



*"Building Champions with a Future and a Hope"*

# **Student - Parent Handbook**

## **2023-2024**

**Dallas**

**Waxahachie**

**Grand Prairie West**

**Grand Prairie East**

# EAGLE ADVANTAGE SCHOOLS EST. 1998

## PREFACE

To Our Students, Parents and Guardians

This Handbook has been designed as a resource for basic information that students and parents need to know during the course of the academic school year. The information presented in this handbook is extremely valuable and should be read by both student and parent. We encourage you to take some time to review each section of the handbook. The Student-Parent Handbook is designed to work in harmony with the Pre-K, Secondary and Student Code of Conduct Handbooks. All handbooks are available for viewing at each Campus Office or may be viewed by going to the schools website [www.advantageacademy.org](http://www.advantageacademy.org). Relevant information appears in each publication.

All handbooks are approved by the Board of Directors in accordance with state and local law. This publication is updated at least annually with policy adoptions and revisions. In case of conflict between any provision of this Handbook and School Policy, the provision most recently adopted by the Board of Directors will be followed. Advantage Academy at its sole discretion, reserves the right to unilaterally withdraw, add to, modify or amend this handbook throughout the school year as required and/or needed. The contents of this publication are not contractual and do not give rise to a claim of breach of contract against the school district, campus, school employees or administrators.

The policies, procedures, and rules contained in Advantage Academy handbooks apply to all students, parents, guardians and visitors and have been established as standards that are consistent with a safe learning environment and the school's vision and mission. Policies, procedures and rules within this handbook are intended to promote adherences to district, campus, classroom and school policies/procedures and remain in effect for all campuses, facilities and property; before, during and after regular school hours and during any school sponsored event or activity on or off campus.

Because the District's Board of Directors has adopted the Student Code of Conduct as the force policy; if a conflict arises between this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct, the Code shall prevail.

The term "**campus**" is used to refer to school property as well as the geographic area within 300 feet of school property as measured from any point on the real property boundary line. Thus, to prohibit an activity on "campus" is to prohibit the activity on school property and within 300 feet of school property.

The term "**parent**" is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person(s) who have agreed to assume school-related or legal responsibility for the student.

If you have any questions about the material contained in this handbook, please feel free to contact your Campus Principal or District Department for clarification.

**CAMPUS PROFILES****ADVANTAGE ACADEMY DALLAS**

4009-4010 Joseph Hardin Dr., Dallas, TX 75236 – Pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Programs

**Tel:** 214-276-5800(option 3) **Fax:** Elementary: 214-467-4499.....Middle: 214-467-2510

**ADVANTAGE ACADEMY GRAND PRAIRIE WEST**

955 Freetown Rd, Grand Prairie, TX 75051 – Pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Programs

**Tel:** 214-276-5800(option 2) **Fax:** 972-602-2212

**ADVANTAGE ACADEMY WAXAHACHIE**

701 West Highway 287 Bypass, Waxahachie, TX 75165 – Pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Programs

**Tel:** 972-937-9851(option 4) **Fax:** 972-937-9876

**ADVANTAGE ACADEMY GRAND PRAIRIE EAST**

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**Tel:** 214-276-5800(option 6) **Fax:** 972-237-7927

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Eagle Advantage Schools does not discriminate against students, employees or applicants for employment because of race, color, religion, gender, sex, national origin, age, disability, military status, genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by law in providing equal access to the schools education programs or activities, including CTE programs, as required by Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Title I and Title V of the (ADA) Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended; the (ADEA) Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the (GINA) Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008; and any other legally-protected classification or status protected by federal, state or local law.

For inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies, contact the Human Resources, Student Services or Special Programs Department (214-276-5800) 618 W. Wheatland Road, Duncanville, TX 75116. Eagle Advantage Schools, Inc. (dba Advantage Academy) 501©3 non-profit organization  
[www.advantageacademy.org](http://www.advantageacademy.org) 618 W. Wheatland Road, Duncanville, TX 75116 ph. 214-276-5800.

## SCHOOL PROFILE

### Vision

For every student to live with *Wisdom, Purpose* and *Victory* by instilling America's founding principles of *Knowledge, Character* and *Leadership*.

### Mission

To prepare each student for the global society by meeting their unique needs - mind, body and spirit, through:

- *A safe, healthy, nurturing and faith-friendly environment*
- *Active and personalized learning*
- *Family and community engagement*
- *Character, servant leadership and personal responsibility*
- *Truth in American history, civic virtue and service*

### Motto

"Building Champions with a Future and a Hope"

## PLEDGES/MINUTE of SILENCE and PRAYER

With the passing of Senate Bill 83 in the Texas legislature, public school districts now require students to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States and Texas flags and to also observe a minute of silence following the recitation of the pledges. During the one minute of silence, each student may reflect, pray, meditate or engage in any other silent activity that is not likely to interfere with or distract another student.

### United States Pledge of Allegiance

The **Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag** is an oath of loyalty to the country. The pledge should be recited by standing at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart.

### Texas Pledge of Allegiance

The **Texas Pledge of Allegiance** is an oath of loyalty to the State of Texas. The pledge should be recited by standing at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart.

### Minute of Silence

One **Minute of Silence** will follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that minute as long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others.

### Prayer

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

## SEVEN PILLARS of CHARACTER and LEADERSHIP

Students of Advantage Academy are expected to learn and uphold the following qualities:

**Integrity** - Integrity is having strong moral values and showing consistent character even when no one is watching. The honesty, truthfulness, or accuracy of one's actions.

**Humility** - Humility is a modest view of oneself. Not the opposite of confidence, humility is showing a lack of false pride, seeing the importance in others, and being willing to learn and grow.

**Authority** - Authority means being a leader that is willing to serve in order to support the team. Authority is leading with both confidence and humility.

**Stability** - Stability is having a firm purpose and consistently working towards that purpose with perseverance. Reliable and dependable; having strength or security.

**Community** - Community is a group of people linked by a common goal or purpose. People connected and empowered with knowledge and the skills needed to effect change for a shared interest.

**Prosperity** - Prosperity is a state of health of the mind, body, and spirit. To thrive; encompass

happiness.

**Victory** - Victory is to achieve success by overcoming opposition and difficulties. To overcome; triumph.

### Daily "CHAMPION" Recital

Each student is required to recite the school's daily "Champion" recital as part of the students' normal morning routine.

### SCHOOL VALUES (Compact)

Advantage Academy is committed to a clear and common focus on student learning. The School believes that all students can learn and develop academically, socially and emotionally. The School is committed to a culture of high expectations and excellence.

**ADVANTAGE ACADEMY** is committed to upholding the following values:

- Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables students of Advantage Academy to meet the State's academic achievement standards
- Professional ethics, standards of practice and exceptional role models
- Maintain a safe and orderly environment conducive to learning and the care of all students
- Teach and exemplify the Seven Pillars of Character and Leadership
- Communicate effectively concerning student progress (through conferences, progress reports, etc...)
- Provide engaging, rigorous and differentiated instruction for student success
- Provide parents opportunities to engage within the school community
- Allow parents reasonable access to teachers, administrators and classroom observations

**ADVANTAGE ACADEMY** also agrees to:

- Extend learning beyond the school day to promote student achievement
- Work in a multicultural environment that emphasizes inclusion
- Model mutual respect and cooperation
- Ensure that every child's learning needs are addressed
- Motivate students to be successful learners
- Respond to student discipline issues using established discipline management techniques

*This compact outlines how the school shares the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the values by which the school will partner with parents/families to help each student achieve the standard of excellence.*

### STUDENT VALUES (Compact)

Each Advantage Academy student must respect the rights and privileges of others, including all administrators, teachers, school staff members and visitors. Students must assist in fostering and maintaining a climate of mutual respect while exercising their individual rights responsibly.

Advantage Academy **STUDENTS** are committed to upholding the following values:

#### ATTENDANCE:

- Attend all classes daily and do my best
- Be on time and prepared for each class (includes supplies and materials)
- Be aware of the Texas Compulsory Attendance laws

#### ACADEMICS:

- Take responsibility for learning
- Actively participate in class
- Complete all class and homework assignments
- Ask questions for better understanding

**BEHAVIOR:**

- Learn and abide by the Seven Pillars of Character and Leadership
- Comply with the District's Code of Conduct, campus and classroom rules
- Follow the dress code and grooming standards at all times
- Keep my parents informed of all school communications
- Be aware of and abide by the Districts Bullying policy

**STUDENTS** also agree to the following:

- Respect and cooperate with all school staff
- Respect personal and district property
- Be responsible, caring and honest

*This compact outlines how students share the responsibility for their own academic achievement and outlines the values by which the student will partner with the school to achieve the standard of excellence.*

**PARENT/FAMILY VALUES (Compact)**

Advantage Academy **PARENTS/FAMILIES** are committed to upholding the following values:

- Partnering with the school, I pledge to cooperate with school administrators and teachers and to treat all members of the school community in a courteous and respectful manner
- Take an active role in school related decisions and plans that concern my student
- Ensure my student attends school daily and is on time
- Keep all contact information current
- Be involved in my student's learning by ensuring that my child completes all homework assignments
- Participate in all academic conferences and parent meetings
- Understand and abide by the Seven Pillars of Character and Leadership
- Ensure my student is fully prepared for class (includes supplies and materials)
- Respond appropriately to all school communications (verbally and written)
- Read, understand and comply with all school handbooks

**PARENTS/FAMILIES** also agree to attend the following required meetings:

- Parent Orientations
- All contract related meetings (academics, attendance and discipline)
- Parent/Teacher Conferences (mandatory for students with grades of below 70% or attendance concerns)
- STAAR Academic Parent Meetings (fall and spring)
- Family Engagement Meetings

*This compact outlines how parents/families share the responsibility for student academic achievement and outlines the values by which the parents/family members will partner with the school to help their child achieve the standard of excellence.*

**INTEGRITY NOTICE**

It is essential that each school community member shield the reputation and public perception of Advantage Academy and its school community members. Advantage Academy will guard the privacy, reputation and integrity of its school community members; including administrators; employees; students; parents and guardians; visitors; persons and/or entities affiliated with the school; school facilities; and the school district as a whole. Integrity measures have been established to protect against the potential loss, or damage to an individual's privacy, reputation or integrity. Behavior(s) or action(s) that call into question a community member's or the school's character, core values or ethics will be considered a violation of this notice.

This notice encompasses the electronic or other posting of hostile or derogatory comments or images, the taking of pictures or video-taping without consent that directly or indirectly involves a school community member. It is a violation of this notice to post hostile or derogatory comments or images that include or are in reference to a school community member. Furthermore, it is a violation of this notice to take pictures or video-tape students, school employees, or campus activities without prior school administrative permission. Permission to take pictures or video tape school community members or school activities must be obtained prior to such activity taking place.

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## ACADEMICS

Advantage Academy features a rich academic program focused on helping students acquire the best foundational skills available for high school, college, and life success. With curriculum content aligned with the (TEKS) Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and state-adopted curricular materials, we incorporate advanced skills to truly challenge our students. Our staff of certified and highly qualified educators is committed to assisting all students to reach their full potential socially, academically, and physically. We are proud of our district and the various programs implemented daily. We are a diverse population focused on academic excellence. The academic program is built on Advantage Academy's mission and vision which emphasizes **Knowledge, Character** and **Leadership**. These values will assist each and every student in becoming a true "**CHAMPION.**"

**English / Language Arts** programs focus on a rigorous curriculum of grammar, writing, and literacy skills. Through these components students are expected to build knowledge, gain insights, explore possibilities, and broaden their perspectives.

**Mathematics / Science** programs target skill development and growth in independent thinking and reasoning. These classrooms are equipped with various materials to enrich student learning and encourage discovery. The latest research indicates that future workers in our country must become skilled in the "STEM" areas (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) as most businesses and industries are creating increasing demands for quality technology skills, problem solving, and higher level thinking. At Advantage Academy, we are intentional about developing these skills to enable students to have a wealth of choices when deciding a plan for their future. Rigorous content coupled with a firm foundation creates a bountiful learning environment in which students develop and discover their unique talents.

**Social Studies / History** programs promote student understanding of historical concepts and important details about history and culture by allowing students to discover connections between the truth in history and their lives today. Through inquiry, it is our goal to challenge students to establish a foundation of **Knowledge, Character** and **Leadership** that created "One Nation Under God".

### Additional Academic Programs:

CTE

Technology training and exploration at all grade levels

Character and Leadership Education using "The Leader in Me" and "Why Try"

### Curriculum at a Glance:

McGraw Hill

Social Studies Weekly

Pearson

EMC Mirrors and Windows

HMH Into Literature Texas

TEKS Resource System

Frog Street Curriculum

### Intervention Programs:

Reading A-Z

BrainPOP

BrainPOP Jr.

Discovery Streaming

Edgenuity

Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention

MyPath

PathBlazer

Khan Academy

Vizzle

3<sup>rd</sup> Quest

FEV Digital Tutoring

Advantage Academy's instruction and academic rigor will encourage critical thinkers to become problem solvers and responsible citizens of our community and our world.

### **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY / CHEATING / PLAGIARISM\***

**Academic Dishonesty:** Any type of cheating that occurs in relation to standard academic practices; any action or practice on the part of a student that undermines the purpose of assessment.

**Cheating:** To obtain something by dishonesty or deception; to practice fraud or trickery; to violate rules dishonestly or an abuse of confidence.

**Plagiarism:** Any action intended to obtain or assist in obtaining credit for work that is not one's own; copying another student's class work, test, or homework. Plagiarism is considered cheating.

Academic dishonesty, cheating and plagiarism also include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Copying another student's homework or test answers with or without that student's permission or allowing another student to copy homework or providing test answers;
2. Using cheat notes during a quiz, test or closed book assignment;
3. Accessing a teacher's answer sheets or books by any means;
4. Obtaining test questions from students who have already taken tests;
5. Copying themes and other written papers from other students or alternative reference materials without proper citation of the source;
6. Claiming work taken from the Internet or other resources as his or her own;
7. Use of a cell phone or unauthorized electronic device during testing or class time to obtain or relay answers, take pictures of a quiz, test, or closed classroom assignment; and/or
8. Communicating academic or assessment content or answers to another student(s).

***\*Students who cheat will be subject to loss of credit for the work in question, zeros on assessments and appropriate disciplinary action***

### **ACCELERATED LEARNING**

Accelerated learning days will be **mandatory** for any student who is identified as needing additional assistance in one or more of the following situations: **a)** Student did not achieve a minimum of "Approaches Grade Level" on any local or state assessment; **b)** *K-5<sup>th</sup> Grade* - Student is below grade level in reading (RLA) and math; **c)** *6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade* - Student is below grade level in any core subject; **c)** Student is below the minimum attendance requirement of 90%; or **d)** Student has acquired three (3) Code of Conduct discipline infractions.

Each campus shall follow district standards in providing additional opportunities for any student identified as in need or struggling in one or more of the mandatory situations. Accelerated learning days will be composed of direct and/or blended combinations of options to address learning gaps and assist students in need.

Students in need of **Accelerated Learning** will be identified after each 3, 6, or 9-week grading period. Identified students will be notified and scheduled accordingly. Notices must be signed by parent/guardian and returned to the appropriate campus administrator. **Accelerated Learning** days will be assigned on scheduled Fridays.

Students identified and scheduled for mandatory **AL** must attend. Students **MUST PARTICIPATE IN and COMPLETE** all **AL** instruction and assignments in order to receive **Accelerated Learning** credit. Failure to attend and/or participate appropriately will negatively affect a student's attendance and may be grounds for disciplinary action.

**HB4545:** Students who did not successfully pass STAAR/EOC (*situation a*) are required to receive between 15-30 hours of tutoring for each subject.

### **NOTE\*:**

\*Academic assistance in **Accelerated Learning** will address learning gaps in Core Academic Subjects, it is not "homework help."

\*Each campus is required to maintain detailed logs of **AL** participants, participation times and remediation methods.

\*Teachers are not permitted to privately tutor students on or off campus, during or apart from regular school hours or teachers work schedules.

***Scheduled Accelerated Learning attendance is mandatory; non-attendance will be recorded in conjunction with state compulsory attendance laws***

## **ATTENDANCE**

The first and most basic factor necessary for a student to be successful in school is regular and punctual attendance. Regular school attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his or her education; to benefit from teacher-led and school activities; to build each day's learning on the previous day's learning and to grow as an individual. Therefore, a student and their parent's first concern should be to attend school and each class regularly. Advantage Academy recognizes the positive correlation between regular school attendance and achievement. Student academic success is in direct relation to attendance and absences have a detrimental effect on student grades.

