

*South San Antonio Independent School District*  
***Student-Parent Handbook***  
***2022-2023 School Year***



**Academic Policies & Procedures**  
**Acceptable Use of the District's Technology Resources**  
**District Policies & Procedures**  
**Student Code of Conduct**

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR.....STAAR Test Dates

### Elementary School

Date	Grade Level	Test
Tuesday, April 18, 2023	3, 4, 5	Reading
Tuesday, April 25, 2023	5	Science
Tuesday, May 2, 2023	3, 4, 5	Mathematics

### Middle School

Date	Grade Level	Test
Tuesday, April 18, 2023	6, 7, 8	Reading
Tuesday, April 25, 2023	8	Science
Wednesday, April 26, 2023	8	Social Studies
Tuesday, May 2, 2023	6, 7, 8	Mathematics

### High School

Date	Grade Level	Test
Tuesday, December 6, 2022	10-12 Retesters	English I EOC U.S. History EOC
Wednesday, December 7, 2022	10-12 Retesters	Algebra I EOC
Thursday, December 8, 2022	10-12 Retesters	English II EOC
Friday, December 9, 2022	10-12 Retesters	Biology EOC
Tuesday, April 18, 2023	9	English I EOC
Wednesday, April 19, 2023	10	English II EOC
Tuesday, April 25, 2023	9	Biology EOC
Wednesday, April 26, 2023	11	U.S. History EOC
Tuesday, May 2, 2023	9	Algebra I EOC

## 2022-2023 SSAISD Campus Administration & Support Facilities Listing

Campus	Principal	Behavior Coordinator/ Assistant Principal	Attendance Office	Counselor	Nurse
<b>Armstrong Elem</b> 7111 Apple Valley, 78242 210-623-8787 FAX 210-977-7061	Jose Luevanos	Laura Ramirez	Eva Salazar	Sylvia Sosa	Marlene Hall
<b>Athens Elem</b> 2707 W. Gerald, 78211 210-977-7055 FAX 210-928-9040	Evelia Montemayor	John Gonzalez	Marie Contreras	Patricia Lopez	Karen Baldwin
<b>Benavidez Elem</b> 8340 I-35 Access Rd, 78224 210-977-7175 FAX 210-977-7466	Vanessa Dominguez	Leticia Vasquez	Erica Soto	Suzanne Bratcher	Kimberly Willis
<b>Carrillo Elem</b> 500 Price Ave, 78211 210-977-7550 FAX 210-977-7312	Joann Buchanan	Ramona Vedia	Frances Flores	Cynthia Farr	Krystal Morales
<b>Five Palms Elem</b> 7138 Five Palms, 78242 210-645-3850 FAX 210-977-7064	Greg Martinez	Jacob Gonzales	Ashlyn Gusme	Leslie Lizalde	Kerrie Sutton
<b>Frank Madla Elem</b> 6100 Royalgate, 78242 210-645-3800 FAX 210-977-7059	Flo Castillo	Bette Jackson	Judi Delgado	Leonor Delgado	Aurora Valderas
<b>Hutchins Elem</b> 1919 W. Hutchins Pl, 78224 210-977-7200 FAX 210-977-7013	Sandra Sandoval	Charles Garcia	Zenaida Guerra	Alyssa Gomez	Dianza Gomez
<b>Kindred Elem</b> 7811 Kindred St, 78224 210-977-7575 FAX 210-977-7063	Eric Boysen	Sandra Lomas	Roxanna Martinez	Norma Gomez	Natalia Rasche

<b>Palo Alto Elem</b> 1725 Palo Alto Rd, 78211 210-977-7125 FAX 210-977-7018	Frank Zavala	Vacancy	Alex Serrata	Anna Lisa Sanchez	Karla Carlock
<b>Price Elem</b> 245 Price Ave, 78211 210-977-7225 FAX 210-977-7311	Laura Hernandez-Lopez	Christian Sanchez	Guadalupe Cantu	Valerie Dykes	Elizabeth Medrano
<b>Dwight Middle</b> 2454 W. Southcross, 78211 210-977-7300 FAX 210-977-7313	Elizabeth Sandoval	Eduardo Narezo	Michelle Elias	Jesse Lopez	Melissa Jorge
<b>Kazen Middle</b> 1520 Gillette Blvd, 78224 210-977-7470 FAZ 210-977-7016	Judith Benavidez	Larry Machado	Sandra Castillo	Ana Flores	Christina Seely
<b>Shepard Middle</b> 5558 Ray Ellison, 78242 210-623-1875 FAX 210-977-7058	Juan Garza	Richard Castro	Carolina Mora	Linda Suttner	Leticia Arce
<b>Zamora Middle</b> 8638 Larkia Lane, 78224 210-977-7278 FAX 210-977-7008	Donna Gomez	Samantha Lopez	Lisa Agis	Maria Spain	Carolyn Wallace
<b>South San HS</b> 7535 Barlite Blvd, 78224 210-977-7400 FAX 210-977-7358	Erika Almendarez	Aaron Galaviz		John Davila	Nicole Martinez & Desiree Flores
<b>West Campus HS</b> 5622 Ray Ellison, 78242 210-977-7015 FAX 210-977-7021	John Zamora	David Villalobos		Elias Portillo	Kristen Nelson
<b>DAEP</b> District Alternative Education Program 8634 Larkia St, 78224 210-475-4406 FAX 210-	Gary Long	-	Gina Rojas	Betty Iredale	Carolyn Wallace



## RESOURCES AVAILABLE WITHIN THE DISTRICT

The following programs are available in the District to assist you and your child. You may call the appropriate telephone number for assistance in each area of concern.

**Advanced Academics (210) 977-7000 ext. 3520**

Questions regarding GT testing; honors, Pre-AP and AP programs

**Assessment and Accountability (210) 977-7000 ext. 3599**

Questions regarding state testing, Skyward Family Access, records requests or discipline hearings

**Attendance (210) 996-9149**

Questions regarding student non-attendance/truancy, drop-out prevention, and enrollment

**Athletics (210) 977-7390**

Questions regarding campus athletic programs

**Bilingual/ESL/Migrant (210) 977-7000 ext. 3682**

Questions regarding difficulties in language other than English that may be spoken or migrant students

**CareZone (210) 977-7033**

Questions regarding mental health counseling, food pantry, clothing and other social services

**Chief Academic Officer (210) 977-7000 ext. 3563**

Questions relating to the elementary and secondary school operations, curriculum, and administration

**Child Nutrition (210) 977-7525**

Questions regarding special dietary needs or campus cafeterias

**Community Education (210) 977-7304**

Questions relating to GED programs and adult education

**Early Childhood Program (210) 977-7000 ext. 3612**

Questions regarding the district Pre-kindergarten program

**Early College High School (210) 977-7000 ext. 3425**

Questions regarding the Early College High School program with Palo Alto College

**Guidance and Counseling (210) 977-7000 ext. 3578**

Questions regarding school counseling services, families that are homeless, and students in foster care

**Health Services (210) 977-7000 ext. 3636**

Questions regarding immunizations, medications, and other health concerns

**Special Education (210) 977-7000 ext. 3583**

Questions about programs relating to emotionally or physically disabled students, 504 services and homebound services

**Transportation (210) 977-7000 ext. 3530**

Questions regarding bus transportation

**South San Antonio Independent School District Police (210) 977-7500**

**SOUTH SAN ANTONIO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Central Administration Office**  
**1450 Gillette Blvd**  
**San Antonio, TX 78224**  
**(210) 977-7000**  
[www.southsanisd.net](http://www.southsanisd.net)

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

President.....Ernesto Arrellano, Jr., District 2

Vice President .....Shirley Ibarra, District 4

Secretary.....Gina Villagomez, District 1

Trustee.....Homer Flores, District 3

Trustee.....Connie Prado, District 5

Trustee.....Gilbert F. Rodriguez, District 6

Trustee.....Stacey E. Alderete, District 7

**ADMINISTRATION**

Interim Superintendent.....Henry Yzaguirre

Chief Financial Officer.....Tony Kingman

Chief Academic Officer.....Millicent Marcha

Executive Director of Curriculum & Instruction.....Joel Gaines

Executive Director of Student Services.....VACANT

Executive Director of Human Resources.....Maximilian Flores

Director of Communications and Marketing.....Alexis Castillo

Director of Purchasing.....Andy Rocha

Chief of Police.....Eugene Tovar

*South San Antonio Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, or disability in providing education or providing access to benefits of education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.*



**PROTECT \* PREVENT \* PARTICIPATE**  
*Have a concern? Let us know. It's Anonymous. 24/7.*  
**South San Antonio ISD - P3 Anonymous Reporting**

**“like” us on Facebook:**



**South San Antonio ISD**  
@southsanantonioid · Public School

Follow us on Twitter:

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Catch South San on our YouTube channel.



<https://www.youtube.com/user/southsanantonio>



# ALL VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS ON CAMPUS ARE SCREENED THROUGH THE NATIONAL SEX OFFENDER AND CRIMINAL DATABASE.

## CAMPUS VISITORS

All Visitors are required to show a **government issued picture I.D.**, register in the Front Office with the receptionist and indicate the reason for visiting the campus. They are also required to sign-out prior to leaving the campus. Upon sign-in, all Visitors will receive a Visitor's Pass to wear while on campus.

## STUDENT SIGN-OUT

When it is necessary for a student to leave school early, the parent/guardian should come to the attendance office to sign the student out. The parent/guardian signing out the student will be screened through our visitor management system. Students will not be called out of their class until the parent/guardian has arrived at the attendance office. For the safety of our students, no student will be released from any of the SSAISD campuses without a proper parent/guardian **government issued picture I.D.** and verification that the person is on the student contact list.

## NO SIGN-OUTS 30 MINUTES BEFORE THE END OF THE DAY

Administrators, teachers and office staff must prepare for the end of the school day. In order to allow for a smooth end-of-day transition, please refrain from signing out your child 30 minutes prior to the end of the school day. In the event of an emergency, please contact the school directly. We appreciate your support.

## NO SIGNING OUT AFTER:

Elementary School....**2:30 pm** (school ends at 3:00pm)  
Middle School.....**3:15 pm** (school ends at 3:45 pm)  
High School.....**4:00 pm** (school ends at 4:30pm)

## Table of Contents

District Calendar	1
Important Test Dates	2
2022-2023 SSAISD Campus Administration & Support Facilities Listing	3
Resources available within the District	5
SSAISD Central Office Administration	6
Skyward Family Access / SSAISD Social Media	7
Campus Visitors/Student Sign Out	8
Table of Contents	9
Preface	13
Accessibility	14
<b>Section One: Parental Rights</b>	<b>15</b>
Consent, Opt-Out, and Refusal Rights	15
Removing a Student from Instruction or Excusing a Student from a Required Component of Instruction	22
Right of Access to Student Records, Curriculum Materials & District Records/Policies	24
A Student with Exceptionalities or Special Circumstances	29
<b>Section Two: Other Important Information for Parents and Students</b>	<b>36</b>
Absences/Attendance	36
Academic Integrity	42
Accountability under State and Federal Law	42
Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Test	43
Awards and Honors	43
Bullying	43
Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Other Work-Based Programs	45
Celebrations	47
Child Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, & Other Maltreatment of Children	47
Class Interruptions	50
Class Rank/Highest-Ranking Student	50
Class Schedules	52
College and University Admissions and Financial Aid	53
College Credit Courses	54
Communications	54
Complaints and Concerns	55
Conduct	56
Counseling	58
Course Credit	59
Credit by Exam—If a Student Has Taken the Course	59
Credit by Exam for Advancement/Acceleration—Student Has Not Taken the Course	60
Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation	61
Discrimination	65
Distance Learning	65
Distribution of Literature, Published Materials, or Other Documents	65
Dress and Grooming	66

