

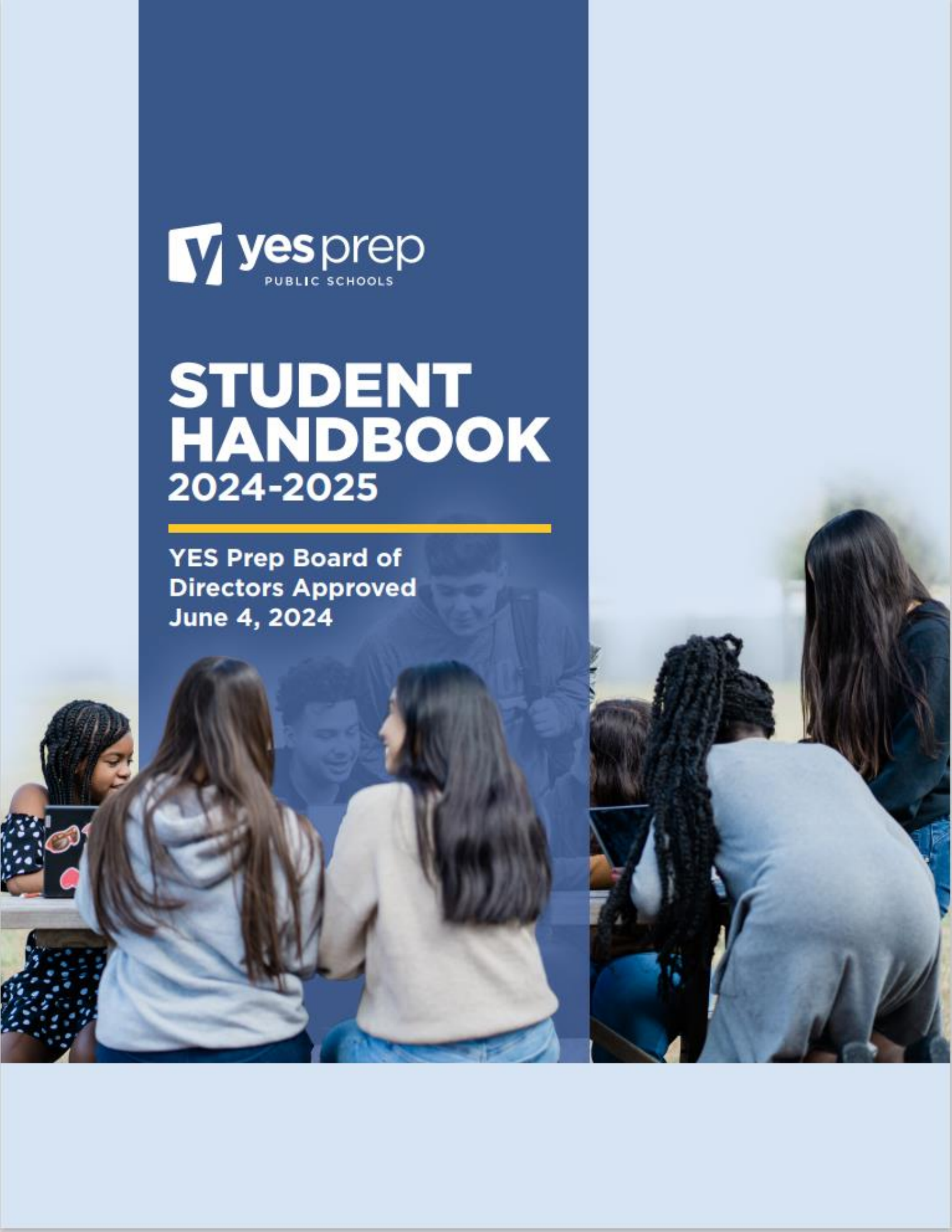


# STUDENT HANDBOOK

## 2024-2025

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YES Prep Board of  
Directors Approved  
June 4, 2024



# Secondary Schools



## Brays Oaks Secondary

GRADES 6-12

9000 W. Bellfort Blvd.  
Houston, Texas 77031  
(713) 967-8400



## East End Secondary

GRADES 6-12

8401 Lawndale St.  
Houston, Texas 77012  
(713) 967-7800



## Fifth Ward Secondary

GRADES 6-12

1305 Benson St.  
Houston, Texas 77020  
(713) 924-0600



## Gulfton Secondary

GRADES 6-12

6565 De Moss Dr.  
Houston, Texas 77074  
(713) 967-9800



## Hobby Secondary

GRADES 6-10\*

8787 Tallyho Rd.  
Houston, Texas 77061  
(713) 842-5600



## North Central Secondary

GRADES 6-12

13703 Aldine Westfield Rd.  
Houston, TX 77039  
(713) 967-8800



## North Forest Secondary

GRADES 6-12

6602 Winfield Rd.  
Houston, Texas 77050  
(713) 967-8699



## Northline Secondary

GRADES 6-12

5815 Airline Dr.  
Houston, Texas 77076  
(713) 842-5400



## Northside Secondary

GRADES 6-12

5215 Jensen Dr.  
Houston, Texas 77026  
(713) 924-0400



## Northwest Secondary

GRADES 6-11\*

14741 Yorktown Plaza Dr.  
Houston, Texas 77040  
(713) 842-5510



## Southeast Secondary

GRADES 6-12

353 Crenshaw Rd.  
Houston, Texas 77034  
(713) 967-9400



## Southwest Secondary

GRADES 6-12

4411 Anderson Rd.  
Houston, Texas 77053  
(713) 967-9200



## Southside Secondary

GRADES 6-12

5515 S. Loop E. Fwy, Suite A  
Houston, TX 77033  
(713) 924-5500



## West Secondary

GRADES 6-12

10535 Harwin Dr.  
Houston, Texas 77036  
(713) 967-8200



## White Oak Secondary

GRADES 6-12

5620 W. Tidwell Rd.  
Houston, Texas 77091  
(713) 924-5200

\*School continuing to add grade levels until fully grown, offering sixth through twelfth grade.

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# STUDENT HANDBOOK OVERVIEW

It is a YES Prep expectation that every student and guardian understand the content of the entire YES Prep Public Schools (YES Prep) Student Handbook. This handbook is an easily searchable resource for regular reference. Use the “Ctrl+F” function to search the handbook for specific phrases.

## Guardian Acknowledgement of the YES Prep Student Handbook

Guardians are required to acknowledge their reading and understanding of the YES Prep Student Handbook during the registration and re-registration processes. This is the language available in School Mint:

*As guardians of a YES Prep student, we acknowledge that we have read and signed the appropriate forms on SchoolMint regarding the YES Prep Student Handbook. We acknowledge that YES Prep students and families are expected to carefully review the policies and procedures in the YES Prep Student Handbook which is available online or in hard copy upon request.*

## YES Prep Student Handbook Changes

Throughout the year, the handbook may be adjusted to meet the needs of students, guardians, staff, and the campus. Agreement with this handbook also means agreement with the possibility of temporary or permanent handbook changes. If changes are made, guardians and students will be notified through campus and YES Prep communication. Changes made during the current school year and temporary policies in place will be posted online at <https://www.yesprep.org/families/student-handbook> for easy access. The YES Prep Student Handbook found on this site will always be the most updated.

# FAMILY GUIDANCE

## YES Prep Parent Compacts

The YES Prep Parent Compact for each campus can be found in the Individual Campus Supplement. These may be accessed from the campus website at [YESprep.org](https://www.yesprep.org).

## Parent & Family Engagement Policy

YES Prep is committed to working together with students, families, and community stakeholders to achieve ambitious student learning goals. Parents and families play an important role as their child's first teacher and are valued partners in their child's schooling and will be included in appropriate decision-making opportunities to support student achievement. The complete Engagement Policy can be found at <https://www.yesprep.org/departments/family-engagement/pfepolicy>.

## Notice of Legal Guardian and Student Rights

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") affords guardians and students over 18 years of age (eligible students) certain rights with respect to the student's educational records.

### **The Right to Inspect and Review**

Legal guardians and/or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's educational records within 45 days of the day YES Prep receives a request for access. Legal guardians or eligible students should submit to the campus Principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The campus will plan for access and notify the guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

If circumstances effectively prevent the guardian or eligible student from exercising the right to inspect and review the student's educational records, the campus shall provide the guardian or eligible student with a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the guardian or eligible student to inspect and review the requested records.

The campus shall not destroy any educational records if there is an outstanding request to inspect and review the records under this section. The campus may charge a reasonable fee for a copy of an educational record that is made for the guardian or eligible student, unless the imposition of a fee effectively prevents a guardian or eligible student from exercising the right to inspect and review the student's educational records. The campus will not charge a fee to search for or to retrieve the educational records of a student.

If the educational records of a student contain information on more than one student, the guardian or eligible student may inspect and review or be informed of only the specific information about that student.

### **The Right to Seek Amendment of the Student's Educational Records**

Legal guardians and/or eligible students may ask the campus to amend a record they believe is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of the student. Such a request must be made to the Principal in writing, clearly identify the part of the record the guardian or eligible student wants changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. The campus will

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decide whether to amend the record as requested within a reasonable time after receipt of the request. If the campus decides not to amend the record as requested by the guardian or eligible student, it will notify the guardian or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment.

If, because of the hearing, the campus decides that the information in the educational record is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of the student, it shall inform the guardian or eligible student of the right to place a statement in the record commenting on the contested information or stating why they disagree with the decision of the campus, or both. If the campus places an amended statement in the educational records of a student, it is obligated to maintain the amended statement with the contested part of the record for as long as the record is maintained and disclose the statement whenever it discloses the portion of the record to which the statement relates.

## **The Right to Consent Prior to Disclosure**

Legal guardians and/or eligible students have the right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to campus officials with legitimate educational interests. A "campus official" is a person employed by the campus as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the YES Prep Board of Directors; a person or company with whom the campus has outsourced services or functions it would otherwise use its own employees to perform (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); a legal guardian or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a guardian, student, or other volunteer assisting another campus official in performing their tasks.

A campus official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record to fulfill their professional responsibility. Upon request, the campus discloses education records without consent to officials of another open-enrollment charter school, school system, or private school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

## **The Right to File a Complaint**

Guardians who desire to express initial grievances or complaints should escalate concerns to Principals or appropriate campus directors. These campus officials will escalate concerns to appropriate departments or system officials.

A parent or legal guardian may submit a written appeal to the Board of Directors for disciplinary cases to share their grievance after all steps of the disciplinary process have been completed. The appeal will consist of the written appeal and be based upon the record of information presented at the administrative-level hearing and the decision of that level. The Board may schedule a hearing opportunity for the parent, legal guardian or student to present to the Board in executive session if the Board determines this appropriate in rendering its decision or as otherwise required by law. The parent(s)/legal guardian(s) has questions about this process, they should contact the building principal. The Board of Directors will consider the written appeal at a future board meeting. The disciplinary decision or placement shall be in effect pending any appeal.

The process to submit a written appeal to the Board of Directors for disciplinary cases is as follows: The parent(s)/legal guardian(s) should contact the Chief of Staff ([dana.foughty@yesprep.org](mailto:dana.foughty@yesprep.org)) within three school days of receipt of the District Panel's decision. Once the Chief of Staff receives

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the parent's request for a Board of Directors appeal, the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will be notified of the board review date and time, which will take place at a future scheduled board meeting.

Legal guardians and/or eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the campus to comply with the requirements of FERPA. These complaints should be addressed as follows:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

## The Right to Access to Medical Records

Legal guardians are entitled to access their students' medical records.

## The Right to Photograph or Film Students

Throughout the school year, YES Prep and its organizations (yearbook, webpage designer, etc.), as well as outside media representatives (newspaper, television stations, etc.) may be on campus to video and/or photograph students in school-related activities or events (YES Prep Photos).

Guardians must notify the campus administrator in writing to request that a student's picture not be used for these purposes or indicate so when registering in School Mint.

## Notice for Directory Information

Under FERPA, the campus must, with certain exceptions, obtain written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's education records. However, the campus may disclose personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational records without obtaining prior written consent of the guardian or eligible student if the campus has designated the information as "directory information."

The campus has designated the following categories of information as directory information for disclosure relating to school-sponsored/school-affiliated purposes:

1. Student name;
2. Address;
3. Telephone listing;
4. Electronic mail address;
5. Photographs (including video image);
6. Date and place of birth;
7. Major field of study;
8. Degrees, honors, and awards received;
9. Dates of attendance;
10. Grade level;
11. Most recent educational institution attended;
12. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports; and
13. Weight and height of members of athletic teams.

School-sponsored/school-affiliated purposes are those events/activities the campus conducts and/or sponsors to support the educational mission of the campus. Examples include, but are not limited to:

1. Extracurricular programs or events (e.g., plays, concerts, athletic events, graduation ceremony);
2. Publications (e.g., newsletters, yearbook, etc.);
3. Honor roll and other student recognition lists;
4. Marketing materials of the campus (e.g., print media, website, videos, newspaper, etc.)

The campus has designated the following categories of information as directory information for disclosure to military recruiters and institutions of higher education, but only for secondary students:

1. Student's name
2. Student's address
3. Student's telephone listing

The campus shall not release directory information except for the purpose indicated above, namely:

1. Disclosure relating to school-sponsored/school-affiliated purposes; and
2. Disclosure to military recruiters and institutions of higher education, but only for secondary students.

A guardian or eligible student may opt out of the release of directory information for either or both purposes by submitting a written objection to the Principal. The campus requests that such an objection be submitted within the **first week after school begins**.

If the campus does not receive an opt-out form objecting to the release of directory information by the fifth school day of the school year, the campus will assume that the guardian approves release of directory information for the purposes described above. However, guardians may alter their decision to restrict or not to restrict release of directory information by submitting a completed "Use of Student Photos and Directory Information Opt-Out Form" or otherwise notifying the campus in writing at any time during the year.

## **CIPA**

YES Prep promotes digital safety and security by: (a) preventing user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, and all other forms of electronic communications; (b) preventing unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) preventing unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) complying with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)], the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act, and the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act.

Prevention and protection measures have been put in place to block or filter Internet access to inappropriate information, including but not limited to, visual depictions of material deemed obscene, pornography, child sexual assault material, or any material deemed harmful to minors. Inappropriate behavior, including (a) unauthorized access, 'hacking,' and other unlawful activities; and (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors, is not permitted. YES Prep periodically reviews and updates the filtering rules to include content deemed appropriate.

YES Prep monitors all online activity to ensure appropriate use. Periodic reviews are in place to update approved filtering rules to include content deemed appropriate. Students and staff are enrolled in yearly programs to educate on internet policies and best safety practices, including how to appropriately use social media and how to recognize and respond to cyberbullying. Anyone who attempts to circumvent this policy will be subject to discipline in accordance with the code of conduct.

## **FERPA**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

## **Rights & Responsibilities of Guardians**

Guardians, which for the purposes of this Handbook shall include mother, father, guardians, or persons having lawful control of the student, have the right/responsibility to:

- Provide for the physical needs of their child;

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- Be knowledgeable of campus policies and academic requirements of campus programs;
- Cooperate with campus administrators and staff;
- Encourage their child to pay attention and obey the rules;
- Have their child attend school regularly and promptly report and explain absences and tardiness to the campus;
- Notify campus authorities of any learning problems or conditions that may relate to their child's education;
- Participate in meaningful guardian-teacher conferences to discuss their child's campus progress and welfare;
- Review educational records;
- Return signed report cards and campus assignments with their child;
- Maintain up-to-date home, work, and emergency telephone numbers and other pertinent information with the campus;
- Ensure their child is appropriately dressed at school and school-related activities;
- Encourage their child to develop proper study habits at home;
- Ensure their child attends a campus tutorial program when required or as the need arises;
- Attend guardian training workshops when available;
- Participate in school-related organizations;
- Control their child (under Family Code 33.01, a student's guardian is legally liable for property damage proximately caused by (a) the negligent conduct of the student if such conduct is reasonably attributable to the negligent failure of the guardian to exercise that duty, or (b) the willful or malicious conduct of a student who is at least 12 but under 18 years of age.);
- Pick up their child from campus when requested by campus authorities for disciplinary or other reasons;
- Receive a copy of all discipline reports that are given to an administrator.

## **Student Record Access and Pick Up**

By law, YES Prep must release students and/or their information to their guardians. Requests that conflict with a student's guardianship (i.e. "Please don't allow Jane Doe to pick my student up," but Jane Doe is the guardian of the student) cannot be handled by YES Prep or its individual campuses. Only legal changes to guardian rights and/or guardianship will allow YES Prep to honor such requests.

# COMPLIANCE

This section outlines all the policies YES Prep follows due to federal and state guidelines.

## YES Prep Governance Structure

YES Prep is managed by a group of executive leaders who have dedicated their careers to challenging the status quo and are committed to continuous improvement and strategic innovation in service of the YES Prep Mission.

- Mark DiBella, Chief Executive Officer
- Carmen Darville, Chief Operating Officer
- Dana Foughty, Chief of Staff
- Isy Gabriela Castillo, Chief External Officer
- Luis Mena, Chief Financial Officer
- Jose Muñoz, Chief Talent Officer
- Philip Wright, Chief School Officer

YES Prep is fortunate to have excellent volunteer leadership on the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is comprised of a fervently committed and diverse group of individuals who consistently bring strong business skills, strategy, vision, and leadership to the organization.

## Information about the Military

The military requests, and is entitled to, the names, telephone numbers, and addresses of high school Juniors and Seniors, unless the guardian or eligible student fills out an opt-out form. This form is available in the Front Office at every campus. The military typically requests this information in the Fall semester of each academic year. Legal guardians must fill out the opt-out form by October 1<sup>st</sup> if they do not want the military to obtain this information. Legal guardians and eligible students are encouraged to remember that filling out this opt-out form means that the campus will not release student information to the military, but it does not mean that the military might not gather student information from other sources not affiliated with the campus.

### Example of Forms

|   |
|---|
| <b>DIRECTORY INFORMATION OPT-OUT (ALL STUDENTS)</b>   |
| A. I do NOT consent to the release of directory information about the student named below outside the school system to sources such as an institution of higher education or newspapers and other media, except as authorized by law. |
| B. I do NOT consent to the release of photographs or directory information within the school system such as yearbooks, rosters for sports information, programs or articles.  |
| <b>MILITARY OPT-OUT FOR STUDENTS (GRADES 9-12 ONLY)</b>   |
| C. I do NOT consent to the release of directory information to the military about the student named below [RELEASE TO MILITARY]   |
| D. I do NOT consent to the release of directory information about the student named below to institutions of higher education upon their request without my prior written consent. [RELEASE TO INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION]      |



## **Student Absences**

### **Excused Absences**

An absence is considered excused if a student provides physical or electronic documentation within 48 hours of absence indicating the student's full name, dates missed and is signed by a guardian or doctor mentioning any of the following reasons:

- Illness
- Medical/dental-related, including appointments
- School-sanctioned activities
- Absences related to the legal system
- Family emergency
- Bereavement/Funeral for immediate family members
- Religious observances
- Short-term suspensions or other disciplinary actions resulting in an absence
- Any other absence that is protected under State or Federal Law

Upon return to school, a student absent for more than three (3) consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's extended absence from school. YES Prep students have access to Legacy clinics on site at most YES Prep campuses.

### **Unexcused Absences**

A student's absence is considered unexcused if no documentation is provided by the guardian, doctor, or an official to verify the reason the student was absent. See the [Compliance - Compulsory Attendance](#) section for more details on absences.

### **Extended Student Absence**

If a student is going to be out for a week or more due to hospitalization, please notify the campus's medical designee immediately. The medical designee will alert the Student Support Counselor who will investigate and determine if the student could qualify for Homebound Services. For a description of Homebound Services, please see the [Homebound Section](#) of this handbook.

### **Student Absence Exceptions**

Specific absences are outlined in section 3.6.3 of the Student Attendance Accounting Handbook (SAAH) published each year by TEA and may be counted as "present" with the proper documentation.

Documentation for such absences should follow the guidelines defined in the SAAH, and where the SAAH references local policy, documentation will be determined at the Principal's discretion. Please contact the campus Front Office for more details.

### **Compulsory Attendance**

Under [TEC§25.085](#), Compulsory Attendance Law states that a child who is at least six years of age, or who is younger than six years of age and has previously been enrolled in first grade, and who has not yet reached their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday shall attend school. The child must attend school each school day for the entire period the program of instruction is provided, unless the student is exempt under [TEC§25.086](#).

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Compulsory attendance is also required for the following programs:

- An extended-year program for which the student is eligible that is provided by the system for students identified as likely not to be promoted to the next grade level or tutorial classes required by the system
- An accelerated reading instruction program to which the student is assigned
- An accelerated instruction program to which the student is assigned
- A basic skills program to which the student is assigned
- A summer program

### **For Students Aged 19 and Older**

A person who voluntarily enrolls in school or voluntarily attends school after the person's 19<sup>th</sup> birthday shall attend school each school day for the entire period the program of instruction is offered. Enrollment may be revoked from these students for the remainder of the school year for having more than five unexcused absences in a semester. The system may not revoke enrollment on a day on which the student is physically present at school. As an alternative to revoking enrollment, the campus may impose a behavior improvement plan ([TECS25.0915](#)).