Two state laws - one dealing with Compulsory Attendance, the other with Attendance for Course Credit, are of special interest to students and parents. The primary responsibility for attendance rests with students and their parent(s)/guardian(s).

### **Compulsory School Attendance**

Schools are required by law to file a court case against the student's parent, the student (between the ages of 12 and 18), or both if the student accumulates numerous unexcused absences within a specific period of time (*Truant Conduct*). Parents must maintain compliance with the Compulsory Attendance Law in the State of Texas. Failure to comply will be considered a violation of the Texas Compulsory Attendance Law and is considered a Class C Misdemeanor, punishable by a fine for each offense (*Contributing to Truancy*).

A student absent without permission from school; from any class; from required special programs, such as additional special instruction (termed "accelerated instruction" by the state) assigned by a grade placement committee; or from required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law. The school will file court cases on violations of the state compulsory attendance law.

### **Minimum Attendance for Class Credit**

To receive credit for a class, a student must attend at least 90% of the days the class is offered. A student who attends at least 75%, but fewer than 90%, of the days the class is offered may receive credit for the class if he or she completes a credit recovery plan that allows the student to fulfill the instructional requirements for the class. Credit Recovery Plans must be authorized by the Attendance Committee with final approval from the District's Director of Administrative Services. If a student attends less than 75% of the days a class is offered and does not complete an approved Credit Recovery Plan, the student will lose credit for that class and/or will not be advanced to the next grade level.

***The campus Attendance Committee will provide students with a Recovery Plan, only if there were extenuating circumstances that lead to the student's excessive absences. The Attendance Committee will use state approved guidelines when determining whether there were extenuating circumstances***

***All absences, both excused and unexcused, count against the 90% attendance rule***

### **Excuses**

When returning to school after an absence, a student must bring a note within 72 hours of the absence, signed by the parent or a professional describing the reason for the absence. Only two (2) parent/guardian notes per semester will be accepted after which a professional institute note is required for each absence. If a student returns to school without a note, the absence will be documented as unexcused. Excuse notes must include: **1)** the date of the note; **2)** the students name; **3)** the date of the absence or tardy; **4)** the specific reason for the absence or tardy; and **5)** the parents' signature.

***Students enrolled in kindergarten are required to attend Advantage Academy fulltime and are subject***

***to all established district attendance requirements. [See Attendance Policy for more information]***

### **BANNED ITEMS**

To ensure that all students, school employees and visitors have a safe and healthy experience at Advantage Academy, the following items have been classified as “prohibited” and therefore are not permitted on school property or at any school sponsored event at any time. Banned items may be used with Campus Principal approval if such an item is needed or otherwise related to an instructional or extracurricular activity, sporting event or a special approved school sponsored event. (list is non-exhaustive)

- ❖ Any personal or other item(s) that distracts from instruction or educational purpose of the school
- ❖ Aerosol Cans (unauthorized)
- ❖ Alcoholic Beverages
- ❖ Ammunition (non-prohibited type)
- ❖ Animals (except assistive animals for individuals with disabilities)
- ❖ Beverages other than bottled water
- ❖ Chains (except to secure bikes)
- ❖ Cigarettes (includes electronic smoking devices)
- ❖ Fireworks
- ❖ Gang Related Items
- ❖ Gum
- ❖ Items that Promote Drugs, Alcohol, Violence, Gangs, Cults, Hate or Racism
- ❖ Laser Pointers
- ❖ Lighters
- ❖ Matches
- ❖ Objects used to threaten, inflict harm, injury or pain
- ❖ Permanent Marker Pens (except as needed for a specific school project)
- ❖ Razors
- ❖ Restricted Personal Electronic Items (see cell phones and restricted electronic devices)
- ❖ Toys that resemble weapons (intent is no defense)
- ❖ Weapon (non-prohibited type)

The District reserves the right to define other items, articles or devices not listed above as “Banned.” Students who possess banned items shall assume full responsibility for the item(s). At no time shall the District be responsible for the theft, loss or damage to any personal item(s) brought on to school property by a student. Confiscated banned items will not be returned.

### **BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING\***

The Advantage Academy Board of Directors has affirmed that “Bullying” may be determined if the act: ***Was a single significant act; Is a pattern of acts; Is one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power; Is through physical contact; Used verbal expression; Used written expression; Used electronic means; Physically harms a student or damages their property; Creates reasonable fear of harm to student or damage to their property; Produces an intimidating educational environment; Produces a threatening educational environment; Produces an abusive educational environment; Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or operation of school; or Infringes on the rights of the victim at school.***

“**Bullying**” is a violent and negative behavior that may also be motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression; or a mental, physical, or sensory disability or impairment; or by any other distinguishing characteristic. Furthermore, “Bullying” is unacceptable and potentially criminal conduct that when observed or reported will be taken seriously by the school and fully investigated.

Examples of “**Bullying**” may include but is not limited to:

- Derogatory verbal comments (e.g., name-calling, taunting, unwanted or hostile teasing, epithets, jokes, rumors, or slurs);
- Derogatory written or visual communications in any media (e.g., letters, notes, newspaper articles, invitations, posters, photos, cartoons and electronic media such as computers, cell phones, text messages, e-mail, voice mail and pager messages);
- Threatening behavior or actual threats of force or violence against a person's body, possessions, or residence (e.g., obtaining food or money by threats of force, intimidating behavior or acts); or
- Physical conduct (e.g., provocative gestures, overly rough horseplay, restricting freedom of movement or action, violence, defacing or destruction of property, personal or otherwise).

**"Cyberbullying" (Electronic Communication)** Any Act of creating, sending, posting or otherwise communicating messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal using an electronic device is prohibited. This prohibition applies to conduct on or off school property, when it involves a person associated with the school, and/or results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment of a student or the school.

In accordance with law, a student's personal electronic device may be searched by school personnel with probable cause. Students will be disciplined according to Policy procedures and the Student Code of Conduct and may, in certain circumstances, be reported to law enforcement.

Electronic communication devices and equipment includes cell phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools such as social media sites, text messages, emails, chat, and websites. Restricted communications also include rumors, postings on social networking sites, embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, and fake profiles. **List is non-inclusive**

#### **The School District Prohibits Cyberbullying:**

- Through acts using an electronic communication device on school grounds, during regular school hours.
- Through acts using an electronic communication device off school grounds, after regular school hours when such conduct is directed at, involves or has a connection to a student of the school, a parent of a student of the school, an employee of the school or the school itself.
- Through acts using an electronic communication device during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity or on any AA school bus or other form of transportation.
- Through the use of any electronic communication device on school grounds or while using any computer or electronic software that is accessed through a computer, computer system or computer network of Advantage Academy. The ownership, physical location or time of access of a computer-related incident cannot be raised as a defense in any disciplinary action initiated under this section.
- Through the use of any electronic communication device off school grounds or while using any computer or electronic software that is accessed through a computer, computer system or computer network, when such conduct has a connection to a student of the school, a parent of a student of the school, an employee, volunteer or visitor of the school. The ownership, physical location or time of access of a computer-related incident cannot be raised as a defense in any disciplinary action initiated under this section.

***\*See the Advantage Academy District Bullying Policy for details.***

#### **CAMPUS / CLASSROOM INTERRUPTIONS and DISRUPTIONS**

School campuses and classrooms should not be interrupted or disrupted needlessly. In able to carry out the school's intended function, Campus Administrators have the responsibility of conducting the purposes and objectives of the campus in an orderly manner. In an effort to minimize campus and classroom interruptions and disruptions, parents are asked to observe the following guidelines **[list is non-exhaustive]**:

1. Always check-in at the front office.

2. Don't make needless calls or deliveries to the front office for students.
3. Visitors will not be accepted on testing days.
4. Schedule doctor and dentist appointments accordingly.
5. Do not enter the campus during a school emergency.
6. Schedule meeting to conference with a teacher.
7. Do not have (commercial) food delivered for your child (does not include food or forgotten lunches delivered by a parent).

Check school policies regarding the above guidelines. Deliveries that are in violation of policy will not be accepted nor delivered to a student. Only emergency phone calls will be communicated to students.

### **CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES\***

Students should leave their cell phone at home because cell phones and electronic devices may not be used during the normal school day. Text messaging and other unauthorized electronic forms of communication are prohibited. Electronic devices (personal electronics) are prohibited at all times, except as indicated below. Cell phones and electronic devices will be confiscated if ***seen, heard, deemed disruptive, brought into any testing environment or reasonable suspicion exist to believe they contain prohibited or illegal material.*** In accordance with Texas Education Code 37.082 and district guidelines pertaining to confiscating and returning such items, Campus Administrators shall strictly adhere to the following:

**FIRST OFFENSE - (1)** cell phone confiscated; **(2)** cell phone returned to parent/guardian (cannot be returned to student.)

**SECOND OFFENSE - (1)** cell phone confiscated; **(2)** cell phone returned to parent/guardian (cannot be returned to student); and **(3)** \$15 administrative fee collected.

**THIRD OFFENSE - (1)** cell phone confiscated; **(2)** cell phone returned to parent/guardian (cannot be returned to student) after five (5) school days; and **(3)** \$15 administrative fee collected.

**TESTING OFFENSE - (1)** cell phone confiscated; **(2)** cell phone returned to parent/guardian (cannot be returned to student) after fifteen (15) school days; and **(3)** \$15 administrative fee collected.

**ILLEGAL OFFENSE - (1)** cell phone confiscated; **(2)** cell phone may be turned over to local law enforcement or other officials for processing. *If so*, the school's liability is relinquished at that time. *If not*, **(3)** cell phone returned to parent/guardian (cannot be returned to student) after thirty (30) school days; and **(4)** \$15 administrative fee collected.

**\*Confiscated cell phones shall include SIM card.**

**\*Personal electronic devices (*deemed disruptive or inappropriate*) may be confiscated at any school sanctioned/sponsored activity, any time, on or off school property.**

The following personal electronic devices (PED's) are restricted at all Advantage Academy locations;

***\*except when authorized for school projects or special events by the Campus Principal.***

***Teachers are responsible for obtaining authorization before beginning projects that require restricted items. (list is non-exhaustive)***

- Cell phones/Smart phones
- BlackBerry devices and other PDAs
- CD or DVD Players
- iPods and MP3 players
- Smart watches
- iPads, tablets, and other eReaders
- Electronic/Video games or gaming systems
- Cameras or other photographic equipment
- Headphones, headsets, or in-ear headphones such as earbuds
- Any device capable of recording audio, photographic or video content, or capable of viewing or playing back such content.
- Portable data storage devices such as flash drives or external hard drives

Students are prohibited from creating, sending or posting electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition applies to conduct on or off school property, when it involves a person associated with the school, and/or results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment. In accordance with law, a student's personal electronic device may be searched by school personnel under reasonable suspicion.

### **Sexting**

Students taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content including pictures of one-self may be subject to the schools Anti-Sexting Policy, Bullying Policy and the Technology AUP. Students will be disciplined according to policy procedures and the Student Code of Conduct and may, in certain circumstances, be reported to law enforcement. Furthermore, students found to have engaged in sexting may lose privileges to participate in school activities. Students are urged to remember that they should never take pictures that they would not want their classmates, teachers, families, or employers to see. Students are reminded that once a picture is sent, it can be forwarded to anyone. To ensure safety, the District urges any student who receives a nude picture on his/her cell phone to take the following steps: **(1) Do not delete the picture, and (2) Report the picture immediately to an adult you trust.**

***! The normal school day includes, but is not limited to, before or after school, class time, passing periods, lunch periods, before or after school detention or tutorials, during emergency drills, extracurricular event practices and field trips.***

***! Cell phones, smart watches and any other electronic devices are strictly prohibited during STAAR, State Assessments or in any school testing environment. Students found with restricted electronic devices in testing areas will be subject to disciplinary action, with a minimum 3 days In-school suspension and test may be invalidated.***

***! Cell phones may be used by students after normal school hours unless they are engaged in an after school event or activity or if informed by an administrator that usage is disruptive or inappropriate depending on the time, location or situation. Cell phones may not be used while traveling in school provided transportation, bus or other.***

***! Students who possess a cellular phone or PED shall assume full responsibility for its care. The District is not responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen cell phones or other electronic devices brought on to school property. Furthermore, the District is not liable for cell phones or other electronic devices (believed to contain prohibited or illegal material) confiscated and turned over to state or law enforcement agencies.***

### **CHARACTER AND LEADERSHIP EDUCATION**

Advantage Academy's commitment to *Knowledge, Character and leadership* is at the heart of its mission. While assisting students in the development of key character and leadership qualities, Advantage Academy's character and leadership education will enable students to set aspirations high and to obtain personal goals while living a champion's life. It is Advantage Academy's belief that a student and their parent's commitment to character and leadership education will also play an essential part in the success of the student. Advantage Academy has adopted character and leadership programs which embody traits that we believe builds Champions. Advantage Academy strives to create positive character and leadership qualities in all its students for the betterment of the student and his/her community. Advantage Academy will involve all students in character and leadership programs on a weekly or by-weekly basis.

### **CHILD MALTREATMENT (Abuse, Neglect, Trafficking)**

Maltreatment is defined as physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, physical, emotional or sexual abuse, neglect and commercial or sexual exploitation (trafficking), which results in actual or potential harm to a child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

*As Required by Law;* School personnel who have cause to suspect that a child has suffered maltreatment as defined above, has a legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting the suspected maltreatment, abuse, neglect or trafficking to Child Protective Services (CPS) [1.800.252.5400](tel:1.800.252.5400), the Texas Department of

Family and Protective Services (DFPS) [214.372.8700](tel:214.372.8700), or to the local police department.

### **Notification of Parents**

*By law;* Investigations may be conducted by authorized agencies or law enforcement without notification or consent of the student's parents/guardians/caregivers.

### **Student Interviews at School**

Advantage Academy personnel will fully cooperate with CPS, DFPS and law enforcement investigations as required. School personnel may not interfere with an investigation of a report of child maltreatment, abuse, neglect or trafficking conducted by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services ("DFPS") or local law enforcement agencies.

### **Staff Training**

School personnel shall review the Schools Policy concerning child maltreatment, abuse, neglect and trafficking at periodic intervals and not less frequently than once each school year. Trainings shall include mandated reporting requirements, general statutes, regulations and the administrative procedures regarding reporting.

## **CHILD NUTRITION SERVICES**

The district participates in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs and offers students nutritionally balanced meals daily. The intent of the program is to encourage the consumption of nutritious food by students and to limit access to high-fat, high-sugar and other food items. Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value" (i.e. carbonated beverages, hard candy, or popsicles) may not be made available or provided access to students during the school day. Competitive foods (foods and beverages that are not provided by the school's food service program) (commercial/restaurant) may not be served, provided or made available to students either directly or indirectly until 30 minutes after student lunch periods have ended. Furthermore, these items may not be given away or sold to students.

The school cafeteria offers nutritious, appetizing meals daily. Students may select from a variety of menu and a la carte choices. All campuses are equipped with computerized point-of-sale stations where students enter their student ID number, for access to their accounts. Photo IDs are used at the point of sale to identify the student. Meals and a la carte purchases are recorded in the cafeteria lunch computer.

### **Cafeteria Guidelines**

All food must be consumed in the cafeteria or at other approved areas designated for eating and drinking. Students are NOT permitted at their lockers or in the parking lots during lunch periods. Food of any kind may NOT be consumed in the hallways or in non-approved areas of the campus.

- Advantage Academy campuses are considered CLOSED CAMPUSES: students are not allowed to leave campus for lunch.
- Students must present their Student ID and money to the cashier at the time of meal or a la carte purchases.
- Delivery of food to students from outside vendors (commercial food) is not permitted.
- Parents may not bring restaurant (commercial food) for their child.
- Forgotten sack lunches from home must be delivered to the front office for distribution.
- Parents or guardians may not provide food for other students (parents must be aware that many children have food allergies (see *Food Allergies* below.)
- Students must clean up their area before leaving the cafeteria.
- Students are required to place trash in designated containers.
- During lunch, students are to remain in the lunchroom or other designated lunch area(s) at all times.