Electronic Devices and Technology Resources 69  
End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments 71  
Emergent English Learners 71  
Enrollment 71  
Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations 74  
Fees 75  
Fundraising 76  
Gang-Free Zones 77  
Gender-Based Harassment 77  
Grade-Level Classification 77  
Grading 78  
Grading Guidelines 79  
Graduation 79  
Harassment 88  
Hazing 88  
Health—Physical and Mental 88  
Health-Related Resources, Policies, and Procedures 97  
Homework 99  
Law Enforcement Agencies 99  
Leaving Campus 101  
Lost and Found 102  
Makeup Work 102  
Married and/or Pregnant Students 103  
Nondiscrimination Statement 104  
Nontraditional Academic Programs 105  
Parent and Family Engagement 105  
Parent-Teacher Conferences 106  
Parking and Parking Permits 106  
Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence 107  
Prayer 107  
Promotion and Retention 107  
Release of Students from School 108  
Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences 108  
Retaliation 109  
Safety 109  
SAT, ACT, and Other Standardized Tests 111  
Schedule Changes 111  
School Facilities 111  
School-Sponsored Field Trips 114  
Searches 115  
Sexual Harassment 116  
Special Programs 116  
Standardized Testing 116  
Students in Foster Care 119

Students Who are Homeless 120  
Student Speakers 120  
Summer School 120  
Tardies 120  
Textbooks, E-books, Tech Equipment, and Other Instructional Materials 120  
Transfers 121  
Transportation 124  
Vandalism 125  
Video Cameras 125  
Visitors to the School 126  
Volunteers 127  
Voter Registration 128  
Withdrawing from School 128

**Glossary 129**

**Appendix: Freedom from Bullying Policy 132**

Student Welfare: Freedom from Bullying 132

**Section Three: Student Code of Conduct 136**

Accessibility 137  
Purpose 137  
Campus Behavior Coordinators Directory 138  
South San Antonio ISD Believes 139  
School District Authority and Jurisdiction 139  
Campus Behavior Coordinator 140  
Threat Assessment and Safe and Supportive School Team 140  
Searches 140  
Reporting Crimes 140  
Security Personnel 140  
“Parent” Defined 142  
Participating in Graduation Activities 142  
Unauthorized Persons 142  
Responsibilities of Community Members 143  
Student Responsibility and District Expectations 143  
Parent and/or Guardian Responsibility 143  
Teacher Responsibility 144  
Counselor Responsibility 144  
Administrator Responsibility 145  
General Conduct Violations 146  
Disregard for Authority 146  
Mistreatment of Others 146  
Property Offenses 147  
Possession of Prohibited Items 147  
Possession of Telecommunications or Other Electronic Devices 148  
Illegal, Prescription, and Over-the-Counter Drugs 148  
Misuse of Technology Resources and the Internet 148  
Safety Transgressions 149  
Miscellaneous Offenses 149  
Discipline Management 150  
Students with Disabilities 151

Discipline Techniques 151  
Removal from the School Bus 152  
Removal from the Regular Educational Setting 153  
Notification of Discipline 153  
Appeals 153  
Routine Referral 154  
Out-of-School Suspension 154  
Misconduct 154  
Process 155  
Coursework During Suspension 155  
Categories of Offenses 156  
Category I Offenses - Mandatory Expulsions 156  
Provision for Appeal of Student Expulsions 157  
Category II Offenses 158  
Category III Offenses 162  
Category IV Offenses 165  
Student Withdrawal Prior to Discipline 168  
Criminal Trespass Warning (CTW) 168  
Additional Disciplinary Information/Procedures 169  
Alcohol and Other Drugs 169  
Drug Free Schools 169  
Bullying 170  
Distribution of Non-school Materials 172  
Falsely Accusing Others of Misconduct 172  
Fighting (Mutual Combat) 172  
Gang/Crew Activity 173  
Gang-Free Zones 173  
Gang Law Violations 173  
Hazing 174  
Threats 174  
Terroristic Threats 174  
False Alarm or Bomb Threat 175  
General Threats to Student, Staff and/or Schools 175  
Title IX - Dating Violence, Sexual and Gender-based Harrassement 175  
Tobacco/Vape Products on School Property 177  
Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources 177  
Unauthorized Organizations 178  
Weapons/Explosives 178  
Glossary 180

## PREFACE

Welcome to the 2022-2023 school year. South San Antonio ISD is celebrating our 100th year of educating and serving families on the southside of San Antonio - *that is 4 generations of families!* We know that education is a team effort. Let us continue the South San tradition of students, parents, teachers, and other staff members working together to make this a successful year.

The South San Antonio ISD Student-Parent Handbook is a general reference guide that is divided into three sections:

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

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

**Section Three: Student Code of Conduct** as required by Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code, provides methods and options for managing student behavior, preventing and intervening in student discipline problems, and imposing discipline.

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

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

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

Therefore, parents and students should become familiar with the South San Antonio ISD Student Code of Conduct. State law requires that the Code of Conduct be prominently displayed or made available for review at each campus.

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

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

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

**Note:** References to board policy codes are included for ease of reference. The hard copy of the district's official policy manual is available for review in the district administration office, and an unofficial electronic copy is available at [southsanisd.net](http://southsanisd.net).

The policy manual includes:

- Legally referenced (LEGAL) policies that contain provisions from federal and state laws and regulations, case law, and other legal authorities that provide the legal framework for school districts.
- Board-adopted (LOCAL) policies that articulate the board's choices and values regarding district practices.

For questions about the material in this handbook, please contact a teacher, school counselor, or a campus administrator.

Complete and return to the student's campus the following forms (provided in the forms packet distributed at the beginning of the year or upon enrollment):

- Acknowledgment of Electronic Distribution of Student Handbook,
- Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information,
- Parent's Objection to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education (if you choose to restrict the release of information to these entities), and
- Consent/Opt-Out Form for participation in third-party surveys.

[See **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** and **Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey** for more information.]

### **Accessibility**

If you have difficulty accessing the information in this document on our website because of a disability, please contact:

Alexis Castillo  
Director of Communication  
alexis.castillo@southsanisd.net  
210-977-7005

## **Section One: Parental Rights**

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

### **Consent, Opt-Out, and Refusal Rights**

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

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

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

#### **Consent to Human Sexuality Instruction**

##### ***Annual Notification***

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

Students enrolled in a Health course or in a course receiving a Health waiver at the high school level will be discussing many topics including abstinence, sexually transmitted diseases (including AIDS/HIV) and reproduction. For further information, please visit with campus administration.

In accordance with state law, a parent may:

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

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

- Present abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice in relationship to all sexual activity for unmarried persons of school age;
- Devote more attention to abstinence from sexual activity than to any other behavior;



- Emphasize that abstinence, if used consistently and correctly, is the only method that is 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity;
- Direct adolescents to abstain from sexual activity before marriage as the most effective way to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases; and
- If included in the content of the curriculum, teach contraception and condom use in terms of human use reality rates instead of theoretical laboratory rates.

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

### ***Consent Before Human Sexuality Instruction***

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

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

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

### ***Annual Notification***

Students in middle school and high school receive instruction related to the prevention of child abuse, family violence, dating violence, and sex trafficking. The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) makes recommendations for curriculum materials for such instruction.

The District provides annual training to employees as required by law and District policy. Training addresses techniques to prevent and recognize sexual abuse, trafficking, and all other maltreatment of children, including children with significant cognitive disabilities. For further information you may access FFG (Local).

In accordance with state law, a parent may:

- Review, receive a copy of, or purchase a copy of curriculum materials depending on the copyright of the materials. As required by law, any curriculum materials in the public domain used in this instruction will be posted on the district's website at the location indicated above.
- Remove his or her child from any part of this instruction without academic, disciplinary, or other penalties.
- Become involved in the development of this curriculum by becoming a member of the district's SHAC or attending SHAC meetings. (See the campus principal for details.)

- Use the district’s grievance procedure concerning a complaint. See **Complaints and Concerns (All Grade Levels)** and FNG for information on the grievance and appeals process.

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

### **Consent to Provide a Mental Health Care Service**

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

The district has established procedures for recommending to a parent an intervention for a student with early warning signs of mental health concerns, substance abuse, or suicide risk. A district mental health professional will notify the student’s parent within a reasonable amount of time after learning that a student has displayed early warning signs and provide information about available counseling options. The district mental health professionals consist of the School Counselors, At-Risk Counselors, Social Workers, and our Mental Health Collaborative Partners.

South San Antonio ISD has partnered with the San Antonio Mobile Mental Wellness Collaborative to offer no-cost mental wellness services at the SSAISD CARE Zone, which is located at 2707 W. Gerald, San Antonio, TX 78211. These evidence-based services include: individual, group, family, and substance abuse counseling, as well as psychiatry, and community education groups.

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

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

The district has established procedures for staff to notify the district mental health professionals regarding a student who may need intervention.

For more information regarding our Guidance and Counseling Program or the SSAISD CARE Zone please contact :

Carlos (Charlie) F. Gallardo  
Director of Guidance & Counseling  
[cgallardo@southsanisd.net](mailto:cgallardo@southsanisd.net)  
210-977-7000 ext. 3578

Ron Flores  
Licensed Social Worker  
[ronald.flores@southsanisd.net](mailto:ronald.flores@southsanisd.net)  
210-977-7033

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

[See **Mental Health Support**]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **The Use of Corporal Punishment**

The Board prohibits the use of corporal punishment in the District. Students shall not be spanked, paddled, or subjected to other physical force as a means of discipline for violations of the Student Code of Conduct.

## **Limiting Electronic Communications between Students and District Employees**

The district permits teachers and other approved employees to use electronic communications with students within the scope of professional responsibilities, as described by district guidelines. For example, a teacher may send a text or create a social networking page, such as Google Classroom, for his or her class to relay information regarding class work, homework, and tests. As a parent, you are welcome to receive texts or become a member of the networking pages.

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

The employee is required to include his or her immediate supervisor and the student's parent as recipients on all text messages.

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

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

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, permits the district to disclose appropriately designated “directory information” from a student’s education records without written consent.

“Directory information” is information that, if released, is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy. Examples include:

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

Directory information will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it. However, a parent or eligible student may object to the release of this information. Any objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days of the student’s first day of instruction for this school year. [See **Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent’s Response Regarding Release of Student Information**, included in the forms packet.]

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

The district has identified the following as directory information: student name; address; telephone listing; electronic mail address; photograph; date and place of birth; major field of study; degrees, honors, and awards received; dates of attendance; grade level; most recent educational institution attended; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; and weight and height of members of athletic teams. If a parent objects to the release of the student’s information included on the directory information response form, this objection also applies to the use of that information for school-sponsored purposes, such as:

- Honor roll,
- School newspaper,
- Yearbook,
- Recognition activities,
- News releases, and
- Athletic programs.

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

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

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

- Name,
- Address, and
- Telephone listing.

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

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

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

#### ***Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey***

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

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

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

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

#### ***"Opting Out" of Participation in Other Types of Surveys or Screenings and the Disclosure of Personal Information***

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

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

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

A parent may inspect:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **EHBK(LEGAL)**

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

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

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

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

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

[See **Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence** and policy EC(LEGAL) for more information.]

## **Religious or Moral Beliefs**

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

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

## **Tutoring or Test Preparation**

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

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

The school will always attempt to provide tutoring and strategies for test-taking in ways that prevent removal from other instruction as much as possible.

In accordance with state law and policy EC, districts must obtain parental permission before removing a student from a regularly scheduled class for remedial tutoring or test preparation for more than ten percent of the days the class is offered.

Under state law, students with grades below 70 for a reporting period are required to attend tutorial services—if the district offers these services.

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



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

### **Instructional Materials**

A parent has the right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum, and to examine tests that have been administered, whether instruction is delivered in-person, virtually, or remotely. The district will provide login credentials to each student's parent for any learning management system or online learning portal used in instruction to facilitate parent access and review.

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

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

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

A noncustodial parent may request in writing that he or she be provided, for the remainder of the school year, a copy of any written notice usually provided to a parent related to his or her child's misconduct that may involve placement in a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) or expulsion. [See the Student Code of Conduct and policy FO(LEGAL) for more information.]

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

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

### **Student Records**

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

A parent may review his or her child's records. These records include:

- Attendance records;
- Test scores;
- Grades;
- Disciplinary records;
- Counseling records;
- Psychological records;
- Applications for admission;
- Health and immunization information;
- Other medical records;

- Teacher and school counselor evaluations;
- Reports of behavioral patterns;
- Records relating to assistance provided for learning difficulties, including information collected regarding any intervention strategies used with the child, as the term “intervention strategy” is defined by law;
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to the child; and
- Teaching materials and tests used in the child’s classroom.