### **Additional Compulsory Attendance Guidelines**

At the beginning of each school year, guardians will receive notice of compulsory attendance requirements. During the school year, if a student has been absent without excuse for three days within a four-week period, a warning notice will be issued to the guardian informing them that truancy prevention measures will be initiated. Truant conduct occurs if a student is absent from campus without excuse for ten or more days within a six-month period in the same school year. In these cases, the student may be subject to referral to truancy court.

With regard to administrative withdrawals, according to the Student Attendance Accounting Handbook ([SAAH 3.4.2](#)), the system must *not* withdraw a student who is temporarily absent from school but still a member of the system. The system may withdraw a student who never officially withdrew from school but whose whereabouts cannot be determined according to local policy. The system must have a policy in place that addresses how to "determine" a student's whereabouts ([SAAH 3.4.3](#)).

Absenteeism may affect the final grade a student receives in any class. All students are expected to maintain regular attendance. Excessive tardiness or a pattern of unwarranted absenteeism contribute to poor academic performance and may lead to loss of credit and/or disciplinary action.

### **Policy for Determining Student Whereabouts**

According to the Student Attendance Accounting Handbook ([SAAH 3.4.3](#)), YES Prep may initiate withdrawal of a student who never officially withdrew from school, but whose whereabouts can no longer be determined.

YES Prep may determine the student's whereabouts to be unknown under the following conditions:

1. The student has been absent for ten consecutive school days; and
2. Repeated efforts by the attendance officer to locate the student have been unsuccessful.  
Repeated efforts to determine a student's whereabouts may include:
  - Make phone calls to the family
  - Send emails
  - Send certified mail
  - Conduct a home visit

Once it has been determined that the student's whereabouts are unknown, and proper documentation has been received, YES Prep may begin the withdrawal process. The effective withdrawal date is the day after the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive day or the day paperwork is received for a final determination, whichever is later.

Once withdrawn, students in grades 7 through 12 must be reported as a school leaver on the 40203 School Leaver Extension and could be considered a dropout according to Section 2 Audit Requirements of the TSDS PEIMS Data Standards ([SAAH 3.4.3](#)).

This policy refers to the "whereabouts" of a student and does not cover persistent absences less than 10 consecutive days nor repeat absenteeism, which should be addressed using truancy prevention measures and/or according to applicable laws. *There is no system policy in place allowing for the withdrawal of students for nonattendance.*

## **Early Pick-Up**

Early pick-up for students to attend appointments or due to illness must be arranged prior to departure. All students leaving campus early for appointments must be signed out in the Front Office prior to departing campus. The adult picking up the student must show photo identification to Front Office staff and must appear on the student's emergency contact card authorized by the student's guardian. Early pick-up will be allowed up to 30 minutes prior to school dismissal.

## **Late to School Policy**

Secondary students are considered late to school if they arrive after 8:30 AM (secondary start time). All students who enter the campus after 8:30 AM should enter through the front doors and report directly to the Front Office to be checked in, receive a tardy pass, and report directly to their scheduled class. Each time a student reports to campus after 8:30 AM, without a valid note from a guardian, they will earn a "Late to School" demerit. After a student has been late to school three times, they will earn an additional consequence. See the Individual Campus Supplement for the campus-specific Late to School Policy.

## **Campus Visitor Expectations**

All campus visitors—including family members of students, system employees and contractual/service provider workers are required to enter campuses through the main entrance that leads to the front office. All campus visitors are required to provide photo identification and reason(s) for visit to the front office to access the building. Only persons identified as guardian or emergency contact as indicated by the student's profile in YES Prep's student information system will be allowed to access the campus interior. Photo IDs will be scanned at the front office before clearing visitors to pass beyond the front office. Visitors without a photo ID will not be permitted past the front office.

Campuses may have policies pertaining to former student visitors, including alumni and students who have withdrawn from the campus. This information can be found in the Individual Campus Supplement. Campus visitors are expected to act in a way that maintains the learning environment and safety of the campus. Visitors who disrupt the learning environment or create an unsafe situation on campus will be subject to dismissal from the campus and further action as determined by the Principal and Head of Schools.

## Outside Service Providers

All service providers must either be YES Prep employees or approved vendors who have gone through the background check & insurance procedure. Services not provided by a YES Prep employee or approved vendor should not be provided during the school day. We encourage campuses to consult private external service providers who work with students outside the school day, and to engage with approved YES Prep vendors when additional services are needed.

A private external service provider is any individual hired by the family to provide services to a student outside of the school day.

YES Prep allows outside qualified mental health providers to work with students in a limited set of circumstances. If a family has signed consent with an outside qualified mental health provider, they can work with the Student Support Counselor (SSC) on campus to give consent for services to occur during the school day. The provider and the SSC will work together to identify times of day the student can work with the provider. Providers must be supervised by a YES Prep employee for students ages 11 and under; campus availability for supervision is not guaranteed. All providers must adhere to YES Prep guidelines at all times. At no point can outside therapy interfere with the student's learning opportunities. Students should be pulled from Core Enrichment or advisory in order to avoid loss of instructional time.

In order to approve outside therapy services, outside agencies must provide written & signed consent. The SSC then obtains verbal consent from the family. The SSC will request Release of Information (ROI) from the family to ensure regular communication with the qualified mental health provider for continuity of care. A family can revoke consent for services or the voluntary Release of Information at any time.

This type of service represents a medical or psychiatric need, which is outside of the duty of the Special Education program for students who qualify for Special Education and Related Services. YES Prep offers additional services through a broad range of community partners.

Community partners who work with SSCs on campus are considered approved YES Prep vendors and can provide services directly to students pending family approval & compliance with YES Prep's visitor policy.

### Outside Service Providers: Special Education

All services for students with disabilities that support their educational achievement must be included in the student's IEP, approved by the ARD committee, and provided at no charge to the family and student. All Special Education service providers must either be YES Prep employees or approved vendors who have gone through the background check & insurance procedure.

Services not recommended by the ARD committee & outlined in a student's IEP provided by a YES Prep employee or approved vendor cannot be provided during the school day. We encourage campuses consult private external service providers who work with students outside the school day, and to engage with approved YES Prep vendors when additional services are needed.

- A private external service provider is any individual hired by the family to provide services to a student outside of the school day
- Campuses can also consider entering into a formal vendor agreement and incorporating these services into a student's IEP
- Community partners who work with SSCs on campus are considered approved YES Prep vendors and can provide services directly to students pending family approval & compliance with YES Prep's visitor policy.

## Campus Volunteers

People interested in volunteering at YES Prep are required to follow the volunteer approval process. This process is required of all volunteers, including guardians, chaperones for trips, one-time volunteers, etc. Visit <https://www.yesprep.org/support-yes/volunteer> for more information.

## Parent Custody Court Order & Legal Documents

When a student is enrolled in any YES Prep school in the District and is party to parents/legal guardians who are separated or divorced, both parents should provide the school Front Office/Registrar with a certified copy of the custody order, protective order, or decree and of any subsequent orders of modification. It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school of changes by providing a certified copy of any modification order. If the school does not have any certified executed court order, then the school cannot keep any child from the parent who appears on the child's birth certificate. Any order submitted by the parent/legal guardian to the school must be court certified.

## Registered Sex Offender Visitation

To the extent that YES Prep Public School officials have actual knowledge that a parent, legal guardian, or other person seeking to be present on school property or at a school sponsored activity is a registered sex offender based on an offense against a child (a person under the age of 17), the following procedures shall apply:

- Only known registered sex offenders, based on an offense against a child, who are also parents or legal guardians of a child, or children enrolled in YES Prep Public Schools will be permitted on school property or to be in attendance at school-sponsored activities. No other persons known to be registered sex offenders, based on an offense against a child, will be permitted to be present on school property or at any school-sponsored activity.
- A parent or legal guardian to whom these procedures apply must comply with all requirements. Failure to do so generally will result in the loss of visiting privileges for that person at any school property or at any school-sponsored activity, regardless of location.
- Unless legal documentation (i.e., a court order) prohibits a registered sex offender from being on or within a specified distance of school property, the registered sex offender shall be allowed school-related visitation, as provided by this policy.

To ensure student safety, school administrators shall enforce the precautions listed below while a registered sex offender is on school property.

[Click here to download a copy of the Registered Parent Sex Offender Form.](#) Please complete and submit the signed form to your child's campus front office.

- For a parent or administrative conference, the person will abide by the following procedures:
- They must complete the consent form provided by the campus and return it to the front office. The person may also call the campus front office and speak with the Director of Campus Operations (DCO) to schedule a meeting before coming to the school.
- They must report immediately to the front office upon arriving at school and meet with the DCO to obtain a visitor's badge, as required of all school visitors.
- They must sign in at a place designated by the DCO upon arrival at the campus or event.
- They will be escorted by a school employee the entire time they are on campus.
- They will not have any access to any common area of the building, meaning cafeterias, auditoriums, breezeways, open areas for gathering on any campus, etc.

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- They will not have access to any classroom where students other than their child are present.
- They must sign out at a place designated by the DCO before departing the campus or event.
- They will be escorted back to their vehicle by a school employee at the conclusion of the visit.

When dropping off or picking up a child to or from school, the person will abide by the following procedures:

- They must complete the consent form and return it to the front office if they are the legal guardian that will be collecting their child or picking them up, whether once or on a consistent basis during the school year.
- They will pick up or drop off their child at the campus without leaving their vehicle.
- If they must leave their vehicle during pick-up or drop-off, then they must coordinate with the school and follow school instructions.
- They will be escorted back to their vehicle by a school employee after their child has been picked up or dropped off.

Prior attending any before- or after-school or extra-curricular event, the person will abide by the following procedures:

- They must complete the consent form provided by the campus and return it to the front office. The person may also call the campus front office and speak with the DCO.
- They must state the event they intend to attend no later than 48 hours before the start of the event. They must have approval from the DCO in order to attend the event.
- They must sign in at a place designated by the DCO upon arrival at the event.
- They must sign out at a place designated by the DCO before departing the event.
- They will be escorted to their vehicle by a school employee at the time of the departure from the event.

When picking up or dropping off a student at an extra-curricular activity, on or off school property, the person will abide by the following procedures:

- They must complete the consent form and return it to the front office if they are the legal guardian that will be collecting their child or picking them up on a consistent basis, or once or a few times during the school year.
- They will pick up or drop off their child at the campus without leaving your vehicle.
- If they must leave their vehicle during pick-up or drop-off, then they must coordinate with the school and follow school instructions.
- They will be escorted back to their vehicle by a school employee after their child has been picked up or dropped off.
- If they do not need to get out of the vehicle to collect their child, they must remain in the vehicle at all times.

A legal guardian who is subject to these procedures based on his or her identification as a registered sex offender because of an offense against a child is prohibited from transporting any student or child (other than his or her own child) to or from any school campus or school-sponsored activity without express written permission from the parent or guardian of the student. Any person subject to these procedures is also prohibited from working as a volunteer for the school, including but not limited to volunteering for school-related activities such family associations and class fund raisers.

Any person subject to these procedures must send the most recent court document related to the offense to [PublicInfo@yesprep.org](mailto:PublicInfo@yesprep.org) to be kept on file with YES Prep. The person can also have their parole officer or other official write YES Prep a letter indicating that they do not have any such restrictions, are low risk, or the offense was not against a child (17 years old or younger).

## **Discrimination**

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

Examples of prohibited harassment may include offensive or derogatory language directed at another person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, immigration status, skin color, or need for accommodation; threatening, intimidating, or humiliating conduct; offensive jokes, name calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; display of graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

State and federal law prohibits discrimination. YES Prep complies with all non-discrimination rules and regulations and does not permit discrimination against students based on race, color, national origin, sex, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, family situation, religion, or political affiliation. This holds true for all students who are participating in educational programs and/or co-curricular activities. Inquiries regarding compliance procedures may be directed to campus administrators.

## **Distributing Literature**

Students and families must receive approval from a designated campus-based administrator prior to distributing any flyers, literature, etc., for non-school sponsored activities. For campus-sponsored activities, such as pep rallies, dances, student government campaigns, etc., students who wish to post advertising materials for these events must have each copy signed or initialed by a campus administrator before posting. Campuses may have additional processes connected to this policy outlined in their Individual Campus Supplements.

## **Fundraising**

School clubs and organizations and individual students may sell items before, after, and during campus hours only after they have received permission from the Principal or designated administrator. Disciplinary action may be taken with students who sell items without permission.

## **School Threats and False Alarms**

Safety is YES Prep's highest priority. Any threats, even hoax threats, to the safety of a student, the school, or a staff member are taken very seriously by YES Prep and law enforcement. If YES Prep is made aware of a threat, a thorough investigation will be conducted, and YES Prep will engage the local authorities as appropriate. As a part of the investigation, parent or guardian is notified at the start to secure any additional context for committee outcome. Once local authorities are involved, the person who issued the threats may be subject to civil or criminal charges that are beyond the control of YES Prep. Guardians should ensure students are aware of the serious consequences of any written or verbal threats on or off campus grounds, including web-based threats via social media, text message, or through email. These threats, listed in any of the included mediums, are considered a federal crime and will be taken seriously. Students, families, and staff should avoid sharing or forwarding any threat, instead, threats should be reported and shared immediately with school leadership and law enforcement so that the threat can be investigated thoroughly.

Threat assessments are critical to maintaining safety and security and will be executed anytime

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there is a perceived threat on campus. The assessments involve a systematic process for evaluating and responding to potential threats posed by students, staff, and other individuals within the school community. They are used to identify potential threats and inform risk management strategies. Depending on the level of threat (i.e., low or med/high), the school may recommend psychiatric evaluation and supportive measures such as counseling, safety plans, or support with consequences for code of conduct violations.

Any student found to be responsible for causing a false alarm or false report will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the code of conduct and may be subject to civil or criminal charges that are beyond the control of YES Prep. False alarms/false reports are dangerous to first responders and to the school community. False alarms/false reports can cause severe emotional distress to students, families, and school personnel. If YES Prep is made aware of a false alarm/false report, a thorough investigation will be conducted, and YES Prep will engage the local authorities as appropriate.

## **Suicide Threats**

### **YES Prep Protocol**

YES Prep community members take warning signs and threats of suicide seriously. If a student is identified as being a physical or emotional danger to themselves, campus administration works swiftly to ensure the physical and emotional safety of that student. Licensed and trained Student Support Counselors will meet with the student to conduct a suicide risk assessment.

Administrators will call an immediate emergency family conference to communicate risk assessment results and potential need for a psychiatric evaluation by a licensed physician. If a suicide risk assessment is high and the family refuses to complete the recommended psychiatric evaluation, then the staff will report the matter to the Child Protective Services (CPS). A listing of mental health professionals is provided to families. If recommended, the psychiatric evaluation ensures that the student receives the necessary medical attention and support needed before transitioning back to campus. Upon return to campus, Student Support Counselors may request a Release of Information to communicate with any mental health professional in previous or current care of the student. A safety plan may be implemented to support the student's functioning. The safety plan is reviewed by guardians and includes their responsibility to respond in the event of a mental health emergency.

### **Guidance for Families and Students**

If a family member or student knows a classmate who has expressed thoughts of suicide, they must get help immediately. Call 911 or report to the emergency room in the event of an actual emergency. Because the mental health of every student matters, Student Support Counselors can confidentially provide students and families with a variety of referrals for mental health support. We have partnerships with quality, vetted community agencies who can provide low to no cost therapeutic services for student and families. Some services can be accessed on campus.

If you see something, say something. Student and school safety is particularly important; failure to provide relevant information that interferes with the safety of students, school staff, or the environment might result in disciplinary action. Ensuring student and school safety is crucial for creating a conducive learning environment. It not only protects the well-being of students and staff but also fosters a sense of trust and security within the school community. By encouraging individuals to report any suspicious or concerning behavior, we can proactively address potential threats and prevent harm before it occurs.



## **Property Damage**

Students who damage or deface property belonging to another student, staff member, or YES Prep may be held responsible for the damage or loss. Any attempt to destroy, deface, or steal property may result in disciplinary action under the Code of Conduct at YES Prep.

All campus-issued materials will be returned in good condition at the end of each school year (such as devices, textbooks, novels, athletic uniforms, calculators, etc.). In the event that students fail to do so, they may be required to reimburse the campus for the replacement cost of these items.

## **Mandatory Reporting**

A principal or designee who is under the principal's supervision shall notify the appropriate regulatory department including but not limited to Law Enforcement and Texas Department Family and Protective Services, in which a campus is located, for all mandatory reporting actions or offenses including, but is not limited to drugs, controlled substances, possession or use of a weapon, sexual assault, or terroristic threats if the principal or designee has reasonable belief that these actions occurred at school, on school property, or at a school sponsored or school related activity. Teachers and staff are not required to notify families when filing a CPS report.

## **Investigations & Searches**

### **Student Interviews Pertaining to Investigations**

School personnel may conduct searches if there is reasonable suspicion that a student possesses prohibited items or engages in behavior that threatens safety. Reasonable suspicion is based on specific facts and circumstances, not mere hunches. Students may not possess weapons, drugs, alcohol, or other dangerous items on campus. School personnel can confiscate such items. While maintaining a safe environment, we respect students' privacy rights. Searches should be conducted discreetly and sensitively.

Searches include:

- Personal Searches: These include metal detector screening of but not limited to clothing, pockets, shoes, etc., bag checks, and personal belonging searches.
- Locker Searches: Lockers are school property, and students have limited privacy rights regarding locker contents.
- Vehicle Searches: If a student parks a vehicle on school premises, it may be searched if reasonable suspicion exists.

Guardians will be informed promptly if their child is searched. Exceptions apply in cases of imminent danger or when notifying guardians would compromise an ongoing investigation. Our primary goal is to create a secure learning environment while upholding students' rights. For detailed procedures, refer to our system's official Student Code of Conduct.

### **Personal Devices & Student Searches**

In the interest of promoting student safety and to ensure that campuses are safe and drug free, campus officials may occasionally conduct searches. Student personal belongings including, but not limited to a student's cell phone or technological device, including but not limited to tablets,

computers, cameras, or any other technological devices, are subject to search. Searches are conducted without a warrant as permitted by applicable law.

Administrators, teachers, and other professional personnel may question a student regarding the student's conduct or the conduct of other students. In the context of school discipline, students have no claim to the right not to incriminate themselves.

Students shall be free from unreasonable searches and seizures by campus officials. Campus officials may search a student's outer clothing, pockets, or property by establishing reasonable cause or securing the student's voluntary consent. A search is reasonable if:

- The campus official has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will uncover evidence of a rule violation or a criminal violation.
- The scope of the search is reasonably related to the circumstances justifying the search, such as the extent of the search, the objectives of the search, the age and sex of the student, and the nature of the infraction.

School administrators may seize a student's cell phone or technological device during an investigation if the content violates school policy, code of conduct, or civil/criminal law.

## **Locker, Desk, and Storage Area Inspections**

Students should have no expectation of privacy in the contents of lockers, desks, or other storage areas provided by YES Prep. All lockers and storage areas provided for student use on campus premises remain the property of the campus and under the control and jurisdiction of the campus, even when assigned to an individual student. Students are fully responsible for the security and contents of their assigned storage areas. Students must be certain their lockers are locked, and that combinations are not made available to others. Students may place an approved lock for security reasons on their assigned locker; however, the student must provide a key or combination to campus administrators upon request.

Campus administrators may conduct general inspections of lockers at any time with or without the student present and with or without reasonable suspicion that a campus rule has been violated or another violation has occurred. Such general inspections shall not include searching personal items stored in lockers, clothing, bags, or purses, unless reasonable cause or suspicion exists.

## **Motor Vehicle Searches**

A student has full responsibility for the security and content of their vehicle parked on YES Prep property and must make certain that it is locked and that the keys are not given to others. Vehicles parked on campus property are under the jurisdiction of YES Prep. Campus officials may search any vehicle any time there is reasonable suspicion to do so, with or without the permission of the student. If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the student will be required to unlock the vehicle.

## **Random Searches**

In a scenario of reasonable suspicion, a student may be subject to a search. This search may include review of their items such as a backpack or athletic bag and could be conducted using a metal detector wand.

## **Guardian Notification – Searches**

Guardians will be notified if prohibited articles or materials are found in a student's locker, desk, storage area, vehicle parked on campus property, or on the student's person during a search.