### **Exceptions to Cafeteria Guidelines**

Exceptions to the National and Local Cafeteria Guidelines are as follows:

- Students who leave campus for approved field trips or travel to athletic events or other school related activities.
- Three waiver days as allowed by the TDA. District designated waiver days are Thanksgiving

luncheon, Christmas celebration, and Field Day.

### **Free and Reduced**

Applications for free or reduced price meals may be completed at any time during the year. Approval is based on federal guidelines. Applications may be obtained from any school cafeteria, the registrar's office, online at [www.schoollunchapp.com](http://www.schoollunchapp.com) or from the Child Nutrition Office. For more information, call (214) 276-5848. Benefits will begin when the application is processed and approved. Students should bring money or a lunch from home until the application is processed.

### **Food Allergies**

The District requests to be notified when a student has been diagnosed with a food allergy, especially those allergies that could result in dangerous or possibly life-threatening reactions either by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact with the particular food. It is important to disclose the food to which the student is allergic, as well as the nature of the allergic reaction. Please contact the school nurse to communicate any known food allergies or as soon as possible after any diagnosis of a food allergy. The school will assist when information of food allergies is received and puts the student at risk.

### **Food and Drink**

Bottled water is the only beverage allowed in instructional/academic settings during the normal school day. Food (of any kind) and all other beverages are not permitted. Bottled water is NOT allowed in the school's computer labs or any other instructional setting where computers or other technical or electronic devices are in use.

### **Vending Machines**

The district has adopted policies and implemented procedures to comply with state and federal food service guidelines for restricting student access to vending machines. For more information regarding these policies and guidelines, contact the Child Nutrition Department.

The District follows the Texas Public School Nutrition Policy for foods being served or sold on school premises during the school day.

For more information contact the Texas Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Division, Tel. 888.TEX-KIDS, [www.squaremeals.org](http://www.squaremeals.org)

To locate campus menus and other information about Child Nutrition, please visit the School Lunch Program Link on our website at <http://www.advantageacademy.org>

## **CLASSROOM PARTIES AND CELEBRATIONS**

Classroom parties and celebrations are a special occasion - birthdays, holidays, etc. - these occasions are a golden opportunity for parents and teachers to demonstrate community, diversity and healthy choices. Parties and celebrations are a great way for children to feel part of the school community, where the learning environment is made festive and where students, teachers and parents can come together to enjoy a break from the routine. Advantage Academy asks that all parties and celebrations center on **fun** instead of **food**. Birthday celebrations are held once a month; Check your campus calendar. Classroom parties and celebrations include Pre-K – 4<sup>th</sup> grade students only.

Classroom parties are about the classroom community; No cliques or exclusive activities. **Parents and visitors should check with Campus Administrators and their child's classroom teacher to find out what items may be permitted;** Please do not bring or have unauthorized or unapproved items delivered to the school. Due to room capacity limits, each student may invite no more than **two adult guest**. Special arrangements must be made with campus administrators if you wish to send food treats to school on the day of your child's classroom celebration. Due to increasing concerns regarding allergies among school age children, AA ask you to consider the following ideas when preparing for your child's classroom party or celebration:

- Please do not send or bring **foods with minimal nutritional value** (high in sugar and fat content) such as frosted cupcakes, candy, most cookies, jellies, candy-coated popcorn, gummy candy and/or gum.

- Check with your child's teacher regarding classmates with specific dietary needs or food allergies prior to sending any food item to school.
- No food items that contain peanuts or peanut butter are allowed.
- If you bring or send food items, they must be purchased from a store. Homemade items present a risk of cross-contamination of foods that many students may be allergic to.
- All food items brought or sent to the school to be shared will be checked by the classroom teacher for ingredients that could be harmful to another student.
- Consider sending treats such as pencils, erasers, sugar free juice pops or jello cups.
- Consider doing a craft or reading to the class instead of sending food items.

**Approved parties and celebrations include, Birthdays (once monthly), Thanksgiving, Christmas (last day before break), and Field Day;**

**Classroom party and celebration plans are at the discretion of the classroom teacher with approval from district administrators;**

**Student behavior, campus and classroom expectations remain in place as usual;**

**The teacher remains the primary mentor and custodian of the students during party activities;**

**Homemade foods items are not allowed; please do not bring these items to school.**

Parties and Celebrations cannot interfere with the Child Nutrition Program and should normally take place during the last 30 minutes of the school day. Advantage Academy supports the federal Smart Snacks program and is proud to be proactive when dealing with student health and safety. Thank you in advance for understanding, respecting and supporting our party policy.

### **CLOSED CAMPUS**

Advantage Academy campuses have been designated as ***CLOSED***, which means:

- Students are required to remain on campus during the entire school day.
- Students MAY NOT leave campus once they have arrived at school in the morning.
- Students MAY NOT leave campus for lunch.
- No student may leave campus at any time during the school day without first obtaining parent permission. Permission must be cleared through the main office with a note or phone call from the student's parent.

### **Leaving Campus During the School Day:**

Parents are asked to make all medical and dental appointments during non-school hours when possible. When a student must leave school during school hours for any reason, the student must be "signed out" in the main office by the student's parent/guardian. If another adult is to pick up the student, written permission must be granted. For verbal permission given by the parent/guardian, the authorized adult must be on file at school as an emergency contact for the student. Students may be released only if this procedure is followed. For prearranged medical or dental appointments, students must bring a note on the day of the appointment stating the reason and time they will be leaving campus and if they will be returning to school that day or not.

A closed campus is essential to safety and the protection of our students. Therefore, if a student leaves campus without authorization he/she shall be subject to disciplinary action(s) which are outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Communication between the school and its students' parent(s)/guardian(s) is vital to a student's success. We encourage parents to communicate with their child's teachers and the Campus Principal on a regular basis. Additionally, the district will utilize newsletters, the district website, parent conferences and meetings, school messenger notifications and take-home folder communications or alerts for sharing important information and gaining needed feedback.

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS

From time to time, conflicts between students, parents and school employees may arise. Conflicts can usually be addressed simply with an e-mail or phone call at the point of concern. The School's Conflict Resolution Process requires that conflicts be reported and addressed at the lowest level (student/parent/guardian-employee) for proper resolution. All informal (verbal) resolution requests must be made directly to the appropriate employee at the point of concern and must be conflict specific. School staff will not address mass complaints/concerns, or resolution requests that are accompanied by inappropriate behavior.

*While there's no guarantee that all parties will agree; a respectful airing of different perspectives usually leads to mutual understanding and a more productive relationship between the parties concerned.*

### Conflicts should never be discussed:

- While an employee is performing their duties;
- Immediately following an employee completing their duties;
- During a time when other employees, parents or students are present; or
- When emotions or tempers are not controlled (employee, student, parent, administrator.)

### Step 1: Informal: Student/Parent/Guardian – School Employee (point of concern)

*Meetings may include the student unless otherwise inappropriate.* The parent/guardian should speak to the school employee most closely related to the conflict and as soon as possible. Informal decisions or resolutions agreed upon by both parties must be communicated to and approved by Campus Administration. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached after several attempts through direct or indirect contact (**Step 1**), the student's parent/guardian should contact the campus front office to request a Conflict Resolution Form that shall be completed and forwarded as Step 2.

### Step 2: Campus Principal/Administrator

*This conference may include all concerned parties in an attempt to reach a satisfactory resolution.* The parent/guardian shall discuss the issue with campus principal/administrator. No other issues/items will be discussed at this conference that are not **related** to the **original complaint**. Step 2 decisions or resolutions must be approved by district administration.

If a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached through the Step 2 conference, the original Conflict Resolution Form will be forwarded to Step 3.

### Step 3: District Administrator

*This conference may include all concerned parties in an attempt to reach a satisfactory resolution.* The parent/guardian shall discuss the issue with a district administrator. No other issues/items will be discussed at this conference that are not **related** to the **original complaint**. Step 3 decisions or resolutions must be approved by the Superintendent and are considered final.

## CONTACT WITH STUDENTS THROUGH ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Within the scope of an individual's professional responsibilities, teachers and other approved AA employees are permitted by the district to contact students in grades 6-12 through the use of approved internal electronic media systems only. *For example*, a teacher may communicate information related to class work, homework, and tests. However, any contact or communication between teachers and students is to be very clear, concise and professional. Communications should also include the student's parent or a campus administrator on the message.

Teachers and other AA school employees are prohibited from contacting or otherwise communicating students through the use of personal electronic media accounts. As a parent, you are encouraged to monitor all district, campus and teacher communications. If you have questions related to the use of electronic media by school employees, please contact the campus principal. This policy does not apply to one-way communication to groups of students regarding campus events/activities, classroom assignments, or postings of homework instructions.

## DATING VIOLENCE

*Advantage Academy's Board of Directors declares that dating violence is prohibited!* Dating violence occurs when one partner in a dating relationship, either past or current, intentionally uses physical, sexual, verbal or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate or control the other partner, as defined AA's Dating Violence Policy and by Section 71.0021, Texas Family Code. Dating violence can be considered harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct rises to the level of *Harassment* as described by school policy.

Examples of dating violence may include physical or sexual assaults, name-calling, put-downs, threats to hurt the person or the person's family members or members of the person's household, destroying property, threats to commit suicide or homicide if the person ends the relationship, attempts to isolate the person from friends and family, stalking or encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

Dating violence is a pattern of coercive behavior that one partner exerts over the other for the purpose of establishing and maintaining power and control. Every relationship is different, but the most common aspect of abusive dating relationships is the escalation of violence, which, over time becomes more and more dangerous for the victim.

- Violent relationships can have serious ramifications by putting the victims at higher risk for substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behavior and further domestic violence.
- Being physically or sexually abused makes teen girls six times more likely to become pregnant and twice as likely to get a Sexually Transmitted Disease.
- Half of youth who have been victims of both dating violence and rape attempt suicide, compared to 12.5% of non-abused girls and 5.4% of non-abused boys.

If you're not sure whether or not a relationship is or may become abusive, review the following **warning signs**:

- History of violence
- Extreme jealousy
- Explosive temper
- Threats
- Possessiveness
- Severe mood swings
- Telling the other partner what to do
- Preventing the other partner from doing what they want
- Making false accusations about the other partner
- Seeking financial control over the other partner

***If you or someone you know is in an unhealthy relationship, inform a trusted adult at school and/or call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE to get help***

***Advantage Academy has a Dating Violence Policy that provides for a specialized response to dating violence. The Policy also provides for an "Advocate" that shall be assigned to any student who is experiencing dating violence.***

## DIRECTORY INFORMATION

The law specifies that certain general information about students be considered "directory information" and will be released to anyone who follows proper requesting procedures. Directory information is any information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. The primary purpose of information being designated as directory information is to allow the school district to include this type of information in school and district publications. A student or his/her parent may object to the release of directory information during the enrollment process or at any time when presented in writing.

## DISTRIBUTION OF NON-SCHOOL MATERIALS

Students must obtain prior approval from the campus principal before posting, circulating, or distributing written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other auditory or visual materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school, are not sponsored

by the district or by a school affiliated club or organization. Before non-school materials or publications are made available to students, they must be submitted to the principal for review and approval.

All material submitted for distribution consideration must meet the restrictions established under **Material Communication Guidelines**, and include the name of the sponsoring person or organization. Students are not permitted to distribute non-school publications or materials in the classroom or hallways. The principal or designee will make a decision as to whether or not the material is approved within 24 hours of the time the materials are submitted. Failure by administration to act or respond within that time is to be interpreted as non-approval. Materials will not be sold, circulated, distributed, or posted on any district premises by any district employee or by persons or groups not associated with the district without prior approval from the Central Office.

## **DISTRICT MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS**

### **Pest Control**

Advantage Academy's routine pesticide applications are made on a regular calendar-based schedule and/or as needed to control pests on school grounds. Although the district strives to use the safest and most effective methods to manage pests, including a variety of non-chemical control measures, pesticide use is sometimes necessary to maintain adequate pest control and ensure a safe, pest-free school environment. All applications are applied only by certified pesticide applicators and include:

1. Prevention of pest population.
2. Application of pesticides only as needed.
3. Selection of the least hazardous pesticides effective for control of targeted pests.
4. Precision targeting of pesticides to areas not contacted or accessible to the students, faculty or staff.

The school's Pest Management program attempts to maintain a high standard of pest control while reducing reliance on pesticides. Certified pesticide applicators consult with the school on a set of detailed procedures describing how particular pest problems can be avoided and/or managed.

### **Asbestos Plan**

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. An accredited management planner has developed an asbestos management plan for all District property. The Districts plans currently contain the inspection reports and the appropriate response actions. They also contain plans for periodic re-inspections and post-response activities.

Asbestos Management Plans are available for review at the following locations:

- The Main Office of each campus during normal school hours
- The Districts Central Office located at 618 W. Wheatland Rd. Duncanville, TX. 75116

## **DONATIONS**

Advantage Academy is able to receive private and corporate donations that are intended to support and enhance campus or district programs, student activities or help the educational experience of our students. Donations cannot become the property of an individual employee, campus or department, therefore all donations become the property of Advantage Academy. Donations are tax exempt and receipts will be presented upon request. Donations made to Advantage Academy are subject to the following guidelines:

- Donations shall not conflict with Advantage Academy policies and procedures nor actions set forth by its Board of Directors or the Texas Education Agency.
- Donations must have a purpose consistent with Advantage Academy's mission and vision.
- Donations shall not place restrictions on any Advantage Academy school program.
- Donations shall not establish curriculum guidelines.
- Donations shall not establish specific use guidelines.
- Donations shall not require the exclusive endorsement of a particular business product.

## **DRESS, GROOMING AND ACCESSORIES**

***In order to attend regular classes, students must be in full compliance with code standards. All requirements will be strictly enforced.***

Advantage Academy believes that the business of school is student learning. An established **uniform** dress, grooming and accessory code supports that purpose and promotes a safe and orderly learning environment free from distractions and disruptions. A student's dress, grooming and accessories should reflect the seriousness and business-like atmosphere that supports academics and instruction. A student's dress, grooming and accessory choices must be in accordance with the requirements outlined below. It is the District's responsibility to ensure that enforcement of these standards is performed in a consistent manner with respect to safety, age appropriateness and reasonable modesty.

The school's Dress, Grooming and Accessories Code applies to all district campuses, facilities and all locations on or off-campus where students are receiving instruction or participating in or are in attendance of a school sponsored activity unless otherwise specified (e.g. field trips, athletic competitions or other educational events/activities). The Superintendent has delegated to Campus Discipline Administrators, the authority to make final determinations as to whether a student's dress, grooming and/or accessories meets or does not meet the Dress, Grooming and Accessories Code Standards. While it is inevitable that there will be differences of opinion regarding the appropriateness of a student's attire, the final decision lies with the District.

### **Parent, Guardian and Student Responsibility**

Parents, guardians and students have the primary responsibility for ensuring acceptable dress, grooming and accessory code compliance each school day during normal school hours and as indicated above. The dress code is meant to serve the best interests of all students in the school district while allowing students a wide variety of choices. The cooperation of parents, guardians and students is essential to the effectiveness of the school's dress code.

The district prohibits pictures, emblems or writings on clothing that are lewd, offensive, vulgar, obscene or that depict, advertise or promote tobacco products, alcoholic beverages of any kind, drugs or other prohibited substances; the school prohibits any dress or grooming that, in the district's judgment, may reasonably be expected to interfere with the school's learning environment or normal school operations.

Clarification regarding dress should be obtained **prior to wearing an item to school**. Guidance can be acquired from the Campus Discipline Administrator.

### **School Uniforms**

Standardized school uniforms help school administrators to quickly identify non-students, visitors, and intruders in a crowd, thereby enhancing safety and security. School uniforms, standards and guidelines are absolute necessities which provide students with a sense of society, community and belonging. The school's Dress, Grooming and Accessories Code also aids in:

- Organization and professionalism;
- Decreasing commotion among students;
- Reducing distractions;
- Promoting discipline;
- Averting insinuating dress regulations;
- Reducing violent behavior and theft; and
- Averting gang association.

The school has attempted to make the school uniform more informal and satisfactory for parents and students while ensuring that they meet established standards. The following are suggested clothing vendors where Advantage Academy uniforms may be purchased. Students and their parents are under no obligation to purchase uniforms from the suggested vendors. However, uniforms purchased from other clothing vendors must meet code standards such as: size, color and style. Please contact your campus for more details and uniform examples.

**School Uniform Purchases** - Grade level polo shirts may be purchased or ordered through your

campus office.