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

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

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

- Inspect and review student records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access;
- Request an amendment to a student record the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of FERPA;
- Provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information from the student’s records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent; and
- [File a complaint](https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/file-a-complaint) (<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/file-a-complaint>) with the U.S. Department of Education concerning failures by the school to comply with FERPA requirements.

Both FERPA and state laws safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and eligible students certain rights of privacy.

Before disclosing personally identifiable information from a student’s records, the district must verify the identity of the person, including a parent or the student, requesting the information.

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

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

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

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

However, the parent may continue to have access to the records if the student is a dependent for tax purposes and, under limited circumstances, when there is a threat to the health and safety of the student or other individuals.

FERPA permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's education records without written consent of the parent or eligible student when school officials have what federal law refers to as a "legitimate educational interest" in a student's records.

Legitimate educational interest may include:

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

School officials may include:

- Board members and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals;
- Teachers, school counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff (including district health or medical staff);
- A person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a specific institutional service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, third-party vendor that offers online programs or software, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, school resource officer, or volunteer);
- A person appointed to serve on a team to support the district's safe and supportive school program;
- A parent or student serving on a school committee; or
- A parent or student assisting a school official in the performance of his or her duties.

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

- To authorized representatives of various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers, the U.S. Comptroller General's office, the U.S. Attorney General's office, the U.S. Secretary of Education, the Texas Education Agency, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture's office, and Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers or, in certain cases, other child welfare representatives.
- To individuals or entities granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- To another school, district/system, or postsecondary educational institution to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which the student already is enrolled.
- In connection with financial aid for which a student has applied or has received.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions.

- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; administer student aid programs; or improve instruction.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- When the district discloses directory information-designated details. [See **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** to prohibit this disclosure.]

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

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

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

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

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

You may contact the campus registrar's office for records of currently enrolled students or for students who have withdrawn from the district.

The custodian of records for students who have graduated within 5 years is:

Adrienne Gamez  
 Registrar  
 South San High School  
 7535 Barlite Blvd., San Antonio, TX 78224  
 adrgamez@southsanisd.net  
 210-977-7400

The custodian of records for students who have withdrawn or graduated in over 5 years is:

Susan Harrington  
 Records Specialist  
 1450 Gillette Blvd., San Antonio, TX 78224  
 susan.harrington@southsanisd.net  
 210-977-7000 ext. 3608

A parent or eligible student may inspect the student's records and request a correction or amendment if the records are considered inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights.

A request to correct a student's record should be submitted to the appropriate records custodian. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected and include an explanation of how the information is inaccurate. If the district denies the request to amend the records, the parent or eligible student has the right to request a hearing. If after the hearing the records are not amended, the parent or eligible student has 30 school days to place a statement in the student's record.

Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student's grade in a course or on an examination is handled through the complaint process found in policy FNG(LOCAL). A grade issued by a teacher can be changed only if the board of trustees determines that the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or inconsistent with the district's grading guidelines.

[See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences, Complaints and Concerns**, and Finality of Grades at Policy FNG(LEGAL).]

The district's student records policy is found at policy FL(LEGAL) and (LOCAL) and is available at the principal's or superintendent's office or on the district's website at [southsanisd.net](http://southsanisd.net).

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

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

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

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

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

## **A Student with Exceptionalities or Special Circumstances**

### **Children of Military Families**

The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children entitles children of military families to flexibility regarding certain district and state requirements, including:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The board may transfer a student who has engaged in bullying to another classroom. The board will consult with the parent of a child who has engaged in bullying before deciding to transfer the child to another campus.

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

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

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

[See policy FDE for more information.]

The board will honor a parent's request for the transfer of his or her child to another district campus if the child has been the victim of sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether the assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for the assault. In accordance with policy FDE, if the victim does not wish to transfer, the board will transfer the assailant.

### **Student Use of a Service/Assistance Animal**

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

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

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

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

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

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

If a student in grade 11 or 12 transfers to another district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, the student can request a diploma from the previous district if the student meets its graduation criteria.

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

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

[See **Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration, Course Credit, and Students in Foster Care.**]

### **A Student Who Is Homeless**

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

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

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

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



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

[See **Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration, Course Credit, and Students who are Homeless.**]

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

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

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

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

#### ***Special Education Referrals***

If a parent makes a written request for an initial evaluation for special education services to the director of special education services or to a district administrative employee of the school district, the district must respond no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, the district must give the parent prior written notice of whether it agrees or refuses to evaluate the student, along with a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*. If the district agrees to evaluate the student, it must also give the parent the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

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

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

There is an exception to the 45-school-day timeline. If the district receives a parent's consent for the initial evaluation at least 35 but less than 45 school days before the last instructional day of the school year, it must complete the written report and provide a copy of the report to the parent by June 30 of that year. However, if the student is absent from school for three or more days during the evaluation period, the June 30 due date no longer applies. Instead, the general timeline of 45 school days plus extensions for absences of three or more days will apply. Upon completing the evaluation, the district must give the parent a copy of the evaluation report at no cost. Additional information regarding special education is available from the school district in a companion document titled *Parent's Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process*.

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

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

Julie Silva  
Director of Special Education  
julie.silva@southsanisd.net  
210-977-7000 ext. 3583

For questions regarding post-secondary transitions, including the transition from education to employment, for students receiving special education services, contact the student's campus counselor. Information regarding employment for people with disabilities can also be found at [www.twc.texas.gov](http://www.twc.texas.gov)

### **Section 504 Referrals**

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

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

### **Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals**

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

Julie Silva  
Director of Special Education  
julie.silva@southsanisd.net  
210-977-7000 ext. 3583

[See **A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504**]

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

[Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process](https://fw.esc18.net/display/Webforms/ESC18-FW-LandingPage.aspx?DT=G&LID=en)

(<https://fw.esc18.net/display/Webforms/ESC18-FW-LandingPage.aspx?DT=G&LID=en>)

[Partner Resource Network](http://prntexas.org/) (<http://prntexas.org/>)

[SPEDTEX: Special Education Information Center](https://www.spedtex.org/) (<https://www.spedtex.org/>)

[Texas First Project](http://www.texasprojectfirst.org/) (<http://www.texasprojectfirst.org/>)

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

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

### **A Student Who Receives Special Education Services with Other School-Aged Children in the Home**

If a student is receiving special education services at a campus outside his or her attendance zone, state law permits the parent or guardian to request that other students residing in the household be transferred to the same campus—if the grade level for the transferring student is offered on that campus.

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

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

### **A Student Who Speaks a Primary Language Other than English**

A student may be eligible to receive specialized support if his or her primary language is not English, and the student has difficulty performing ordinary class work in English.

If the student qualifies for these services, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will determine the types of services the student needs, including accommodations or modifications related to classroom instruction, local assessments, and state-mandated assessments.

[See **English Learners** and **Special Programs**.]

## **A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504**

A student with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, as defined by law—and who does not otherwise qualify for special education services—may qualify for protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Section 504 is a federal law designed to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

When an evaluation is requested, a committee will be formed to determine whether the student needs services and supports under Section 504 in order to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE), as defined in federal law.

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

## **Section Two: Other Important Information for Parents and Students**

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

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

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

### **Absences/Attendance**

Regular school attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his or her education—to benefit from teacher-led and school activities, to build each day's learning on the previous day's, and to grow as an individual. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, the student and parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Two state laws—one dealing with the required presence of school-aged children in school, e.g., compulsory attendance, the other with how a child's attendance affects the award of a student's final grade or course credit—are of special interest to students and parents. They are discussed below.

### **Compulsory Attendance**

#### ***Prekindergarten and Kindergarten***

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

#### ***Ages 6–18***

State law requires that a student who is at least six years of age, or who is younger than six years of age and has previously been enrolled in first grade, and who has not yet reached their 19th birthday, shall attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction program, extended-year program, or tutorial session, unless the student is otherwise excused from attendance or legally exempt.

State law requires a student in kindergarten–grade 2 to attend any assigned accelerated reading instruction program. Parents will be notified in writing if their child is assigned to an accelerated reading instruction program based on a diagnostic reading instrument.

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

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

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

## **Compulsory Attendance—Exemptions**

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

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

- Religious holy days;
- Required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining U.S. citizenship;
- Documented health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences related to autism services, if the student returns to school on the same day of the appointment and brings a note from the health-care provider;
- Absences resulting from a serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment that makes a student's attendance infeasible, with certification by a physician;
- For students in the conservatorship of the state:
  - An activity required under a court-ordered service plan; or
  - Any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the student's participation in the activity outside of school hours.

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

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

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

The district will allow a student who is 15 years of age or older to be absent for one day to obtain a learner license and one day to obtain a driver's license, provided that the board has authorized such excused absences under policy FEA(LOCAL). The student will be required to provide documentation of his or her visit to the driver's license office for each absence and must make up any work missed.

[See **Driver License Attendance Verification.**]

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Compulsory Attendance—Failure to Comply**

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

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

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

#### ***Withdrawal for Non Attendance***

The District may initiate withdrawal of a student under the age of 19 for nonattendance under the following conditions:

1. The student has been absent ten consecutive school days; and
2. Repeated efforts by the attendance officer and/or principal to locate the student have been unsuccessful.

[For District-initiated withdrawal of students 19 or older, see FEA(LEGAL).]

## ***Students with Disabilities***

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

## ***Ages 6–18***

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

The notice will:

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

## **For any questions about student absences, parents should first contact the campus administrator.**

South San Antonio ISD has four attendance officers that are assigned to different campuses around the District . The Attendance Officer is a liaison between the District and the juvenile court authorities in matters pertaining to student attendance. He/She works collaboratively with campus personnel, parent/guardian, and the community to foster improved student attendance and enhance student achievement.

The Attendance Officer makes home visitations to verify residences, guardianships, investigate suspected violations of the state's compulsory attendance law and counsel with parent/guardian and student to prevent and remedy truancy situations. The Attendance Officer will pursue appropriate courses of action in instances of noncompliance with attendance laws.

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

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

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



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

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

### **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade (All Grade Levels)**

Excessive absences will result in loss of credit unless the student makes up the missed work in an acceptable alternative manner including but not limited to: Saturday School, Summer School, or after school hours. An unusual extenuating circumstance is a basis for appeal to the attendance review committee.

To receive credit or a final grade in a class, a student must attend the class at least 90 percent of the days it is offered. A student who attends fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered will be referred to the attendance review committee. The committee will determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit or a final grade. [See policy FEC for more information.]

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

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

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

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

The district will take official attendance every day at 10:00 a.m.

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

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

A parent must provide an explanation for any absence upon the student's arrival or return to school. The student must submit a note signed by the parent. The campus may accept a phone call from the parent but reserves the right to require a written note.

A note signed by the student will not be accepted unless the student is age 18 or older or is an emancipated minor under state law.

The campus will document in its attendance records whether the absence is excused or unexcused.

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

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

Upon returning to school, a student absent for three or more consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the absence. Otherwise, the absence may be considered unexcused and in violation of compulsory attendance laws.

Should the student develop a questionable pattern of absences, the principal or attendance committee may require a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the absence to determine whether an absence will be excused or unexcused.

### ***Certification of Absence Due to Severe Illness or Treatment***

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

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

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

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

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

### **Academic Integrity (All Grade Levels)**

All students are expected to be honest and to display a high standard of integrity in the preparation and presentation of work for credit in all classes. The attempt of any student to present work which was not honestly performed by said student will be regarded as a serious offense which may subject the offender to a grading penalty and/or a disciplinary action. School staff will contact the parents or guardians of any student who is found to be in violation of this policy to determine disciplinary action.

### **Cheating**

Dishonesty of any kind on a test or examination, written assignment, or project, illegal possession of test or examination questions, the use of unauthorized notes during a test or examination, obtaining or giving information about a test or examination from or to another student, assisting others to cheat or altering grade records are instances of cheating.

### **Plagiarism**

Offering the work of another as one's own work without proper acknowledgment is plagiarism; therefore, any student who fails to give credit for quotations or essentially identical material taken from books, encyclopedias, magazines, internet sources, and other reference works or from the themes, reports or other writings of a fellow student is guilty of plagiarism.

### **Accountability under State and Federal Law (All Grade Levels)**

South San Antonio ISD and each of its campuses are held to certain standards of accountability under state and federal law. A key component of accountability is the dissemination and publication of certain reports and information, including:

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

Accountability information can be found on the district's website at [southsanisd.net](http://southsanisd.net). Hard copies of any reports are available upon request to the district's administration office.

