harassment Report Form Intake. Although bullying reports should be made in a timely manner, unlike other district grievances, there is no time limit on when a bullying complaint can be made. Be sure to verify and include years in all documentation to avoid any confusion. (F51-A: Bullying/Harassment Report Form Intake).
- **Step 3** Verbally notify the parent(s) of the student alleged to have been bullied or harassed referred to as the “Target Student” within three business days after the date the incident is reported that an allegation of bullying has been made and an administrative investigation will be or is being conducted. The parent(s) of the alleged perpetrator must be notified within a reasonable amount of time after the incident. Assure all parents that they will be kept advised of the outcome of the investigation. Keep a log of the dates and times of all verbal notifications and keep the log in the investigation file.
- **Step 4** Take any immediate interim steps that may be necessary to ensure student safety, including but not limited to separating the students, disciplining the student(s), contacting Child Protective (CPS) or law enforcement, or other measures as required by Policy and law.
- **Step 5** Gather information and conduct an investigation of the allegations using the Investigation Guidelines. Complete the Administrative Investigation Report (Final) to document the investigation. Generally, the investigation should be completed within ten business days. Particularly fact-intensive investigations or investigations that occur during the holidays or over the summer break may necessarily take longer. If the investigation will not be completed within ten business days (or the timeline established in policy), it is a good practice to notify the parents of the extenuating circumstances that require additional time to complete the report. If the allegations also contain allegations based on discrimination or harassment against a student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, disability, age, or on any other basis prohibited by law, an investigation should be conducted under both Policy FFH (Local) and FFI (Local). Check policy FFI or FFH (Local) to confirm the deadlines. See Form F51-B: Investigation Guideline and Form F51-C Administrative Investigation Report (Final).
- **Step 6** Review and apply the Six Step Analysis to establish whether or not bullying and/or harassment occurred.
- **Step 7** Where required by policy, send a copy of the completed Administrative Investigation Report (Final) to the Superintendent’s office and/or to any other officials designated in policy to receive such reports.
 - Remember: if a student who is the perpetrator of bullying or the victim of bullying is eligible for special education or Section 504 services, the campus should convene the student’s Admission, Review, and Dismissal (“ARD”) or Section 504 committee as soon as possible to determine whether the student requires additional services to address the conduct or the effects of the conduct.
- **Step 8** If necessary, take any corrective measures to stop the bullying and/or harassment and prevent it from recurring, such as disciplinary consequences, student conferences, counseling referrals, schedule changes, a Stay Away Agreement, etc. For

other suggested remedial measures, refer to the Ideas and Strategies to Address Bullying/Harassment. Check the age of the student.

- o Remember: a student who was the victim of bullying may not be disciplined for the student's reasonable use of self-defense to respond to bullying. Additionally, a student who receives special education services may not be disciplined for bullying until an Admission, Review, and Dismissal ("ARD") committee meeting has been held to review the conduct.
- **Step 9** Separately meet with or contact the parents of both the alleged target student and the alleged perpetrator student to notify them of your findings.
- **Step 10** Follow up with the parents of the alleged target student(s) and the alleged perpetrator(s) by sending a brief letter summarizing the investigation findings and any corrective actions taken. Avoid referencing other children by name or personal identifiers in the outcome letter, and do not disclose any disciplinary measures taken against children other than the child whose parents are receiving the letter.
- **Step 11** If warranted, initiate further, long-term corrective measures considered necessary to remedy any deficiencies revealed by the investigation. This may include additional staff training or parent outreach regarding anti-harassment and anti-bullying protocol. If a deficiency is noted, document in writing all responsive action taken to address the deficiency (training agendas and minutes, employee documentation, etc.) and keep those notes separate from the investigation file. For other suggested remedial measures, refer to the Ideas and Strategies to Address Bullying/Harassment.
- **Step 12** Monitor (or assign others to monitor) the effectiveness of any corrective actions taken, including follow-up with any student (and parent of student) found to have been the target of harassing or bullying conduct. Document the periodic monitoring in order to ensure the efficacy of any corrective anti-bullying measures taken.
- **Step 13** If it is determined that bullying did not occur, the investigating administrator must determine if the conduct alleged could constitute prohibited discrimination, harassment, or dating violence under policy FFH. If so, an appropriate--and separate--investigation must be conducted under policy FFH (Local), and any necessary corrective actions should be pursued in accordance with that policy.

Bullying Investigation Timeline

Notice of Parent and Student Rights

HCISD Bullying Determination Flowchart

Parent Resources:

Internet Safety

- Cyberbullying - What to do if it happens to you!
- Cyber Safety for Parents
- Contract for Responsible Cell Phone Use
- Protecting your Child on the Internet

Parenting Resources

- [Disciplining my child](#)
- [Developing Healthy School Habits](#)
- [How to Handle Lying, Cheating, Stealing](#)
- [Teaching Self Control](#)

Emotional Support

- [Grief in Children](#)
- [Relaxation Exercises for Children](#)
- [Positive Friendship Skills](#)
- [Divorced Parent Resources](#)
- [Anxiety, Fears, and Phobias](#)
- [Dealing with Bullying](#)
- [Suicide Crisis Center](#)