### **Code Enforcement**

Students in violation of the dress, grooming and accessories code will be expected to remove items not in compliance with this policy or to make dress or grooming adjustments when violations are brought to their attention. To avoid discipline infractions, parents/guardians may bring appropriate attire to the school for the student. Students who refuse to come into compliance may be sent home and asked not to return until they are compliant. Students who persistently violate the dress, grooming and accessories code will receive a Code of Conduct infraction (level I Dress/Grooming/Accessory Code Violation) and will be subject to disciplinary consequences, including suspension. Dress and grooming decisions made by Campus Discipline Administrators are final and may not be appealed.

***[See Student Code of Conduct for Elementary and Middle School Dress, Grooming and Accessories Code]***

***[See Secondary Handbook, Page 70 "HANDBOOK SUPPLEMENTS" For GPE Secondary Campus Dress, Grooming and Accessories Code]***

### **EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

Parents/Guardians are responsible for providing emergency contact information to the school, as well as keeping that information updated. The school MUST be able to contact parents at all times especially in the event that there is an emergency involving your child. If there is an emergency involving your child and the school is unable to reach a parent or other adult contact listed on the contact information provided during enrollment, 9-1-1 services may be called unnecessarily. In the event of an emergency, the school will normally try to contact the parent/guardian first, and then other contacts listed. However, if none of the contacts are successful and 9-1-1 services are called, the family will be responsible for all costs incurred. Please contact the front office to update your telephone number(s), cell number, address, and additional adult contacts as soon as there is a change.

### **EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT**

Parents are asked each year to complete a "Student Health Information form" which includes information about their child's allergies to medications, foods, insect bites, etc. Parents should keep emergency care information current (e.g., name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.). Student Health Information forms must be updated at the beginning of each school year or as health information changes. Please contact the front office and campus nurse/aide to change or update health information that the school and teacher needs to know about your child.

### **ENROLLMENT**

Advantage Academy is an open enrollment charter school which is a public school of choice. For student admittance, the parent must follow the established guidelines for the admission and lottery process which includes all eligible children who are within the geographical boundaries as described in the school's charter contract. Parents/guardians and prospective students must complete all enrollment requirements as established by Advantage Academy and the Texas Education Agency. All applicants will be required to submit an application. Students will not be discriminated against or denied enrollment on the basis of sex; national origin; ethnicity; religion; disability; academic, artistic, or athletic ability. ***[See Enrollment Manual for additional information]***

### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Participation in school-sponsored activities is an excellent way to provide students with creative outlets; create leadership skills; encourage the discovery of hidden talents; and allow students to continue to learn outside of their regular classroom setting. Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege and not a right and students must meet specific requirements to participate. Eligibility for initial and continuing participation in many of these activities is governed by state law or competition rules. If a student is involved in an academic or other school sponsored activity, club or organization the student and parent are expected to know and follow all applicable rules.

All extracurricular activity, club, and organization members are required to conduct themselves in a respectable and orderly manner as they remain under school jurisdiction. Extracurricular activities, clubs or organizations by-laws may establish standards of conduct - including consequences for misbehavior - that are in addition to those for students in general. If a violation is also a violation of school rules, the consequences specified by the Student Code of Conduct will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization, club or team.

### **FALSE ACCUSATIONS**

Be advised that teachers, administrators, district employees and school volunteers may pursue a criminal complaint against any person who they believe has filed a false police report against them. Victims may seek civil damages from the student/parent/ guardian if harm was done by the false accusation or report. Please be aware that this is an individual right and separate from Advantage Academy.

### **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

Advantage Academy provides many opportunities for families to engage in their student's education. Family engagement provides kids with guidelines and support and lends itself to better student performance in all areas of a child's educational journey. Family engagement is an excellent way for families to partner with the school and help their student(s) navigate more easily some of the challenges of school life, their academic demands and in just simply "growing up". Families are a student's first and most influential teachers.

Families who engage and partner with the school are up-to-date, able to be more proactive in assisting or redirecting their students who may have fallen behind or below acceptable standards. Engaged families are able to provide the school with important feedback which may include the following: Which practices are currently working well at each grade level; which practices should be improved or added in each grade; and which practices should change and which should continue. Families are highly encouraged to voluntarily commit to partnering with the school when and where their student is concerned.

**The following are professional recommendations for how to encourage your student to do his/her best in school:** *These are positive examples that emphasize the importance of learning!*

1. Spend time each day talking to your child about what he or she is learning in school. Offer encouragement.
2. Respect learning style differences in your children. Kids have differing interests and talents, encourage those interests and talents.
3. Treat each child as an individual.
4. Communicate the value of learning. Review their homework and discuss their futures and the necessary skills to be successful.
5. Use positive statements such as: "I knew you could do it!" "You're really a smart kid!" "I'm so proud of you!"
6. Ask to see your child's schoolwork daily.
7. Stay in contact with your child's teacher. Teachers want to build partnerships with their students' parents. Don't hesitate if you have questions.
8. Talk with your child and together plan a focused time and place for study each day.

**Families can get engaged with the school and their student by:**

- Participating in Service Learning Opportunities;
- Promoting Learning/Academics at Home;
- Communicating Student/Classroom Needs to School Administrators;
- Organizing Positive Student Learning Activities or Events;
- Volunteering for Organizations, Clubs, Offices or Committees; and
- Collaborating with the School to Promote Community.

**Other family engagement opportunities include:**

- Attending Student/Parent Orientations;
- Staying in Communication with Teachers Concerning their Students Academics;

- Responding to Meeting Request for Student Grade Reviews, Concerns, etc.;
- Attending Parent-Teacher Conferences, each Semester;
- Completing Parent Surveys as requested; and
- Volunteering (volunteer/chaperone, teacher assistance, classroom observance, etc.)

### **Acknowledgement:**

Advantage Academy would like to thank the families who do take full advantage of all provided engagement, meeting and partnership opportunities. It is always a positive and in the best interest of the student when families are engaged. Family engagement and partnerships with the school, reiterates to students that education is important.

### **FEES / DEPOSITS / RESTITUTION**

Materials that are a part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds and are at no charge to a student. A student, however, is expected to provide his or her own pencils, paper, erasers, and notebooks. Certain other fees or deposits may also be required. A student may be required to pay certain fees or deposits for services not considered as part of the basic educational program, such as a user fee, optional club/program dues or extra materials. Restitution cost may also be imposed/collected for loss, damage or misuse. Fees, Deposits and Restitution cost may include, but is not limited to:

Club dues and supplies;  
 Materials for class projects;  
 Athletic, including athletic uniform/equipment loss or damage;  
 Technology equipment and/or device damage;  
 College readiness assessments;  
 Physical education uniforms;  
 Library books;  
 Damaged books, school-owned equipment and facilities damages;  
 Student parking permits;  
 Optional courses offered for credit;  
 Credit recovery;  
 Voluntary purchases of pictures, publications, class rings, etc;  
 Student accident insurance; and  
 Student identification card replacement.

### **FOOD AND DRINK**

Food (of any type) candy, gum or drinks ***other than bottled water***\* are NOT allowed in any instructional/academic setting during the normal school day.

\*Bottled water is NOT allowed in computer labs or any other instructional setting where computers or other technical or electronic devices are being used.

### **FUND-RAISING**

Teachers cannot use instructional time to administer or facilitate fundraising efforts of students or other organizations. Student participation in an approved fundraising activity or event shall at no time interfere with the student's regular instructional programs including AI/Tutoring or other instructional or learning opportunities. Fundraisers must benefit the group, team or class as a whole. A teacher, sponsor or student group/organization leader that wishes to conduct a fundraising campaign, must first receive authorization from their Campus Principal, follow all District Fundraising requirements, including the completion of the Activity/Event/Fundraiser Approval Form and receive all levels of District approval prior to any activity. Activities should not be posted or announced prior to receiving approval. Fundraising requests must detail the vendor (if any), product to be sold or service to be rendered and the estimated sales proceeds along with other required information.

In accordance with District Safety Guidelines, door-to-door solicitation by AA students' Pre-K through 8 is

strictly forbidden. District practice requires any contract with outside businesses for fundraising purposes be approved by the Superintendent/Designee. The teacher, sponsor or student group/organization leader is responsible for the accounting of all funds raised or collected by students in the group. These amounts must be deposited with the Campus Principal or District daily or no later than the next business day if received after normal school hours, for safekeeping and deposited to the activity account for the group or organization. Failure to follow established procedures related to depositing, handling, and accounting of proceeds from fundraising activities or any other monies associated with student activities or organizations may be cause for disciplinary action including termination of employment.

**Raffles** Permitted within the following guidelines:

- Each campus, organization or club may hold no more than two raffles per school year each and only one at a time;
- The class, campus, organization or club must have the prize(s) in its possession before beginning the raffle;
- Prizes may NOT be valued in excess of \$700;
- A raffle prize may not be cash;
- Only AA students or adult members of an organization/club may sell tickets;
- School employees may not participate in raffles that include students, parents or the public;
- Event/Activity and/or tickets may not be advertised or sold through paid advertising;
- Phone solicitation may not be used to promote the event or for ticket sales; and
- Winners are responsible to pay applicable tax on any prize won. If the value of a prize exceeds \$600, the school, organization or club must provide an IRS form 1099 to the winner of that prize.

### **GANG-FREE ZONES**

Certain criminal offenses, including those involving organized criminal activity such as gang related crimes, will be enhanced to the next highest category of offense if they are committed in a gang-free zone. For purposes of the district, a gang-free zone includes school provided transportation, locations in, on or within 1000 feet of district-owned or leased property, a campus sports field or playground, etc. All gang related activity will be immediately reported to local authorities.

**GRADING GUIDELINES** Grades must be based on mastery of the state standards for the course.

Grades may not be based on non-instructional issues or compliance with requests such as bringing school supplies or other items. Teachers cannot award extra credit grades for non-academic reasons, nor can they reduce grades for the purpose of disciplining a student for classroom misconduct. However, grade reductions may be issued for work that does not fulfill the assignment or for work that is turned in late.

**Numerical Scale** Grades Pre-K - 8<sup>th</sup>

98-100% - (A+) .... 95-97% - (A).... 90-94% - (A-).... 88-89% - (B+) ...

85-87% - (B).... 80-84% - (B-).... 78-79% - (C+) .... 75-77% - (C).... 71-74% - (C-)

A grade of below 70% indicates a student is not meeting the passing standard for the course and is not accepted for credit. If a student receives a grade of below 70% in any subject, at the end of a grading period, a parent/teacher conference may be required in order to discuss the student's academic progress and remediation methods including accelerated instruction/tutoring.

**Missed Assignments, Test and Quizzes** Missed Assignments due to absences must be completed and turned in within the same number of days as the student's absence in order to receive a grade. Students who miss tests or quizzes due to absences must make up grades during a predetermined time set by the teacher, either before or after school.

**Grade(s) of Zero** Before a grade of zero can be entered into the grade book, the teacher must **first**; provide opportunity for the student to make up the work; **secondly**; make parent contact and **lastly**; require the student to attend tutoring. Failure to make up work (on time) or attend tutoring would result in "Zero" being entered into the grade book. Grades of zero may be entered for academic dishonesty, cheating or plagiarism. For intervention purposes, the Campus Principal must be notified if a student accrues (3) or more zeros.

**Failing Grade(s)** Students with failing grades will be required to attend provided Accelerated Instruction/Tutoring programs or other remediation sessions. Parents will be informed and intervention strategies will be created to assist the student with academic achievement in targeted subject areas. Students with failing grades may be required to attend tutoring sessions before and/or after school, on Saturdays when available and times outside normal school operations i.e. summer months. Tutoring session attendance is required and is recorded under the states compulsory attendance law.

### **HALL PASSES**

Valid hall passes are required of any student out of an assigned classroom for any reason. During lunch periods, students are to remain in designated dining areas.

### **HEALTH / WELLNESS**

Each school campus has a health clinic with trained personnel to care for students. All health service staff is trained in CPR and first aid. Any information regarding a student's health condition or any health concerns should be communicated to the campus nurse/nurse aide. A "Student Health Information Form" will be sent home with your child at the beginning of the school year. It is very important to complete and return this form. This form will give you the opportunity to list any medical conditions, allergies, medications or concerns you may have. It also includes emergency information for the clinic staff. This form also contains information for contacting the parent or designee.

When your child is ill, please contact the school to let us know he or she won't be attending that day. It is important to remember that schools must exclude students with certain illnesses from school for periods of time as identified in state rules. For example, if your child has a fever over 100 degrees, he or she must stay out of school until fever free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications. In addition, students with diarrheal illnesses must stay home until they are diarrhea free.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, he or she must receive permission from the teacher before reporting to the school nurse. If the nurse determines that the child should go home, the nurse will contact the parent. The District is also required to report certain contagious diseases or illnesses to the (TDSHS) Texas Department of State Health Services or the local health authority. The school nurse can provide information from TDSHS on these notifiable conditions. Contact the school nurse if you have questions or are concerned about whether or not your child should stay at home.

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

The duties of the SHAC range from recommending curriculum to developing strategies for integrating curriculum into a coordinated school health program encompassing issues such as school health services, counseling services, a safe and healthy school environment, recess recommendations, improving student fitness, mental health concerns, and employee wellness. During the school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council holds 4 meetings. Additional information regarding the district's School Health Advisory Council is available from the Director of Student Services.

### **District Wellness Policy**

In compliance with the 2004 Reauthorization Act, AA adopted the District Wellness policy. Included in the policy are guidelines for food and beverages made available or sold on campus, including student birthday celebrations, classroom rewards and food sold as fundraisers. The policy was developed in collaboration with AA Child Nutrition, the School Health Advisory Council, students, parents, and internal district departments and includes guidelines for health education, physical education, and nutrition.

### **Clinic Procedures**

Students are not allowed to enter the clinic without a pass or communication from the teacher. If a student is injured during school hours, he or she should report to the clinic. The nurse will contact the parents to notify them of the injury. If, in the judgment of the nurse or other appropriate school staff, emergency transportation is required, a call will be made to 911. Any costs associated with this emergency treatment are borne by the student's parent or guardian.

### **Communicable Diseases**

To protect other students from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not

allowed to come to school while contagious. If a parent suspects that his or her child has a contagious disease, the parent should contact the school nurse or campus principal so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted. The school nurse can provide information from the Texas Department of Health regarding these diseases.

### **Emergency Medical Treatment**

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity and the parent cannot be reached, school staff will seek emergency medical treatment unless the parent has previously provided a written statement denying this authorization. If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school may access previously provided information about allergies to medications, foods, insect bites, etc. Therefore, parents are asked each year to complete an "Emergency Care Consent Form," which includes information about their student's allergies to medications, etc. Parents should keep emergency care information current (e.g., name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.). An updated Student Health Form will be required at the beginning of each school year. Please contact the school nurse to change or update any health information that the nurse or teacher needs to know about your child.

### **Immunizations**

Advantage Academy adheres to the State of Texas immunization requirements stipulated in the Texas Education Code, Article 2.09, which requires specific immunizations for children attending schools in the state of Texas. No person may be admitted to any school in the district unless they have been fully immunized and such immunizations are current and up-to-date. For specific immunization requirements, please contact the district nurse or review the school's Attendance Policy.

### **Medication at School**

All medication, prescription or otherwise, that a student is required to take at school, must be kept in and administered through the clinic. Before medication can be administered at school, the parent or guardian must submit a written, dated request to the campus nurse. Students may not bring their medication to school. Only the student's parent or guardian may take the medication to the school clinic. All prescription and non-prescription medication must be in the original container and properly labeled. Only the guidelines printed on the container will be followed unless a physician order is present. The Surgeon General, the Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control recommend that due to the increased risk of developing Reye's syndrome aspirin or products containing aspirin not be given to children under 18 years of age. If your physician orders aspirin, you must submit a copy of that physician order. The Texas Nurse Practice Act allows registered nurses to refuse to administer prescription medications anytime the nurse believes the medication is contraindicated for the student.

District policy allows the school nurse to train designated school employees to administer medication to a student during school hours. Medication administered at school should be brought to the school clinic and permission request signed by the parent. No medication is brought to school or returned home by the student riding the school bus. Please note that medication ordered "once a day" and "twice a day" may be administered at home. Medications "three times a day" are usually administered every 8 hours. These may also be given at home unless the physician has indicated a dose should be given during school hours. Most pharmacies will provide a separate bottle for medications to be administered at school. An over-the-counter medication dosage must not exceed the dosage recommendation listed on the bottle.