TEA maintains additional accountability and accreditation information at:

[TEA Performance Reporting Division](https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability/academic-accountability/performance-reporting)

(<https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability/academic-accountability/performance-reporting>).

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

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

The test is offered three times during the school year. Please contact your campus counselor for more information about this opportunity.

### **Awards and Honors (All Grade Levels)**

Awards and Honors vary at each campus. Please speak to the campus principal for more information.

### **Bullying (All Grade Levels)**

The district strives to prevent bullying, in accordance with the district's policies, by promoting a respectful school climate; encouraging reporting of bullying incidents, including anonymous reporting; and investigating and addressing reported bullying incidents.

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

- Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property;
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student;
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school; or
- Infringes on the rights of the victim at school.

Bullying includes cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is defined in state law as bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device, including through the use of:

- A cellular or other type of telephone
- A computer
- A camera
- Electronic mail
- Instant messaging
- Text messaging
- A social media application

- An internet website
- Any other internet-based communication tool.

Bullying is prohibited by the district and could include:

- Hazing
- Threats
- Taunting
- Teasing
- Confinement
- Assault
- Demands for money
- Destruction of property
- Theft of valued possessions
- Name-calling
- Rumor-spreading
- Ostracism.

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

A student may anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying by using the Anonymous Alerts site through the link on our webpage - [southsanisd.net](http://southsanisd.net).

The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying and related misconduct. The district will also provide notice to the parent of the alleged victim and the parent of the student alleged to have engaged in bullying.

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

Available counseling options will be provided to the affected individuals, including any student who witnessed the bullying.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The district offers CTE Programs of Study in the following areas:

- Animal Science
- Electrical
- Digital Communications - Audio Video Production
- Design & Multimedia Arts - Graphic Design & Illustration / Animation / Commercial Photography
- Business Management
- Teaching and Training
- Health Informatics
- Nursing Science
- Healthcare Therapeutic
- Culinary Arts
- Cosmetology and Personal Care Services
- Information Technology Support and Services
- Law Enforcement
- Welding
- Engineering
- Automotive Collision & Repair
- Automotive Technology
- Cybersecurity

The district offers work-based programs in the following areas:

- Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
- Construction Technology
- Architectural Design
- Audio/Video Production
- Graphic Design & Illustration
- Animation
- Commercial Photography
- Business Management

- Education & Training
- Nursing
- Culinary Arts
- Computer Technician
- Law Enforcement
- Manufacturing
- Collision Repair
- Automotive Technology

The district offers certification programs in the following areas to students in 11th and 12th grade:

- Certified Veterinary Assistant
- NCCER Electrical, Level 1 & 2
- Adobe Certified Associate Certifications
- Microsoft Office Specialist or Expert - Excel and Word
- Microsoft Technology Associate Windows Operating System Fundamentals
- CompTIA Security+
- Educational Aide I
- Medical Coding and Billing Specialist
- Certified Nurse Aide/Assistant
- Pharmacy Technician
- National Restaurant Association (NRA) ServSafe Manager
- Cosmetology Operator License
- Non-Commissioned Security Officer Level II
- NCCER Welding, Level I
- Autodesk Certified Professional or User (ACU) - Inventor
- Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Painting & Refinishing (B2) certification
- Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) in the following areas:
  - Electrical/Electronic Systems,
  - Maintenance and Light Repairs,
  - Heating and Air Conditioning,
  - Brakes,
  - Suspension and Steering,
  - Engine Performance,
  - Automatic Transmission and Transaxle,
  - Heating and Air Conditioning,
  - Electrical/Electronic Systems,
  - Engine Repair,
  - Manual Drivetrain and Axles

District policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap in its vocational programs, services, or activities, as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

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

The district will take steps to assure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission or participation in all educational and vocational programs.

For information about your rights or grievance procedures, contact the Title IX coordinator and the ADA/Section 504 coordinator.

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

### **Celebrations (All Grade Levels)**

The District will comply with state law, which allows a parent or grandparent to provide a food product of his or her choice to classmates of the person's child or grandchild on the occasion of the student's birthday or to children at a school-designated function. [See CO(LEGAL)]

Although a parent or grandparent may provide food to share for a school-designated function or for a student's birthday, please be aware that children in the school may have severe allergies to certain food products. Therefore, it is imperative to discuss any classroom allergies with the teacher before bringing food to share and all food brought in should be store-bought with ingredient and nutrition fact labels.

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

[See **Food Allergies.**]

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

The district follows the state mandated guidelines for reporting child abuse which can be accessed at [https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/contact\\_Us/report\\_abuse.asp](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/contact_Us/report_abuse.asp). Trafficking includes both sex and labor trafficking.

### **Warning Signs of Sexual Abuse**

As a parent, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused.

Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent



sexual conduct with a child. A person who compels or encourages a child to engage in sexual conduct commits abuse. It is illegal to make or possess child pornography or to display such material to a child.

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

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

- Difficulty sitting or walking, pain in the genital areas, and claims of stomachaches and headaches;
- Verbal references or pretend games of sexual activity between adults and children, fear of being alone with adults of a particular gender, or sexually suggestive behavior; or
- Withdrawal, depression, sleeping and eating disorders, and problems in school.

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

### **Warning Signs of Trafficking**

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

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

Possible warning signs of sexual trafficking in children include:

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

Additional warning signs of labor trafficking in children include:

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

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

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

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

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

If your child is a victim of sexual abuse, trafficking, or other maltreatment, the school counselor or principal will provide information on counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs.

To find out what services may be available in your county, see [Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Programs Available in Your County](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Programs_Available_In_Your_County/default.asp) ([http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention\\_and\\_Early\\_Intervention/Programs\\_Available\\_In\\_Your\\_County/default.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Programs_Available_In_Your_County/default.asp)).

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

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

The following websites might help you become more aware of child abuse and neglect, sexual abuse, trafficking, and other maltreatment of children:

[Child Welfare Information Gateway Factsheet](https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/whatiscan.pdf)  
(<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/whatiscan.pdf>)

[KidsHealth, For Parents, Child Abuse](https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/child-abuse.html) (<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/child-abuse.html>)

[Office of the Texas Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Team](https://gov.texas.gov/organization/cjd/childsextrafficking)  
(<https://gov.texas.gov/organization/cjd/childsextrafficking>)

[Human Trafficking of School-aged Children](https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/other-services/human-trafficking-of-school-aged-children)  
(<https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/other-services/human-trafficking-of-school-aged-children>)

[Child Sexual Abuse: A Parental Guide from the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault](https://taasa.org/product/child-sexual-abuse-parental-guide/)  
(<https://taasa.org/product/child-sexual-abuse-parental-guide/>)

[National Center of Safe Supportive Learning Environments: Child Labor Trafficking](https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/human-trafficking-americas-schools/child-labor-trafficking)  
(<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/human-trafficking-americas-schools/child-labor-trafficking>)

## **Class Interruptions**

School announcements to students will be made only once during the day except in emergencies. Non-academic events will not be scheduled during the instructional day and will only occur before or after school. School officials will not interrupt classes to deliver a message to a student or to call a student out of class except in emergencies.

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

The District shall include in the calculation of class rank grades earned in all high school credit courses regardless of when the credit was earned. The calculation of class rank shall exclude grades earned in local credit courses (including student aide courses) and all grades earned at a nonaccredited school.

## **Weighted Grade System**

The District shall categorize and weigh eligible courses as Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3 in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

Tier 1: Eligible Advanced Placement (AP) courses and dual credit courses designated in the course catalog shall be categorized and weighted as Tier 1 courses.

Tier 2: Eligible Pre-AP courses, gifted and talented (GT) courses, and other courses locally designated as honors in the course catalog shall be categorized and weighted as Tier 2 courses.

Tier 3: All other eligible courses shall be designated as Tier 3 courses.

Weighted Numerical Grade Average:

The District shall assign weights to grades earned in eligible courses and shall calculate a weighted numerical grade average in accordance with the following scale:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Top Grade</b>
Tier 1	plus 15	115
Tier 2	plus 10	110
Tier 3	plus zero	100

*The District shall record unweighted numerical grades on student transcripts.*

### **Transferred Grades**

When a student transfers grades for properly documented and eligible courses, the District shall assign weight to those grades based on the categories and grade weight system used by the District if the grades were earned at an accredited school and similar courses are offered to the same class of students in the District.

### **Local Graduation Honors**

For the purpose of determining honors to be conferred during graduation activities, the District shall calculate class rank using grades available at the time of calculation at the end of the third nine-week grading period of the senior year. The grade for the third nine-week grading period shall be used as the semester grade for this purpose.

For the purpose of applications to institutions of higher education, the District shall also calculate class ranking as required by state law. The District's eligibility criteria for local graduation honors shall apply only for local recognition and shall not restrict class ranking for the purpose of automatic admission under state law. [See EIC(LEGAL)]

### **Ranking for Early Graduates**

A student who completes the high school program requirements in fewer than four years shall be ranked in the class with which he or she actually graduates and shall be eligible for all honor positions.

### ***Valedictorian and Salutatorian***

The valedictorian and salutatorian shall be the eligible students with the highest and second highest ranking, respectively.

To be eligible for such recognition, a student must:

1. Have been continuously enrolled in the District high school for the three semesters immediately preceding graduation; and
2. Have completed the Recommended Program, the Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program, or the foundation program with the distinguished level of achievement.

### ***Breaking Ties***

In case of a tie in weighted numerical grade averages, the District shall apply the following methods, in this order, to determine recognition as valedictorian or salutatorian:

1. Compute the weighted numerical grade average to a sufficient number of decimal places until the tie is broken.
2. Compare the number of Tier 1 courses taken by each student involved in the tie.
3. Calculate a weighted numerical grade average using only grades earned in Tier 1 courses.

### ***Honor Graduates***

The District shall recognize students in the top ten percent of each graduating class as honor graduates. The three-semester residency requirement necessary for recognition as valedictorian or salutatorian shall not be applicable for recognition as an honor graduate.

### ***Class Schedules (Secondary Grade Levels Only)***

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

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

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

For two school years following graduation, a district student who graduates as valedictorian or in the top ten percent of his or her class is eligible for automatic admission into four-year public universities and colleges in Texas if the student:

- Completes the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation graduation program [see **Foundation Graduation Program**]; or
- Satisfies the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks or earns at least a 1500 out of 2400 on the SAT.

The student is ultimately responsible for meeting the admission requirements of the university or college, including timely submission of a completed application.

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

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

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

- Automatic college admission;
- Curriculum requirements for financial aid;
- Benefits of completing the requirements for automatic admission and financial aid; and
- The Texas First Early High School Completion Program and the Texas First Scholarship Program.

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

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

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

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

## **College Credit Courses (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

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

- Certain courses taught at the high school campus, which may include courses termed dual credit, Advanced Placement (AP) or college preparatory; and
- Enrollment in courses taught in conjunction and in partnership with Palo Alto College, which may be offered on or off campus;

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

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

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

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

## **Communications (All Grade Levels)**

### **Parent Contact Information**

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

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

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

The District shall verify, upon enrollment of a student, that either the student and/or either a parent or a legal guardian is a resident of the District. A copy of the validation document for residency shall be placed in the student's permanent record file.

The following are examples of items that may serve to validate residency within the District:

1. A current contract or lease agreement for a dwelling within the District boundaries.
2. A current utility bill (water, gas, electricity) for an address within the District boundaries.
3. A current mortgage payment document for a dwelling within the District boundaries.
4. A notarized affidavit stating that a student and/or either a parent or a legal guardian resides within the District boundaries with another homeowner/lessee. The affidavit shall be accompanied by a residency validation document for the homeowner/lessee. For guidelines governing an inter-district transfer for a student whose parent or guardian has a contract for a residence within District boundaries, see policy FDA (Local).

### **Automated Emergency Communications**

The district will rely on contact information on file with the district to communicate with parents in an emergency situation, which may include real-time or automated messages. An emergency situation may include early dismissal, delayed opening, or restricted access to the campus due to severe weather, another emergency, or a security threat. It is crucial to notify your child's school when a phone number changes.

[See **Safety** for information regarding contact with parents during an emergency situation.]

### **Automated Non Emergency Communications**

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

Standard messaging rates of your wireless phone carrier may apply.