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## **Restraint and Time-Out**

It is the responsibility of YES Prep to maintain the dignity and safety of all students at all times. In the event that a student is in immediate danger of harming themselves or others, students may be restrained using approved restraint techniques. The Texas Education Agency defines “restraint” to mean the use of physical force or a mechanical device to significantly restrict the free movement of all or a portion of the student’s body. (TEC 37.0021(b)(1) and 19 TAC 89.1053(b)92)). Restraint is used only in the case of an emergency and is limited in use and duration. TEA defines an “emergency” to mean a situation in which the student’s behavior poses a threat of: 1) imminent, serious physical harm to a child or others; or 2) Imminent, serious property destruction (19TAC 89.1053(b)(1)).

All YES Prep staff who restrain students are trained in de-escalation and safe restraint procedures. Families will receive communication if a student is restrained. If a student in Special Education is restrained, a meeting may be scheduled or requested to review the student’s Behavior Intervention Plan and Safety Plan.

The Texas Education Agency defines [time-out](#) as “a behavior management technique in which, to provide a child with an opportunity to regain self-control, the child is separated from other children for a limited time in a setting that is not locked and from which the exit is not physically blocked by furniture, a closed door held shut from the outside, or another inanimate object.” This includes the use of a cool-down or safe space that allows a student to regain self-control. These techniques may be used in limited circumstances to support student safety & well-being.

The use of cool-down or safe spaces occurs only in conjunction with other documented behavior supports. Use of these spaces is limited only when necessary to align to the student’s progress. If a student uses a cool-down or safe space, they will be given an opportunity to recover any missed instructional time and will be supported throughout by trained staff.

## **Student Property**

YES Prep assumes no responsibility for any loss to students’ personal property or items. Students must put these items away whenever on campus or when requested to do so by campus personnel or volunteers.

All items that are prohibited and deemed unacceptable for the campus environment will be confiscated and stored in the appropriate administrators’ office until a guardian retrieves those items after speaking with the campus administrator and after following required processes. Guardians will not be permitted to retrieve illegal contraband. The campus is not responsible at any point for items that are prohibited on campus. Inappropriate items will be returned to guardians at the discretion of the campus administrator.

## **General Student Fees**

Guardians should expect to pay various student fees throughout the year depending on the student’s participation in special programming. YES Prep has worked to standardize student fees across campuses and ensure fees being charged to students are aligned with compliance expectations and YES Prep philosophy.

These are some general parameters applied to student fees:

- Students will not be charged a fee for items that have no cost.

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- Students will not be charged a fee for items or services that benefit staff members.
- Cost inflation will not be variable for items with a fixed cost. For example, ID badges will cost the same at all campuses.
- YES Prep will not make a profit from sale of items to students and/or families.

Student fees for specific activities may change from year to year because they are based on a percentage of cost. Campuses will communicate specific fee amounts based on the parameters above as costs for items and programs are finalized.

## **Cell Phone Usage**

Cell phones can be confiscated, if they cause safety concerns by school personnel or law enforcement. Any conduct that violates school, student, and staff safety in or out of school hours, including any school activity (bus routes, athletic events, after school programming) may be subject to further investigation and/or assigned consequences based on the code the conduct.

During school hours, all students follow their campus' cell phone policy to maximize student learning and focus. Students may receive permission from a YES Prep staff member to use their phone if needed. If a student's cell phone is out, in use, or heard without permission, the student may receive a consequence. Please refer to the Individual Campus Supplement for more details about how a student may obtain permission to use their phone and potential consequences.

Guardians should know that any content or conduct that impacts school, staff, or student safety shared via cell phone including but not limited to, social media, text message, email or any other technological devices may be investigated by school administrators and may receive consequences based on the student Code of Conduct.

## **Late After-School Pick Up**

It is the responsibility of the guardian to ensure students are picked up promptly after dismissal or at the end of official after-school programming (if a student is participating). Staff members are unavailable to supervise students beyond the school day to ensure student safety unless a student is officially attending a program. Examples of after-school programming include, but are not limited to, tutorials, athletics, clubs, etc.

Students who are picked up 30 minutes or later after dismissal from campus or an official after-campus program in which they are approved to participate will receive a warning letter from the administrator on duty. This warning letter and a log will be signed in person as the student is retrieved from campus. Letters will be logged and tracked for each student picked up late. These letters are warnings, and after the third letter the Houston Police Department may be contacted if a student is not picked up on time, and a report may be filed with Child Protective Services.

If a guardian is aware they will not be able to pick up a student on time, they must alert the campus and do their best to arrange for alternative transportation. Lack of transportation is not an excuse to miss required after-school programming or the school day, and absences due to lack of transportation will be unexcused.

## **Student Health and Wellness**

### **Homebound Services**

If a student has a medical or psychiatric condition that necessitates being absent for at least four weeks, not necessarily consecutively, homebound service option may be shared with the family along with their responsibility to secure medical documentation for committee consideration. Once the campus receives a completed eligibility form (YPHB 2) from a licensed physician that there is a medical necessity for the student to receive homebound services, a committee will meet to review the medical documentation and determine whether homebound services would be an appropriate educational program to meet the individual student's needs. Convening the committee is not a guarantee of approval for homebound services.

A weekly schedule will be developed for in-home instruction, which is mutually agreed upon by the committee and student's guardian. Guardians are responsible for providing adult (age 18 and over) supervision during homebound instruction, requesting any schedule changes 24 hours in advance, and securing medical documentation for continuation and/or termination of services.

Failure to comply with the family responsibilities outlined during the Homebound committee meeting can result in discontinued services.

Students will be permitted to return to regular campus instruction upon receipt and approval of an exit form (YPHB 8) from a licensed physician. Upon termination of homebound services, Student Support Counselors will coordinate transition services, which may include academic, medical, and social emotional support. In some cases, medical records may be requested, with guardian permission, to ensure continuity of care. Students referred for homebound services may be considered for qualification under Section 504. Some students may also be eligible for services under the IDEA if the student qualifies. If a student has a disability, the determination will be made by a 504 or ARD committee.

### **Pregnancy Related Services**

When a student is determined eligible through a certified physician's written confirmation to receive Pregnancy Related Services, a committee will meet to determine a coordinated educational plan. Students are responsible for meeting the requirements of grade-level curriculum and will be required to take all standardized tests when possible. Guardians are responsible for providing adult (age 18 and over) supervision during Compensatory Education Home Instruction (CEHI), requesting any schedule changes 24 hours in advance, and securing medical documentation for continuation and/or termination of services. Confinement in the home may include prenatal, post-partum, extended post-partum, or break-in-service and will be determined by the student's physician and the Homebound Committee/District Coordinator/Compliance following review of Physician recommendations based on individual need. Students will be permitted to return to regular campus instruction upon receipt and approval of an exit form (YPHB 8) from a certified physician. Upon termination of pregnancy related services, Student Support Counselors will coordinate transition services, which may include health and counseling supports. While in-home instruction is exclusive to mothers, Student Support Counselors can recommend a range of supports and services for fathers.

### **Homeless Students**

YES Prep surveys families annually through the Student Residency Questionnaire (SRQ) to determine if their living situation is transitional as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. All newly enrolled students and families who qualify for McKinney-Vento based on

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completion of Student Residency Questionnaire (SRQ) will have a welcome meeting with their respective Student Support Counselor (SSC). SSC will review the potential needs and share available supports and services. Children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence are considered transient and may be eligible for services.

Based on SRQ responses, families will be contacted by their Student Support Counselor to determine the type of services the student may be eligible for during the complete school year. Services will be provided for the duration of the qualified academic year. If, during the year, a family's living situation changes due to loss of housing or economic hardship, the family should contact their Student Support Counselor to update their SRQ and determine if they are eligible for services. Services can include but are not limited to transportation. Should a student qualify for services, a request for transportation can be initiated by the campus. Transportation services continue as routed except in cases of changes in address, which should be communicated to the respective Student Support Counselor immediately. Failure to communicate changes in housing status or adhere to the guidelines of customized routing may result in delay or termination of services. Questions concerning services to students who are transient should be directed to the Homeless Liaison at (713) 967-9083.

## **Suspected Child Abuse**

All YES Prep staff and community members are required by law to report suspected child abuse/neglect to the proper authorities. A person making a report is immune from civil or criminal liability, and the name of the person making the report is kept confidential. Any person suspecting child abuse/neglect and not reporting it can be held liable for a Class B misdemeanor. The law requires persons with first-hand knowledge of the concern to make a report within 48 hours of the time they suspect the child abuse/neglect by calling the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400 or online at [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org). The hotline is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The hotline can also be called to review a case for determination of whether a report should be made. Only a suspicion is required to make a report, and general student demographic information is needed when placing the call. Student Support Counselors should be notified if a report is submitted. If a student reports a concern which presents as an imminent threat or danger, the Director of Student Support and Principal should be notified immediately.

Child Protective Services (CPS) reports may be made by classmates, neighbors, family members, clergy, campus administrators, campus social service professionals, teachers, passersby, and anyone in the community. YES Prep policy states that we do not disclose the source of the report, nor do we confirm or deny that the report originated from our campus.

YES Prep students are strongly encouraged to seek help for themselves and their classmates if they are being hurt by an adult, suspect that their classmate is being hurt by an adult, or communicate intentions to harm others. By seeking help, Student Support Counselors can refer students and families to community and/or counseling agencies that teach effective ways of dealing with common family stressors.

## **Student Accident and Health Insurance**

YES Prep carries student accident insurance for all students. However, students who are enrolled in their own health insurance policy must utilize their policy first. YES Prep insurance will not cover any medications, deductibles, and/or co-pays.

## Medical Care at School

The campus will contact guardians or a designated relative if a student becomes ill or suffers an injury. Guardians must provide information on any possible reaction to food allergies on the YES Prep Allergy Form.

Subject to specific rules related to self-administration of prescription asthma or anaphylaxis medication, prescription medication can be administered at campus only when advance written approval from a guardian or physician is on file. Only personnel designated by the campus administrator may administer prescription to a student during the school day or campus sanctioned events. For additional information, please contact the campus Nurse or Certified Medical Assistant (CMA).

Over-the-counter medication must be sent with written guardian consent and immediately turned in to a campus official in the main office. Any over-the-counter medication found on a student will be confiscated, and disciplinary action may follow. Both prescription and over-the-counter medication must be sent in the original package. The name and medication must match the student's information. The prescription or written instruction from the student's physician needs to be in the student's file.

## Required Immunizations

Guardians must update their child's immunizations. When enrolling a child in school, guardians must bring a signed record of the child's current immunizations. The student can be enrolled provisionally if the required immunization process has begun. The student may remain in campus after 30 days if they have provided YES Prep with a record indicating they are 1) in the process of receiving immunizations, 2) bringing an affidavit indicating they cannot receive vaccines or 3) choosing not to receive the recommended vaccines.

If a guardian cannot provide YES Prep with the immunization records or one of the three above documents, YES Prep may require the student to stay home until the immunizations are complete.

Some organizations offer free immunizations through their regular healthcare providers, such as Texas Vaccinations for Children. Others, such as a few branches of the Houston Public Library, offer free immunizations during specific hours on certain days of the month. For more information about required Texas immunization please contact [Texas Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Students Grades K-12 | Texas DSHS](#).

## Head Lice

Based upon specialized training and the professional judgement of the Nurse, Certified Medical Assistant and/or designated staff, students with live head lice or signs of active infestation will not be excluded from campus. Students will not be isolated from the class. Students should receive prompt treatment for lice at home and are expected to return to campus the following day, free of live organisms. If head lice are found, guardian will be notified to treat the student before they return to campus the following day. Guardians should check their student on a weekly basis for head lice. If head lice are found, their hair must be treated before the student returns to campus the following day. Upon return to campus, the student and guardian must report directly to the Front Office, provide information about the treatment utilized, and have the student's hair checked before reporting to class. Please communicate with the campus Student Support Counselor as they can provide resources for medical care, if needed.

## Bed Bugs

Based upon specialized training and the professional judgement of the Nurse, Certified Medical Assistant and/or designated staff, students with live bed bugs or signs of active bed bugs will not be excluded from campus. Students will not be isolated from the class. Students should receive prompt treatment for bed bugs at home and are expected to return to campus the following day, free from bed bugs. If bed bugs are found, the guardian will be notified to treat the student before they return to campus the following day. Guardians should check their students on a weekly basis for bed bugs. If bed bugs are found, the student must be treated before the student returns to campus the following day. Upon return to campus, the student and guardian must report directly to the Front Office, provide information about the treatment utilized, and have the student checked before reporting to class. Please communicate with the campus Student Support Counselor as they can provide resources for medical care, if needed.

## YES Prep Wellness Plan

YES Prep conducts a wellness meeting quarterly that is comprised of parents, students, child nutrition employees, community partners and advocates.

The Child Nutrition team welcomes system employees, community leaders, parents, and students to actively get involved and participate.

The importance of wellness through nutrition, exercise, and education is discussed during these meetings. Any changes to the plan are discussed and implemented at the meetings.

The committee works to create a well-rounded wellness plan that will encourage students to have a healthy foundation and wellness plan. The wellness plan covers all aspects of SMART snacks and food brought in for celebrations including birthdays, etc.

Find more information on the [YES Prep Wellness website](#).



# ACADEMICS

## Curriculum

YES Prep’s curriculum has been designed to prepare students for the rigors of college-level work in accordance with our mission. YES Prep believes that students’ access to aligned and rigorous curriculum is a key lever to educational equity. In effective classrooms, the teacher strikes a balance that allows students to struggle productively while ensuring that they have the appropriate resources and scaffolds to learn through that struggle. YES Prep will provide students with the support and appropriate interventions to make it possible for each of our students to succeed academically, including group and individual tutorial and enrichment sessions, opportunities to contact the teacher for help after school, and frequent feedback to both students and guardians about progress in class.

## Assessment

The YES Prep curriculum includes regular unit assessments that students will take during regular class time. YES Prep also administers the following assessments to monitor overall progress in students’ coursework and college readiness:

| Assessment   | Information of Note  |
|--|--|
| NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computerized adaptive tests to measure annual growth (Fall to Spring) and/or progress in interventions</li> <li>• Administered to students in grades 6-10 and students in Special Education in grades 11-12</li> <li>• Timing varies by grade level</li> </ul>  |
| YES Prep Common Assessments (CA)                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal graded assessments to assess student learning and adjust instruction.</li> <li>• Administered to students in grades 6-12.</li> <li>• Administered fall/spring</li> </ul>   |
| State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual assessments required by the State of Texas to measure progress a student has made in the subject area.</li> <li>• Administered in grades and courses below:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Grade 6 – Mathematics &amp; Reading Language Arts</li> <li>○ Grade 7 – Mathematics, Reading Language Arts</li> <li>○ Grade 8 – Mathematics, Reading Language Arts, Science &amp; Social Studies</li> <li>○ High School* – Algebra I, Biology, English I, English II, US History</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Testing windows are set by the TEA (<a href="https://www.texasassessment.com/staar/families/all-about-the-staar-test/">https://www.texasassessment.com/staar/families/all-about-the-staar-test/</a>)</li> <li>• High school students must score Approaches, Meets, or Masters on 5 EOCs (Algebra I, Biology, English I, English II and US History) to graduate. Retake opportunities are in December, April/May and June.</li> </ul> |
| Advanced Placement (AP) Exams                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exams taken in high school that can qualify students for college credit, administered by CollegeBoard</li> <li>• High school students enrolled in AP Courses take this exam.</li> <li>• Administered in May</li> </ul>  |
| Credit-by-Exam (CBE)                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An exam to receive high school credit, most administered for Spanish credits.</li> <li>• Available to students in grades 7 – 12</li> <li>• Available to administer in December, February, and/or May</li> </ul>   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| SAT   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A pre-college assessment that measures reading, writing and math as part of college admissions, administered by CollegeBoard</li> <li>• Administered to students in grades 11 - 12</li> <li>• Offered in the spring for Juniors and fall for Seniors YES Prep campuses (SAT School Day) free of charge to the student</li> <li>• Offered multiple times throughout the school year at other testing centers for a fee unless student qualifies for a fee waiver</li> <li>• Students are required to take the exam a minimum of 2 times.</li> </ul> |
| Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An assessment system that determines the English language proficiency of English learners (ELs) in four domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing</li> <li>• Administered to students identified as English Learners in grades 6 - 12</li> <li>• Administered in Spring</li> </ul>  |
| Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA)                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An assessment that helps colleges and universities determine which students are ready for college-level course work in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics.</li> <li>• Required for any student who plans to enroll in a Texas college or university and has not met the college readiness benchmark on the SAT</li> <li>• Administered free of charge to students in grade 10, 11, and/or 12 who have not met the college readiness benchmark on the SAT</li> </ul>  |

These assessments furnish important information about students’ progress and help YES Prep staff better support them in their journey to college. Data from these assessments:

- Demonstrate how students are currently performing on state and national standards;
- Measure student growth and progress from year to year;
- Identify students’ strengths and areas for additional focus so teachers can adjust instruction.

## Accelerated Instruction

As required by the Texas Legislature, a student who does not earn satisfactory performance on any 6-8 grade STAAR or high school End of Course exam must receive hours of accelerated learning. This applies to students who scored “Did Not Meet” and to students who did not take the STAAR or EOC and have a missing score. At YES Prep, accelerated learning may be delivered during the school day, after school, on Saturdays, and/or over the summer. If a student is required to attend accelerated learning outside the school day, the guardian will be informed.

## Graduation Requirements

### High School Credit Requirements

YES Prep commits to preparing each student for success in college or university coursework. Therefore, in addition to the State of Texas diploma, to earn a YES Prep Diploma, there are additional requirements each student must fulfill.

To earn a YES Prep Diploma, a student must earn at least 26 credits of high school coursework, including the specific course requirements and additional requirements listed in the table below.

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| English     | 4 credits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English I (1.0)</li> <li>• English II (1.0)</li> <li>• Introduction to Rhetoric &amp; Composition or AP English Literature (1.0)</li> <li>• AP English Language or AP English Literature<sup>1</sup>(1.0)</li> </ul> |
| Mathematics | 4 credits   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Algebra I (1.0)</li> <li>Geometry (1.0)</li> <li>Algebra II (1.0)</li> <li>An additional 4th credit<sup>2</sup> from one of these courses: Advanced Quantitative Reasoning, Pre-Calculus, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, or AP Statistics (1.0)</li> </ul>  |
| Social Studies   | 4 credits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>World Geography, Special Topics in Social Studies, or AP Human Geography (1.0)</li> <li>World History or AP World History (1.0)</li> <li>U.S. History or AP US History (1.0)</li> <li>Economics (0.5)</li> <li>Government or AP Government<sup>3</sup>(0.5)</li> </ul>                               |
| Science  | 4 credits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biology (1.0)</li> <li>Chemistry (1.0)</li> <li>Physics or AP Physics 1 (1.0)</li> <li>An additional 4th Science credit<sup>2</sup> from one of these courses: Environmental Systems, AP Environmental Science, AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Physics 1<sup>1</sup> or AP Physics C. (1.0)</li> </ul> |
| World Languages  | 2 credits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both credits must be in a language other than English</li> <li>Both credits must be the same language</li> </ul>   |
| Fine Arts  | 1 credit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 year-long class or two semester long classes</li> </ul>   |
| Physical Education   | 1 credit  |
| Electives  | 6 credits   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>26.0 Credits</b>   |
| <b>Students must meet the following additional requirements to receive a YES Prep Diploma.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced Placement Course Requirement (1.0 credits)</li> <li>Assessment Requirement</li> <li>Enrollment and Completion of Junior and Senior Seminar</li> <li>College Acceptance Requirement</li> </ul> |   |

<sup>1</sup>if not taken Junior year

<sup>2</sup>This can be one full credit or a combination of two half credits from two different courses in the list, subject to prerequisite requirements.

<sup>3</sup> Students in AP Government are enrolled in AP Government in the Fall and Advanced Studies in the Spring.

## Additional State Graduation Requirements

The TEA outlines five additional graduation requirements that students must fulfill by the end of their Senior year.

- End of Course Assessment Requirement:** A student must receive passing scores (Approaches, Meets, or Masters) on required state STAAR End of Course assessments as set forth by the State of Texas. These are Algebra I, Biology, English I, English II, and US History.
- CPR Training:** Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) instruction must be provided to each student at least once before graduation from high school. YES Prep students will complete this requirement as part of the Senior Seminar Course during 12<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Peace Officer Training:** The Texas State Board of Education requires school systems and charter schools to provide instruction to students in grades 9-12 on proper interaction with peace officers during traffic stops and other in-person encounters. YES Prep students will usually complete this requirement while enrolled in the Interpersonal Studies and Professional communication Course in 9<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Financial Aid Application Completion:** Each student in 12<sup>th</sup> grade must do one of the following to graduate:
  - Complete and submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
  - Complete and submit a Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA)
  - Submit a signed opt-out form

- d. YES Prep students will complete this requirement as a part of the Senior Seminar Course during 12<sup>th</sup> grade.
- 5. **Speech Proficiency:** To receive a high school diploma, a student must demonstrate proficiency, as determined by the system in which the student is enrolled, in the following:
  - a. Delivering clear verbal messages
  - b. Choosing effective nonverbal behaviors
  - c. Listening for desired results
  - d. Applying valid critical-thinking and problem-solving processes
  - e. Identifying, analyzing, developing, and evaluating communication skills needed for professional and social success in interpersonal situations, group interactions, and personal and professional presentations
  - f. YES Prep students will be enrolled in the Interpersonal Studies and Professional Communication Course in 9<sup>th</sup> grade to complete this requirement.