If your doctor has directed a dosage that is greater than the recommended dosage, a written order from the doctor must be provided along with a written note from the parent. In addition, the use of "sample" medication from a doctor must have signed written instructions from the doctor along with a written note from the parent.

Students with asthma or anaphylaxis that require the use of prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication may possess the medication with written permission from the physician and parents. It is strongly recommended that extra medication be kept in the clinic for emergencies. Diabetic students will provide a Diabetic Management Plan developed by the physician and parents. The campus nurse will consult with the student and family to develop an Individual Health Plan for the school year. In accordance with a

student's Individual Health Plan for management of diabetes, a student will be permitted to possess and use monitoring and treatment supplies and equipment while at school or a school-related activity. See the school nurse for information.

### **Other Health-Related Matters**

#### **Bacterial Meningitis**

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

##### ***What is meningitis?***

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

##### ***What are the symptoms?***

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

##### ***How serious is bacterial meningitis?***

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

##### ***How is bacterial meningitis spread?***

Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis is 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).

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

Maintaining healthy habits, like getting plenty of rest, can help prevent infection. Using good health practices such as veering 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. (Please note that the TDSHS requires at least one meningococcal vaccination between grades 7 and 10, and state guidelines recommend this vaccination be administered between age 11 and 12 with a booster dose at 16 years of age. Also note that entering college students must show, with limited exception, evidence of receiving a bacterial meningitis vaccination within the five-year-period prior to enrolling in and taking courses at an institution of higher education. Please see the school nurse for more information, as this may affect a student who wishes to enroll in a dual credit course taken off campus. The vaccines are safe and effective (85-90%). They can cause mild side effects, such as redness and pain at the injection site lasting up to two days. Immunity develops within 7 to 10 days after the vaccine is given and lasts for up to 5 years.

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

Seek prompt medical attention. For 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 meningococcal vaccine.

Additional information may be found at the web sites for: **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or the **Texas Department of State Health Services** at

[www.tdh.state.tx.us](http://www.tdh.state.tx.us).

**Crutches and Wheelchairs**

Students who require the temporary use of crutches or a wheelchair at school must have an order from their physician.

**Fever**

A student with a temperature of 100 or over will be excluded from school. The temperature must be below 100° for a full 24 hours before returning to school.

**Food Allergies**

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

**Head Lice**

Head lice, although not an illness or a disease, is very common among children and is spread very easily through head-to-head contact during play, sports, and when students share things like brushes, combs, hats and headphones. If careful observation indicates that a student has head lice, the school nurse will contact the student's parent to determine whether the child will need to be picked up from school and discuss a plan for treatment with an FDA-approved medicated shampoo or cream rinse that may be purchased at any drug or grocery store. After the student has undergone one treatment, the parent should contact the school nurse to discuss the treatment used.

**Screening Procedure:**

- A student may be referred to the nurse for a head check by a school employee or by parent request.
- School nurses can perform lice checks on siblings or children within the same household.
- Class checks can take place if a student is positive for head lice.

**Nits/Lice:**

- If a student is identified with nits/lice, the parent/guardian will be contacted to pick-up student and will be provided treatment recommendations.

**Pink Eye (conjunctivitis)**

A student with red painful/itchy eyes usually with discharge/crusting should have a medical evaluation. Conjunctivitis is very contagious and students must be excluded from school until they have a note from a physician or are symptom free.

**Rashes**

Students with a "questionable" rash should be referred for a medical diagnosis.

**Screenings**

The Texas Department of Health requires a screening program for vision and hearing for all new students and grades Pre-K, K, 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 7th. Scoliosis screening is required in grades 6 and 9. If you would prefer to have this done by your physician, please send the results to the school nurse. Other areas which may be screened are growth and development (height and weight), dental, blood pressures and pediculosis (head lice).

**Vomiting and Diarrhea**

A student with vomiting or diarrhea must be excluded from school.

**HOMELESS STUDENTS**

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths. Director of Special Programs, 618 W. Wheatland Rd., Duncanville, TX 75116, (214) 276-5857.

**HOMEWORK**

Homework is an integral part of the learning process to support, enrich, or reinforce topics covered in class. At the beginning of each semester, a written syllabus will be provided for each course of study to each student. The syllabus will include a brief description of the course and a list of major course projects or assignments. At the beginning of each unit or grading period, teachers will make available to each student, homework assignments; major test schedules; and major project/paper assignments. Homework may be assigned on a daily basis with prior notification for major projects or tests.

The teacher's responsibility is to assign effective, well-planned homework assignments that aid the student in the mastery of the course's essential elements. This includes providing the student with ample notice of impending homework assignments. The student's responsibility is to complete assignments on time and to schedule after-school activities which do not interfere with the completion of assignments. The student assumes the responsibility for making up work when absent from class.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child completes the homework assigned each day. Regular monitoring of homework assignments provide a good overview of how the student is performing in various subjects. Homework also provides a regular channel of communication between the parent and the teacher.

**INAPPROPRIATE DISPLAY OF AFFECTION**

Advantage Academy students are prohibited from the appearance of or the actual engaging in any type of inappropriate "Display of Affection". Any act of inappropriate kissing, hugging, touching, etc. between students that Administrators deem "inappropriate" before, during or after school hours, while on school property or while attending school related activities may be classified as inappropriate "Display of Affection" and subject to disciplinary action.

**INDEPENDENT LEARNING**

To achieve the States vision of preparing students for success in college, career or the military and building proficiency in reading (RLA) and math, students MUST demonstrate the ability to meet grade level standards in the targeted areas. To support a strong foundation in reading (RLA) and math, and progress towards the states standards, Advantage Academy will implement its new Independent Learning Program (SY 23/24) to assist students 1) who are performing below grade level; or 2) did not achieve a minimum of "*Approaches Grade Level*" on any local or state assessment; in RLA and/or Math.

The program will administer supplemental instruction that is aligned with the TEKS and will also incorporate other effective instructional materials. The Independent Learning program will employ online learning platforms and software applications that are specifically designed to close learning gaps and are proven to have a significant impact on outcomes for students. Students assigned to Independent Learning will be required to participate (log-in) and perform assigned work (due next school day) using the approved online learning platforms while at home on any Friday when Accelerated Instruction is not scheduled at school. AA's new program is designed to assist students in achieving satisfactory performance in their applicable grade level and lacking subject area(s).

**LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS**

A student with limited English proficiency (LEP), sometimes referred to as an (EB) Emergent Bilingual in certain state statutes and state rules, may be entitled to receive specialized services from the district. The Districts (LPAC) Language Proficiency Assessment Committee, which will consist of both district personnel and at least one parent representative, will determine whether students qualify for services. The student's parents must consent to any services recommended by the LPAC for a LEP student. In order to determine a student's level of proficiency in English, the LPAC will use information from a variety of assessments. If a student qualifies for services and once a level of proficiency has been established, the LPAC will then designate instructional accommodations or additional special programs the student will require to eventually become proficient at grade level work in English. Ongoing assessments will be conducted to determine a student's continued eligibility for the program.

## LOCAL ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES [See Student Code of Conduct]

### LOST AND FOUND

Lost items are easily returned if they are labeled with the student's name. Students should turn in any item they find (such as money, clothing, lunch boxes, books, etc.) to the school office. If a student loses any item at school, he/she should first check in the Lost and Found. At the end of each semester, unmarked and/or unclaimed articles in the Lost and Found will be donated to a local charity. The school is not responsible for lost, misplaced or unclaimed items, properly labeled, marked or not marked.

### MAKEUP WORK Due to an Absence\*

Make-up assignments, projects and tests shall be made available to students after an absence. For any day/class missed, the teacher will assign the student make-up work based on the instructional objectives for the subject or class missed. The student is responsible for requesting missed assignments and making arrangements for the make-up work. This must be done the first day the student returns to class. Students will have one day for each day of absence to make up assignments. For extended absences, the student must make special arrangements with the teacher and Campus Principal.

- a. Work that was assigned prior to an absence must be turned in on the first day a student returns to class or that work will be considered late. Teachers may assign a late penalty to any long-term project in accordance with time lines previously approved by the teacher and communicated to the student. All missed tests must be taken on the first day back or at the teacher's and Principal's discretion.
- b. Make-Up work must be turned in within the same number of days as the student's absence. *For example*, If a student is absent on a Monday and returns on Tuesday, his or her work is due on Thursday (One day absent = one day to make-up work).
- c. **If the absence was excused;** the student must complete all work missed, if the make-up work is turned in on time, the student will be eligible for gaining full credit. If make-up work is not turned in by the designated time, the student is subject to a grade penalty. *For example*, if the student turns the make-up work in one day after the designated turn in period, he/she will receive a grade of no higher than 70%. Make-up work turned in two days after the designated turn in period will receive a grade of no higher than 50%. Failure to turn in work by the third day after the designated turn in period will result in a grade of zero.
- d. **If the absence was unexcused;** the student must complete all work missed, but the grade will be reduced by 15% regardless. If the student turns the make-up work in one day after the designated turn in period, he/she will receive a grade of no higher than 70%. Make-up work turned in two days after the designated turn in period will receive a grade of no higher than 50%. Failure to turn in work by the third day after the designated turn in period will result in a grade of zero.
- e. Students who participate in field trips or extracurricular activities are required to obtain and have their assignments completed upon arriving to class the next school day.
- f. When students are absent from school and assignments are requested for pickup, please call the campus attendance clerk before 10:00 a.m. to allow the teacher sufficient time to prepare and have the assignments in the office for after school pickup. Assignments will not be available for pickup prior to the end of the school day.

***\*Students must earn a passing grade on make-up work in order to receive credit***

### MATERIAL COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Only material relating to school sponsored and/or approved activities or school-recognized clubs and organizations may be communicated (written or printed), posted or distributed at or on school property, in a classroom or other instructional setting, or at a school sponsored/approved activity.

Private convictions are not a part of the school's vision or mission and; therefore, are considered incompatible with the school's normal activities. Students and parents may not materially disrupt the educational interest of the school district or adversely affect working relationships (students, parents, employees and co-workers). All material must meet the following guidelines to be considered for posting,

distributing or communication: (a) align with the school's vision/mission (b) meet established school standards and purpose; (c) avoid disruption of the educational interest of the school and/or campus/school functions; and (d) prevent student exploitation.

Personal beliefs may not negatively affect the integrity of the school district or the effectiveness by which the school accomplishes its fundamental mission. Content that adheres to a particular ideological viewpoint that is not related to a school sponsored and/or approved activity or school-recognized club and organization or that is contrary to the schools mission/vision is prohibited. Restrictions will be placed on written and printed material that is discriminatory, harassing or disruptive in nature. Material restrictions include signs, symbols and colors. Campus Administration must review and approve all material posting and communication requests.

### **MESSAGES AND DELIVERIES**

It is not possible to receive messages and/or make deliveries to students without interrupting classes and interfering with the learning environment that the school staff works so hard to maintain. Therefore, the delivery of any item(s) to students at school is NOT permitted, unless deemed appropriate by campus administration. In the case of an emergency situation, the school office should be contacted for assistance. If a student forgets their homework, lunch, school supplies, an assignment or project, or money to pay dues or fines, deliveries may be made to the front office for the student to pick up during the school day. Packages such as flowers, balloons, etc. may not be delivered to the school for students. Items as such will not be delivered to the classroom. All deliveries are subject to search at the discretion of campus administration.

### **MOVIES AND VIDEOS**

Advantage Academy believes that movies, videos and other audiovisual materials are important supplemental tools and can be used effectively for instruction in many courses. However, the use of movies and videos should be limited while appropriately achieving legitimate educational objectives. Movies, videos and other audiovisual materials must never be used in the classroom as a reward or for entertainment.

**Educational Alignment and Approval** Advantage Academy only allows G and PG rated movies/videos to be shown. Movies/Videos rated otherwise may not be shown at all whether in part or in whole. Every effort should be made to remove offensive language and suggestive actions from all movies/videos. Campus Principal approval must be acquired prior to showing any movie/video. All movies/videos must be included in the teacher's lesson plan and have the specific educational objective listed. No movie/video may be viewed by students that is not expressly listed in the teachers lesson plan or that has not been approved by the Campus Principal.

**Proper Use and Review** Teachers bear the responsibility to ensure that educational activities and supplemental materials are relevant to the curriculum, appropriate for the age and maturity of students and consistent with specific educational objectives. All movies and/or videos should be reviewed before being submitted for district consideration and approval.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Eagle Advantage School's does not discriminate against students, employees or applicants for employment because of race, color, religion, gender, sex, national origin, age, disability, military status, genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by law in providing equal access to the schools education programs or activities; , including CTE programs, as required by Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Title I and Title V of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended ("ADA"); the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended ("ADEA"); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 ("GINA"); and any other legally-protected classification or status protected by federal, state, or local law.

For inquiries regarding school policies and procedures related to student or employee discrimination or if

an individual believes they have been a victim of unlawful discrimination in an education program or activity or in employment please contact the appropriate coordinator listed below:

Title IX and VII/ADEA Coordinator-Employee Welfare: Human Resources Director, 618 W. Wheatland Rd., Duncanville, TX 75116, (214) 276-5866.

Title IX Coordinator-Student Welfare: Director of Student Services, 616 W. Wheatland Rd., Duncanville, TX 75116, (214) 276-5888.

ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Director of Special Programs, 618 W. Wheatland Rd., Duncanville, TX 75116, (214) 276-5857.

Liaison for Homeless Children and Youth (coordinates services for homeless students): District Special Programs Department, 618 W. Wheatland Rd., Duncanville, TX 75116, (214) 276-5840.

### **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parents are encouraged to confer with their child's teacher at least twice per semester to discuss academic progress or other pertinent topics concerning the student. The teacher may also wish to contact the parent to confer about the child. Parents may schedule appointments through the main office. Conferences should be scheduled before or after school or during conference periods if teachers approve. Unscheduled visits will not result in a conference with the teacher due to the teachers' duties and/or commitments.

Teachers are only able to meet during their conference period and before or after school, unless special arrangements have been made. Teachers must never be interrupted for conferences or related phone calls during instructional times. Appointments should be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance. This allows the teacher time to be adequately prepared. Parents must report to the front office and sign in before proceeding to the conference. Parents may also take advantage of designated Parent-Teacher Conference week at their perspective campus. Specific dates will be listed on campus calendars.

### **PERSONAL ITEMS AT SCHOOL**

The school and school district cannot accept any liability nor be responsible for personal items brought to school that may become lost, damaged or stolen. As a result, we ask that parents discourage their child from bringing unnecessary personal belongings especially of high or significant value to school. Students and/or their parents shall assume all responsibility for personal property brought to school or school sponsored activities on or off campus. Please make sure student belongings are labeled with the student's name so they can be returned if found. Personal Items that are found but not clearly labeled for return, will be placed in the "Lost and Found."

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

#### **State Standards**

The state has developed its own standards for physical education, with which all school districts must comply. The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) were last revised in 1998. [See State Standards for Physical Education chart for details.]

#### **Curriculum**

The state does not require the use of specific curricula for elementary, middle school/junior high and high school physical education. However, all curricula must be sequential, developmentally appropriate, and designed, implemented and evaluated to enable students to develop the motor, self-management, and other skills, knowledge, attitudes and confidence necessary to participate in physical activity throughout life. Each school district must also establish specific objectives and goals the district intends to accomplish through the physical education curriculum. Local school systems have the option of using the CATCH, Healthy & Wise SPARKS, or Bienestar commercial curriculum. Foundation of Personal Fitness is used for high school students.

#### **(GPA) Grade Point Average**

Physical education grades are included in a student's overall GPA.

**Physical Fitness Assessments**

The state requires school districts/schools to assess students' physical fitness levels using FITNESSGRAM. Annually, the District will conduct physical fitness assessments of students in grades 3-12 enrolled in a PE or PE alternative class. Physical fitness levels are measured and results are sent to the state as congregate data for the district and may be shared publicly. Parents can receive a copy of their student's data upon request. The data may also be used for research studies.

**PICK-UP NOTIFICATIONS**

In the event of illness, injury, discipline issue or other unforeseen circumstance, a parent is required to honor the schools request for pick-up. Parents are required to pick up children within 30 minutes of notification. In the event of a severe illness or injury, if a parent fails to pick up their child within a reasonable amount of time, the school may call emergency services at the parent's expense. Repeated failures by parents to respond appropriately will cause the school to pursue this matter further with local officials.