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

### **Complaints and Concerns (All Grade Levels)**

Usually, student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed informally by a phone call or a conference with the teacher or principal.

For those complaints and concerns that cannot be resolved informally, the board has adopted a Student and Parent Complaints/Grievances policy at FNG(LOCAL). This policy can be viewed in the district's policy manual, available online at [southsanisd.net](http://southsanisd.net). The complaint forms can be accessed at the principal's or superintendent's office.



To file a formal complaint a parent or student should complete and submit the complaint form. In general, the written complaint form should be completed and submitted to the campus principal in a timely manner.

If the concern is not resolved, a parent or student may request a conference with the superintendent.

If the concern is still unresolved, the district provides a process for parents and students to appeal to the board of trustees.

## **Conduct (All Grade Levels)**

### **Applicability of School Rules**

The board has adopted a Student Code of Conduct that defines standards of acceptable behavior—on and off campus, during remote and in-person instruction, and on district vehicles—and outlines consequences for violation of these standards. The district has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards set out in the Student Code of Conduct, as well as campus and classroom rules.

During summer instruction, the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct in place for the school year immediately preceding the summer period shall apply, unless the district amends either or both documents for the purposes of summer instruction.

### **Campus Behavior Coordinator**

Each campus has a campus behavior coordinator to apply discipline management techniques and administer consequences for certain student misconduct, as well as provide a point of contact for student misconduct. The contact information for each campus behavior coordinator is available on the campus website at [southsanisd.net](http://southsanisd.net).

### **Deliveries**

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

### **Disruption of School Operations**

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

- Interference with the movement of people at an exit, entrance, or hallway of a district building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interference with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.

- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.
- Use of force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.
- Interference with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to district property.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving district property without authorization from an administrator.

Disruption of classes or other school activities while on or within 500 feet of district property includes:

- Making loud noises;
- Trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity; and
- Entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with loud or profane language or any misconduct.

Interference with the transportation of students in vehicles owned or operated by the district is also considered a disruption.

### **Social Events**

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

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

A parent interested in serving as a chaperone for any school social events should contact the campus principal.

### **Counseling**

The district has a comprehensive school counseling program that includes:

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

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

## **Counseling**

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

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

In either grade 7 or 8, each student will receive instruction on how best to prepare for high school, college, and a career.

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

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

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

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

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

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

[See **Scholarships and Grants** for more information.]

## **Personal Counseling (All Grade Levels)**

The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal, social, and family concerns, including emotional or mental health issues and substance abuse. A student who wishes to meet with the school counselor should ask their teacher for a pass to the counselor's office, complete a Counselor Request Form, or contact their counselor via email so that they can be pulled out of class. As a parent, if you are concerned about your child's mental or emotional health, please speak with the school counselor for a list of resources that may be of assistance.

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

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

## **Course Credit (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

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

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

A student who has previously taken a course or subject but did not receive credit or a final grade for it may, in circumstances determined by the principal or attendance committee, be permitted to earn credit or a final grade by passing an examination approved by the district's board of trustees on the essential knowledge and skills defined for that course or subject.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The examinations offered by the district are approved by the district's board of trustees. Testing windows for these examinations will be published in district publications and on the district's website. A student may take a specific examination only once per testing window.

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

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

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

### **Kindergarten Acceleration**

The Superintendent or designee may allow a child who is five years old at the beginning of the school year to be assigned initially to grade 1 rather than kindergarten. Criteria for acceleration may include:

1. Scores on readiness tests or achievement tests that may be administered by appropriate District personnel.
2. Recommendation of the kindergarten or preschool the student has attended.
3. Chronological age and observed social and emotional development of the student.
4. Other criteria deemed appropriate by the principal and Superintendent.

### **Students in Grades 1–5**

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

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

## **Students in Grades 6–12**

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

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

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

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

Students learn best, and their welfare is best served, in a school environment that is free from dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

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

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

### **Dating Violence**

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

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

Examples of dating violence against a student may include, but are not limited to:

- Physical or sexual assaults;
- Name-calling;

- Put-downs;
- Threats to hurt the student, the student's family members, or members of the student's household;
- Destroying property belonging to the student;
- Threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship;
- Threats to harm a student's past or current dating partner;
- Attempts to isolate the student from friends and family;
- Stalking; or
- Encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

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

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

For more information on dating violence, see:

Texas Attorney General's office [recognizing and responding to dating violence flier](https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/sites/default/files/files/child-support/papa/session%2010/recognizing-relationship-violence-en.pdf) (<https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/sites/default/files/files/child-support/papa/session%2010/recognizing-relationship-violence-en.pdf>)

The CDC's [Preventing Teen Dating Violence](https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/teendatingviolence/fastfact.html) (<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/teendatingviolence/fastfact.html>).

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

### ***Discrimination***

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

### ***Harassment***

Harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

Examples of harassment may include, but are not limited to:

- Offensive or derogatory language directed at a person's religious beliefs or practices,
- accent, skin color, or need for accommodation;

- Threatening, intimidating, or humiliating conduct;
- Offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors;
- Physical aggression or assault;
- Graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or
- Other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

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

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

Examples of sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to:

- Touching private body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature;
- Sexual advances;
- Jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and
- Other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

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

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

Gender-based harassment can occur regardless of the student's or the harasser's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a student may include, but are not limited to:

- Offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors;
- Physical aggression or assault;
- Threatening or intimidating conduct; or
- Other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

### ***Retaliation***

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



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

### ***Reporting Procedures***

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

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

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

### ***Investigation of Report***

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

To the extent possible, the district will respect the privacy of the student. However, limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct a thorough investigation and comply with law.

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

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

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

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

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

## **Discrimination**

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

## **Distance Learning (Secondary Grade Levels)**

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

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

Depending on the TXVSN course in which a student enrolls, the course may be subject to the “no pass, no play” rules. [See **Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations.**] In addition, a student who enrolls in a TXVSN course for which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment is required must still take the corresponding EOC assessment.

A parent may ask questions or request that their child be enrolled in a TXVSN course by contacting the school counselor. Unless an exception is made by the Chief Academic Officer, a student will not be allowed to enroll in a TXVSN course if the school offers the same or a similar course.

## **Distribution of Literature, Published Materials, or Other Documents (All Grade Levels)**

### **School Materials**

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

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

### **Non School Materials**

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

Students must obtain prior approval from the campus principal before selling, posting, circulating, or distributing copies of written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school. To be considered, any nonschool material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization. Approval will be granted or denied within two school days.

A student may appeal a decision in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL). Any student who sells, posts, circulates, or distributes nonschool material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without approval will be removed.

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

### ***From Others***

No person or group will sell, circulate, distribute, or post on any district premises written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials that is not sponsored by the district or by a district-affiliated school-support organization, except as permitted by policy GKDA.

To be considered for distribution, any nonschool material must meet the limitations on content established in the policy, include the name of the sponsoring person or organization, and be submitted to the Superintendent or designee for prior review. The Superintendent or designee will approve or reject the materials within two school days of the time the materials are received. The requestor may appeal a rejection in accordance with the appropriate district complaint policy. [See policies DGBA or GF for more information.]

Prior review will not be required for:

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

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

### **Dress and Grooming (All Grade Levels)**

The district's dress code teaches grooming and hygiene, prevents disruption, minimizes safety hazards, and maintains a positive learning climate. Students and parents may determine a student's personal dress and grooming standards, provided that they comply with the following:

The general provision of the Student Dress Code applies to **all students at all grade levels**. Students who attend the school must abide by the general provisions of the Student Dress Code.

**Requirements:**

- All students must be clean and well groomed at all times;
- Undergarments should not be visible;
- Eyes should be visible at all times;
- Shorts, skirts or skorts must not be shorter than four (4) inches above the top of the kneecap and should not create a distraction; they should be appropriately sized and properly secured at the waist;
- No visible cleavage;
- Shirts and blouses must be appropriately sized and should not be revealing.
- Shirts and blouses must not expose bare backs or cleavage.

**Prohibited Items:**

- Any clothing, grooming, or accessories that may reasonably be expected to cause distraction of, or interference with, school operations;
- Any clothing, grooming, or accessories that may reasonably be expected to cause physical harm to the wearer or to third parties;
- Any clothing, grooming, or accessories that are worn for the purpose of showing membership or affiliation to a gang;
- Any pictures, emblems, or writing on clothing or accessories that represents or depicts:
  - Lewd, offensive, vulgar or obscene messages;
  - Tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, drugs, or any other substance;
  - The occult, death, suicide, violence, or gang membership;

**Accessories not permitted:**

- Bandannas, rags, or gloves;
- Sunglasses worn unless medically prescribed;
- Headgear for students unless medically prescribed and/or religiously affiliated;
- Prescriptive/non-prescriptive eccentric contact lenses;

**Clothing not permitted:**

- See-through garments of any kind;
- Oversized, sagging clothes or trench coats;
- Muscle shirts, tube tops, strapless tops, halter tops, racer back shirts, spaghetti strap blouses, swimsuits, or any other garments that expose the midriff, chest, or back, including shirts that show the navel (belly button);
- Pants that sag below the waistline;
- Pants with major holes or excessively ripped jeans above the knees;
- Biker shorts;
- Shorts NOT secured at the waist;

Outerwear such as windbreakers, fleece, sweaters, or sweatshirt-type jackets or pullovers must adhere to all acceptable guidelines. All other jackets/coats must be taken off and stored properly upon entering the building. Spirit outerwear in the appropriate school colors acknowledging the school or mascot in which the student attends is acceptable. **No hoods inside the building are permitted at any time.**

**Skirt, dress and short length must be NO more than 4 inches above the knee.**

**Hair and hair styles not permitted:**

- Unconventional color (i.e. blue, green, bright red, pink, purple, yellow, orange, or any other non-human color), multi-colored, spiked, or Mohawk hair styles;
- Designs or etching in the hair or eyebrows;
- Mustaches, beards, or goatees in elementary or middle school levels. Beards are allowed at the high school level (neatly trimmed);

*Acceptability of facial hair will be determined by the high school administration.*

**Footwear not permitted:**

Including but not limited to:

- Footwear which has toes reinforced with steel or hard plastics (or similar materials);
- Wheeled footwear;
- Shower shoes, house shoes/slippers, water-socks, flip flops, slides;
- Stilettos, or high heels in excess of 1 ½ inches;

*NOTE: Footwear must be worn at all times. No bare feet.*

**Body Piercing/Jewelry not permitted:**

- Excessive jewelry/Rosaries may not be worn as jewelry;
- Chains worn as an accessory;
- Pointed or spiked earrings on the ear;
- Grills or temporary decorations on teeth are prohibited;
- Boys are not allowed to wear earrings in elementary school;

Every other form of visible body piercing jewelry is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to piercings on the face, arm, or tongue. Piercings or earrings are to be worn on the earlobe only and will be of a length that will not present a safety hazard. Temporary coverings such as band aids may not be used to avoid the rules and consequences with regards to piercings.

**Tattoos:**

- Tattoos deemed offensive and or gang related by the administration will not be allowed;

- Final determination in regards to tattoos at the high school will rest with the campus administration.

A basic rule to remember is that student dress and grooming should not be suggestive, indecent, and/or so unusual as to detract from the classroom environment.

If the principal determines that a student's grooming or clothing violates the school's dress code, the student will be given an opportunity to correct the problem at school and return to the classroom. If the problem cannot be corrected at school, the principal will work with the student and parent to obtain an acceptable change of clothing for the student in a way that minimizes loss of instructional time.

Repeated or severe offenses may result in more serious disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

## **Electronic Devices and Technology Resources (All Grade Levels)**

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

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

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

Without such permission, teachers will collect the items and turn them in to the principal's office. The principal will determine whether to return items to students at the end of the day or to contact parents to pick up the items.

The use of cell phones or any device capable of capturing images is strictly prohibited in locker rooms or restroom areas while at school or at a school-related or school-sponsored event.

If a student uses a telecommunications device without authorization during the school day, the device will be confiscated. The student or the student's parents may pick up the confiscated telecommunications device from the principal's office for a fee of \$15.

Confiscated telecommunications devices that are not retrieved by the student or the student's parent will be disposed of after the notice required by law. [See policy FNCE for more information.]