## Additional YES Prep Graduation Requirements

In addition to state graduation requirements, YES Prep requires students meet the following criteria before the end of their senior year:

1. **High School AP Course Requirement:** Every YES Prep student, unless exempt from these requirements by their Admission Review Dismissal (ARD) committee, must have at least 1.0 credits of an Advanced Placement course on their transcript to be eligible to receive their YES Prep Diploma. Students are required to take the AP exam for each course in which they are enrolled.
2. **College Acceptance Requirement:** A student must be accepted to at least one four-year college or university to be eligible to graduate with a YES Prep Diploma unless exempt from such requirements by the student's Admission Review Dismissal (ARD) Committee. Students may be exempted from this requirement if an ARD Committee agrees to an alternative post-high school pathway.

## Exceptions

YES Prep may choose to amend any of the additional YES Prep requirements for graduation to meet individual student needs. Requests to amend the additional requirements for a YES Prep Diploma will be considered on a case-by-case basis and must be approved by the YES Prep Board of Directors.

## Grading Policy

### Overview

The purpose of grading and the reporting grades at YES Prep is to share the progress of a student's academic achievement with everyone: the student, the guardian, the teacher, and the campus-based leadership. The grade a student receives shows their learning and ability to demonstrate course content achievement. Grades provide everyone with feedback on a student's progress and should be clear and precise.

All assignments relate to instructional objectives that are tied to the essential knowledge and skills for the curriculum established for each course. Students' grades indicate the level of mastery achieved on course objectives; all grades are based on achievement rather than effort or completion.

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## Year-Long Courses: Semester Averages

YES Prep courses span two semesters. Students' grades for each semester are determined by averaging the grades from two quarter grading cycles, with additional weight given to results from YES Prep Common Assessments when applicable.

## Grading Scale

Grades at YES Prep are given on a number and letter system. Please refer to the table below for conversions; grade points are only awarded for courses taken for high school credit only. Some students enroll in high-school level classes while still in middle school; number grades in these courses will be reported on the student's official transcript.

| Number Grade | Letter Grade | Grade Points<br>(for credit classes only) |
|--------------|--------------|---|
| 100-97       | A+           | 4.33                                      |
| 96-93        | A            | 4   |
| 92-90        | A-           | 3.67                                      |
| 89-87        | B+           | 3.33                                      |
| 86-83        | B            | 3   |
| 82-80        | B-           | 2.67                                      |
| 79-77        | C+           | 2.33                                      |
| 76-73        | C            | 2   |
| 72-70        | C-           | 1.67                                      |
| 69 and Below | F            | 0   |

YES Prep does not award a grade of "D". Each assignment, including class work, projects, labs, exam and quizzes, and all other graded work, receives either a passing grade, meaning it meets YES Prep standards, or a failing grade, meaning it does not meet YES Prep standards.

For AP courses, 1 additional grade point will be added to the grade point scale for any course in which a student earns a passing grade. For example, a student who earns a B in an AP class will be awarded 4 grade points. "College-Ready" (formerly known as Pre-AP) courses are given a weight of 0.75 extra points. To qualify for the addition, the course must be represented on a student's official transcript as an AP or "College-Ready" course. A student who receives a failing grade in these courses is not entitled to the extra weight.

## Ranking

YES Prep does not rank students. However, given the unique nature of State of Texas' admissions standards for public colleges and universities, YES Prep reserves the right to disclose academic information related to decile and quartile rankings required for automatic admission. The Uniform Admission Policy is defined in sections 51.801 through 51.809 of the Texas Education Code. The Valedictorian (graduating Senior with the highest cumulative GPA) and Salutatorian (graduating Senior with the second highest cumulative GPA) will be determined at the end of May to include final semester grades in cumulative GPA calculations.

## Honor Roll and Academic Recognition

YES Prep celebrates students who, through their hard work and dedication, achieve high academic results. Students who receive exceptionally high grades in any given grading cycle will be recognized and become honor roll members for the following grading cycle.

| Designation     | Meaning        | Qualifications             |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Summa Cum Laude | Highest Honors | All As                     |
| Magna Cum Laude | High Honors    | At least 3 As, the rest Bs |
| Cum Laude       | Honors         | At least 1 A, the rest Bs  |

## Gradebook Guidelines

Each teacher is expected to enter, at minimum, one achievement-based grade in the gradebook per full week of instruction (4-5 days). Grades are expected to be entered within five business days of the assignment's date, except for major papers and projects. Gradebook weights and assignments must be consistent among teachers at a campus of a similarly named course.

The grades entered must be an accurate representation of the student's achievement in the quarter grading cycle. No single assignment may weigh more than 25% of the quarter average in the gradebook.

While grades may be recorded in both Schoology (our learning management platform) and Skyward (our student information system), guardians and students should refer to averages, report cards, and transcripts in Skyward as the official record.

## Extra Credit

The purpose of grading and reporting grades is to provide an accurate reflection of a student's knowledge on the most essential concepts in the stated curriculum. Teachers do not create extra credit activities or assignments. Extra credit assignments tend to be misaligned with the mission of grading, insofar as creating grades that are not achievement based, adding extra grades for an objective that is already adequately tested, or giving assignments that do not cover the essential knowledge and skills. Teachers will adhere to the reassessment policies Instead of providing extra credit.

## Reassessment

All students, in all grade levels, and in all content areas, will have at least one opportunity to reassess all attempted formative (minor) assignments up to 100%. Summative (major) assignments are not eligible for reassessment with two exceptions.

- Students are allowed to submit unit exam corrections to regain credit up to 70%.
- Common Assessments scores will be used to replace any summative grades in the corresponding quarter that are lower.

Teachers will communicate details about reassessment opportunities for their individual courses, including the required timeline for completion and students' responsibilities for participating in remediation or reteaching.

## Homework

Homework is a component of building academic skills and stamina that will prepare students for college and the workforce. Homework is an opportunity for students have additional opportunities to practice skills learned during the school day or preview knowledge to prepare them for the next school day. As such, it is the expectation that students complete homework that is assigned to them.

If a student does not complete a homework assignment, they may receive a demerit for Engaged in Learning. If a student is caught cheating on or plagiarizing a homework assignment, they will receive an escalated consequence. Examples of academic dishonesty with homework include, but are not limited to, copying answers from another resource, allowing another student to copy an assignment, or sharing answers to a homework assignment. Additional information on YES Prep's Academic Dishonesty policy can be found [here](#).

## Promotions

### **Middle School Promotion**

The criteria below must be met for promotion to the next grade level.

**To be promoted from 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> grade or from 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students must:**

- Earn a yearly average of at least 70% in at least three out of four core academic subjects (English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science)
- Attend each core academic class for at least 90% of the school year (if a student misses an excessive number of classes for a specific course, they may be reviewed by the Retention & Placement Committee and lose credit due to excessive absences – see section on Student Absences in the Compliance Section of this handbook)

**To be promoted from 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade students must:**

- Earn a yearly average of at least 70% in at least three out of four core academic subjects (English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science)
- Attend each core academic class for at least 90% of the school year (if a student misses an excessive number of classes for a specific course, they may be reviewed by the Retention & Placement Committee and lose credit due to excessive absences – see section on Student Absences in the Compliance Section of this handbook)

Any student who does not meet these requirements will be reviewed by the campus Retention & Placement Committee.

### **High School Promotion**

YES Prep has specific criteria that must be met for promotion to the next grade level. Students will be retained until proof of passing credits are official received by YES Prep from within YES Prep or from an outside agency/educational organization.

**To be promoted from 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grade students must:**

- Earn credits in the following courses
  - Algebra I (1.0 credit required)
  - English I (1.0 credit required)

- Biology, World Geography/AP Human Geography/Special Topics in Social Studies (sum of 1.0 credit)
- Attend each core academic class for at least 90% of the school year (if a student misses an excessive number of classes for a specific course, they may be reviewed by the Retention & Placement Committee – see section on Student Absences in the Compliance Section of this handbook)
- Be scheduled to recover any additional missing credits in the subsequent school year

**To be promoted from 10<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> grade students must:**

- Earn credits in the following courses
  - Algebra I (1.0 credit required)
  - English I (1.0 credit required)
  - Biology (1.0 credit required)
  - World Geography/AP Human Geography/Special Topics in Social Studies (1.0 credit required)
  - English II (1.0 credit required)
  - Geometry, Chemistry, World History/AP World History (sum of 2.0 credits)
- Attend each core academic class for at least 90% of the school year (if a student misses an excessive number of classes for a specific course, they may be reviewed by the Retention & Placement Committee – see section on Student Absences in the Compliance Section of this handbook)
- Be scheduled to recover any additional missing credits in the subsequent school year

**To be promoted from 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade students must:**

- Earn credits in the following courses
  - Algebra I (1.0 credit required)
  - English I (1.0 credit required)
  - Biology (1.0 credit required)
  - World Geography/AP Human Geography/Special Topics in Social Studies (1.0 credit required)
  - English II (1.0 credit required)
  - Geometry (1.0 credit required)
  - Chemistry (1.0 credit required)
  - World History/AP World History (1.0 credit required)
  - English III (IRC)/AP English Literature (1.0 credit required)
  - Algebra II (1.0 credit required)
  - Language Other than English (1.0 credit required)
  - US History/AP US History, Physics, Environmental Science (sum of 1.0 credit)
- Attend each core academic class for at least 90% of the school year (if a student misses an excessive number of classes for a specific course, they may be reviewed by the Retention & Placement Committee – see section on Student Absences in the Compliance Section of this handbook)
- Be scheduled to recover any additional missing credits in the subsequent school year

To earn a YES Prep Diploma, students must earn all required credits and meet all other YES Prep Graduation Requirements (see section on YES Prep Graduation Requirements). If a student fails to earn all required credits by the end of the current school year, they will not be able to participate in their YES Prep Commencement Ceremony.



- If a student has failed to earn 1.0 or fewer credits, they must successfully complete summer credit recovery to earn their YES Prep Diploma.
- If a student must earn 1.5 or more credits, they must return to YES Prep for at least the Fall Semester to complete their remaining required credits.

## **Retention & Placement Committee**

If a student does not meet the promotion standards for Middle School or High School, the Retention & Placement Committee (RPC) reviews the student's comprehensive data and makes the decision to retain or place the student. The committee chair documents the decision, submits any requests for appeals to the Head of Schools, and leads a meeting with the guardian of the student to discuss the outcome of the RPC process. 504 or ARD committees will determine student promotion for students what qualify for Special Education or Section 504 services.

## **Earning High School Credits**

High school credits are earned after the successful completion (meeting grade and attendance requirements) of each semester. Other ways to earn or recover credits are outlined in the rest of this section.

## **Regaining Credit in HS Using Yearly Averages**

In certain introductory courses, students may be able to earn credit for a failed first-semester course by demonstrating stronger performance in the second semester.

Courses: English I, English II, Algebra I, Geometry, World Languages 1, World Languages 2, Biology, Chemistry, World Geography (regular or AP), World History (regular or AP)

If the student fails the first semester of one of the courses listed above, then they can regain credit for the first semester if:

- The average of the first and second semester is 70 or higher AND
- They earn a passing score on at least one YES Prep Common Assessment for the course

## **YES Prep Credit Recovery**

If a student did not earn credit(s) for a math, science, English and/or social studies course(s) during the fall semester, it is strongly recommended that they enroll in YES Prep Credit Recovery held during the spring semester.

If at the end of the year a student is still missing credits, they must take the class in the summer immediately following the school year to ensure they stay on track for graduation. If the student does not take the course over the following summer, the student risks having to repeat the grade level.

If the course(s) needed are offered at YES Prep Credit Recovery, the student should enroll at YES Prep. If the course(s) needed are not offered at YES Prep Credit Recovery, it is recommended that they enroll in Houston Community College Adult High School Program. Students must receive approval from their Principal to enroll in a course at any other location besides YES Prep Credit Recovery or HCC.

YES Prep Credit Recovery is reserved for students who have already attempted and not earned credit in the course; it is not designed for earning original credits.

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## Credit-by-Exam: Spanish

YES Prep has Board-approved Credit by Exam (CBE) assessments in Spanish that allow students to receive credit for lower level Spanish courses because of these exams. Students can take a Spanish CBE test prior to student's enrollment in a Spanish course.

The student must receive a grade of 80% or greater on the CBE to receive credit for the course if the student has had no prior instruction in that course. Results of the CBE test are used to award credit for Spanish I, II, and/or III and to place the student in the appropriate level of Spanish in the following school year. For each exam in which the student scored an 80 or greater, the student will be awarded credit before the beginning of the following school year.

Credit in Spanish I is a pre-requisite for enrollment in Spanish II; credits in Spanish I and II are prerequisites for enrollment in Spanish III; credits in Spanish I, II, and III are prerequisites for enrollment in AP Spanish Language or AP Spanish Literature.

A guardian will receive a letter from the campus indicating the grade the student will receive for this course if the student qualifies for credit through the exam. If a guardian wants to refuse this credit for the child, the guardian should sign and return the letter, with a check by REFUSE credit, and the student will not receive the credit or grade for this course. The guardian must return the letter to the Front Office within 10 business days of receiving the letter.

Occasionally, Spanish CBEs are administered to students who have had prior instruction in the Spanish course. If a student has received approval to take a Spanish CBE for a course for which they have had prior instruction, the student must earn a 70 or greater on the CBE to receive credit for the Spanish course (see section below).

## Credit-by-Exam: Other Courses

In rare circumstances, a Director of Academics at YES Prep will approve the administration of a Credit by Exam provided by an approved CBE external vendor, UT High School. The campus will order, pay for, and track the results of the external CBE tests. The student will not pay for the CBE.

For courses in which the student has received prior instruction, the student must earn a minimum score of 70% to receive credit. For courses in which the student has received no prior instruction, the student must earn a minimum score of 80%. A student may only attempt a CBE two times, and each time must be approved by the Director of Academics.

## Auditing Courses

If a student is taking a course that they have already earned credit for they are auditing the course. They will receive a grade for an audited course, but the grade is not calculated into the student's GPA. Students do not receive credit for auditing a course. Students should not audit any course they still need as a credit to fulfill promotion or graduation requirements. A campus cannot schedule a student to audit a class unless the campus has written permission from the student's guardian.

## Academic Dishonesty

YES Prep students participate in a rigorous, college-preparatory curriculum, and therefore are held accountable when it comes to academic honesty. If a student is caught cheating or copying (or if they are strongly suspected of cheating or copying), they will earn the appropriate consequence outlined below. Cheating or copying is defined as, but not limited to discussing test contents or answers verbally or in writing, using unauthorized reference materials or technology, plagiarizing

another's work (including submitting work done by Artificial Intelligence, see section below for more details), taking and/or disseminating photos of secure test materials. Campus administrators reserve the right to take all necessary steps to investigate alleged academic dishonesty; including but not limited to requiring a student to retake an exam or quiz or rewriting portions of a paper.

Students who cheat or copy the work of another student, or allow another student to cheat or copy, on a summative exam, test, quiz, project, or essay will be subject to the following consequences:

- Earning a minimum recorded grade of 50% on the assignment, with a retake opportunity offered to earn a maximum recorded grade of 70% at campus discretion
  - Note: summative exams may not be reassessed (this includes not being eligible for corrections.)
- A one-day in-school suspension
- May be subject to other disciplinary action as determined by the campus administration

Students who cheat or copy the work of another student, or allow another student to cheat or copy, on a YES Prep Common Assessment will be subject to the following consequences:

- Earning a minimum recorded grade of 50% on the assessment
- A two-day in-school suspension
- May be subject to other disciplinary action as determined by the campus administration

Students who cheat or copy the work of another student, or allow another student to cheat or copy, on a state standardized test (e.g., STAAR, TELPAS, etc.) or any other external assessment (e.g., MAP, SAT, TSAI, , AP) will be subject to the following consequences:

- A two-day in-school suspension
- Invalidation of the student's test
- May be subject to other disciplinary action as determined by the campus administration

If it is determined that a student has been involved in cheating on a state assessment upon investigation, the system is required to:

- Submit an online report with the TEA
- Contact guardian
- This does not exempt student from retesting. If the student cheated on a STAAR End-of-Course assessment, they must retest in the next re-testing opportunity.

For other possible academic dishonesty incidents, such as cheating or plagiarizing homework, please see the Individual Campus Supplement section for disciplinary consequences.




## **AI Student Policy**

Digital Citizenship is the ability to use technology responsibly, safely, and respectfully. With the emergence of generative Artificial Intelligence (learning systems capable of generating text, images, code, or other types of content, often in response to a prompt entered by a user) being a good Digital Citizen means continuing to make smart decisions when navigating a digital world (i.e., protecting your privacy, fact-checking information, treating others with respect, etc.).

This student policy aims to promote the efficient and ethical use of AI tools, while minimizing the risk of intentional or unintentional misuse that may result in harm to individuals, the organization, or our mission. AI is still developing, and as result, remains at risk of providing false or misleading information. Our goal is to develop students as good Digital Citizens set forth by individual teachers and their assignments. And as a Digital Citizen, it remains the student's responsibility to ask if AI use is permissible if they are not sure. Please refer to the section entitled Academic Dishonesty for a list of the appropriate consequences when using unauthorized technology (e.g., AI) for cheating or

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copying. For additional information about the 9 Principles of Digital Citizenship please click here: [ISTE | Essential Elements of Digital Citizenship | ISTE](#)

| Framework for Determining Appropriate AI Usage                                      |  |
|---|--|
|    | <p>Plagiarism is taking credit for someone else’s work without giving them credit. When using AI to complete assignments, produce ideas, etc., submitting AI work as a student’s own is considered a form of plagiarism. Examples of misusing AI are listed below. For other applications, please check with the teacher.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posting an assignment question or prompt to AI, copying or adapting the AI generated text/image, and submitting it as your own response/creation</li> <li>• Accessing AI during any system, state, or national exam where AI is prohibited. Assume AI use is prohibited on these exams unless otherwise stated.</li> <li>• Using AI to produce or alter images of staff or students without their permission</li> </ul> |
|    | <p>When a teacher allows AI to enhance the learning experience, students must use AI responsibly and cite AI in their work when necessary. Examples of how teachers may allow AI in the classroom are listed below. For other applications, please check with the teacher. Asking AI to translate course content, subtitles, audio, or video</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posing a question to AI to generate summaries, provide examples, or images as part of the brainstorming/initial research process as explicitly permitted as part of an assignment and indicating that AI was used as part of the process</li> </ul>  |
|  | <p>Remember, as a Digital Citizen, students must use AI safely and responsibly by evaluating the information and fact-checking sources. Examples of how students may use AI are listed below. For other applications, please check with the teacher.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asking AI to explain or simplify a difficult concept with examples</li> <li>• Utilizing AI to generate a list of ideas as part of the brainstorming process</li> <li>• Using AI to provide suggestions for further reading about a topic</li> <li>• Using AI to generate extra practice questions</li> <li>• Conversing with AI in a foreign language for additional practice</li> </ul>   |

# STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

To ensure that ALL students have access to a college-ready education, YES Prep offers a variety of supports and services to students who have identified needs. The sections below describe specific programs created to support students.

## Emergent Bilingual Program (EB)

YES Prep also provides an English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) program that focuses on developing English as a second language and using English as a medium to learn mathematics, science, social studies, and other academic subjects. The ESL program at the secondary level is different from the elementary Bilingual program in that all instruction is in English for students, with additional supports provided by the classroom teacher.

All Emergent Bilingual students will be monitored to ensure academic progress by the campus Language Proficiency Assessment Committee. This committee is responsible for coordinating additional services and supports needed for the student to meet their English as a Second Language program goals. Every year, Emergent Bilingual students take the state-required TELPAS (Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System) exam to monitor their level of language proficiency and progress. Students who are Beginning or Intermediate Language Learners per the TELPAS assessment will be given additional accommodations and modifications in the classrooms, as well as receive additional services provided by a campus Literacy Specialist or intervention teacher who is ESL certified.

Every campus has a designated staff member responsible for coordinating support of Emergent Bilingual students on the campus. At each secondary campus, the Literacy Specialist is the designated contact regarding questions about services for Emergent Bilingual students and the ESL program on that campus.

For Emergent Bilingual services and questions, contact the Director of Multilingual Programming at 713-967-9000.

## Dyslexia Services

Dyslexia is a neurological condition; the characteristics of dyslexia include difficulty with recognizing words accurately and quickly, difficulty breaking down words, and poor spelling. If a student is suspected of having dyslexia, they will be evaluated via Special Education by having a full and individual evaluation (FIE), as required by the state of Texas.