**POSTERS / SIGNS**

The Site Principal must authorize and approve all posters and/or signs before they are posted or used for any reason in any school sponsored activity, event or for any other purpose on or off school property.

**PROMOTION / RETENTION\***

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

In grades 1-8\*, promotion to the next grade level is based on an overall average of at least 70% (on a scale of 100) based on course-level, grade-level, standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas and a grade of at least 70% in three of the following areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

In addition, at certain grade levels, a student, with limited exceptions will be required to pass the (STAAR) State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness if the student is enrolled in a public Texas school on any day between January 1 and the date of the first administration of the STAAR. To be promoted to grade 6, students enrolled in grade 5 must perform satisfactorily on the mathematics and reading sections of the grade 5 assessments in English or Spanish.

**\* 8<sup>th</sup> grade students** who do not achieve "Met Standard," in **Reading; Math; Science** and **Social Studies** will be required to attend Summer School. Upon successful completion of Summer School, the grade placement committee will determine if the 8<sup>th</sup> grade student will be retained or promoted.

If a student in grade 8 is enrolled in a course that earns high school credit and for which an (EOC) End-of-Course assessment will be administered or in a course intended for students above the student's current grade level in which the student will be administered a state mandated assessment, the student will not be subject to the promotion requirements described above for the relevant grade 8 assessment. However, the student's score on the EOC assessment will be used in determining whether the student meets the minimum cumulative score required for graduation.

Students in grades 5 or 8 will have two additional opportunities to take a failed assessment. If a student fails a second time, the grade placement committee will determine the additional special instruction the student will receive. After a third failed attempt, the student may be retained. In order for the student to be promoted, based on standards previously established by the district, the student must complete all additional special instruction.

**PROTECTED INFORMATION RIGHTS**

Students will not be required to participate without parental consent in surveys, analysis, or evaluations that concern:

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

Parents will be able to inspect the survey or other instrument and any instructional materials utilized in connection with such a survey, analysis, or evaluation.

**RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL**

Because all class time is important, doctor and dentist appointments should be scheduled at times when the student will not miss instructional time. A student who needs to leave school during the day must be signed out by the student's parent/guardian. If a student becomes ill during the school day, the student must receive permission from their teacher to report to the school nurse. The nurse will decide whether or not the student should be sent home and if so, parents will be notified. Students are not to call parents to pick them up.

**RELIGIOUS VIEWPOINT**

In compliance with the Religious Viewpoint Antidiscrimination Act, Advantage Academy's Board of Directors has approved the following Local Policy which encompasses Religious Expression and Religious Activities. The Policy addresses two general areas: A student's freedom of religious expression in class assignments and freedom to organize religious groups and activities. The purpose of the Act is to ensure that a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint on a subject is treated in the same manner as a student's voluntary expression of a secular (non-religious) viewpoint and that students who organize and conduct religious activities are afforded the same rights as students who organize and conduct (non-religious) activities.

**Religious Expression**

The school shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the school treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and shall not discriminate against the student based on the viewpoint expressed. Students may express their beliefs about religion in homework, artwork, and other written and oral assignments free from discrimination based on the religious content of the submission. Homework and classroom work shall be judged by ordinary academic standards of substance and relevance. Students may not be penalized or rewarded on account of religious content. If a teacher's assignment involves writing a poem, the work of a student who submits a poem in the form of a prayer (for example, a psalm) shall be judged on the basis of academic standards, including literary quality, and the student's submission shall not be penalized or rewarded on account of its religious content.

**Religious Activities**

Students may organize prayer groups, gatherings, and other religious activities before, during, and after school to the same extent that students are permitted to organize other non-curricular activities. Students who participate in religious activities will be permitted to announce events and meetings, in the same manner afforded those who participate in nonreligious activities, meetings, and events. The school will not promote, encourage or favor any specific religious group. Advantage Academy will not discriminate against students that meet for prayer or other religious speech. However, religious convictions may not negatively affect the integrity of the school district or the effectiveness by which the school accomplishes

its fundamental mission. School authorities may disclaim religious group activities, and may deny meeting, activity and event request that:

- Are idealistically opposed to the school's vision and mission;
- Do not meet established school standards and purpose;
- Disrupt the educational interest of the school and/or campus/school functions;
- Exploit AA students.

Restrictions will also be placed on religious expressions (oral, written, printed) and related activities that are discriminatory, harassing or are disruptive in nature. Restrictions include signs, symbols and colors. Campus Administration must review and approve all material posting and communication requests.

### **REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS**

Grade reports are issued for grades K-12, each nine (9) weeks. Students will also receive written progress reports at the end of each three (3) and six (6) week grading period. Teachers follow established grading guidelines that have been approved by the 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 District determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district's grading policy. *[See Grading Guidelines]*

Report cards must be signed by the student's parent and returned to the homeroom teacher. An official report card will be mailed to the student's address on file following the end of the academic school year.

### **REQUESTING TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS**

Parents may request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's teachers, including whether a teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; whether the teacher has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived; and undergraduate and graduate degree majors, graduate certifications, and the field of study of the certification or degree. Parents also have the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to their child.

### **RETURNED CHECKS**

In the event a non-sufficient funds check is issued to Advantage Academy, the district will utilize an outside collection agency to pursue reimbursement of the amount issued and the cost and fees associated with the collection of the amount owed.

### **REVIEWING INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

As a parent, you have a right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum.

### **SAFETY**

#### **Students**

Student safety on campus, at school-related events and on district vehicles is of the utmost importance to the district. Although the district has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students and parents is essential to ensuring school safety. All students are expected to:

- Follow the instructions of campus administrators and any other school employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.
- Follow the behavioral standards in the Student Code of Conduct, Student-Parent and Secondary handbooks, as well as all additional rules for behavior and safety set by the Campus Principal, Assistant Principal, SDA's or teachers.
- Remain alert to and promptly report to teachers or school staff; safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student, staff member or the campus.
- Be aware of emergency evacuation routes and signals.

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or others at risk.

### ***Emergency Procedures\****

Advantage Academy will follow all established state law and district guidelines in the case of any individual or school-wide emergency. Each campus has a trained Emergency Response Team, which will coordinate all emergency procedures according to policy. In case of an emergency, students must follow all emergency procedures and directives of ERP Team members, campus Administrators and school staff. When alarms sound, students must follow emergency procedures and/or directions in a quiet, orderly and timely fashion. In case of a campus wide emergency, parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible using the contact information and method provided by the parent.

*\*Parents, please be aware that if your child's campus is in an emergency situation you will not be able to collect your child, access the campus or any facility until the emergency is over and all clear is sounded.*

### ***Emergency Drills - Evacuate, Shelter, Secure (lockout), Lockdown***

Advantage Academy is required by state law to conduct numerous preparedness drills per school year. Each aspect of the school's Emergency Response Plan will be practiced numerous times throughout the school year. Preparedness drills develop safety practices that will help students move quickly, orderly and safely to assigned areas during an emergency. When the command is given or alarm is sounded, students need to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

### ***Emergency Information***

Each year, parents are asked to sign up to receive important school information notices by providing a contact method(s). In the event that the school must communicate an emergency situation, parents will be contacted by their preferred method(s). Emergency information will also be communicated in the following ways:

- Postings online using the school's website at [www.advantageacademy.org](http://www.advantageacademy.org);
- Advantage Academy Twitter profile @advantageeagles; and
- Through local news media outlets if deemed necessary.

***School Identification Cards*** (Required for ALL Students). **A minimal cost will be required to replace lost or damaged ID cards.**

### ***Visitors***

Parents and others with legitimate school related business are welcome to visit district campuses. However, for the safety of our students, employees and to avoid disruptions of daily operations Advantage Academy requires without exception that all visitors – including parents and school volunteers proceed directly to the campus main office-state a legitimate school related reason for their visit-and **sign-in** using a current/valid state or government issued photo ID in exchange for a Visitor's Pass. **(For more information see *Visitors to The School.*)**

### ***SCHOOL CLOSING AND OPENING DELAYS (inclement weather)***

Anytime there is a question of inclement weather or hazardous road conditions, the District, with an emphasis on safety first, will strive to make an informed decision that is in the best interest of the majority of parents, students and staff. Should weather conditions require the district to close its campuses or to open late, notice will be broadcast over local TV stations WFAA 8, and KTVT 11. Please utilize these resources rather than calling the school district office or campus for information. Weather related decisions are usually not made until shortly before 6:00 a.m.

If you do not see your campus listed on the closings or delays list, the school will be on regular schedule. The Advantage Academy school district is independent and will not always follow large ISD's in the area. If conditions worsen after school is in session, campuses will operate on a regular schedule unless utility or weather conditions make the building unsafe. If the campus must close early, notices will be broadcast over the District's website, School Messenger and Social Media.

## **SCHOOL DAY**

### **Arrival**

Advantage Academy's school day (Dallas, GPW and Wax) (Monday-Thursday) begins for Pre-K - 8 @ 7:50 AM. Students are generally not allowed to enter their classroom prior to 10 minutes before class begins unless approved events have been scheduled. The school does not provide supervision for students at school until 7:15 AM. For safety purposes, parents are not allowed to drop their child(ren) off before 7:15 AM, unless approved school events are scheduled.

### **Dismissal**

Advantage Academy's school day (Dallas, GPW and Wax) (Monday-Thursday) ends for Pre-K - 8 @ 4:10 PM. Advantage Academy does not provide supervision for students after 4:40 PM. (Pre-K-8). For safety reasons, parents are not allowed to leave their child(ren) at school past these times unless approved school events are scheduled.

### **Fridays Accelerated Learning**

Accelerated learning days (K - 8) will be released @ 2:00 PM. Please check the School calendar for scheduled Friday Accelerated Learning days.

### **Drop-off / Pick-up**

Various grade levels may use different exits of a campus building. Drivers must observe all established traffic flow patterns and safety precautions. Cell phone use is prohibited in the designated drop-off / pick-up zone of each campus. Please do not block other vehicles that are attempting to drop-off / pick-up or that are exiting or parking. Parents must NEVER exit from or leave their vehicle unattended in the Student Drop-off / Pickup zone. If you must enter the school for any reason, please park in designated parking spaces. Please do not park in handicapped designated spaces without a displayed placard.

Parents are not allowed at any time to go directly to their child's classroom when arriving for pick-up. To pick up your child (Pre-K - 5<sup>th</sup> grade), you must possess and display an official Student Pick-Up card, if the driver does not possess an official Student Pick-Up card, he/she must park, report to the main office and present a government issued photo identification card. The person picking up the child must be listed on the Student Release Authorization Form. Children will not be released to anyone not possessing a government issued photo identification card or to those not listed on the student release authorization form.

## **SCHOOL FACILITIES**

### **Before and After School**

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are required to remain in the area where their activity is scheduled to take place. Students are not permitted to enter other areas of the building or campus unless the teacher, coach, or sponsor overseeing the activity gives permission. Unless a student is involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher or other authorized employee or adult, students should not report to school in the morning before 7:15 a.m. and must leave campus no later than 30 minutes after dismissal.

### **Cafeteria Services**

The District participates in the School Breakfast Program and offers students nutritionally balanced meals for breakfast. Free and reduced-price meals are available based on financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential. Students who do not qualify for meal benefits may purchase breakfast at the standard rates. The District follows the federal and state guidelines regarding foods of minimal nutritional value being served or sold on school premises during the school day.

### **Hallways During Class Time**

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

**Non-Curriculum Groups**

Student organized and led non-curriculum groups are permitted to meet during the hours designated by the campus principal before and after school. These groups must comply with all established district and campus policy requirements.

**Conduct**

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct before- and after-school, at activities on district premises and at school-sponsored events off district premises, such as athletic and club competitions, study groups, and tutorials. Students must abide by the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day and shall be subject to consequences established by the Student Code of Conduct. Students may also be subject to other standards of behavior that have been established by athletic coaches or extracurricular sponsors.

**SCHOOL MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES**

Materials and supplies that are a part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds and are at no charge to students. Students, however, are required to provide his/her own pencils, paper, erasers, notebooks, and additional teacher, class or course required items after school begins. Students are required to replenish supplies during the course of the year dependent on usage or as directed by the teacher, the Campus Principal or the School District. A student may be required to pay certain fees or deposits for services not considered part of the basic educational program, such as a user fee, optional club/program dues. Fines may also be imposed for lost, damaged or misused materials or supplies. Each school year the district publishes a list of school materials and supplies students need for the upcoming academic year. The lists are available on the district's web page.

**SCHOOL PROPERTY ISSUED TO STUDENTS**

Students are responsible for all items issued by the classroom teacher, campus and/or district, such as textbooks, instructional materials, athletic equipment, library materials, technology equipment and other materials. Consequences shall be applied and restitution payment required if school property is lost, damaged, vandalized or not returned.

**SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION [See Student Code of Conduct]****SEARCHES AND QUESTIONING OF STUDENTS [See Student Code of Conduct]****SEX DISCRIMINATION / HARASSMENT**

Advantage Academy is committed to safeguarding the rights of all members of the District's community and to providing an educational environment and activities that are free from all forms of sex discrimination and harassment. To this end, the school prohibits all forms of sex discrimination and harassment on school grounds, school buses, and at all school sponsored events, including those that take place at locations outside the school district. The District prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any person on the basis of sex, gender, or sexual orientation. Persons who feel they have been subjected to discrimination or harassment based on sex or have experienced a hostile environment based on sex are encouraged to immediately report such allegations to a campus or district administration or to the appropriate Title IX Coordinator listed below.

The District will promptly investigate all complaints of sex discrimination and harassment reported in any form, verbal, or written. To the extent possible, all complaints will be treated in a confidential manner. Limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation. If, after an appropriate investigation, the District finds a violation of the schools sex discrimination/harassment policy, prompt corrective action will be taken in accordance with the Policy and applicable laws. Any law enforcement notification or reporting, and/or disciplinary action taken will be in accordance with the nature of the incident. The District will not tolerate retaliation against any individual who reports or files a complaint of sex discrimination or harassment.

Advantage Academy, administrators and staff, along with its students, their parents, and the school community as a whole will work together to promote an environment free from acts of sex discrimination

and harassment of any kind. Individuals who believe they have been a victim of sex discrimination/harassment in an education program or activity or in employment please contact the appropriate coordinator as listed:

Title IX and VII/ADEA Coordinator-Employee Welfare: Human Resources Director, 618 W. Wheatland Rd., Duncanville, TX 75116, (214) 276-5866.

Title IX Coordinator-Student Welfare: Director of Student Services, 616 W. Wheatland Rd., Duncanville, TX 75116, (214) 276-5888.

ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Director of Special Programs, 618 W. Wheatland Rd., Duncanville, TX 75116, (214) 276-5857.

Liaison for Homeless Children and Youth (coordinates services for homeless students): District Special Programs Department, 618 W. Wheatland Rd., Duncanville, TX 75116, (214) 276-5840.

### **SMOKING / VAPING / TOBACCO USE\***

State law prohibits the use, possession, sell, purchase or distribution of tobacco products (including the use of electronic cigarettes or any other electronic vaporizing device) and their paraphernalia on all district-owned property. The District, its administrators, and school staff shall strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of all tobacco products, including electronic cigarettes, digital vaporizers and paraphernalia by AA students while on or within 300 feet of school property, as measured from any point on the school's real property boundary line or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or event on or off school property: Violations will constitute serious consequences for the first offence. Repeat offenders face *Discretionary Expulsion*. A student caught vaping with a device considered to contain THC or other illegal substances will face *Mandatory Expulsion*. Confiscated items will not be returned.

*\*The intent of this policy is to send a strong message to our students that inhaling chemicals and unknown substances is not acceptable behavior at school, is disruptive to the school day and is a threat to their health.*

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

### **Special Education**

Special Education is defined as specially designed instruction provided by special and general education personnel to meet the individualized needs of students with documented disabilities.

### **Eligibility**

There is a two-prong test for determining whether your child is eligible for special education and related services: (1) your child must have a disability; and (2) as a result of the disability, your child must need special education and related services to benefit from education. To meet the first part of the two-part test for eligibility, a child between the ages of 3 through 21, except as noted, must meet the criteria for one or more of the disability categories listed below:

- auditory impairment (from birth);
- autism;
- deaf-blindness (from birth);
- emotional disturbance;
- intellectual disability;
- multiple disabilities;
- noncategorical early childhood (ages three through five);
- orthopedic impairment;
- other health impairment;
- specific learning disability;
- speech or language impairment;
- traumatic brain injury; or
- visual impairment (including blindness from birth).