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

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

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

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

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

### **Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources**

District-owned technology resources may be issued to individual students for instructional purposes. Use of the district's network systems and equipment is restricted to approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement (separate from this handbook) regarding use of these district resources. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

### **Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources**

Students are prohibited from possessing, sending, forwarding, posting, accessing, or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition also applies to conduct off school property, whether on district-owned or personally owned equipment, if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, possessing, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content—commonly referred to as “sexting”—will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, may be required to complete an educational program related to the dangers of this type of behavior, and, in certain circumstances, may be reported to law enforcement.

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

Any student who engages in conduct that results in a breach of the district's computer security will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. In some cases, the consequence may be expulsion.

## **End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments**

[See **Graduation** and **Standardized Testing**.]

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

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

To determine a student's level of proficiency in English, the LPAC will use information from a variety of assessments. If the student qualifies for services, and once a level of proficiency has been established, the LPAC will designate instructional accommodations or additional special programs that the student will require to eventually become proficient at grade level work in English. Ongoing assessments will be conducted to determine a student's continued eligibility for the program.

The LPAC will also determine whether certain accommodations are necessary for any state-mandated assessments. The STAAR Spanish, as mentioned at **Standardized Testing**, may be administered to an Emergent English learner up to grade 5. In limited circumstances, a student's LPAC may exempt the student from an otherwise required state-mandated assessment or may waive certain graduation requirements related to the English I end-of-course (EOC) assessment. The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) will also be administered to English learners who qualify for services.

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

## **Enrollment**

### **Registration of New Students**

A child must be enrolled by the child's parent, guardian, or other person with legal control under a court order. The District shall record the name, address and date of birth of the person enrolling a child.



A student must be identified by the student's legal surname as it appears on the student's birth certificate or other legal document suitable as proof of the student's identity, or in a court order changing the student's name.

At the time of enrollment the person authorized to enroll the child shall immediately furnish a record showing that the child has the immunizations required by Texas Education Code Section 38.001, or proof that the child is not required to be immunized, or proof that the child is entitled to provisional admission.

To register your child in school you will need:

1. An original or a certified copy of the child's *birth certificate* or another document suitable as proof of the child's identity as defined by the commissioner of education in the Student Attendance Accounting Handbook. (Child must be five on or before September 1st for kindergarten and six on or before September 1st for first grade.)
2. Child's up-to-date *immunization record*.
3. *Proof of Residence* - Acceptable documents for verifying address include current utility bills, sales or lease agreements, or other legal documents other than a driver's license which does not require a verified address. Cell phone bills are not acceptable.
4. Child's social security card (optional).
5. A copy of the *child's records from the school the child most recently attended* if he or she was previously enrolled in a school in Texas or in another state.

Students shall not be denied enrollment or be removed solely because they fail to provide the required documentation above.

### **Child in DPRS Possession**

The District shall enroll a child without the required documentation if the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (DPRS) has taken possession of the child. DPRS shall ensure that the required documentation is furnished to the District not later than the 30th day after the date the child is enrolled.

### **Inconsistent Documentation**

If a child is enrolled under a name other than the name that appears in the identifying documents or records, the District shall notify the missing children and missing persons information clearinghouse of the child's name as shown on the identifying records and the name under which child is enrolled.

### **Missing Documentation**

If the required documents and other records are not furnished to the campus or district within 30 days after enrollment, the campus or district shall notify the police department of the city or the

sheriff's department of the county in which the district is located and request a determination of whether the child has been reported as missing.

### **Students Under Age Eleven**

On enrollment of a child under eleven years of age in a school for the first time at the school, the school shall:

1. Request from the person enrolling the child the name of each previous school attended by the child;
2. Request from each school identified in Item #1 the school records for the child and, if the person enrolling the child provides copies of previous school records, request verification from the school of the child's name, address, date, grades, and dates attended; and
3. Notify the person enrolling the student that not later than the thirtieth day after enrollment, or the ninetieth day if the child was not born in the United States, the person must provide:
  - a. A certified copy of the child's birth certificate; or
  - b. Other reliable proof of the child's identity and age and a signed statement explaining the person's inability to produce a copy of the child's birth certificate.

If a person enrolls a child under 11 years of age in school and does not provide the valid prior school information or documentation required, the school shall notify the appropriate law enforcement agency before the 31st day after the person fails to comply.

### **False Information**

When accepting a child for enrollment, the District shall inform the parent or other person enrolling the child that presenting false information or false records for identification is a criminal offense under Texas Penal Code - Section 37.10 and that enrolling the child under false documents makes the person liable for tuition or other costs as provided below.

A person who knowingly falsifies information on a form required for a student's enrollment in the District may be liable to the District if the student is not eligible for enrollment, but is enrolled on the basis of false information. For the period during which the ineligible student is enrolled, the person is liable for the maximum tuition fee the District may charge or the amount the District has budgeted per student as maintenance and operating expense, whichever is greater.

### **Residency Review for Extracurricular Activities**

The superintendent or designee shall determine whether a minor student residing in the District separate and apart from a parent, guardian, or other person having lawful control under order of a court is present in the District for the primary purpose of participating in extracurricular

activities. This determination may be appealed to the board by making a written request to the superintendent within 15 days of the decision.

### **Change of Address**

Students who change their residence, mailing address, or telephone number after enrollment should report the change promptly to the administrative offices so that the records may be corrected in case of an emergency at the school or at home. Business phone numbers of parents should also be recorded in the administrative offices.

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

Participation in school-sponsored activities is an excellent way for a student to develop talents, receive individual recognition, and build strong friendships.

Some extracurricular activities may include off-campus events. Students are required to use transportation provided by the district to and from the events. Exceptions may only be made with the approval of the activity's coach or sponsor. [See **Transportation**.]

Eligibility for many of these activities is governed by state law and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL), a statewide association overseeing interdistrict competition. If a student is involved in an academic, athletic, or music activity governed by UIL, the student and parent are expected to know and follow all rules of the UIL organization. Students and parents can access the [UIL Parent Information Manual](https://www.uiltexas.org/athletics/manuals) (<https://www.uiltexas.org/athletics/manuals>) online. A hard copy can be provided by the coach or sponsor of the activity on request.

To report alleged noncompliance with required safety training or an alleged violation of safety rules required by law and the UIL, please contact the curriculum division of TEA at (512) 463-9581 or [curriculum@tea.texas.gov](mailto:curriculum@tea.texas.gov). Student safety in extracurricular activities is a priority of the district. Parents are entitled to review the district's records regarding the age of each football helmet used by the campus, including when a helmet has been reconditioned.

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

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

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

If a student is enrolled in a state-approved course that requires demonstration of the mastery of an essential knowledge and skills in public performance and the student receives a grade below

70 in any course at the end of the grading period, the student may participate in a performance so long as the general public is invited.

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

In addition, the following applies to all extracurricular activities:

- A student who receives special education services and who fails to meet the standards in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks.
- An ineligible student may practice or rehearse but may not participate in any competitive activity.
- A student is allowed in a school year up to 10 absences not related to post-district competition, a maximum of 5 absences for post-district competition prior to state, and a maximum of 2 absences for state competition. All extracurricular activities and public performances, whether UIL activities or other activities approved by the board, are subject to these restrictions.
- An absence for participation in an activity that has not been approved will be considered an unexcused absence.

### **Standards of Behavior**

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

### **Offices and Elections**

Certain clubs, organizations, and performing groups will hold elections for student officers. Please contact the school for a list of these groups. The selection process for choosing members shall be specified in the constitution of each group organization.

### **Fees (All Grade Levels)**

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

- Materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations.
- Admission fees to extracurricular activities.

- Security deposits.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, and the like.
- Voluntarily purchased student health and accident insurance.
- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance when uniforms are provided by the district.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Parking fees and student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Fees for driver training courses.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that require use of facilities not available on district premises.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A reasonable fee for providing transportation to a student who lives within two miles of the school. [See **Buses and Other School Vehicles.**]
- A maximum fee of \$50 for an educational program outside of regular school hours for a student who has lost credit or has not been awarded a final grade because of absences and whose parent chooses the program for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance requirements. The fee will be charged only if the parent or guardian signs a district-provided request form.
- In some cases, a fee for a course taken through the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN).

Any required fee or deposit may be waived if the student and parent are unable to pay. Application for such a waiver may be made to the campus principal. [See policy FP for more information.]

### **Fundraising (All Grade Levels)**

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

State rules adopted by the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) allow an exemption to the Smart Snacks requirements for up to six days per year per campus when a food or beverage is sold as part of a District fundraiser. [See CO (LEGAL)] The District's local school health advisory council (SHAC) recommends that foods and beverages that are provided by district staff to students meet "Smart Snacks" standards.

Schools that participate in the NSLP or SBP may sell food and beverages that do not meet nutritional standards as part of a fundraiser, during the school day, for up to six days per school year on each school campus, provided that no specially exempted fundraiser foods or

beverages may be sold in competition with school meals in the food service area during the meal service.

Definitions:

“School day” means the midnight before, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.

“School campus” means all areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the school that are accessible to students during the school day.

The campus principal will send a list of their exempt days to the child nutrition director at the beginning of each school year. If any changes are made to those dates during the school year, the child nutrition director will be notified.

### **Gang-Free Zones (All Grade Levels)**

Certain criminal offenses, including gang-related crimes, will be enhanced to the next-highest category of offense if they are committed in a gang-free zone. Gang-free zones include a school bus and any location in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any district-owned or leased property or campus playground.

### **Gender-Based Harassment**

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

### **Grade-Level Classification (Grades 9–12 Only)**

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

<b>Credits Earned</b>	<b>Classification</b>
6 - 12.5	Grade 10 (Sophomore)
13 – 18.5	Grade 11 (Junior)
19+	Grade 12 (Senior)

## **Grading (All Grade Levels)**

### ***Academic Grading System***

- A - 90-100
- B - 80-89
- C - 75-79
- D - 70-74
- F - 69 and below

Students who have not been able to complete coursework due to excused absences or other District-approved excuses may be issued an “I” for incomplete. The incomplete work must be completed prior to the end of the succeeding grading period. The “I” will make the student ineligible for extra-curricular activities seven days after the end of the previous grading period if the “I” is still on the record. Students with an incomplete in a course regain their eligibility when the “I” is replaced with a passing grade. Students shall be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work after a grading period has ended. Incompletes must be removed within thirty (30) days of the end of the school year.

### ***Citizenship Grading System***

- E - Excellent citizenship displayed in class
- S - Satisfactory citizenship displayed in class
- N - Citizenship needs to be improved (parent conference requested)
- U - Unacceptable citizenship displayed in class (parent conference requested)

### ***Progress Reports***

The purpose of progress reports is to inform parents that the student’s work is unsatisfactory at the time of the report. The student has primary responsibility for delivering the progress report to their parents. Teachers shall send out written notice to parents during the fourth week of a nine-week grading period of a student’s performance in any class or subject in which the student’s overall grade is less than 70 or “Unsatisfactory.” However, at the teacher’s discretion, they may also issue a progress report at any time a student’s progress becomes unsatisfactory. Even though a progress report has not been issued, a student may still receive a failing grade during a grading period. Usually failing notices do precede a failing grade, but occasionally a poor exam grade or incomplete work at the end of a grading period can produce a failing grade.

### ***Reporting to Parents***

Parents/guardians are entitled to know the status of their child’s progress throughout the school year. South San Antonio ISD offers reports throughout the year, including progress reports, attendance reports and report cards. Parent conferences provide one of the best methods for reporting and discussing student progress. Additionally, there should be a constant flow of information between parent/guardian and teacher through each grading period. Skyward Family Access is a real-time online information system for parents and can be accessed through the Internet. Call your child’s school for information.

Report cards will be made available to parents/guardians approximately one week after the end of each Marking Period (MP) and will be accessible in Skyward. If a parent/guardian would like a paper copy of their child's report card, this can be obtained by contacting your child's school.

School attendance is essential to student success. Parents/guardians are urged to regularly monitor students' records of attendance and grades through Skyward. Absences are reported for each class listed on the report card. Tardy reports are optional by school. On the attendance record, "MP" (Marking Period) indicates the number of times the student has been absent or tardy during the current grading period. "YTD" (Year to Date) indicates the total number of times the student has been absent or tardy during the entire school year. Parents/guardians are urged to be as attentive to absences as they are to grades.