6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students demonstrating gaps in their reading level are enrolled in a reading intervention class where they receive research-based direct instruction in these skills. Students in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and up with characteristics of dyslexia receive additional support from the campus Literacy Specialists.

In accordance with the [2021 Dyslexia Handbook](#), YES Prep students go through a universal screening process in kindergarten through 2nd grades and in 7<sup>th</sup> grade as required by the state of Texas. The universal screener will include formal and informal data to determine if a student demonstrates characteristics of dyslexia. If students in any grade display a pattern of characteristics of dyslexia, they may be referred for a dyslexia evaluation by campus staff. Guardians may refer a student for a dyslexia evaluation at any time.

Once identified, students who are eligible to receive dyslexia services are provided with research-based individualized support through Special Education. YES Prep offers small group reading

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instruction with a targeted and research-based curriculum to students with dyslexia who demonstrate a need for this intervention. During this time, students are provided with research-based direct instruction that is systematic, taught to mastery, and multisensory. The Annual Review & Dismissal (ARD) will annually review and recommend additional accommodation for all students with dyslexia. A list of instructional and testing accommodations will be given to each guardian as part of the IEP.

Special Education teachers and secondary Literacy Specialists receive extensive training and development in Region 4 Education Service Center's dyslexia intervention, *Reading by Design: An Individualized Reading Intervention*. It is a systematic, multisensory approach aligned with research-based practices for developing literacy and is designed for students with basic reading difficulties, such as dyslexia.

For more information see the [2021 Dyslexia Handbook](#): Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Services.

Should the student's family or school staff suspect a need for specially designed instruction through special education services, they can refer the student for a special education evaluation at any time.

For Dyslexia services and questions, contact the YES Prep Special Populations Department at 713-967-9000.

## **Section 504**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a civil rights law aimed at protecting students from discrimination due to their disability and supporting students who are experiencing cognitive or physical impairments that limit major life activities. Students who qualify for services under Section 504 will receive accommodations based on their Service Plan to ensure their success in a general education classroom. Students receiving services under Section 504 are responsible for all content standards for their enrolled grade level and must meet all promotion standards to be promoted to the next grade.

If a student is experiencing cognitive or physical impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, their guardian may contact YES Prep to learn about the school's general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including making a referral for Section 504 evaluation to determine if the student needs specific aids, accommodations, or services. A guardian or adult student (age 18 or over) may request an evaluation for Section 504 services at any time.

Should the student's family or school staff suspect a need for specially designed instruction through special education services, they can refer the student for a special education evaluation at any time.

The Section 504 Parent and Educator Resource Guide, created by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), is available at this link: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/504-resource-guide-201612.pdf>.

For Section 504 services and questions, contact the Director of Secondary MTSS, 504 & Specialized Services at 713-967-9000.

## **Special Education**

YES Prep complies with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). When a student enrolls at YES Prep, we provide that student with a free and appropriate public education that meets their needs. The Special Education teams on each campus provide a range of services deemed

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appropriate by the ARD committee for each student from direct instruction in the small group pull-outs to in-class support in the general education classroom. Special education teams also offer support for socio-emotional and behavioral needs. All eligible students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education in accordance with their ARD/IEP meeting as reflected in the Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process located here: <http://framework.esc18.net/>.

An individualized education program (IEP) is developed, implemented, and monitored for each student with a disability according to state and federal law.

YES Prep offers a full continuum of services for students with disabilities, including instructional and related services and self-contained Special Education classrooms. These specialized programs are designed for students who need to spend part or all their day in a Special Education classroom in order to meet their IEP goals. If the ARD committee deems that one of the programs below is the most appropriate placement for a student, we offer a transfer to a campus that has an available setting.

| Specialized Program       | Description   |
|---------------------------|---|
| BASE                      | Designed for students with emotional and behavioral difficulties related to their disability who need structured social-emotional skill-building and on-grade level curriculum. Available at YES Prep Fifth Ward Secondary with transfers for all qualifying students   |
| YSTEP                     | Designed for students who have significant cognitive or physical disabilities and require alternate curriculum & daily living skills instruction. Available at YES Prep Brays Oaks Secondary, YES Prep East End Secondary, YES Prep Gulfton Secondary, YES Prep Hobby Secondary, YES Prep North Forest Secondary, YES Prep Northline Secondary, YES Prep Northwest Secondary, YES Prep Southside Secondary and YES Prep White Oak Secondary with transfers for all qualifying students. |
| Community-Based ACT (18+) | Designed for students who have completed YES Prep's academic program but need ongoing instruction in functional and vocational skills. Students receive the instruction in their community.   |

Students in Special Education prepare for rigorous post-secondary opportunities through transition planning in the ARD process. For more information on transition, consult <https://www.transitionintexas.org/>.

- For Special Education services and questions, contact the Director of Special Education at 713-967-9000.
- For Transition services, contact the Manager of Special Education Transition at 713-967-9000.
- To refer student for Special Education testing, contact the Director of Special Education Evaluation at 713-967-9000 or use the QR code below



Special Education Resources:

- [Texas Transition and Employment Guide](#)
- [Guia de Transicion y Empleo de Texas](#)
- [Guardian's Guide to ARD Process](#)

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- [Guia Para Padres del Proceso de ARD](#)
- [Notice of Procedural Safeguards](#)
- [Aviso Sobre Procedimientos de Proteccion](#)

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## Outside Service Providers

Please refer to the [Outside Service Providers](#) policy in the Compliance section for more details on how Outside Service Provider related to Special Education services may visit campus.

## Child Find Responsibilities

YES Prep is responsible for identifying, locating, and evaluating students who are potentially eligible for Special Education and related services. According to the TEA, YES Prep's Child Find duty to seek guardian consent to evaluate a child when it suspects or has reason to suspect that the child has a disability and needs Special Education services is an affirmative one: a guardian is not required to request that the LEA identify and evaluate the child. This means that it is the responsibility of the school system, YES Prep, to identify and evaluate students who may need Special Education services. A guardian may request an initial evaluation at any time if they believe their child has a disability in need of Special Education and related services.

## Referrals to Special Populations Programs

### **Learning Difficulties, Special Education, Section 504 Services**

For those students who are having difficulty in the regular classroom, all school systems and open enrollment charter schools must consider tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior

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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 systems and charter schools to meet the needs of all struggling students.

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, their guardian 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 guardian may request an evaluation for special education or Section 504 services at any time.

## **Special Education Referrals**

If a guardian 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 system or open enrollment charter school, the system or charter school must respond in writing no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, the school must give the guardian 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 agrees to evaluate the student, it must also give the guardian the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

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 system or charter school to respond within the 15-school-day timeline.

If YES Prep 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 guardian'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 system or charter school receives a guardian'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 guardian 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 system or charter school must give the guardian a copy of the evaluation report at no cost. Additional information regarding special education is available from the system or charter school in a companion document titled Parent's Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process.

## **Contact Person for Special Education Referrals**

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

- Contact Person: Director of Special Education Evaluation
- Phone Number: 713-967-9000

## Section 504 Referrals

Each school system or charter school must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of students in the system'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 guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure.

### Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals

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

- Contact Person: Director of Secondary MTSS, 504 and Specialized Services
- Phone Number: 713-967-9000

### 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](#)

# SCHOOL CULTURE AND DISCIPLINE

YES Prep believes holding students to behavioral expectations that increase safety and joy in learning will support their ability to achieve academic success, care for their community, and ultimately increase the number of students from YES Prep prepared to succeed in college and post-secondary opportunities. Committing to community expectations ensures a physically and emotionally safe learning environment that embraces the diverse communities, cultures, and identities of students. It is the responsibility of YES Prep staff to build community agreements and teach non-cognitive social skills to help students feel safe, seen, and empowered.

## Rewards and Recognition

YES Prep recognizes students for overall achievement and growth in academics, attendance and behavior. Each YES Prep campus has their unique way of showing students they are seen and cared for by the staff, such as student of the month awards, core value awards, honor roll, etc. YES Prep campuses also utilize a positive behavior incentive system that rewards students with points that can be used to participate in special events, make purchases at the school store, or earn special privileges. A student's positive points are accessible to students and families at any time through an online application. Secondary Schools use Hero© K12 to track student points. See the Individual Campus Supplement for specific details on rewards and recognitions for each campus.

## YES Prep Standards of Student Conduct and Behavior

YES Prep students are expected to behave in a manner that promotes care for all individuals, contributes to a safe environment for students, and provides an educational environment free of disruption.

## **YES Prep Student Expectations**

YES Prep Students are expected to:

1. Respectful Behavior
  - Be kind and respectful to classmates, teachers, and staff at all times.
  - Be attentive to others and wait your turn to speak.
  - Follow instructions promptly and accurately.
2. Responsible Actions
  - Be responsible for your actions and belongings both inside and outside the classroom.
  - Show respect and kindness to peers and adults by engaging in positive social interactions.
  - Follow school and classroom rules consistently and understand the consequences.
3. Academic Engagement
  - Contribute actively to classroom discussions and activities.
  - Utilize critical thinking skills to solve problems and grasp new ideas.
  - Manage time and work effectively to complete assignments and projects.
4. Safety and Well-Being
  - Be respectful of others' space and behave safely on the playground and in the classroom.
  - Resolve conflicts peacefully and seek help from adults when necessary.
  - Adhere to the YES Prep Code of Conduct
5. Character Education
  - Uphold the YES Prep Core Values
  - Engage in Character Education

- Invest in developing the essential knowledge and skills of positive character traits and personal skills

## **YES Prep Jurisdiction and Authority**

YES Prep has disciplinary authority over a YES Prep student:

- During the regular school day and while the student is going to and from school on YES Prep transportation including at bus stops before and after pick-up and at least 300 feet from the bus stop location;
- For any expulsion offense committed away from YES Prep property and not at a school-sponsored or school-related event, if the misconduct creates a substantial disruption to the educational environment;
- For any expulsion offense committed while on YES Prep property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity of YES Prep or another school in Texas;
- For any school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location, including any violations involving or impacting other students of the school;
- When criminal mischief is committed on or off YES Prep property or at a school-related event;
- When retaliation against another student, school employee or volunteer occurs or is threatened, regardless of time or location;
- When the student commits a felony, including those provided by Texas Education Code §§ 37.006 or 37.0081, regardless of time or location;
- While a student is participating in any remote / virtual classroom or other period of online instruction provided by YES Prep;
- While the student is attending any school-related activity, regardless of time or location; and
- While the student is in transit to or from school or to or from school-related activities or events using YES Prep provided transportation.

## **Statement of Non-Discrimination and Title IX**

YES Prep Public Schools is committed to providing a safe learning and work environment where all school community members are treated with dignity and respect. The schools in the system are subject to all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination based on disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services. A qualified student may not be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to unlawful discrimination under any system program or activity based on disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, ancestry, creed, religion, sex (which includes marital status), sexual orientation (which includes transgender), disability ancestry, or need for special education services. Discrimination against employees and applicants for employment based on age, genetic information, and conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth is also prohibited per state and federal law. Based on the protected areas, any harassment/discrimination of students or staff will be investigated and responded to.

As required by Title IX, YES Prep Public Schools does not and is required to not discriminate based on sex in its educational programs or activities. This nondiscrimination requirement applies to admission to and employment with YES Prep Public Schools. Inquiries into issues related to Title IX may be referred to YES Prep Public Schools' Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both. School community members, including families, should bring any questions or concerns about YES Prep Public Schools' compliance with these federal programs to the attention of the following persons designated as being responsible for

coordinating compliance with these requirements. More information can be found at <https://www.yesprep.org/departments/student-family-services/title-ix>.

## **Harassment, Bullying, and Inappropriate Conduct**

No one should be subject to harassment, bullying, or inappropriate conduct on campus for any reason. It is YES Prep’s policy that all employees, volunteers, guardians, and students will deal with all persons in ways that convey care and consideration for individuals regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, gender, age, disability, immigration status, sexual orientation, family situation, religion, or political affiliation. Acts of harassment, bullying, hostility, or other inappropriate conduct, whether verbal, written, or physical, will not be tolerated and constitute grounds for disciplinary action according to the YES Prep Code of Conduct. Prohibited harassment of a student is defined as physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on the student’s race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, family situation, political affiliation, or any other basis prohibited by law that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct:

- Affects a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
- Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the student’s academic performance; OR
- Otherwise adversely affects the student’s educational opportunities.

Prohibited harassment includes dating violence as defined by this policy. Legal agencies may also be contacted.

Inappropriate conduct that might not rise to the level of harassment is also prohibited and can include, but is not limited to: physical (e.g., hitting, kicking, pushing, choking, etc.), oral or written comments (e.g., threatening, taunting, teasing, starting rumors, hate speech, or inappropriate comments or actions that result in intimidation or revealing of personal information without permission, etc.), electronic (e.g., e-mail, text messaging, blogging, social networking sites, etc.) or written threats.

David’s Law is a federal law prohibiting and combating bullying in Texas schools. David’s Law empowers school administrators and law enforcement to reprimand the aggressor, while focusing on rehabilitation. The following are amendments to Education Code 37.0832: changes the definition of “bullying” to include “single significant act” or a “pattern of acts” by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power; integrates “cyberbullying” into the definition of bullying; and requires Texas public schools to investigate and respond to bullying that occurs on or off school property.

If a student believes they are a target of discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment or dating violence) or other inappropriate behavior described in this section, the student should immediately notify their teacher, the Student Support Counselor, a Dean of Students, Assistant Principal, or the Principal. Additionally, if anyone else believes that someone has been a target of harassment, discrimination, or inappropriate behavior described in this section, that individual should immediately notify a teacher or campus administrator.

Students may report any incident of bullying anonymously. All campuses have forms (“Student Self-Referral Forms”) where students may anonymously report an incident of bullying. These forms may be completed electronically or turned into a lockbox that will be placed near a Student Support Counselor’s office. At no point will the student need to reveal their identity if they do not wish. An investigation into the alleged incident will take place.

Guardians of a bullied student will be notified within three days of the bullying or notification of the bullying to administrators. The guardians of the alleged bully will be notified within a reasonable

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time by administrators. Students who witness or are made aware of such situations are expected to report the incident immediately to a campus administrator. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Reports of discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, or dating violence, may be directed to the designated Title IX coordinator. YES Prep will follow its Title IX procedures when such allegations, if proved, would meet the definition of sexual harassment in an education program or activity and against a person in the United States under Title IX. To review YES Prep's Title IX policies and procedures, see YES Prep Public Schools Title IX webpage.

Sexual harassment includes all unwanted, uninvited, or non-reciprocal sexual attention (whether direct or indirect) as well as the creation of an intimidating, hostile, or offensive campus or work environment. Harassment can include, but is not limited to:

- Sexually suggestive looks or gestures
- Sexual jokes, pictures or teasing
- Pressure for dates or sex
- Sexually demeaning comments
- Deliberate touching, cornering, or pinching
- Attempts to kiss or fondle
- Threats, demands, or suggestions that favors will be granted in exchange for sex or tolerance of sexual advances

Dating violence, which is prohibited conduct, occurs when a person in a current or past dating relationship uses sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control another person in a dating relationship. Dating violence occurs when a person commits these acts against a person in a marriage or dating relationship with the individual who is or was once in a marriage or dating relationship with the person committing the offense, as defined by Section 71.0021 of the Family Code. Dating violence is a pattern of coercive behavior that one partner exerts over the other for establishing and maintaining power and control. Dating violence can include, but is not limited to:

- Physical abuse (hitting, kicking, pushing, choking, etc.)
- Control of daily activities, choices, and access to resources
- Isolation from family, friends, religious activities, campus, community, etc.
- Emotional abuse (put-downs, public humiliation, etc.)
- Sabotage
- Technological abuse and stalking
- Sexual coercion
- Suicide or homicide threats, attempts, or completions

Such conduct will be considered bullying if that conduct exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct and interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a campus.

Students who engage in bullying may be expelled if the student encourages another student to commit or attempt suicide, incites violence against a student through group bullying, or releases or threatens to release intimate visual material of a minor or a student who is 18 years of age.

Any student who wishes to seek additional support for engaging in harassment or bullying should contact a campus administrator.

## Federal Firearms Act

YES Prep, as an open-enrollment charter school, shall expel a student who brings, possesses at campus, including any setting that is under YES Prep's control or supervision for a campus activity, a firearm, as defined by 18 U.S.C. Section 921. The student must be expelled from the student's regular campus for a period of at least one year, unless the superintendent or other chief administrative officer of the campus chooses to modify the length of the expulsion in the case of an individual student (excluding grades 2<sup>nd</sup> and below).

## In-School and Out-of-School Suspension

If a student engages in an act of misconduct that is in violation Level II, Level III, or Level IV of YES Prep Student Code of Conduct, the student may earn an In School or Out of School Suspension for up to three days per occurrence. Prior to the suspension, the campus administrator will notify the student of the claims against them, allow the student to share their version of the incident, conduct a thorough investigation of the events surrounding the incident, and determine whether the student's conduct was a violation of the YES Prep Code of Conduct. If it is determined that the student's behavior warrants a suspension, the campus administrator will notify the student's guardian of the period of suspension, the grounds for suspension, and provide a time and place for an opportunity to meet with the campus administrator. The system shall not use out-of-school suspension for students in grade 2 or below, or students under the age 10, unless, while on property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property, the student engages in one of the following offenses. The system shall use a positive behavior program as a disciplinary alternative for students below grade 2, or students under the age 10, who commit general conduct violations instead of suspension or placement in a DAEP. The program shall meet the requirement of law:

- Conduct that contains the elements of an offense related to weapons under Penal Section 46.02 or 46.05; or
- Conduct that contains the elements of a violent offense under Penal Code Section 22.01, 22.011, 22.02, or 22.021,
- Selling, giving, or delivering to another person or possessing, using, or being under the influence of any amount of marijuana, an alcoholic beverage, or a controlled substance or dangerous drug as define by federal or state law

The student shall receive credit for missed work during the period of removal if the student makes up the work within the same number of school days the student was absent on administrative removal.

## Disciplinary Hearings

If a student is recommended for a Disciplinary Hearing, the guardian will receive written notice of the Disciplinary Hearing, reason for the Disciplinary Hearing, and the location and time the Disciplinary Hearing will be held. The campus shall make a good faith effort to work with the guardian to schedule the Disciplinary Hearing and will inform the student and the student's guardian of the location and time that the hearing will be held. The campus shall hold the Disciplinary Hearing regardless of whether the student, the student's guardian, or another adult representing the student attends.

At the hearing, the student has the right to:

- Be present at the meeting;

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- Present evidence in their defense;
- Be informed and appraised of the campus's evidence;
- Be accompanied by their guardians; and
- Be represented by an attorney

The hearing will be led by the campus administrator in front of a Disciplinary Hearing Officer and will be audio recorded. Within 48 hours of the Disciplinary Hearing, the Disciplinary Hearing Officer will notify the student and the student's guardian of their decision, including the length of the DAEP placement or expulsion. The decision shall also be provided to the guardian in writing from the campus. The Disciplinary Hearing Officer shall also inform the guardian of their right to appeal the decision if they believe that due process was not afforded to them during the hearing.

A disciplinary hearing decision may result in the following but is not limited to:

- Placement in a disciplinary alternative education program (See DAEP Section);
- Expulsion for up to 180-days (See Expulsion Section);
- Completion of a substance abuse contract (See Substance Abuse Contract Section); AND/OR
- Other consequences recommended by the hearing officer (e.g., implementation of an individual student plan, implementation of a safety plan, and or removal from extracurricular activities)
- If the guardian believes due process was not afforded to them during the hearing, the guardian has the right to appeal. The appeal process is as follows:

To appeal the decision by the Disciplinary Hearing Officer (DHO) for placement at DAEP/YES Prep Thrive:

- The guardian will notify the YES Prep Head of Schools or their designee to request an appeal within 48 hours of receipt of the decision by calling the YES Prep District number and leaving a message with the request for the appeal or email [receptionist@yesprep.org](mailto:receptionist@yesprep.org). The YES Prep District number is (713)- 967-9000.
- A Head of Schools or their designee will act as the appeal officer. The appeal officer will review the evidence presented at the disciplinary hearing. No new evidence may be presented before review. The appeal officer may uphold the decision, overturn the decision, or modify the length of the DAEP placement.
- If the appeal officer elects to uphold the placement, the guardian(s) may request a second hearing review by another Head of Schools. The second Head of Schools will review the body of evidence presented at the original hearing. No new evidence may be presented before review. The second Head of Schools may uphold the decision, revise the decision, or overturn the decision.