### **Parental Request for Evaluation**

A parent may request an initial evaluation in writing or verbally to the director of special programs, campus principal or teacher. A copy of the request shall be provided to the principal or administrative designee within 24 hours of receipt. Parents will receive a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards, which explains the parent's specific rights and responsibilities under the (IDEA) Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Advantage Academy must respond no later than fifteen (15) school days after receiving the request by convening a (SST) Student Study Team with parents to discuss reasons for evaluation. The SST is a campus based team that takes a data driven problem solving approach to support student's academic, behavioral, and social emotional needs.

If the SST determines there **is** evidence of a suspected disability; a referral for special education is made. Prior written notice proposing evaluation and consent for evaluation is signed. Parents must be provided an opportunity to sign consent no later than 15<sup>th</sup> school day after the date the district received the request for evaluation. Interventions may be implemented during evaluation.

The district has 45 school days to complete the evaluation and sign report. The ARD committee must make the eligibility determination within 30 calendar days from the date of completion of the initial evaluation report.

If the SST determines there **is no** evidence of a suspected disability, prior written notice and procedural safeguards to indicate refusal to evaluate are given to the parent no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> school day after district receives request for evaluation. Letter of Refusal for Evaluation comes from Special Programs Director. MTSS and/or a 504 accommodation plan may be considered.

### **(MTSS) Multi-tiered Systems of Support**

MTSS is designed to provide every student with high quality instruction. The emphasis of the MTSS process is on prevention and early identification of students in need of academic and/or behavioral support. Academic and behavioral interventions are provided at increasing levels of intensity in accordance with each student's individual needs. Depending on the student's level of need a collaborative team made up of administrators, teachers, and parents work together to problem solve and match students to the appropriate instructional and/or behavioral interventions. These teams monitor student progress and frequently review student data to evaluate each student's response to the interventions provided.

Advantage Academy's process is composed of three instructional tiers. Tier I is experienced by all students in the general education classroom and is characterized by differentiated core instruction and school-wide behavior management practices. If a student needs academic or behavioral support beyond what is provided at Tier I, the student will be referred to the professional learning community or student study team for placement in Tier II interventions. At Tier II, students receive targeted instructional or behavioral support designed to meet their unique needs and facilitate their success in the general education classroom. Students who do not respond to Tier II interventions may be referred to Tier III where they will experience more intensive interventions.

### **Child Find**

Child Find refers to the process of "finding" children who may have a disability that warrants a full individual evaluation to determine his/her eligibility for special education instruction or services.

### **Section 504**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a Federal law that focuses on non-discrimination. The law states, "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United State, as defined in section 706(8) of this title, shall, solely by reason of her or his handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance or under any program or activity conducted by any Executive agency or the United States Postal Service..." - 29 U.S.C., 794(a)(1973)." As it applies to public schools, "the language broadly prohibits the denial of public education participation or enjoyment of the benefits offered by public school programs because of a child's disability. To be protected under Section 504, a student must be determined to: (1) have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life

activities; or (2) have a record of such an impairment; or (3) be regarded as having such an impairment.

**Dyslexia**

Students who have been identified through a standardized assessment as having dyslexia may be eligible for special adaptations.

**ESL**

A student may be eligible to receive specialized support if his/her primary language is not English and he/she is identified as being limited in their English proficiency. (ESL) English as a Second Language is offered in PK through 12th grade with ESL Content Based programming, and is designed to develop the student's proficiency in speaking, reading, writing and listening in the English language to ensure academic excellence in all content areas. If the student has difficulty performing class work in English and qualifies for these extra services, the (LPAC) Language Proficiency Assessment Committee will determine the types of services the student needs, including accommodations or modifications related to classroom instruction, local assessments, and state-mandated assessments. When a student with a disability is, or may be identified as an (EB) Emergent Bilingual, the student's (ARD) Admission, Review, and Dismissal committee must work in conjunction with the (LPAC) Language Proficiency Assessment Committee to determine appropriate entry and exit criteria for (ESL) English as a Second Language program.

**State Assessments for Special Programs****(STAAR) State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness**

STAAR is the state's testing program and is based on state curriculum standards in core subjects including reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. Students take STAAR with or without allowable accommodations.

**Who takes STAAR?**

Grades 3–8 STAAR tests are given in the spring. The number of tests your child takes each year will depend on what grade he or she is in.

The ARD committee must review the participation requirements for STAAR Alternate 2 for students with significant cognitive disabilities who access the grade-level (TEKS) Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills curriculum through prerequisite skills.

The ARD committee makes educational decisions for a student with a disability, including decisions related to state assessments and decisions related to graduation requirements as described in Texas Administrative Code §89.1070.

**(TELPAS) Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System**

TELPAS is an assessment program for students in Texas public schools who are learning the English language. The Texas Education Agency developed TELPAS to meet state and federal requirements. Texas annually assesses the English language proficiency of students who have been identified as (EB) Emergent Bilingual in four language domains—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. TELPAS evaluates the progress that each EB makes in becoming proficient in the use of academic English.

**Who takes TELPAS?**

Students in grades K-12 that have been identified as an EB are required to take TELPAS. This includes ELs whose parents have declined bilingual or (ESL) English as a Second Language program services. They will stop participating in TELPAS when their (LPAC) Language Proficiency Assessment Committee determines that they are proficient in the English language and have met exit criteria. This applies to all ELs even those who are not in a bilingual or ESL program. Once a student has met the state's exit criteria, they will no longer be identified as an EB and will not have to participate in TELPAS.

ARD and LPAC committee must review the participation requirements for TELPAS Alternate for (EB) Emergent Bilingual with significant cognitive disabilities.

**STAY-AWAY and TRANSFER AGREEMENTS**

Stay-Away and Transfer Agreements may be initiated by the district or a parent/guardian in certain

instances. Agreements will be considered for approval if the request is **(1)** to assist students who have learning difficulties; **(2)** to accommodate a student's special education services; **(3)** for safety reasons; or **(4)** for other appropriate reasons. Agreements will be approved based on what's best for the student and for transfers, if another campus operated by the school serves the appropriate grade level.

Parents/Guardians may request an agreement for safety reasons only as follows:

- If the child has been determined by the district to have been a victim of bullying, sexual harassment or dating violence.
- If the child has been the victim of a violent criminal offense that occurred at school.
- If their child's assigned campus is identified as "persistently dangerous" by TEA.

## **STUDENT CLUBS**

Student clubs and their related activities are a vital part of Advantage Academy and students are encouraged to become involved. Colleges and businesses closely examine the level of student involvement in clubs and organizations when determining admission, scholarships, or employment. Participation in school-sponsored activities is an excellent way to provide students with creative outlets; create leadership skills; encourage the discovery of hidden talents; and allow students to continue to learn outside of their regular classroom setting. While involvement in clubs or activities is encouraged, students are reminded not to overextend themselves and to carefully select clubs in which they have a sincere or genuine interest. Club participation is a privilege, not a right and therefore, club activities may not interfere with a student's academic endeavors. All school-sponsored clubs must meet the following criteria:

1. Each club must have a stated purpose and operate under a written constitution or a set of by-laws that do not conflict with Campus or District policies. A copy of the club's purpose and their bylaws must be on file in the principal's office and with the District.
2. All clubs must have a sponsor(s) who guides and monitors club activities and are present at all meetings. All activities, practices, or competitions shall be performed under the supervision of the sponsor(s) at all times.
3. A new club cannot be proposed at a campus, if an existing club already addresses the same or similar goals and purposes of the proposed club.
4. Membership does not discriminate on the basis of an individual's race, national origin, religion, gender, or disability.
5. Clubs must meet the minimum requirement of 6 participants.
6. Clubs cannot be established without both Campus and District approval.

In addition to established clubs, students at Advantage Academy are also afforded the opportunity to form their own clubs based on similar interests such as a film club, chess club, outdoors club, or perhaps bowling club. This practice allows students to share common interests and to find activities in which to participate. Each new club must state its purpose, form a constitution or by-laws, recruit a sponsor, receive Campus Principal and District Administration approval, and meet all club requirements as stated above.

It is important for students and parents to investigate a club's purpose and its by-laws, before joining. Contact your campus to inquire about which clubs are offered and which may be accepting new members. In most cases, clubs are an afterschool activity. The campus and school district cannot be held liable for any travel, meetings, or accidents that may occur as a result of the activities of a student club or its members that are conducted outside of or apart from school or is not sponsor(s) monitored. For example, a group of students from the fishing club may decide to go fishing on a Saturday, this activity would not be an approved sanctioned event, therefore, the school and/or sponsor(s) cannot be held liable.

## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

As required by law, the Board of Directors has adopted a Student Code of Conduct that prohibits certain behaviors and defines standards of acceptable behavior – both on and off campus – and consequences for violation of those standards. The District has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with

the Texas Education Code and the Student Code of Conduct. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards in the Student Code of Conduct, District Directives, this handbook and all campus and classroom rules. School rules apply to all school events. Parents and guests attending these events are expected to observe the same rules as students, and a student inviting a parent or guest will share responsibility for the conduct of his or her guest. **[See Student Code of Conduct]**

***Corporal Punishment and the use of Aversive Discipline Techniques is prohibited by the AA Board of Directors. Students will not be spanked, paddled or physically disciplined for classroom mis-behavior/conduct or for violations of the Student Code of Conduct. Furthermore, Aversive Discipline Techniques will not be utilized as punishment or as a discipline consequence.***

***The School District, school employees, volunteers and independent contractors may not authorize, order, consent or cause these discipline techniques to be applied to an AA student. AA expects employees, volunteers and contractors to use non-touching ways to otherwise manage students.***

***Offences that are recognized as unlawful or criminal will be reported to local authorities. Code of Conduct discipline consequences may also be applied.***

## **STUDENT RECOGNITION AWARDS**

Advantage Academy is committed to developing each of its students' to his or her maximum potential. Student excellence will be promoted and encouraged through various student recognition awards or presentations at each campus. Incentive based awards such as Honor Roll, Leadership, Soaring Eagle, Character Champions, Attendance and other awards intended to enhance individual student effort will be awarded to deserving students. Please be aware that prospective awards change from school year to school year.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

Parents may review their child's student records. However, both federal and state law safeguards student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provides parents and "eligible" students certain rights of privacy. Before disclosing any personally identifiable information from a student's records, the District must verify the identity of the person, including a parent or the student, requesting the information. For purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is 18 or older or who is attending an institution of postsecondary education. Virtually all information pertaining to student performance, including grades, test results, and disciplinary records, is considered confidential educational records. Student record release is restricted to:

- The parents - whether married, separated, or divorced - unless the school is given a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student's education records. Federal law requires that, as soon as a student becomes 18, is emancipated by a court, or enrolls in a postsecondary institution, control of the records goes to the student. The parents may continue to have access to the records, however, if the student is a dependent for tax purposes and under limited circumstances when there is a threat to the health and safety of the student or other individuals.
- District school officials who have what federal law refers to as a "legitimate educational interest" in a student's records. School officials would include trustees and employees, such as the superintendent, school officers, administrators, and principals; teachers, school counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff; a person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a particular service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or volunteer); a parent or student serving on a school committee; or a parent or student assisting a school official in the performance of his or her duties. "Legitimate educational interest" in a student's records includes working with the student; considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities; compiling statistical data; reviewing an educational record to fulfill the official's professional responsibility; or investigating or evaluating programs.

- Various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers and (CPS) Child Protective Services caseworkers or other child welfare representatives, in certain cases.
- Individuals or entities granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- A school or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she is already enrolled. Release to any other person or agency - such as a prospective employer or for a scholarship application - will occur only with parental or student permission as appropriate. District Administration is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students and those who have withdrawn or graduated.

Records may be inspected by a parent or eligible student during regular school hours. School employees will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of records. A parent or eligible student who provides a written request and pays copying costs of ten cents per page may obtain copies. If circumstances prevent inspection during regular school hours and the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals, the district will either provide a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review these records. A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student's records and request a correction 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 campus principal. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected and include an explanation of how the information in the record is inaccurate.

If the district denies the request to amend the records, the parent or eligible student has the right to request a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the parent or eligible student has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student's grade in a course is handled through the general complaint process found in school policy. A grade issued by a classroom teacher can be changed only if, as determined by the Board of Directors, the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or inconsistent with the district's grading policy.

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

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

If you are worried that your child may be using or is in danger of experimenting or abusing illegal drugs, alcohol or other prohibited substances, please contact the Director of Student Services, 616 W. Wheatland Rd. Duncanville TX, 75116. The campus nurse-aide can provide you with a list of community resources that may be of assistance to you. The TDSHS maintains information regarding children's mental health and substance abuse intervention services on its Web site: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/mhsa-childadolescent-services/>. **[See Student Code of Conduct]**

## **SUICIDE AWARENESS**

The district is committed to partnering with parents to support the healthy mental, emotional, and behavioral development of its students. If you are concerned about your child, please access <http://www.texassuicideprevention.org> or contact the campus nurse-aide for more information related to suicide prevention or other health services available in your area, or the Director of Student Services, 616 W. Wheatland Rd. Duncanville TX, 75116

## **SUMMER SCHOOL\***

Summer school courses and grade level services are determined each school year according to District Needs Assessment. Students in the "Summer School" program will be provided opportunities to study a curriculum that reinforces and/or enriches skills and knowledge learned during the regular school year. Additionally, classes provide students with an environment that is both stimulating and encouraging. If applicable, summer school information and registration forms will be available at each campus.

***Students, who do not achieve "Approaches Grade Level" on one or more State assessments, may be required to attend summer school***

***If a student is "required" to attend Summer School and does NOT, that student may not be promoted to the next grade level***

**Elementary:** AA Summer Opportunities for Learning offers a variety of elementary programs including Emergent Bilingual or EB. Each offered program is unique, and parents may wish to talk with their child's teacher or principal concerning the programs best suited for summer study.

**Middle School:** The Middle School Summer School Program is designed for students in grades 6 to 8\* who have not mastered the essential elements of the required courses of English, Math, Social Studies or Science. This program is streamlined to concentrate on academic mastery.

**\*8<sup>th</sup> grade students** who do not achieve "Met Standard," in **Reading, Math, Science** and **Social Studies** will be required to attend Summer School. Upon successful completion of Summer School, the grade placement committee will determine if the 8<sup>th</sup> grade student will be promoted or retained.

## **TECHNOLOGY [See Student Acceptable Use Policy 2023-2024]**

### **TESTING / STATE ASSESSMENTS**

#### **(STAAR) State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness - Grades 3–8\***

In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels will take state-mandated assessments such as the STAAR in the following subjects:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3–8
- Reading, annually in grades 3–8
- Writing, including spelling and grammar, in grades 4 and 7
- Science in grades 5 and 8
- Social Studies in grade 8
- Any other subject and grade required by federal/state law.

Texas law requires successful performance on the reading and math assessments in grades 5 and 8, however, Advantage Academy requires successful performance on all four assessments for 8<sup>th</sup> grade, in order to be promoted to 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

**\*8<sup>th</sup> grade students** who do not achieve "Met Standard," in **Reading, Math, Science** and **Social Studies** will be required to attend Summer School. Upon successful completion of Summer School, the grade placement committee will determine if the 8<sup>th</sup> grade student will be retained or promoted.

**[See Promotion / Retention for additional information].**

#### **(TELPAS) Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System- Grades 3–8**

The (TELPAS) Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System is a system of statewide assessments administered to all (LEP) Limited English Proficient students in grades 3 through 12. The TELPAS measures English ability based on the stages of language development of second language learners.

These results will further the understanding of the educational needs of LEP students by providing a state-level measure of both their current academic English levels and their annual progress in English.

### **State Assessments for Special Programs [See Special Programs]**

#### **Testing Protocol (State and Local Assessments)**

Due to the seriousness of testing, below are the stringed testing rules that the state requires and the school has adopted. The Texas Education Agency takes each and every account very seriously; therefore the school must also take testing situations seriously. As a district, our desire is to ensure that we have consistent policies enforced and that there are no violations. To ensure the integrity of State and local assessments, Advantage Academy has enacted specific testing rules, regulations and security precautions on testing days to ensure that testing environments are maintained, breaches do not happen, and State and local compliance is met.