### **Grading Guidelines (All Grade Levels)**

Approved grading guidelines for each grade level or course will be communicated to students and their parents by the classroom teacher. These guidelines establish:

- The minimum number of assignments, projects, and examinations required for each grading period;
- How the student's mastery of concepts and achievement will be communicated (for example, letter grades, numerical averages, checklist of required skills, and the like);
- Circumstances under which a student will be allowed to redo an assignment or retake an examination the student originally failed; and
- Procedures for a student to follow after an absence.

[See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** for additional information on grading guidelines.]

### **Graduation (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

#### **Requirements for a Diploma**

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

- Achieve passing scores on certain end-of-course (EOC) assessments or approved substitute assessments, unless specifically waived as permitted by state law;
- Complete the required number of credits established by the state and any additional credits required by the district;
- Complete any locally required courses in addition to the courses mandated by the state;
- Demonstrate proficiency, as determined by the district, in the specific communication skills required by the State Board of Education (SBOE); and
- Complete and submit a free application for federal student aid (FAFSA) or a Texas application for state financial aid (TASFA).



## Testing Requirements for Graduation

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

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

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

State law allows a student to meet EOC requirements by substituting satisfactory performance on approved national standardized assessments or on the state-developed assessment used for entrance into Texas public universities. [See the school counselor for more information on the state testing requirements for graduation.]

If a student fails to perform satisfactorily on an EOC assessment, the district will provide remediation in the applicable content area. This may require the student's participation outside normal school operating times.

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

[See **Standardized Testing.**]

### ***Foundation Graduation Program***

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

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

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

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

**A Personal Graduation Plan** will be completed for each high school student.

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

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

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

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

**Credits Required**

<b>Course Area</b>	<b>South San ISD Graduation Credit Requirements</b>
English/Language Arts	4
Mathematics	4
Science	4
Social Studies	3.5
Economics	.5
Speech	.5
Physical Education	1
Health	.5
Languages other than English	2
Fine Arts	1
Principles of Information Technology	1
Electives	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>26 credits</b>
Endorsement	YES
Distinguished Level of Achievement	YES
EOC Requirements	English I, English II Algebra I Biology US History

Additional considerations apply in some course areas, including:

- **Mathematics:**

To obtain the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation graduation program, a student must complete an endorsement and take Algebra II as one of the 4 mathematics credits. A student's completion of the distinguished level of achievement is

a requirement to be considered for automatic admission to a Texas four-year college or university and will be included on a student's transcript.

- **Physical education:** A student who is unable to participate in physical activity due to a disability or illness may be able to substitute a course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, or another locally determined credit-bearing course for the required credit of physical education. This determination will be made by the student's ARD committee, Section 504 committee, or other campus committee, as applicable.

The District shall not award state graduation credit in physical education for private or commercially sponsored physical activity programs conducted either on or off campus. [See also EHAC] EIF (LOCAL)

- **Languages other than English:** Students are required to earn 2 credits in the same language other than English to graduate. Any student may substitute computer programming languages for these credits.
  - A student may satisfy one of the 2 required credits by successfully completing in elementary school a dual language immersion program or a course in American Sign Language.
  - In limited circumstances, a student may be able to substitute this requirement with other courses, as determined by a district committee authorized by law to make these decisions for the student.
- **Fine Arts:** The District shall not award state graduation credit in fine arts for participation in a community-based fine arts program. EIF (LOCAL)

### ***Available Endorsements***

A student must specify upon entering grade 9 which endorsement he or she wishes to pursue.

### ***Foundation Program without an Endorsement***

The District requires completion of 2 credits in addition to the number mandated by the state for graduation under the foundation program without an endorsement. Graduation under the foundation program without an endorsement shall be permitted only as authorized under state law and rules. EIF (LOCAL)

### ***Financial Aid Application Requirement***

Before graduating from high school, each student must complete and submit an application for financial aid for post-secondary education. Students must complete and submit either a free application for federal student aid (FAFSA) or a Texas application for state financial aid (TASFA).

South San Antonio ISD also partners with representatives from Cafe College and the San Antonio Education Partnership to assist students with completing the financial aid process.

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

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

Please contact the school counselor for more information.

To confirm that a student has completed and submitted a TASFA, the student must submit:

- A screenshot that includes the processed date field of the FAFSA ApplyTexas Counselor Suite;
- Notification, such as a copy of an email, from the United States Department of Education verifying completion of the FAFSA;
- A copy or screenshot of the FAFSA acknowledgment page;
- A screenshot of the TASFA submission acknowledgment page (from those institutions that offer an electronic form);
- An acknowledgment receipt from an institution of higher education (IHE); or
- A copy of a financial aid award letter from an IHE.

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

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

The district encourages all students to pursue a personal graduation plan that includes the completion of at least one endorsement and to graduate with the distinguished level of achievement. Attainment of the distinguished level of achievement entitles a student to be considered for automatic admission to a public four-year college or university in Texas, depending on his or her rank in class.

The school will review personal graduation plan options with each student entering grade 9 and his or her parent. Before the end of grade 9, a student and his or her parent will be required to sign off on a personal graduation plan that promotes college and workforce readiness, promotes career placement and advancement, and facilitates the transition from secondary to postsecondary education.

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

Please review [TEA's Graduation Toolkit](https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/news-and-multimedia/brochures/tea-brochures) (<https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/news-and-multimedia/brochures/tea-brochures>).

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

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

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

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

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

### **Certificates of Coursework Completion**

A certificate of coursework completion will not be issued to a student who has successfully completed state and local credit requirements for graduation but has not yet demonstrated satisfactory performance on the state-mandated tests required for graduation.

### **Students with Disabilities**

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

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

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

A student who receives special education services and has completed four years of high school but has not met the requirements of his or her IEP may participate in graduation ceremonies and receive a certificate of attendance. The student may then remain enrolled to complete the IEP and earn his or her high school diploma but will only be allowed to participate in one graduation ceremony.

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

### **Graduation Activities**

To be eligible to participate in commencement activities and ceremonies, a student shall meet all state and local graduation requirements, including all applicable state testing. [See EI, EIF] FMH (LOCAL)

Students who are eligible to graduate but are assigned to a disciplinary alternative education program at the end of the school year will not be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony and related graduation activities.

### **Graduation Speakers**

#### *Opening and Closing Remarks*

The District hereby creates a limited public forum consisting of an opportunity for a student to speak to begin graduation ceremonies and another student to speak to end graduation ceremonies. For each speaker, the District shall set a maximum time limit reasonable and appropriate to the occasion.

The forum shall be limited in the manner provided by this section on student speakers at graduation. [See also FMH(LEGAL)]

#### *Eligibility*

Only students who are graduating and who hold one of the following neutral criteria positions of honor shall be eligible to use the limited public forum: top three academically ranked students and the senior class president.

A student who shall otherwise have a speaking role in the graduation ceremonies is ineligible to give the opening and closing remarks. The names of the eligible volunteering students shall be randomly drawn. The first name drawn shall give the opening, and the second name drawn shall give the closing.

#### *Content of Opening and Closing Remarks*

The topic of the opening and closing remarks must be related to the purpose of the graduation ceremony and to the purpose of marking the opening and closing of the event; honoring the occasion, the participants, and those in attendance; bringing the audience to order; and focusing the audience on the purpose of the event.

### **Other Student Graduation Speakers**

In addition to the students giving the opening and closing remarks, the valedictorian and salutatorian may have speaking roles at graduation ceremonies.

For each speaker, the District shall set a maximum time limit reasonable and appropriate to the occasion and to the position held by the speaker. For this purpose, the District creates a limited public forum for these students to deliver the addresses. The subject of the addresses must be related to the purpose of the graduation ceremony, marking and honoring the occasion, honoring the participants and those in attendance, and the student's perspective on purpose, achievement, life, school, graduation, and looking forward to the future.

The student must stay on the subject, and the student may not engage in obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd, or indecent speech. The District shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the District treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and may not discriminate against the student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

### *Disclaimer*

A written disclaimer shall be printed in the graduation program that states, "The students who shall be speaking at the graduation ceremony were selected based on neutral criteria to deliver messages of the students' own choices. The content of each student speaker's message is the private expression of the individual student and does not reflect any position or expression of the District or the board of trustees, or the District's administration, or employees of the District, or the views of any other graduate. The contents of these messages were prepared by the student volunteers, and the District refrained from any interaction with student speakers regarding the student speakers' viewpoints on permissible subjects."

[See the Student Code of Conduct and policy FNA(LOCAL) for more information.]

[See **Student Speakers** for student speakers at other school events.]

### **Graduation Expenses**

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

### **Scholarships and Grants**

Students who have a financial need according to federal criteria and who complete the foundation graduation program may be eligible under the TEXAS Grant Program and the Teach for Texas Grant Program for scholarships and grants toward tuition and fees to Texas public universities, community colleges, and technical schools, as well as to private institutions. Certain students who graduate early may also be eligible for the Texas First Scholarship Program.

See **College and University Admissions and Financial Aid (All Grade Levels)**.



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

## **Harassment**

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

## **Hazing (All Grade Levels)**

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

- Any type of physical brutality;
- An activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the student's mental or physical health, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement to small spaces, calisthenics, or consumption of food, liquids, drugs, or other substances;
- An activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to perform a duty or task that violates the Penal Code; and
- Coercing a student to consume a drug or alcoholic beverage in an amount that would lead a reasonable person to believe the student is intoxicated.

The district will not tolerate hazing. Disciplinary consequences for hazing will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. It is a criminal offense if a person engages in hazing; solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in hazing; or has firsthand knowledge of an incident of hazing being planned or having occurred and fails to report this to the principal or superintendent.

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

## **Health—Physical and Mental**

### **Illness (All Grade Levels)**

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

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

A parent should contact the school nurse if a student has been diagnosed with COVID-19.

A full list of conditions for which the school must exclude children can be obtained from the school nurse.

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

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

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

### **Homebound Services**

Students are provided homebound instruction when they are too medically fragile to attend school due to a diagnosed medical condition. The purpose of the homebound instruction is to provide students with academic instruction at home or hospital bedside, during a temporary period of absence, so that they can re-engage successfully when they return to their home campus.

Students who are eligible for the General Education Homebound Program must meet the following criteria:

1. The student is expected to be confined at home or hospital bedside for a minimum of 4 weeks.
2. The student is confined at home or hospital bedside for medical reasons only.
3. The student's medical condition is documented by a physician licensed to practice in the United States.

The Section 504 committee works in collaboration with a designated committee to make decisions regarding the General Education Homebound placement. In making the decisions, the General Education Homebound Committee considers information from the student's licensed physician. However, documentation from the licensed physician is not the sole determining factor in the committee's decision-making process.

For information contact the Special Education Department at (210) 977-7000 ext. 3583.

### **Immunization (All Grade Levels)**

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

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

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

The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or school nurse within 90 days of notarization. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required are:

- Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis
- Polio
- Measles, mumps, and rubella
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella (chicken pox)
- Meningococcal
- Hepatitis A

The school nurse can provide information on immunization requirements. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

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

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

[See the DSHS's [Texas School & Child Care Facility Immunization Requirements \(https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/default.shtm\)](https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/default.shtm) and policy FFAB(LEGAL) for more information.]

### **Lice (All Grade Levels)**

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

The district does not require or recommend that students be removed from school because of lice or nits.

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

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

More information on head lice can be obtained from the DSHS website [Managing Head Lice in School Settings and at Home](https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/lice.shtm) (<https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/lice.shtm>).

[See policy FFAA for more information.]

### **Medicine at School (All Grade Levels)**

If a student must take medication during school hours, the student's parent must provide the medication. All medication, whether prescription or nonprescription, must be kept in the nurse's office and be administered by the nurse or another authorized district employee. A student may be authorized to possess his or her own medication because of asthma or a severe allergy as described below or as otherwise allowed by law.

The district will not purchase nonprescription medication to give to a student.

In accordance with policy FFAC, authorized employees may administer:

- Prescription medication in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request.
- Prescription medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse or another qualified district employee from the original, properly labeled container provided by the parent along with a written request.
- Nonprescription medication in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request. **Note:** Insect repellent is considered a nonprescription medication.
- Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.

Students whose schedules provide for regular time spent outdoors, including for recess and physical education classes, should apply sunscreen before coming to school.