To appeal the decision by the Disciplinary Hearing Officer (DHO) for expulsion from YES Prep Public Schools:

- The guardian will notify the YES Prep Head of Schools or their designee to request an appeal within 48 hours of receipt of the decision by calling the YES Prep District number and leaving a message with the request for the appeal or email [receptionist@yesprep.org](mailto:receptionist@yesprep.org). The YES Prep District number is (713)- 967-9000.
- A Head of Schools or their designee will act as the appeal officer. The appeal officer will review the evidence presented at the disciplinary hearing. No new evidence may be presented before review. The appeal officer may uphold the decision, revise the decision, or overturn the decision.
- If the appeal officer elects to uphold the expulsion, the guardian(s) may request a second hearing review by another Head of Schools. The second Head of Schools will review the body of evidence presented at the original hearing. No new evidence may be presented before



review. The second Head of Schools may uphold the decision, revise the decision, or overturn the decision.

- If the parent disagrees with the decision of the second Head of Schools, the parent may request a review with a Disciplinary Hearing Review Panel, by notifying the Chief Schools Officer via email within seven (7) calendar days of the date of receipt of the second Head of School's decision.
- The Disciplinary Hearing Review Panel will be comprised of one or more members of the Board, designated by the Board Chair or Vice Chair of the Board and the Chief Schools Officer. The Disciplinary Hearing Review Panel may have access to legal counsel if needed. The Disciplinary Hearing Review Panel will review the record prepared before the hearing officer and the decisions of the hearing officer, appeal officer, and second Head of Schools. The Panel will also give the student, guardians, and first Head of Schools the opportunity to make a presentation before the Panel.
- The Panel will determine the length of the presentation based on the complexity of the case, typically not to exceed fifteen (15) minutes. The Panel members may ask questions of the student, guardians, and Head of Schools (or their designee); however, the Panel members are not subject to questioning. The student and the Head of Schools (or their designee) are required to attend. The student's guardians are encouraged to attend as well. In most cases, the Disciplinary Hearing Review Panel will render its decision at the meeting, but in any event, will do so within five (5) business days after the meeting.
- The Disciplinary Hearing Review Panel's decision will be limited to upholding or overturning the expulsion or revising the decision to be a placement in DAEP/YES Prep Thrive. If the decision is to overturn the expulsion, the student may be subject to other consequences as determined by the Head of Schools or their designee. These consequences include but are not limited to a DAEP/YES Prep Thrive placement, counseling services, community service hours, removal of all extracurricular activities, guardians picking up the student at a set-time, in-school suspension, or out-of-school suspension.

For all appeals, the Head of Schools or their designee decides whether consequences will be deferred pending the outcome of the appeal. If the consequences are deferred pending the outcome of the appeal, the Head of Schools has the discretion to administratively remove the student or place the student in another educational setting within YES Prep, including in-school suspension, while awaiting the decision following an appeal. If a student is placed in another educational setting, the days will count towards their DAEP placement.

## **Expulsion**

If a student engages in conduct listed under the mandatory or discretionary expulsion category of the YES Prep Student Code of Conduct, a student may be expelled from the system for a maximum of 180 calendar days. At the end of 180 calendar days, the student will be required to enter their name into the lottery and will only return to a YES Prep campus should their name be pulled from the lottery. Please see the Student Restrictions section below for additional information about access to the campus after an expulsion.

## **Substance Abuse Contract**

If a student engages in conduct related to the use of any illegal substance, one potential result may be a Substance Abuse Contract. The Substance Abuse Contract requires a student to participate in a substance abuse course along with additional requirements outlined by the campus.

## **Administrative Removal**

In addition to the offenses in this code of conduct for which a student could be suspended as a disciplinary consequence, the Principal or designee has the authority to administratively remove a student from campus for a period of up to 10 school days for any of the following additional reasons:

- The need to further investigate an incident;
- Pending a recommendation to expel the student or pending the outcome of the hearing and/or the appeal of the hearing decision; OR
- An emergency constituting endangerment to health or safety

Should a student be removed from the educational environment for these reasons, the Principal or appropriate campus administrator must notify the student's guardians of the duration and reason for the removal and the time and place for an opportunity to confer with the Principal of appropriate campus administrator.

The student shall receive credit for missed work during the period of removal if the student makes up the work within the same number of school days the student was absent on administrative removal.

## **Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP)**

If a student engages in conduct listed under mandatory or discretionary DAEP placement category of the YES Prep Student Code of Conduct, a student may be removed from the school and placed into the corresponding DAEP for a determined number of days. Placements may not exceed one year, unless after reviewing it is determined that a return to the home campus is a threat to the safety of other students, YES Prep staff, or that it is in the best interest of the student to remain at the DAEP. The terms of placement in a DAEP prohibit the student from participating in any home campus activities. Students who qualify for Special Education services may be placed in the DAEP strictly in accordance with the procedures for discipline of Special Education. Students who qualify for Special Education may not be placed in a DAEP unless the Admissions, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee determines that it is educationally appropriate, and that the student has engaged in conduct for which referral to DAEP is authorized.

## **YES Prep Thrive**

YES Prep Thrive is a restorative Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) that allows YES Prep campuses to hold students accountable while still ensuring that they are receiving the rigorous academic opportunities that is equivalent to those in the general YES Prep environment. At YES Prep Thrive, students will receive instruction that matches their home campus courses, in addition to individualized socio-emotional skill-building and character education, and counseling supports.

## **House Bill 114**

Under the Texas Education House Bill 114, a student shall be removed from class and placed in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) if they engage in specific conduct: sells, gives, or delivers to another person or possesses or uses or is under the influence of a controlled substance (excluding marijuana) or a dangerous drug, possesses, uses, or is under the influence of, or sells, gives, or delivers to another person marijuana or tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), possesses, uses, sells, gives, or delivers to another person an e-cigarette, or sells, gives, or delivers to another person an

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alcoholic beverage, commits a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol, or possesses, uses, or is under the influence of an alcoholic beverage. The bill also authorizes classroom removal and DAEP placement for students found vaping or using marijuana on or near public school property or at specific school events. A DAEP placement can take place on-campus (at the school) or off-campus (at Thrive), and the number of placement days depends on the student's involvement and the impact of their infraction.

## **Student Restrictions During DAEP Placement, Expulsion, or Administrative Leave**

Students that have been placed in at YES Prep DAEP Thrive, expelled, or put on administrative leave are prohibited from being on campus grounds or attending campus-sponsored or campus-related activities during the period place DAEP placement or expulsion. If the student has a sibling at YES Prep with a significant event at campus that the guardian would like to have the student attend, the guardian must first contact the campus administrator to receive a one-time approval to attend the event with their family.

The YES Prep DAEP Thrive may be full or incidents meeting HB114 requirements may result in a student being placed in On-Site DAEP and placed in an ISS setting on the campus assigned to them. Students serving On-site DAEP days will not be allowed to attend campus-sponsored events or activities outside of the On-site DAEP program. Students serving On-site DAEP days are required to be separated from other students as much as possible until completion of their On-site DAEP program days. The campus administration will provide parents, guardians, and students with additional restrictions and expectations following the disciplinary hearing.

## **Newly Enrolled Students**

YES Prep will decide on a case-by-case basis the placement of a student who is subject to a DAEP placement or expulsion order from another system or an open-enrollment charter upon enrollment in the system.

## **Discipline of Students with Disabilities**

The discipline of students with disabilities is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the YES Prep Handbook. To the extent any conflict exists, state and/or federal law will prevail.

## **Disclosure Policy**

During the college search and application process, YES Prep does not proactively inform colleges of student disciplinary records. For any questions on application documentation that asks a counselor to disclose disciplinary history of a student, our counselors are instructed to select the "school policy prevents me from responding" option. However, some college applications may explicitly ask students whether they have been found responsible for a disciplinary violation at an educational institution they have attended from 9th grade (or the international equivalent) forward, whether related to academic misconduct or behavior misconduct, that resulted in your probation, suspension, removal, dismissal, or expulsion from the institution.

YES Prep encourages students to answer this question honestly and openly. In those instances when the question is answered in the affirmative, counselors will assist families in developing a personal statement that will help contextualize the situation. On the occasions when a college calls YES Prep to inquire about a suspension, YES Prep requires written permission from families before discussing a disciplinary matter.

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# YES Prep Student Code of Conduct

The YES Prep Student Code of Conduct outlines the behavioral expectations of students and the consequences administered for specific acts of misconduct. Disciplinary action shall draw on the professional judgment of teachers and administrators, the seriousness of the offense, and the requirements listed in the YES Prep Student Code of Conduct.

The following discipline techniques may be used in addition to the consequences outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

- Cooling-off time
- Verbal or written redirection
- Seating changes within the classroom or vehicles owned or operated by YES Prep
- Temporary confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process
- Behavioral interventions
- Counseling by teachers, counselors, or administrative personnel
- Guardian-staff conferences
- Grade reductions for cheating, plagiarism, and as otherwise permitted by the Academic Dishonesty policy
- Request administrator intervention, other assigned area, or in-school suspension
- Assignment of natural consequence such as cleaning or picking up litter that are natural consequences of the offense (e.g. graffiti, etc.)
- Withdrawal of privileges, such as participation in extracurricular activities, eligibility for seeking and holding honorary offices, or membership in campus sponsored clubs, athletics, and organizations
- Penalties identified for an individual student organization's extracurricular standard of behavior
- Restriction or revocation of YES Prep transportation privileges
- In or Out-of-School suspension, as specified in the Student Code of Conduct
- Expulsion or Alternative Placement, as specified in the Expulsion/DAEP section (Level IV) of the Student Code of Conduct
- Contacting law enforcement officials
- Other strategies and consequences as determined by campus administrators

## **Level I Acts of Misconduct**

Level I acts of misconduct are those for which student behavior is in violation of classroom, campus, extracurricular, or transportation rules. YES Prep Secondary students are held to these expectations to ensure campus remain safe places where students can focus on learning and are all treated with kindness and respect. Failure to adhere to these expectations may result in a demerit and/or consequence or additional consequences as assigned by the teacher or campus administrator.

To maintain campus pride and safety, students are expected to:

- Use technology appropriately
- Respect the physical or property rights of other people
- Follow dress code expectations

To maintain a focus on learning, students are expected to:

- Be prepared for class
- Be engaged in learning
- Be on to school

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- Be on time to class

To maintain kindness and respect, students are expected to:

- Demonstrate kindness in language
- Demonstrate kindness in action

A demerit may be earned by a student when they engaged in Level I acts of misconduct as these behaviors retract from school pride and safety, maintaining a strong focus on learning, and treating all members of the YES Prep community with kindness and respect. If a student continues to engage in these behaviors within a certain timeframe, the demerit may be escalated to a consequence. Consequence compliance is mandatory and failure to comply may result in an In-School Suspension.

Secondary schools use a discipline tracking system to track student behaviors. Student demerits and consequences are accessible to students and families at any time through an online application called HERO. Please see the Individual Campus Supplement for specific details.

## Level II Acts of Misconduct

Level II acts of misconduct are those for which an appropriate administrator may implement a restorative consequence or suspend the secondary school student for up to three days per occurrence. The system shall not use out-of-school suspension for students in grade 2 or below, or students under the age 10, unless the conduct meets the requirements established in law. See Out of School Suspension Section.

- Damaging or vandalizing school property or property belonging to others
- Use of matches or a lighter, except as part of an instructional program
- Inappropriate language/gestures (including but not limited to profanity)
- Using any type of gang sign, symbol, or representation while at school, involvement in a public-school fraternity, sorority, or secret society, including participating as a member or pledge, or soliciting another person to become a pledge or member of a public-school fraternity, sorority, secret society while at school
- Conducting private business, selling, or buying unauthorized items
- Skipping class(es) or activities scheduled during the regular school day (advisory, all school meetings, etc.)
- Failing to attend an assigned detention two times for the same behavior incident
- Failing to provide appropriate or relevant information to school administrators, which results in mental or physical harm to another individual
- Leaving school grounds without permission of an appropriate school administrator
- Cheating or copying the work of another on a state standardized test (or MAP, SAT/PSAT, AP) or YES Prep Common Assessment or allowing another to cheat or copy on a state standardized test or YES Prep Common Assessment
- Violation of the YES Prep Academic Dishonesty by plagiarism or academic dishonesty on a unit exam test, quiz, projects, or essay
- Behaving in a manner that is consistently disruptive to the classroom or school learning environment
- Failure or refusal to cover up while on campus or at a school-related activity any tattoo that is inappropriate, obscene, offensive, vulgar, or gang-related
- Gambling or participating in gambling activities
- Inappropriate Physical Misconduct

## Level III Acts of Misconduct

Level III acts of misconduct are those for which an appropriate administrator may suspend the student for up to three days per occurrence paired with an educational component, or if the administrator finds the Level III misconduct to be severe may recommend the student for a disciplinary hearing in which the student may be placed in a disciplinary alternative program (DAEP) or expelled. The system shall not use out-of-school suspension for students in grade 2 or below, or students under the age 10, unless the conduct meets the requirements established in law. See Out of School Suspension Section.

- Engaging in inappropriate physical or sexual conduct that is consensual
- Harassment due to dating violence and sexually intimidating conduct
- Engaging in conduct that constitutes sexual harassment, including but not limited to verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature
- Taking, disseminating, transferring, possessing, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd or otherwise illegal images or other content, including but not limited to sexting
- Possessing, distributing, or printing pornographic material
- Starting or building a fire on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event, except as part of an instructional program
- Using, in a manner inconsistent with the manufacturer's instructions, or being under the influence of glue, aerosol, paint, and other inhalants
- Possessing, distributing, selling, using, or smoking tobacco or tobacco products, smokeless cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vaporizers, any other nicotine delivery device, or any substance for consumption containing nicotine
- Possessing drug paraphernalia
- Possessing, distributing, selling, or using medications that are available with or without a prescription in a manner that is not consistent with the medicine's intended use as indicated on the manufacturer's label, or with school rules concerning the handling of such medications
- Possessing or selling items attempted to be passed off as illegal drugs or contraband
- Assault of another person, non-felony
- Cyberbullying at or away from campus. The use of the internet, cell phones, or other devices to send, post, or text message images and material intended to hurt or embarrass another student. This may include, but is not limited to, sending e-mail to someone who has said he or she wants no further contact with the sender; sending or posting threats, sexual remarks, or pejorative labels (i.e., hate speech); ganging up on victims by making them the subject of ridicule in electronic forums and posting false statements as fact intended to humiliate another student; sending threatening and harassing texts, instant messages, or emails to another; and posting or sending rumors or gossip to incite others to dislike and/or gang up on the target, which is determined to have a material and substantial interference with school activities or with the rights of students
- Any verbal abuse of others, including slurs, name-calling, or derogatory statements to another person.
- Any bullying or harassment of others, including slurs, name-calling, or derogatory statements to another person because of that person's race, color, national origin, religion, disability, physical appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression
- Possession, distribution, carrying, exhibition, or use of a knife, which includes a switchblade knife, razor blades, utility knives, or other bladed instruments and/or possession, distribution, exhibition of ammunition or bullets
- Throwing objects that can cause bodily injury or property damage
- Possessing, discharging, or spraying mace or pepper spray, which results in a school disturbance
- Burglary of a YES Prep facility
- Stealing, theft, or robbery (not felony level) in an amount under \$750

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- Possession or sale of stolen property (non-felony)
- Recording the voice or image of another without the prior consent of the individuals being recorded or in any way that disrupts the educational environment or invades the privacy of others
- Inappropriate or illegal use of the school's electronic communication systems, including the Internet, or abuse of the Technology Use Policy (found at <https://www.yesprep.org/families/student-tech>)
- Verifiable evidence of crimes (non-felony) charged for conduct committed on campus or off campus determined to have one or more of the following effects: (a) Disrupting the learning environment; (b) Providing a negative example to the other students; or (c) Creating a dangerous and unsafe environment for students or school personnel
- Intentionally discharging a fire extinguisher or activating a fire alarm, except in an emergency
- Escalated vandalism or destruction of school property or property belonging to others
- Possession or use of fireworks, "poppers," smoke or stink bombs, or any other pyrotechnic device that may be used to disrupt the educational process
- Selling, giving, delivering to another person, using or being under the influence of an alcoholic beverage
- Engaging in a fight that results in minimal physical harm
- Threats to another person, including any physical, verbal, emotional and written forms
- Engaging in bullying, harassment, or hazing
- Behaving in such a manner that the continued presence of the student in the classroom threatens the safety, interests and rights of other students or staff, or will be detrimental to the educational process or engages in unruly, disruptive, or abusive behavior that seriously interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn
- Cases of extortion, intimidation, or disrespect of another student, staff member or campus visitor
- Making a hit-list

## Level IV Acts of Misconduct

Level IV acts of misconduct are those for which an appropriate administrator may recommend the student for a disciplinary hearing in which the student may be placed in a disciplinary alternative program (DAEP) or expelled. The system shall not use out-of-school suspension for students in grade 2 or below or, students under the age 10, unless the conduct meets the requirements established in law. See Out of School Suspension Section. These are considered serious misbehaviors and/or illegal acts that seriously disrupt the educational process.

- Conduct punishable as a felony
- Sells, gives, or delivers to another person or possesses or uses or is under the influence of marijuana or a controlled substance, as defined by Health and Safety Code Chapter 481, or a dangerous drug, as defined by Health and Safety Code Chapter 483
- Possessed, sold, used, or was under the influence of an alcoholic beverage
- Abuse of a volatile chemical
- Public Lewdness or indecent exposure
- Retaliation against a school employee
- Based on conduct occurring off campus and while the student is not in the attendance at a school-sponsored or school-related activity for felony offenses not in Title 5 Penal code
- Brought a Firearm to School or Unlawful Carrying of a Handgun, Location-restricted Knife, or club under Penal Code 46.02
- Conduct Containing the Elements of an Offense Relating to Prohibited Weapons Under Penal Code 46.05

- Arson
- Murder, capital murder, criminal attempt to commit murder, or capital murder
- Indecency with a child
- Aggravated kidnapping
- Buying and attempting to buy, attempting to sell marijuana, controlled substances or a dangerous drug
- Use, exhibition, or possession (even if not being carried on or about the student's person) of a club, illegal knife, or handgun
- Possession, distribution, exhibition, or use of any, pellet gun, ammunition, air gun, replica firearm or bomb, electronic stunning device, and other dangerous items
- Terroristic threat
- Assault under Penal Code Section 22.01(a)(1) against a school system employee, volunteer, or someone other than a school system employee or volunteer
- Aggravated assault under Penal Code Section 22.02 against a school system employee, volunteer or someone other than a school system employee or volunteer
- Sexual assault under Penal Code Section 22.011 or aggravated sexual assault under 22.021 against a school system employee, volunteer, or someone other than a school system employee or volunteer
- False Alarm/False Report
- Felony Controlled Substance Violation or Alcohol Violation
- Fighting/Mutual Combat
- Aggravated Robbery
- Manslaughter
- Criminally Negligent Homicide
- Engages in Deadly Conduct
- Student is required to register as a sex offender under Chapter 62 of the Code Of Criminal Procedure
- Continuous sexual abuse of young child or children under Penal Code §21.02 occurring on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property
- Serious misbehavior, as defined by TEC §37.007(c), while expelled to/placed in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP)
- Harassment Against an Employee of the School District under Texas Penal Code 42.07(a)(1), (2), (3), or (7) - TEC 37.006(a)(2)(G)
- Bullying - TEC 37.0052(b)
- Escalation Policy: Students who receive 4 or more Level III and/or Level IV suspensions in any academic year or engage in a one-time egregious behavior may escalate to DAEP placement or expulsion
- Criminal mischief (felony violation)

## Federal Firearms Act

YES Prep, as an open-enrollment charter school, shall expel a student, grade 3 or above, who brings, possesses at campus, including any setting that is under YES Prep's control or supervision for a campus activity, a firearm, as defined by 18 U.S.C. Section 921. The student must be expelled from the student's regular campus for a period of at least one year, unless the superintendent or other chief administrative officer of the campus chooses to modify the length of the expulsion in the case of an individual student (excluding grades 2<sup>nd</sup> and below).



## **Extracurricular Activities & School-Sponsored Events**

### **Co-Curricular Activities**

YES Prep offers a variety of extracurricular activities to students including athletic programming, clubs, affinity groups, performance teams, and student organizations as part of the YES Prep Student Experience. YES Prep believes offering opportunities in addition to rigorous classroom instruction allows students to engage in their campus community and develop skills that will prepare them for college and future leadership. Students who participate in co-curricular activities are held to a high standard of conduct and must comply with all YES Prep rules and policies. Co-curricular activity staff may apply additional, reasonable, and necessary rules unique to the activity for which they oversee, which have been approved by the campus administration in advance and shared with the participating students. For a complete list of opportunities, please see the Individual Campus Supplement or speak with the Director of Student Support.

### **Eligibility to Participate in Co-curricular Activities:**

Students must be prepared to follow all rules and regulations as determined by the performance staff, advisors, activity leads, and/or administrators.

Students must be in attendance for at least 50% of the academic day to participate in a performance or co-curricular activity that same day.