**The school's *Testing Protocol (State and Local Assessments)* is as follows:**

- Regular school uniform attire must be worn;
- Clothing such as hoodies, sweatshirts or any other items with front pouch pockets are not permitted;
- Pockets should be empty of all content and hands must remain out of pockets at all times;
- In the case of questionable actions or items in pockets, the student will immediately be asked to empty all pockets;
- Any determination of cheating or suspected cheating will be cause for test invalidation;
- Test invalidation shall be in order for any determination of cheating or suspected cheating with probable cause;
- Testing students will not be allowed to leave school early, appointments (doctor's, etc.) should be scheduled during non-testing days;
- Students who have completed testing may not leave the testing area, talk or visit;
- Visitors will not be received on campus during/on testing days; and
- Lunch must be left in the main office until specific lunch times.

**Testing Security**

Cell phones, smart watches, electronic devices and other restricted item(s) are prohibited in any testing environment. Testing proctors, monitors, and school administrators, shall collect cell phones, smart watches and other electronic devices and restricted items prior to the start of testing and hold those items while the test is being administered, including breaks. Admission to testing shall be denied to any student who refuses to relinquish a restricted device and shall also be cause for test invalidation.

**Consequences**

Students in violation of the school's Testing Protocol and related policies will be subject to test invalidation, device confiscation and disciplinary action which may include suspension from school. Confiscated device(s) will be returned to parent/guardian after the established fifteen (15) school days and the administrative fee is collected.

**\*All testing requirements and regulations will be fully enforced\***

**TEXTBOOKS / INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS / TECHNOLOGY INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS\***

Textbooks and other district-approved instructional materials are provided to students free of charge for each subject or class. Textbooks and instructional materials must be used for several years; therefore, it is imperative that students take good care of them. All textbooks and materials assigned to a student must be kept in their original form and maintained in good condition, including all inventory barcodes. The district will assign each classroom allotted textbooks, instructional and technology materials for student use. The teacher in return will assign textbooks and materials to each student as required. Students must keep all textbooks properly covered at all times.

A student who is issued a damaged item should report the damage to the teacher immediately. Lost or damaged textbooks or any other instructional materials, including technology materials, must be paid prior to receiving an assigned replacement (students will be provided loaner material resources and equipment for use). Any student failing to return an item in acceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until the item is returned or the damage paid for. Materials that are damaged, destroyed or misused by a student become the financial responsibility of that student or the legal parent/guardian of that student and must be reimbursed in full before the student's transcripts or report cards will be released.

***\*Cash or money orders only will be accepted for payment***

**TRUANCY**

Parents must maintain compliance with the Compulsory Attendance Law in the State of Texas. Failure to comply will be considered a violation of the Texas Compulsory Attendance Law and is considered a Class C Misdemeanor, punishable by a fine for each offense. Schools are required by law to file a court case on

a student's parent, the student (between the ages of 12 and 18), or both who accumulate numerous unexcused absences within a specific period of time. Any absence puts a student behind and has a detrimental impact on that student's learning. It is essential that the school have the support of parents to help our students achieve maximum success and to become champions.

### **Truancy Prevention Measures**

The Truancy Prevention Measures adopted by Advantage Academy are intended to increase attendance rates, decrease truant conduct and lower the drop-out rate of students. The goal of these prevention measures is to partner with parents in addressing the problem of getting their children to school regularly and on time. Established truancy prevention measures will be communicated and shall provide ample opportunities for parents and their child(ren) to discuss attendance issues with the school in order to make better and more informed decisions. Most truant conduct issues will be resolved using these measures.

Failure to respond to truancy prevention measures will be duly noted and provided as documentation to the court upon the filing of a truancy complaint. Advantage Academy will file truancy cases on parents and students who exhibit truant conduct by accumulating unexcused absences.

### **Truant Conduct Warning Notices**

Advantage Academy shall notify parent in writing at the beginning of the school year that if the student is absent from school on 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year that the school shall file a complaint with a municipal court or justice against the student, the student's parent, or both. Subsequently, multiple avenues shall be utilized to inform parents of unexcused absences such as; electronically generated notifications; phone calls, and truant conduct warning letters sent home with students (letter must be signed by parent and returned to the attendance office).

Parents will receive systematic truancy warning notices and truant conduct warning letters at set intervals whenever their child has an unexcused absence. Notifications shall inform the parent (a) of his/her duty to monitor the students' attendance, (b) that the student is required to attend school and (c) that the parent and student are subject to prosecution.

Students who continue to display truant conduct as a result of chronic and problematic attendance will be placed on an *Attendance Contract*.

***Only 3 parent/guardian excuses for absences will be accepted per semester, after which only professional institute excuses will be accepted***

### **District Tardy Process**

3 Unexcused Tardies = Discipline Referral (level I - Persistent Tardiness). Consequences determined by the Student Discipline Administrator.

***Only 3 parent/guardian excuses for tardiness will be accepted per semester, after which only professional institute excuses will be accepted***

### **Late Arrival (Start of School)**

Students who arrive late to school are required to bring a signed parent note and/or other appropriate documentation to the front office in order to obtain an Admit to Class Pass. The note should include the parent's/guardian's name and contact number for verification.

### **Late Arrival (Each Class Period)**

A student is considered tardy during the school day if he/she is not in their scheduled classroom/assigned area of instruction when the class bell rings.

: 01 to: 09 – **REPORTED TARDY**

: 10 – **COUNTED ABSENT** (*applies to students first scheduled and last scheduled period only*)

### **Early Check Out**

Students are required to be in attendance the entire time a class is being offered. If it is necessary for a student to leave school early, he/she must have an approved written excuse from their parents. Students

should bring the written excuse to the office prior to the first period and secure an Excuse from Class Pass. Excuses will not be accepted from students during the class period. Before a student leaves the school property, a parent/ guardian must sign the student out in the office. Failure to do so will be considered truancy. If an early check-out student returns to school the same day, the student must sign back in through the office.

A student who checks-out/leaves ten (10) minutes before the end of class without an approved written excuse will be reported as absent (unexcused) for that class.

***All accumulated unexcused absences will be recorded in accordance with Compulsory Attendance Laws Advantage Academy and each teacher are required to record and report early checkouts***

### **UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS**

In accordance with Education Code 37.105, a school administrator, student discipline administrator (SDA), or appropriate school employee (classroom teacher, coach) shall have the authority to refuse entry or eject a person from district property if the person refuses to leave peaceably on request and: 1. The person poses a substantial risk or harm to any person; or 2. The person behaves in a manner that is inappropriate for a school setting, and the person persists in the behavior after being given a verbal warning that the behavior is inappropriate and may result in refusal of entry or ejection.

### **VANDALISM AND DAMAGE TO SCHOOL/PRIVATE PROPERTY**

The Advantage Academy Board of Directors has a duty under Texas law to provide for the care, control and management of school property (buildings, equipment, materials and grounds). The Board hereby charges each student and their parent or guardian, with responsibility for the proper care of school property. Students are hereby prohibited from damaging, destroying, defacing or attempting to damage, destroy or deface school or private property.

Criminal mischief can be prosecuted as a misdemeanor or **felony** depending on the amount of financial loss. It is a Class C misdemeanor if the financial loss was under \$100. It is a Class B misdemeanor if the financial loss was \$100 or more, but under \$750. Damage of school (buildings, equipment, materials and grounds) or private property by a student will not be tolerated. Students who willfully cause damage to school or private property shall be subject to disciplinary measures, which shall include restitution. The School will remove any student engaging in such behavior from the classroom or school environment entirely. **[See School Policy for More Details]**

### **VIDEO AND AUDIO RECORDING**

State law, permits the school to make video and voice recordings without parental permission for the following circumstances:

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

### **VIDEO SURVEILLANCE / MONITORING *[See Student Code of Conduct]***

### **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL**

Parents and others with legitimate school related business are welcome to visit district campuses. However, for the safety of our students, employees and to avoid disruptions of daily operations Advantage Academy requires without exception that all visitors – including parents and school volunteers proceed directly to the campus main office-state a legitimate school related reason for their visit-and **sign-in** using a current/valid state or government issued photo ID in exchange for a Visitor's Pass. All visitors are required to wear/display the Visitor Pass at all times while on school property and then return to the office at the end of the visit to **sign-out**.

**NOTE: Any person observed on school grounds without a valid Visitors Pass is trespassing and is subject to arrest and prosecution.**

**NOTE: Visitors including parents/guardians will not be received on testing days (check the school calendar for scheduled testing days.)**

Parents/Guardians (max 1 visitor at any one time for classroom observation visits) wishing to observe their child in the classroom or other academic setting must make arrangements 24 hours in advance and receive approval from the Campus Principal and classroom teacher. The school is in no way obligated and/or required to approve visits or observation request. ***Parents/Guardians may not bring children and/or guests into the classroom.***

Students are engaged in learning activities throughout the school day; therefore, ***relatives may only visit during the student's lunch period on (Wed's) with a maximum of 2 visitors. Student's parent/guardian must be present as well.***

Advantage Academy expects that all individuals including parents/guardians will observe the following **Safety Guidelines:**

1. Cooperate with school officials and administrators in the school's effort to provide their child a positive, safe, and orderly learning environment.
2. Report all unusual activity or safety concerns to campus administrators immediately.
3. Follow all instructions as communicated, directed and/or outlined by school officials, campus administrators or other school personnel.
4. Abide by all school policies, procedures and regulations while visiting campuses, classrooms or other locations where school sponsored activities are being held on or off school property.
5. Cooperate with school officials and administrators in the school's effort to adhere to and positively enforce Advantage Academy's "Student Code of Conduct."
6. Follow all campus area traffic flow patterns and rules; including all staff directions and instructions while picking up or dropping off students. ***Exercise extreme caution while in the school's Pick-up/Drop-off Zone (also called the No Phone Zone).***
7. Refrain from exhibiting unsafe, improper, disruptive or offensive behavior either verbally or by actions while on campus, in attendance at school sponsored activities, athletic events or other school functions on or off school property.
8. Do not make false accusations against school employees, the campus or the school district itself.
9. Never threaten a campus principal, school administrator, school faculty or staff member; verbally, in writing or by any other means of communication or action.
10. Never threaten a student or other visitor verbally, in writing or by any other means of communication or action.
11. Refrain from taking pictures or video-taping students and school employees, including classroom and campus activities.

### **Visitor Management System**

The safety and well-being of students, staff, and others within the school is Advantage Academy's highest priority. The District utilizes the Raptor Visitor Management System at all campuses. Raptor is a web-based system implemented to enhance safety by screening all visitors. Public sex offender database information is used to screen visitors to the campus, as well as private alert data entered by the school on custody issues and restraining orders. The Raptor Visitor Management System is a convenient and efficient way to protect students and staff from potential threats.

ID's are scanned to check against sex offender databases in 48 states and to prevent those who may pose a threat to safety from entering. Once the scan is complete, a pass will be printed for approved visitor's to wear at all times while on campus. *This is NOT a background search – no other criminal information is searched or provided such as traffic tickets, warrants, felonies, etc. The system does not scan for or include immigration status.*

If the system identifies a person as a Registered Sex Offender, campus and district administrators will immediately receive an alert message on their cell phone and/or e-mail. Campus administrator's will invite the person into a private office and inform them of the scan search results. If the Campus Principal agrees to the visit, the person would receive a Visitor's Pass and then must be escorted to his/her

destination. The entire visit will be monitored and the RSO will not be left alone for any reason.

The following IDs are known to work within the Raptor system: Texas Driver License; State ID Card; Concealed Handgun License; Military ID; Government ID; Mexico Driver License; Mexico Consulate ID; Canada Driver License; and, Alien Registration Receipt Cards. This list is not meant to be exhaustive, or to exclude other forms of valid state or government issued photo identification cards. If another form of ID is presented, office personnel will evaluate its use for the system.

***All information obtained is confidential and will not be shared or made public.***

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Advantage Academy encourages and appreciates the efforts of parent and grandparent volunteers that are willing to serve our district and the students. Parents interested in becoming volunteers should contact their campus office for more information and to complete the application. All volunteer applicants are required to fully complete the application while providing all necessary information. Incomplete forms will not be reviewed for approval. Applicants must sign a release giving the district permission to conduct a criminal background check that is required to become a school volunteer. The district reserves the right to deny or otherwise not approve any application based on information provided or acquired, including criminal background information. The district is under no obligation to make available to the applicant the reasons considered for denials or non-approvals. To become a school volunteer please follow the process outlined below:

1. Read and become familiar with all Volunteer information.
2. Complete the online Volunteer Application and Agreement Form (applications are also available at your child's campus.
3. Scan or photocopy your driver's license or government ID to complete the required background check.
4. Provide your contact information and volunteering information.
5. Once processed, the campus will inform the volunteer if they have been approved.
6. Approved applications must be on file before duties may be assigned. A new volunteer application must be completed each school year.
7. Volunteers may not bring small children with them while performing their duties.

## **WEBSITE**

The school's "website" is the primary communication tool between the school and community, and has been designed for use by all community members, groups and demographics including staff/administration, parents, students, community partners, and potential, as well as, former students and alumni. The school views its 'website' as the public face for the school while it continually strives to provide updated newsletters, events and campus advertisements. The school communicates educational outcomes for the school community while providing tangible learning benefits such as the streamlining of information access within and between faculties, campuses and educational departments. Using the web site traditionally isolated teachers/staff members are now able to network ideas and resources in ways that afford real professional development. The web site is also used to:

- Provide students, and parents with information such as grades and attendance;
- List academic objectives and school curriculum;
- Provide teachers, administrators, students, and parents current information such as news, calendars of events and sports activities;
- Provide students, parents and staff with an entrance (Student Portal) (Parent Portal) (Staff Portal) to locally hosted documents and resources;
- Provide access to District handbooks and policies;
- Direct visitors to other resources and links;
- Introduce people who don't know about the school (such as parent or students who are considering enrollment, community members who don't have children, and teachers seeking employment) to current events, general culture and existing opportunities;

- Show school excellence with regard to achievements and awards in comparison to competitive schools; and
- Display the schools 'corporate identity'.

The Advantage Academy website is: [www.advantageacademy.org](http://www.advantageacademy.org)

### **WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL**

A parent wishing to withdraw a student from school must come to the registrar's office to sign withdrawal paperwork at least 72 hours prior to withdrawal and to receive specific withdrawal information. All withdrawal information provided must be verified and the withdrawal form must be signed by the parent for use as documentation stating that the student will continue to be enrolled in a school as required by the compulsory attendance laws.

On the student's last day, the withdrawal form must be presented to the teacher(s) for current grade averages and book and materials clearance; to the clinic for health records; to the Guidance Counselor if applicable; and to Child Nutrition Services for lunch balance (unclaimed lunch balances may not be refunded after 30 days). A copy of the withdrawal form will be given to the parent and a copy will be placed in the student's cumulative record.

All district, campus and department records must be clear with the school at the time of withdrawal. Fees or dues paid to the school by the student or his/her parent prior to withdrawal will not be reimbursed or refunded. Purchases made by the student or his/her parent, required or not, such as supplies, uniform items, etc.... cannot be reimbursed or refunded. All school issued materials and equipment must be turned in at the time of withdrawal. Parents will be required to pay for all school property that is missing or damaged.

**SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2023-24****A) Aiding Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education or Section 504 Services**

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

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her parent may contact the individual(s) 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 if 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 an administrative employee of the school district or open enrollment charter school, the district or charter school must respond no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, the district or charter school must give the parent a prior written notice of whether it agrees to or refuses to evaluate the student, along with a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*. If the school district or charter school agrees to evaluate the student, it must also give the parent the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

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

If the district or charter school 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 to evaluate the student. However, if the student is absent from school during the evaluation period for three or more school days, the evaluation period 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 a district or charter school receives a parent's consent for the initial evaluation at least 35 but less than 45 school days before the last instructional day of the school year, 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 30th due date no longer applies. Instead, the general timeline of 45 school days plus extensions for absences of three or more days will apply.

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

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

## Contact Person for Special Education Referrals:

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

Contact Person: Erica Johnson

Phone Number: 214-276-5857

### **Section 504 Referrals:**

Each school district or charter school must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of students in the district's or charter school's Section 504 program. Districts and charter schools 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:

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

Contact Person: Jeff Lavender

Phone Number: 214-276-5840

### **Additional Information:**

The following websites provide information and resources for students with disabilities and their families.

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