### **School-Sponsored Activities**

YES Prep holds campus-sponsored activities (for example Field Day, Prom, Commencement, etc.) for the enjoyment of YES Prep students and their guests. When attending a campus-sponsored activity, students are representing YES Prep and are still in the care of YES Prep Staff. As such, to ensure all campus-sponsored activities are safe and orderly and all YES Prep students are positively represented, students are held to the following expectations:

- Follow all campus rules and policies at the campus-sponsored event (on or off-campus)
- Secure approval for any non-YES Prep guests (see Non-YES Prep Students as Guest section)
- Students leave prior to the end of the activity for any reason may not re-enter the activity
- YES Prep students and their guests may be asked to leave an activity if they conduct themselves in an inappropriate manner or violate any rules set forth in this handbook. No money will be refunded.
- The dress code for each event will be determined by the campus administration. Students and guests who do not meet the dress code expectations will not be allowed to attend the event.
- Students who are absent from 50% or more of the school day are not allowed to attend or participate in any campus-sponsored events (athletic competitions, campus dances, theater performances, etc.) held on the day they were absent.
- Students expelled from YES Prep are not permitted to attend YES Prep sponsored activities (see section on Expulsion)

### **Non-YES Prep Student Guests**

For some events, the campus administration may allow each YES Prep student to invite one non-YES Prep student as a guest. To ensure that all campus-sponsored events are safe and orderly, the following guidelines have been put in place for both YES Prep student and their Non-YES Prep guests.

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- YES Prep students must seek approval and appropriate register the Non-YES Prep guests with the supervising administrator by the deadline set for the event.
- YES Prep students must provide the full name, age, and working telephone number of their guest prior to the activity. The supervising administrator may apply additional requirements such as a signature from the Non-YES Prep guest's campus administrator or a guardian phone call/conference.
- Once a guest is registered there is no substitution allowed.
- All Non-YES Prep students must have a ticket to enter the activity. The ticket should be purchased prior to the activity.
- The supervising administrator reserves the right to deny a person entrance into the activity and campus reserve the right to limit events solely to YES Prep students or any specific audience therein.

## Field Trips

YES Prep offers a variety of field trips throughout the year as rewards or additional learning opportunities. Field trips, including overnight trips if offered by the campus, are a privilege for students, and campus administrators have discretion to determine eligibility criteria for all field trips. Criteria may include good academic performance and effort, number of consequences assigned, number of suspensions, total number of absences, and past field trip behavior.

Students who are eligible to participate in field trips and fail to participate without properly notifying the campus will be responsible for paying any unrecoverable expenses incurred by the campus. Students who are ineligible to attend a field trip or who choose not to participate are still required to attend school that day and complete all work left by their teachers.

## YES Prep Athletics

### Overview of the Athletic Program

The YES Prep Athletic Department provides a rigorous athletic program which complements a challenging academic program in an unconditionally supportive environment. The Athletic Department uses a values-based approach to develop responsible leaders who demand excellence from themselves and their teammates on and off the field. YES Prep believes athletic programs are an extension of the overall YES Prep experience. YES Prep encourages all students to participate; however, it is a privilege to participate in athletic programming. That privilege is earned by each student athlete through their adherence to the rules and policies set forth in the YES Prep Student Handbook.

YES Prep participates in the Honor Charter Athletics League (HCAL). Sports offered at each campus can be found in the Individual Campus Supplement.

The guardian of any student participating in an athletic program must complete and turn in the following forms to the campus Athletic Director. Failure to do so will result in the student not being allowed to participate until completion:

- Complete Physical by a Certified Physician
- Assumption of Risk, Liability, and Indemnity Agreement
- Concussion Acknowledgement Form
- Student Cardiac Arrest Awareness Form
- Transportation Release Form
- Steroid Agreement Form and NFHS Captain's Course (High School Only)

## Athletic Expenses

Participating in YES Prep Athletics is a choice and a privilege. Please be aware that there will be expenses associated with your student's participation and that these expenses vary from team to team and are nonrefundable.

## Athletic Participation Fee

To provide a quality athletic experience, we ask that each guardian pay a non-refundable Athletic Participation Fee at the start of every season. This fee is going directly towards facilities, programs, and transportation costs. This fee needs to be paid in full by the designated due date assigned by the campus Athletic Department.

- Athletic fee maximums for student athletes will be \$75 for the 1<sup>st</sup> sport and may vary for additional sports played for the rest of the school year. This amount should not exceed \$150 in total. Any additional charges, such as fees for award banquets or supplemental athletic gear, is optional.
- Guardians should expect to pay an entry fee, in cash, for all athletic events they attend.
- For additional information regarding payment plans contact the campus Athletic Director.

## Athletic Fundraisers

Fundraisers are an integral part of the success and longevity of the Athletic Program. All student athletes are expected to participate in fundraisers set forth by the YES Prep Athletic Department. Those who wish to not participate in athletic fundraisers must notify the campus Athletic Director in advance and pay the specific amount that they were required to fundraise. All Athletic Fundraisers conducted by student athletes must follow the Fundraising Guidelines (see section on Fundraising)

## Student Athlete Expectations

Athletes are expected to incorporate team values and ideas on and off the playing field by developing strong character and positive leadership. Student athletes represent not only their campus but their system and community.

Student Athletes are expected to follow all campus policies and behavioral expectations outlined in the YES Prep Student Handbook and the Individual Campus Supplement. Failure to adhere to these policies will result in appropriate disciplinary action taken by the campus and potential removal from the Athletic Program.

Student Athletes are expected to:

- Have a medical and guardian clearance before trying out for any sport
- Remain eligible by maintaining a passing grade average in all classes
- Be present, prepared, and on time to all practices, games, and events
- Take care of all issued equipment and uniforms and return them in good condition
- Be in attendance for at least 50% of classes to be able to participate in any athletic event (practice, game, or meet) held that day
- Take care of their body, including reporting all injuries to coach (in or out of school), and seeing a physician if injury gets work
- Respect the game, officials, opposing team, drivers and transportation vehicles, and facilities
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship before, during, and after all practices and games
- Be modest when successful and be gracious in defeat
- Follow the Athletic Program Social Media Policy (see Social Media Policy Section)

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- Complete the NFHSlearn Captain's Training Course before participating in any game/meet during the first year of student athletic participation (High School Only)
- Meet all of the requirements in seasons and off season

In addition to being a role model during their respective seasons, athletes must embody the expectations of being leaders throughout the year. All student athletes will be assessed according to the following criteria and may be restricted from trying out or participating in the following seasons if they do not meet them. Rare considerations may be given to student athletes who do not meet the following criteria.

Expectations:

- Eligibility: passing all classes with a 70 or above (Eligibility will extend throughout the year and not be limited to the season in which the student athlete plays the sport)
- Discipline: have no more than 6 detentions, no level 4 offenses, no more than 2 level 3 infractions
- ADA: 1% higher than campus ADA goal

## **Athletic Program Social Media Policy**

Being a student athlete is a big responsibility, and people within the community look to student athletes as a reflection of YES Prep and the Athletic Program. Good sportsmanship extends beyond the playing or practice field, and student athletes must be conscientious of what they say about the YES Prep Athletic Program, their campus, and other athletes, students, and staff.

Under no circumstances is it okay for anyone affiliated with the YES Prep Athletics Program to write or post anything on their social media account or other people's social media accounts that could be interpreted as negative or derogatory towards a coach, teammate, official, opponent or any other individual. Consequences will be handled at the discretion of the campus Athletic Director, coach, and campus administration. Consequences will be a period of suspension from the team up to expulsion from the team determined by the Athletic Director.

## **Eligibility for Athletic Participation**

Eligibility rules and contest regulations keep competition equitable. According to HCAL standards, students are eligible to represent their campus in interscholastic activities if they are full-time students in the campus and have been in regular attendance at the campus since the 6<sup>th</sup> class day of the current school year or have been in regular attendance for 15 or more calendar days before the contest or competition.

### **High School**

- Are less than 19 years of age on or before September 1 preceding the contest or have been granted eligibility based on a disability that delayed their education by at least one year
- Have not graduated from high school

### **Middle School**

- Are less than 15 years of age on or before September 1 preceding the contest or have been granted eligibility based on a disability that delayed their education by at least one year.
- Students who turned 15 years old on or before September 1 and do not receive SPED, 504, or ELL services are too old to compete at the middle school level. These students must play at the high school level.
- 6<sup>th</sup> grade student athletes will be required to meet the academic eligibility requirements and have approval from the Director of Student Support.

## Academic Eligibility Policy

All student athletes are required to complete grade checks on the designated dates stated in the athletics eligibility calendar. This allows both the student athlete and coach to know their current academic standing.

### Report Card Check: Lose or Regain Eligibility

- If a student is passing all classes on their report card, they are academically eligible all term until the next report card check.
- 6<sup>th</sup> grade student athletes must have an 80% or above in all classes to be eligible to participate in athletic events.
- If a student athlete is failing a class on a designated grade check date, they will not be allowed to participate in athletic events until the grade is brought up to passing level (70% or higher) in all classes at the next designated 3-week grade check. Students will remain ineligible for 3 weeks after the grade check.
- Any student athlete who fails two consecutive report card grade checks (9-weeks) may be removed from athletics for the remainder of the season at the campus Athletic Directors' discretion.

### Progress Report Check (3-week Check): Regain Eligibility Only

- All athletes will complete the 3-week grade check.
- Players cannot lose eligibility due to progress report grades.
- An ineligible student athlete can regain eligibility with a progress report.

### Advanced Placement (AP) Consideration – High School Only

Student athletes must be passing AP English Language (if applicable) to be eligible for athletics. If a student athlete is taking other AP classes, they must be within 10 points of passing to be considered eligible for athletics.

## Guidelines for Ineligible Student Athletes

Student athletes who are currently ineligible to participate in a game or season are still held to the expectations outlined for all student athletes. As they work to regain eligibility, student athletes are expected to:

- Attend offered tutorials and/or seek extra help in a subject in which they are struggling.
- Attend all practices to support team unless attending tutorial or other requirement on established action plan.
- May not attend games with the team.
- Must meet the expectations of a student athlete.
- Not travel to away games, sit on the team's bench during the game, and miss class for any athletic-related event.

## Practice and Game Guidelines

Student athletes must notify the coach in advance if they will miss a practice or a game. Each student athlete is allowed up to three unexcused absences and five total absences per athletic season. Any absences past allowance may result in said student athlete's removal from team.

Unsportsmanlike conduct during a game will result in the reduction of playing time and/or suspension at discretion of a campus and athletic administration.

## **Athletic Consequence Policy**

Student athletes are expected to serve consequences on the day they receive it and are not allowed to participate in any athletic event the day they earn a consequence. Student athletes are subject to be removed from their athletic team if they receive three consequences in each season. Removal from the team for excessive consequences is at the discretion of the campus Athletic Director and campus administration.

## **Athletic Suspension Policy**

Student athletes are not allowed to participate in or attend any athletic practice or event during the duration of an in or out of school suspension. This includes after-school on the day they complete their suspension. The student athlete will serve a one-game suspension after the completion of the suspension. Student athletes may be subject to additional consequence depending on the severity of the offense that resulted in a suspension. Removal from the Athletics Program and/or team will be determined by the campus administrator and the campus Athletic Director.

## **Quitting a Team**

If a student athlete quits a team during an athletic season, they will not be allowed to tryout and/or play for any other athletic team for the remainder of the school year.

Guardians will be notified by either the coach or campus Athletic Director to discuss repercussions of quitting a YES Prep athletic team. Individual student circumstances or exceptions should be addressed with the campus Athletic Director.

## **Removal from YES Prep Athletic Team**

If a student athlete is removed from a YES Prep athletic team by either a head coach or the campus Athletic Director, said student athlete will not be allowed to participate in other sports for a calendar year. A meeting between the student athlete, guardian, coach, and campus Athletic Director will take place upon removal.

## **Varsity Letterman Jacket Requirements**

Student athletes who make a varsity athletic team are eligible to purchase a letterman jacket if the below minimum requirements were met during athletic season. Campuses may use their judgement in creating additional policies and requirements for receiving a letterman jacket.

- Student athlete has earned zero suspensions during the current school year
- Student athlete maintained academic eligibility throughout entire season
- Student athlete participated in a minimum of 90% of the season
- Student athlete has participated for two-years in the varsity sport in which they are lettering
- Schools that offer JV teams – athletic director's discretion of either two-year commitment or one-year commitment of varsity

If the student athlete meets the above requirements, then the Athletic Director will send home a memo detailing the specifics of purchasing a varsity letterman jacket.

## Late Pick Up Guidelines

Student athletes and guardians must follow the YES Prep Late Pick Up Policy outlined in the YES Prep Student Handbook. Athletic Directors have the discretion to take additional action for student athletes who are continually picked up late.

## Sports Injury Protocol

If a student athlete is injured during an athletic event, the coach will notify the guardian immediately. If said student athlete needs to be taken to a medical facility, then the student's primary insurance must be used. Each student plays at their own risk. Please contact [Wellness@yesprep.org](mailto:Wellness@yesprep.org) for all questions regarding the sport injury protocol of YES Prep.

## When to Seek Medical Treatment

It is advised to seek professional treatment if any injury is severe. A severe injury means having an obvious fracture or dislocation of a joint, prolonged swelling, or prolonged or severe pain. While many common acute injuries can be controlled with these four simple steps, especially when combined with over-the-counter pain relievers, more serious conditions may require surgery or physical therapy.

## Natasha's Law – HB 2038

Natasha's Law requires public high schools to create a concussion oversight team (COT) to serve as a resource to each campus. Baylor College of Medicine serves as our primary Concussion Oversight Team for YES Prep. A COT includes at least one certified physician and is responsible to develop the Return-to-Play protocol that all coaches must follow. Having pre-established guidelines allows coaches to avoid outside pressure and ensures that decisions are made with the player's best interests at heart.

In addition, any student showing signs of a concussion must be immediately removed from play and examined by a member of the concussion oversight team.

If it is determined that the player did suffer a concussion, he or she cannot participate in athletics until a doctor on the concussion oversight team has cleared the student to play. The doctor and guardian must complete the *Concussion Management Protocol Return to Play Form* and turn in to the Athletic Director before said student athlete can return.

Lastly, Natasha's law mandates coaches complete a two-hour educational training course covering the prevention, symptoms, and long-term effects of concussions every two years. Concussion symptoms can sometimes take days or weeks to develop and this additional training, combined with the medical experience of the concussion oversight team, will increase coaches' ability to recognize and properly diagnose a concussion on the sidelines.

# COLLEGE INITIATIVES

## College Acceptance

A student must be accepted to at least one four-year college or university to be eligible for a YES Prep Diploma, unless exempt from such requirements by the student's Admission Review Dismissal (ARD) committee or the YES Prep Board of Directors.

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## College Initiatives

Robust and comprehensive college counseling is a central component of the YES Prep College Initiatives program. YES Prep does this work to ensure students are accepted, matriculate and persist through college by exposing students to the five pillars of our College Initiatives programming—Seminar, College Advising, Student Opportunities, Alumni Support, and College Partnerships.

### Seminar

College Prep Seminar classes offer support with career exploration, identity exploration, academic readiness, and college application guidance and support. Seminar courses are offered in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. Students further develop their college-going identity, practice skills that will lead to college success, and complete parts of the college applications.

During Junior year, students receive an SAT test prep course as part of their Junior seminar course.

### College Advising

College Counselors meet one-on-one with students to guide them toward colleges that match their career aspirations, have strong support programs, and are financially affordable. YES Prep College Counselors work with families to help them understand financial aid award letters and determine which colleges are most affordable.

Students gain exposure to different colleges through tours, fly-in programs with IMPACT schools, and visits to YES Prep's College Fair. College visits or tours that fall during the school day and are not coordinated by YES Prep must have prior approval and authorization from a campus-based college counseling staff member to be considered for an excused absence.

### Student Opportunities

Throughout the school year, College Counselors advertise student opportunities that match student interests and goals. Engaging in student opportunities allows a student to build their resume and activities sections on college applications. At the same time, student opportunities expose students to extracurricular activities where students can learn and personally grow outside the classroom.

These programs include:

- Pre-college programs at universities
- Outdoor leadership programs
- Study abroad/semester campus programs
- Career field or special interest specific programs (ex. Computer camps, medical field interest programs)
- Job and community internship programs

Applications for opportunities are open throughout the year with many opportunities occurring either during the summer and weekends throughout the school year. Financial assistance for most programs is available.



## Alumni Support

YES Prep Alumni are eligible after graduation to receive services from the College Initiatives Department. This includes contact from either campus staff or the Alumni Support team who will reach out with information periodically, as well as access to college coaching.

In addition, our Alumni Support Team hosts several social events per year that provide an opportunity for students to interact with staff and faculty of YES Prep, as well as a variety of outside organizations. They will also receive updates via email and social media regarding guidance through their academic and professional challenges. Upon graduation, YES Prep students will immediately become a part of the Alumni Association and receive access to all networking events created by the Alumni Association leadership team. The College Initiatives Department will ensure students are supported in their post-high campus experiences.

## College Partnerships

The IMPACT College Partnership Program began in 2006 to boost college persistence for YES Prep graduates. The fact that over 90% of YES Prep's graduating Seniors are first-generation college-bound introduces a unique set of challenges for our students as they enter college. A strong emotional and academic support system at the college level, as well as the availability of financial aid, powerfully influences the likelihood of persistence.

YES Prep has partnerships with a diverse and impressive group of colleges and universities across the country to ensure these supports are available in college. These partnerships enable YES Prep students to enroll in "cohorts." These cohorts, or clusters, of students are designed to serve as mutually supportive communities within the larger college campus. Partner institutions provide structured support programs to complement YES Prep's college counseling curriculum. Additionally, YES Prep has purposely sought out and secured partnerships with colleges and universities willing to meet the full demonstrated financial need of selected students.

## Senate Bill 1843, Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB)

Senate Bill 1843 requires that each campus year each campus system and open-enrollment charter campus provide students in grades 10 through 12 an opportunity to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test and consult with a military recruiter.

Students grades 10 through 12 will have the option to opt into learning more about careers in the Military through the College Initiatives Department on their campus.

# OPERATIONS

## Campus Hours

Our [website](#) features the most updated academic calendars. The following school hours will apply to secondary campuses unless an alternate schedule or school closure is required.

| Days            | Campus Hours    |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Monday - Friday | 8:30am - 4:00pm |

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## Campus Communication to Families

YES Prep utilizes various technologies to communicate with families. Every technology relies on accurate contact information from guardians to receive messaging in a timely manner. Families should ensure their contact information is up to date and notify the campus front office if a **number, emergency contact, email address or physical address has changed.**

Families may receive communication from the system and campuses in the following ways:

- Individual phone calls and emails
- Family Notes Newsletter
- Social Media updates (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.)
- Updates through the Hero application on smartphones
- Automated calls, emails, and texts through SchoolMessenger
- Skyward Family Access
- ParentSquare

## **Family & Teacher 2-way Communication**

In addition to the methods listed above, families on secondary campuses with 2-way communication with teachers will utilize ParentSquare. Please ensure your ParentSquare account is active, and you are checking messages regularly.

Please note: This list may not be exhaustive, and YES Prep reserves the right to utilize additional communication channels as needed.

YES Prep is continually exploring new technologies to better communicate with families and provide updates about student performance, behavior, and campus events. These technologies include Skyward Family Access. Families will receive information about how to sign up for optional updates at campus registration, orientation, and open-house events.

The preferred method for families and students to contact teachers and campus staff is through Parent Square. If families cannot contact a staff member via Parent Square, they can contact staff member's email and professional phone numbers. Please leave clear, detailed messages, including a call back number with the family's name, student's name and grade level if leaving a voicemail. Staff email addresses and phone numbers are published on campus websites. Families should expect staff to respond to their emails, calls, and messages in 48 hours or less.

## Technology Use

All students will use a YES Prep provided laptop as part of their daily learning experience. By using a YES Prep device, a student agrees to be bound by [YES Prep Student Technology Device Use Agreement and Student Technology Policy](#) including but not limited to, being held responsible for safeguarding YES Prep's equipment, networks, and data and facing consequences for incurred damage. YES Prep policies and procedures may be adjusted from time to time due to the continually changing technology environment that requires adaptation to new conditions. The most updated versions of the YES Prep device policies and procedures, as well as resources and support for families and students, can be found at <https://www.yesprep.org/families/student-tech>.

## **Child Nutrition**

The purpose of Child Nutrition is to ensure that all students are ready to learn by having access to nutritious and appealing campus meals.

All meals are free of charge to students in the 2024-2025 school year. To keep this provision available to all students who attend YES Prep are encouraged to complete a Family Income Survey (one per household). YES Prep is required to collect and report this information to continue receiving funding for our dynamic education programming.

YES Prep's food service provider is Sodexo. Menus can be found on our website at [Student Meals - YES Prep Public Schools](#) and on the Sodexo So Happy App which can be downloaded on the App Store or Google Play Store.

Breakfast, lunch, supper, and snacks are available for students each school day. Guardians and/or people indicated on a student's emergency contact list are welcome to eat with their students following the guidelines indicated in the Individual Campus Supplement. Non-student meal prices are available on our Child Nutrition website at [Student Meals - YES Prep Public Schools](#).

## **Food Deliveries**

YES Prep strongly discourages lunch deliveries to students during the school day as this is a disruption to instruction. If a student forgets their lunch, they are encouraged to eat the school lunch provided daily by Sodexo. The Front Office will accept lunch if it does not become a habit or if it is due to a medical emergency. A guardian is the only individual who may provide food for their student. If lunch is dropped off at the Front Office by a guardian, the student will not be called to the Front Office to get the lunch. Guardians must pre-coordinate with students that they will drop off lunch to ensure the student knows to pick it up.

## **YES Prep Uniforms**

### **Dress Code Policy**

YES Prep Public Schools believes in the power of community and school pride while also deeply valuing a student's right to express their individuality without the fear of unnecessary discipline, body shaming, or the confines of gender norms. Students have the right to be treated equitably and dress code enforcement at YES Prep Public Schools will not create disparities, reinforce, or increase the marginalization of any group, nor will it be unfairly enforced more strictly against a student because of racial identity, ethnicity, gender expression, sexual orientation, cultural or religious identity, household income, body size or type, or body maturity.

YES Prep Public Schools' dress code policy is centered around values of equity and school pride. A dress code allows for individuality and campus-based pride dress options (YES Prep shirts, jackets) allows for community building. The dress code should be met each school day and should meet the expectations of system and campus guidelines. If a student's dress or accessory choice poses a concern for student physical or emotional safety, a campus administrator has the discretion to disallow the dress item.

YES Prep-based polos and campus spirit shirts or accessories will be sold by YES Prep Public Schools, containing the current school and official YES Prep logo and is distributed by the student's school or Athletic Department. YES Prep Public Schools also provides various outerwear options.

Families should refer to the Individual Campus Supplement for details on campus-specific daily expectations.

## **YES Prep Attire Merchandise**

YES Prep attire must be purchased through the YES Prep approved vendor website. The vendor web address is communicated throughout the school year and during summer prior to the start of school. Students are responsible for adhering to the campus dress code on the first day of school through the remainder of the school year.

Students with financial hardship can reach out to their Student Support Counselor for assistance with the purchase of YES Prep attire. Assistance will be determined based on need. For exchanges, returned merchandise should be returned to the front office. For more questions, please reach out to the campus Front Office team.

## **Backpack Policy**

To improve safety measures currently in place, YES Prep Public Schools will require all students to use clear or mesh backpacks. Small non-transparent bags no larger than 6" x 9" will be allowed for personal items, such as school supplies, cellphones, money and hygiene products.

Students participating in extracurricular activities are permitted to carry non-transparent bags to store items pertaining to their activity (i.e., athletics, dance, etc.). Upon entry into school, all extracurricular activity bags must be stored in lockers or designated areas.

Additionally, the maximum size for non-transparent bags permitted to carry during the school day, such as lunch kits and purses, will be 6"x 9"x 5".

Please see more details on the backpack policy, including Frequently Asked questions, at <https://www.yesprep.org/families/safety/backpack-policy>.

## **Student ID Cards**

All secondary students and staff are required to wear visible photo IDs while on campus. The student photo ID card is a required element of the secondary school uniform and can be used to move through lunch lines quickly and assign merits and demerits. Secondary students must adhere to these photo ID card expectations:

- IDs must be visible and worn around the neck with a lanyard
- IDs cannot be defaced with stickers, Sharpie, cutting, etc.

Secondary students receive their initial photo ID free of charge. Secondary students without a visible ID will earn a uniform violation demerit. If a student forgets their ID at home, they can request a temporary 24-hour ID from the campus Front Office. Lost IDs should be immediately returned to that student or to the campus Front Office. The campus Front Office will issue permanent replacement photo IDs for students who have lost their IDs for \$5 (ID card, lanyard, ID pouch). Students may also purchase a lanyard and pouch (no ID card) for \$1.

## **School-Sponsored Transportation**

The mission of the YES Prep Transportation Department is to provide safe, reliable, and efficient transportation daily so students across the system can get to school and maximize their time in the classroom. YES Prep also offers special transportation as a related service to qualifying students in

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Special Education and McKinney Vento Programs. For yellow bus services, YES Prep uses two different vendors: First Student and Huerta Bus. For private rideshare services, we use three vendors: FirstAlt, HopSkip Drive, and Adroit.

## **Bus Route Stops**

The transportation department creates stops for students who live within the campus priority zone and two or more miles from campus. If a student's residence meets these criteria, a bus stop will be provided within a mile of their home. Elementary and secondary buses operate separately. Siblings in elementary and secondary will not be allowed to ride the same bus.

- Stops are created with the safety of students in mind, and bus stops will be at locations that allow students to wait off the main roadway for the bus if possible.
- Stops are not placed in private gated communities, cul-de-sacs, or dead-end streets. Bus stops will be located at the corner of intersections that match the distance guidelines.
- Bus stops operated by First Student and Huerta Bus are not scheduled earlier than 6 a.m.
- Questions about eligibility for a bus stop or requests to make changes to a bus stop should be taken to the campus Front Office.

## **Student Bus Stop Expectations**

- Students must be present and ready to be picked up 10 minutes before the scheduled stop time.
- Students are expected to be out of their cars and waiting to board the bus.
- Drivers will not wait for late students.
- Bus drivers are instructed not to stop or open the door for late students once the bus begins to move for safety reasons.
- Students will only be permitted to ride the bus to which they are assigned.

While bus drivers aim to be on time at all stops, they must prioritize safety on the road. If a bus is running late, please reach out directly to the bus yard that corresponds to the campus. This information is available at [yesprep.org](http://yesprep.org) or at the campus Front Office. Guardians and students may use First View to track a student's bus in the morning and afternoon.

## **Student Bus Conduct & Behavior**

For transportation to run smoothly, students must adhere to the same campus behavior guidelines in this handbook while they are on the school bus. Some additional rules apply while riding the bus, which are detailed below. Any violation of these expectations may result in disciplinary action, including the loss of the privilege of being able to use the school bus.

Students are expected to know and follow bus rules in the following areas.

### **Before Boarding the Bus**

- Arrive at your designated stop at least ten minutes before your scheduled pick-up time. YES Prep will not send a bus to pick you up if you miss your bus because you were late.
- Be careful in the loading area. Wait in an orderly, single line for the bus to arrive and avoid horseplay. Stay off the street while waiting for the bus to arrive.
- Approach the bus entrance only after the bus has come to a complete stop. Pushing or shoving while boarding the bus will not be tolerated.

### **After Boarding the Bus**

- Obey the bus operator's directions.

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- Go to the closest available seat or your assigned seat and stay seated until you arrive at your destination. The bus operator may assign you a seat if, in his or her judgement, it is in the best interest of student safety.
- Speak in a classroom voice. Loud speech or laughter causes distractions for the driver. Rough-housing or horseplay on the bus will not be allowed and may result in a loss of transportation privileges.
- Use appropriate language and be courteous to the bus driver and other passengers.
- Keep the bus litter free. No food or drinks may be consumed on the bus.
- If you cause any damage to or vandalize a bus, you and your parent or guardian will be financially responsible, and you may permanently lose your transportation privileges.
- Never throw an object inside or out of the bus. Keep all parts of your body (head, hands, and arms) inside the bus.
- Observe the rules of good conduct and show courtesy to everyone. The use of profane language, rude gestures, or malicious behavior toward the bus operator, a fellow passenger, or another motorist will not be tolerated.
- For the safety of all passengers, aisles must be kept clear of all objects such as books, backpacks, musical instruments, packages, and coats.
- Items which are prohibited on school grounds may not be taken on a school bus, such as alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or weapons.

All provisions of the YES Prep Code of Student Conduct apply to students when being transported by YES Prep transportation services. Violations of the YES Prep Code of Student Conduct while on a YES Prep school bus will be referred to the appropriate campus administrator for disciplinary action. Conduct violations may result in a temporary or possible permanent loss of a student's transportation privileges.

### **Leaving The Bus**

- For safety purposes, if you live on the right side (bus exit side) of the street, get off the bus and walk towards the front of the bus so you can be seen by the driver.
- For safety purposes if you live on the left side of the street (across the street from the bus), leave the bus and walk about 15 feet towards the front of the bus. Watch for the driver's signal to indicate it is safe and walk to the left front fender of the bus. Stop and look in both directions to see if it is safe before proceeding across the street. Never cross the street behind the bus.
- For student safety, students may ride only their assigned bus and be discharged only at their assigned stop. Students must follow the directions of the driver to ensure safety.

### **Schools Bus Acts of Misconduct**

For transportation to run smoothly, students must adhere to the same [Code of Conduct guidelines](#) while they are on the school bus. Some additional rules apply while riding the bus, which are detailed below. Any violation of these expectations may result in disciplinary actions, including the loss of bus riding privilege.

## Consequences for School Bus Offenses

| Acts of Misconduct        | 1 <sup>st</sup> occurrence   | 2 <sup>nd</sup> occurrence  | 3 <sup>rd</sup> occurrence   | 4 <sup>th</sup> occurrence   |
|---------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| Level 1                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demerit for safety</li> <li>Written warning</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demerit for safety</li> <li>Written warning</li> </ul>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detention and family meeting</li> <li>Written warning</li> </ul>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detention and family meeting</li> <li>1 Day Bus Suspension</li> </ul>             |
| Level 2                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restorative Discipline Practice + Family Meeting</li> <li>1-3 Day Bus Suspension</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In school suspension + Family Meeting</li> <li>3-5-day bus suspension</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In student suspension + Family Meeting</li> <li>3-5-day bus suspension</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In student suspension + Family Meeting</li> <li>3-5-day bus suspension</li> </ul> |
| Level 3 / 4 (Termination) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Out-of-school suspension and possible disciplinary hearing</li> <li>Offenses will result in permanent loss of bus privileges for the remainder of the school year.</li> <li>Some acts may result in legal consequences. Please refer to the Acts of Misconduct for violation offenses.</li> </ul> |   |  |  |

YES Prep Public Schools has the discretion based on each incident to modify the above consequence policies. The transportation team reserves the right, when applicable and considering FERPA laws, to show proof of incident to a guardian of a child involved in a specific incident. A written statement of the incident with disciplinary action will be provided. Bus Behavior Contacts are responsible for responding to incident reports in a timely manner.

## Student Enrollment and Transfers

### Student Change of Address

Guardians must give the Registrar written notification of a student's change of address or phone number so that the campus can provide information to the family on a timely basis. For a change of address, a utility bill (gas, water, or light), lease agreement or address affidavit will need to be submitted to the campus Registrar.

### Withdrawal from School

A student withdrawing from campus must be accompanied by a guardian. The family must meet with a campus administrator prior to withdrawing and give the campus 24 hours to obtain withdrawal paperwork. Upon completion of the withdrawal form, all fees and fines must be paid, and all campus-owned materials must be returned in good condition. Any student who withdraws from YES Prep solely to attend another school system and wishes to return to YES Prep will be required to apply for re-entry through the lottery system.

### Transfer Policies

YES Prep allows current YES Prep students to transfer to a different YES Prep campus if approval is granted by both Principals and seats are available at the campus of preference.

## Requesting A Transfer

To request a student transfer, families should follow these guidelines.

- **Direct Communication:** Families must contact the current campus Registrar directly to initiate the transfer process.
- **Transfer Criteria:** The reason for transfer must align with one of the approved transfer reasons and supporting documentation must be reviewed for approval. The current campus must confirm space availability at the destination campus.
- **Skyward Processing:** All transfer requests are handled through Skyward, the student information platform for managing such requests.
- **Immediate Transfer Requests:** Families seeking immediate transfers should express their desire directly to the Registrar of the current campus.
- **Next Campus Year Transfer Requests:** For transfers planned for the next academic year, families should submit their transfer request to the Registrar, who will then initiate the process via Skyward and begin the transfer process.

Once all criteria are met, the current Registrar will proceed to initiate the Student Transfer Process Manager in Skyward. This ensures a streamlined and efficient transfer process for all parties involved. More information on the Student Transfer Process Manager in Skyward will be communicated to families.

## Additional Transfer Guidelines

Transfer requests are accepted all year round but are dependent on Principal approval and seat availability at the desired campus. Some requests may also require approval from the Head of School for each campus.

- Transfer requests may take up to 10 business days to be accepted or denied.
- Guardians can request a transfer if the student is currently enrolled at a YES Prep Campus.
- Transportation to and from the campus is only provided to students who live within the transportation zone for their YES Prep campus.

Students in Special Education may also transfer schools in order to access required services. Special Education transfers are initiated by the ARD Committee, and do not require guardian request.

## No-Show Policy

YES Prep is committed to serving the maximum number of students possible throughout Houston, and to prepare these students to graduate from college. To meet this goal, YES Prep asks that students return to school in August on the first day of school for YES Prep. The first day of school for YES Prep is published in the YES Prep yearly calendar, is communicated through Family Notes (newsletter distributed by campuses) and is available on the website.

Students who do not return for the first day of school in August are deemed “no-show students”. After the last Friday in August, all no-show students officially lose their seats at YES Prep. The seats formally occupied by no-show students will then become available to students on the YES Prep waiting list if the applicable campus has openings in that grade level.

If the no-show student seeks to return to YES Prep after the last Friday in August, the student will not be allowed to enroll immediately. Instead, the student must complete an application in the lottery to re-enroll. The student will be offered a seat when the student moves to the top of the waitlist for the applicable campus.

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# **School Safety Protocols and Policies**

## **Closed Campus Policy**

All students are required to stay on campus throughout the entirety of the school day upon arrival, except Seniors aged 18 years or older approved to leave campus early through the Regular Early Dismissal for Seniors policy included in this handbook. All students who are leaving campus must have an approved guardian or emergency contact check them out through the Front Office. All guardians must present a valid, non-expired, government-issued form of identification to be confirmed against the student records as authorized to check out the student. Guardians are not allowed to pick up students from any location on campus other than the campus Front Office. Additionally, any guest, including guardians and parents, who are remaining on campus for any reason will need to show proof of ID and will be run against the national sex offender database. Persons required to register as a sex offender—including parents, guardians, and listed emergency contacts—are not allowed to be on campus or campus property at any time. Visitors may not walk around campus unescorted. Persons found walking unescorted will be escorted back to the campus Front Office to check in.

## **Before and After School Expectations**

Students arriving to campus before the official beginning of the school day or staying after campus for activities or pick up by a guardian are required to remain in spaces designated by YES Prep staff to ensure student safety. Students must always be supervised by YES Prep staff while on campus. Students may be subject to disciplinary action for breaking this expectation. Specific procedures for before and after campus expectations, including designated locations for students, are outlined in the Individual Campus Supplement. All students should be collected by their guardian 30 minutes after the conclusion of any YES Prep school day and event, activity, and/or game.

## **Emergency School Cancellation**

In the event of dangerous weather condition, natural disaster, or some threat to health and/or safety, YES Prep will either cancel or delay the opening of school.

Announcements about campus closures or delays will be made via SchoolMessenger notifications (when information is available), social media and major news channels (whenever possible).

If a YES Prep campus is closed or dismisses early due to an emergency, all after campus activities are cancelled.

## **Carpool**

Any guardian dropping or picking up a student must adhere to all traffic guidelines detailed in the Individual Campus Supplement for each campus or as posted on each applicable campus. This includes observing laws and procedures for Fire Lanes, Traffic lane lines, directional signage, cones, and/or YES Prep Staff member instructions. The approved speed limit on all campus properties is 5 MPH. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in the police being called for assistance.

Any traffic violations, infractions, and/or accidents are subject to police investigation. The individual responsible for any damage caused to campus property, persons, or other vehicles on campus property will be held financially liable for their actions.

## Fire Lanes

Fire lanes are defined by the Fire Marshal's Office and must always remain clear. Vehicles left parked in a fire lane may be subject to towing at the owner's expense and/or ticketing by the Fire Marshal.

## Emergency Drills

All YES Prep campuses are required to run emergency drills and regularly test life safety equipment to ensure readiness in the case of an actual emergency.

Campuses are required to maintain logs of drills for the school year that include:

- Date of drill
- Time of drill
- Location of drill
- Outcomes
- Lessons learned
- Action items to address

All campuses must run the following drills at the following frequency each year, at a minimum:

- Evacuation (Fire): Monthly
- Evacuation (Fire) with Obstruction: 6 times annually (every other drill)
- Secure: Once per semester
- Shelter: Once per semester (different scenarios - e.g., tornado, hazardous material)
- Lockdown: Once per semester
- Hold: Once per semester

Everyone on campus must participate in drills by order of the Fire Marshal.

## Emergency Operations Plan and Training

All campuses have a Multi-hazard Emergency Operations Plan (MEOP) in place that outlines the protocols to execute in the event of an emergency. This plan is reviewed annually. Directors of Campus Operations present this plan to staff during staff in-service at the beginning of August. EOPs are not publicly available but are constructed in accordance with the nationally adopted Incident Command System (ICS).

All staff are required to complete FEMA accredited ICS 100 course on the Incident Command System annually.

## Emergency Notification Tools

All campuses are equipped with a notification system in each classroom and in most common areas. In the event of an emergency, this system (called Informacast) will be triggered, and messaging will be sounded throughout the campus.

In the event of an emergency, SchoolMessenger will be used to send either systemwide or campus specific messaging to families to provide an update on the situation. Families may receive an automated phone call or text message alert.

In the event of an emergency, social media platforms are NOT the primary mode of communication. Campus and/or system social media pages may publish updates, but guardians should not rely on these for up-to-date information in an emergency.

In the event of an emergency, guardians should be aware of the guidelines through which campuses handle emergencies. Emergencies may create a chaotic environment on campuses and require first responders to act. Guardians' presence on campuses can hinder the recovery effort or campus staff and first responders. Unless specifically instructed, guardians and other emergency contacts should not come to campus and attempt to pick up a student during an emergency.

## **Regular Early Dismissal for Seniors**

YES Prep Public Schools allows qualifying Seniors to have an early dismissal their last year on campus. Each campus will decide whether to enact this privilege on their campus.

A Senior can qualify for this privilege if they meet the following system requirements along with any campus-based requirements:

- They have completed all required elective courses by the previous semester (i.e. second semester Junior year or first semester Senior year)
- They are currently enrolled in all additional required electives as well as English, Math, Science, and Social Studies courses.
- Every student must be in class for at least four hours every day.
- This privilege can only be utilized at the end of the day.
- The early release time for each student that qualifies will be determined by the school administration and will be dependent on the qualifying student's schedule.
- Each campus has the discretion to set additional requirements for a student to qualify for this privilege.
- Each campus has the discretion to enact or not enact this privilege.

When all the preceding requirements are satisfied, the student may have the option to choose an early dismissal in lieu of taking extra electives if the campus offers this privilege and if any additional campus requirements are satisfied.

Every student is required to get guardian permission prior to getting approval from the campus. Students will only be allowed back on campus if they have an after-school activity. This privilege may be revoked if a student is failing any course at the end of the grading period or if the student commits an act of misconduct as outlined in the YES Prep Code of Conduct.

Campus administrators will have the final say in which students qualify for this privilege. More information about additional qualifications and the procedure students and families must follow regarding this policy can be found in the Individual Campus Supplement.

## **Student Drivers**

Any student who wishes to park on campus must apply through the campus Front Office. Student drivers must adhere to local traffic laws as well as all campus traffic guidelines. Students are not permitted to park on campus until they have been cleared by campus administration. Student vehicles parked in non-designated spaces are subject to towing at the owner's expense. This privilege can be revoked at any time and without prior infractions based on the circumstances of an incident. This will be determined by campus leadership.

The student must always display written permission (in the form of a pass or permit) while their vehicle is on campus. To obtain clearance to park on campus the student must bring the following to their campus Front Office: valid Texas driver's license, valid vehicle registration, and proof of

valid vehicle insurance accepted in Texas. Students without all required documents are not permitted to park on campus.

Campuses are limited in the amount of space available for parking. Campuses have discretion to limit the amount of spaces designated for student specific parking. Students who provide required documentation to park on campus will only be granted a parking spot and permit if space is available. Unauthorized vehicles will be towed at the owner's expense. Students that do not adhere to campus driving policies will be subject to disciplinary actions. Please see the Individual Campus Supplement for details about student parking on campus.

## **INDIVIDUAL CAMPUS SUPPLEMENTS**

Many sections in this handbook refer to an "Individual Campus Supplement". The Individual Campus Supplement outlines specific procedures campuses will take in connection with policies outlined in this handbook. Individual Campus Supplements for each campus may be found [Yesprep.org](http://Yesprep.org) on the campus page.