At the elementary level, a student's teacher or other district personnel will apply sunscreen to the student's exposed skin if the student brings the sunscreen to school and asks for help

applying it. A student at this level may apply his or her own sunscreen if the student is able to do so.

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

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

### **Asthma and Severe Allergic Reactions**

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

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

See also **Food Allergies**.

### **Unassigned Epinephrine Auto-injectors**

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

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

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

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

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

## **Unassigned Prescription Asthma Medication**

In accordance with Chapter 38, Subchapter E of the Education Code, the board has adopted a policy to allow a school nurse to administer an unassigned prescription asthma medication on a school campus to a student with diagnosed asthma if the nurse, in his or her professional judgment, reasonably believes the student is experiencing symptoms of asthma that warrant administration of the medication and the district has obtained prior written consent from the student's parent or guardian.

The school nurse may only administer unassigned prescription asthma medication to a student on a school campus. Please be aware that a school nurse will not always be available at a campus to administer this medication.

"Unassigned asthma medication" means a fast-acting bronchodilator delivered by metered dose inhaler with single use spacer or by nebulizer as a rescue medication, prescribed by an authorized health-care provider in the name of the district with a non-patient-specific standing delegation order for the administration of an asthma medication, and issued by an authorized health-care provider.

For additional information, see FFAC(LOCAL).

## **Steroids (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

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

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

## **Mental Health Support (All Grade Levels)**

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

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

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

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

A district employee who is a registered nurse, an advanced nurse practitioner, a physician, or a certified or credentialed mental health professional can recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner, if appropriate. [See policy FFEB for more information.]

For related information, see:

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

## **Physical Activity Requirements**

### ***Elementary School***

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

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

### ***Middle School***

The district will ensure that students in middle school will engage in 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity per day for at least four semesters, in accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA.

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

### ***Temporary Restriction from Participation in Physical Education***

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

### **Physical Fitness Assessment (Grades 3–12)**

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3–12 who are enrolled in a physical education course or a course for which physical education credit is awarded.

At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year by contacting:

Raymond Carroll  
Assistant Director of Athletics  
rcarroll@southsanisd.net  
210-977-7000 ext. 3446

### **Physical Health Screenings/Examinations**

#### ***Athletics Participation (Secondary Grade Levels Only)***

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

- A district athletics program.
- District marching band.
- Any district extracurricular program identified by the superintendent.

This examination is required to be submitted annually to the district. FFAA (LOCAL)

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

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

### ***Spinal Screening Program***

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



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

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

### ***Other Examinations and Screenings (All Grade Levels)***

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

[See policy FFAA for more information.]

### **Special Health Concerns (All Grade Levels)**

#### ***Bacterial Meningitis (All Grade Levels)***

Please see the district's website at [southsanisd.net](http://southsanisd.net) for information regarding meningitis.

**Note:** Entering college students must show, with limited exception, evidence of receiving a bacterial meningitis vaccination within the five-year period prior to enrolling in and taking courses at an institution of higher education. Please see the school nurse for more information, as this may affect a student who wishes to enroll in a dual credit course taken off campus.

[See **Immunization**.]

#### ***Diabetes***

In accordance with a student's individual health plan for management of diabetes, a student with diabetes will be permitted to possess and use monitoring and treatment supplies and equipment while at school or at a school-related activity. See the school nurse or principal for information. [See policy FFAF(LEGAL) for more information.]

#### ***Food Allergies (All Grade Levels)***

Parents should notify the district when a student has been diagnosed with a food allergy, especially an allergy that could result in dangerous or life-threatening reactions either by breathing, eating, or touching the particular food. It is important to disclose the food to which the student is allergic as well as the nature of the allergic reaction. Please contact the school nurse or campus principal if your child has a known food allergy or as soon as possible after any diagnosis of a food allergy.

The district has developed and annually reviews a food allergy management plan, based on the Texas Department of State Health Services' (DSHS) *Guidelines for the Care of Students with Food Allergies At-Risk for Anaphylaxis* found on the DSHS [Allergies and Anaphylaxis](https://www.dshs.texas.gov/schoolhealth/allergiesandanaphylaxis/) website (<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/schoolhealth/allergiesandanaphylaxis/>)

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

[See **Celebrations** and policy FFAF for more information.]

### **Seizures (All Grade Levels)**

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

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

### **Tobacco and E-Cigarettes Prohibited (All Grade Levels and All Others on School Property)**

Students are prohibited from possessing or using any type of tobacco product, electronic cigarette (e-cigarette), or any other electronic vaporizing device while on school property or while attending an off-campus school-related activity.

The district and its staff strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of all tobacco products, e-cigarettes, or any other electronic vaporizing device by students and all others on school property and at school-sponsored and school-related activities. [See the Student Code of Conduct and policies FNCD and GKA for more information.]

## **Health-Related Resources, Policies, and Procedures**

### **Physical and Mental Health Resources (All Grade Levels)**

Parents and students in need of assistance with physical and mental health concerns may contact the following campus and community resources:

- The campus nurse or school counselor.
- The San Antonio Community Resource Directory at <https://sacrd.org/directory/>

### **Policies and Procedures that Promote Student Physical and Mental Health (All Grade Levels)**

The district has adopted (LOCAL) board policies that promote student physical and mental health policies on the topics below can be found in the district's policy manual, available at [southsanisd.net](http://southsanisd.net).

- Food and nutrition management: CO, COA, COB
- Wellness and Health Services: FFA
- Physical Examinations: FFAA
- Immunizations: FFAB
- Medical Treatment: FFAC
- Communicable Diseases: FFAD
- School-Based Health Centers: FFAE
- Care Plans: FFAF
- Crisis Intervention: FFB
- Trauma-informed Care: FFBA
- Student Support Services: FFC
- Student Safety: FFF
- Child Abuse and Neglect: FFG
- Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation: FFH
- Freedom from Bullying: FFI

In addition, the District Improvement Plan details the district's strategies to improve student performance through evidence-based practices that address physical and mental health. District Improvement Plan Goal 4, Strategy 1, references student mental health and wellness through monthly programmed lessons presented by the campus school counselors. The lessons are developmentally appropriate and address the student competencies associated with personal health and safety. Monthly activities are documented through performance evaluation artifacts and in reports to the Director of Guidance and Counseling.

The district has developed administrative procedures as necessary to implement the above policies and plans.

For further information regarding these procedures and access to the District Improvement Plan, please contact:

Millicent Marcha  
 Chief Academic Officer  
 millicent.marcha@southsanisd.net  
 210-977-7000 ext. 3563

**School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) (All Grade Levels)**

Information regarding the district's SHAC is available from the Coordinator of Student Health Services, Diane Olivo, at 210-977-7000 ext.3636 or diana.olivo@southsanisd.net.

Notification of upcoming SHAC meetings will be posted at each campus administrative office at least 72 hours before the meeting. Notification of upcoming SHAC meetings, meeting minutes, and a recording of each meeting will be posted on the district website at [southsanisd.net](http://southsanisd.net).

[See **Consent to Human Sexuality Instruction, Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking**, and policies BDF and EHAA. for more information.]

### **Student Wellness Policy/Wellness Plan (All Grade Levels)**

To encourage healthy habits in our students, the district has developed a board-adopted wellness policy at FFA(LOCAL) and corresponding plans and procedures to implement it. For questions about the content or implementation of the district's wellness policy and plan, please contact:

Diana Olivo, BSN, RN  
Health Services Coordinator  
diana.olivo@southsanisd.net  
210-977-7000 ext. 3636

### **Homework (All Grade Levels)**

Ten percent (10%) of a student's grade shall be based on homework.

Homework will be given on a regular basis. The assignment of homework shall be determined and coordinated at the campus level by the campus School Based Decision Making Committee (SBDM) and grade level teams. Teachers will consider the following in assigning homework:

1. The student's grade level
2. The student's ability (and Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), if appropriate)
3. The time required for task completion
4. Appropriateness of the assignment (alignment to TEKS)
5. Homework should only be assigned for reinforcement of skills and concepts taught in class.
6. Homework provides opportunities for students to apply knowledge, skills, and processes from previous learning to display their understanding.
7. Homework should be considered an extended learning opportunity for students to demonstrate mastery of concepts taught.

### **Law Enforcement Agencies (All Grade Levels)**

#### **Questioning of Students**

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school, the principal will cooperate fully regarding the conditions of the interview, including without parental consent, if necessary, if it is part of a child abuse investigation. In other circumstances, the principal will:

- Verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and ask for an explanation of the need to question the student at school.

- Ordinarily make reasonable efforts to notify the parents, unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.
- Ordinarily be present for the questioning or interview, unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.

### **Students Taken into Custody**

- State law requires the district to permit a student to be taken into legal custody:
- To comply with an order of the juvenile court.
- To comply with the laws of arrest.
- By a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision.
- By a law enforcement officer to obtain fingerprints or photographs for comparison in an investigation.
- By a law enforcement officer to obtain fingerprints or photographs to establish a student's identity where the child may have engaged in conduct indicating a need for supervision, such as running away.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services (CPS), Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.
- To comply with a properly issued directive from a juvenile court to take a student into custody.

Before a student is released to a legally authorized person, the principal will verify the person's identity and, to the best of his or her ability, will verify the person's authority to take custody of the student.

The principal will immediately notify the superintendent and will attempt to notify the parent, unless the legally authorized person raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection to notifying the parents. Because the principal does not have the authority to prevent or delay a student's release to a legally authorized person, any notification will most likely be after the fact.

### **Notification of Law Violations**

The district is required by state law to notify:

- All instructional and support personnel who have responsibility for supervising a student who has been taken into custody, arrested, or referred to the juvenile court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors.
- All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a student who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors that

occur in school, on school property, or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property. These personnel will also be notified if the principal has reasonable grounds to believe the student has engaged in certain conduct.

- All appropriate district personnel regarding a student who is required to register as a sex offender.

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

### **Leaving Campus (All Grade Levels)**

Remember that student attendance is crucial. Appointments should be scheduled outside of school hours if possible. Except for extenuating circumstances, students will not regularly be released before the end of the school day.

State rules require parental consent before any student leaves campus for any part of the school day.

For students in elementary and middle school, a parent or authorized adult must come to the office and show identification to sign the student out. A campus representative will ask the student to report to the office. For safety purposes and stability of the learning environment, we cannot allow any unescorted adult to go to the classroom or other area to pick up the student. If the student returns to campus the same day, the parent or authorized adult must sign the student back in through the main office upon the student's return. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will also be required.

The same process applies to students in high school if a parent picks the student up from campus. If the student's parent authorizes the student to leave campus unaccompanied, a note provided by the parent must be submitted to the main office no later than two hours prior to the student's need to leave campus. A phone call from the parent may be accepted, but the school may ultimately require a note for documentation purposes. The student must sign out through the main office and sign in upon his or her return if the student returns the same day.

If a student becomes ill during the school day and the school nurse or other district personnel determines that the student should go home, the nurse will contact the student's parent and document the parent's wishes regarding release from school.

Unless the parent directs district personnel to release the student unaccompanied, the parent or other authorized adult must follow the sign-out procedures listed above. If a student is permitted by his or her parent to leave campus unaccompanied, the nurse will document the time of day the student was released. Under no circumstances will a student in elementary or middle school be released unaccompanied.

If a student is 18 years of age or is an emancipated minor, the student may sign him- or herself out of school. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will be required.

## **During Lunch**

Students are not authorized to leave campus during lunch for any other reason, except with the permission of the principal or parent check-out.

## **At Any Other Time during the School Day**

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

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

## **Lost and Found (All Grade Levels)**

A lost and found collection box is located in the campus office. A student who loses an item should check the lost and found box. The district discourages bringing personal items of high monetary value to school, as the district is not responsible for lost or stolen items. The campus will dispose of lost and found items at the end of each semester.

## **Makeup Work**

### **Makeup Work Because of Absence (All Grade Levels)**

When a student is absent, the student shall be permitted to complete assignments and/or make-up work for credit toward the class grade. Upon their return, students shall be given sufficient time to gather and submit missed work.

Extended Absences – For all extended absences, the student shall be expected to complete as much of the work as possible prior to or during the term of the absence.

Planned Absences – When an absence is planned in advance, the student or parent shall be expected to obtain information about assignments and make-up work prior to the absences whenever possible. Parents may contact the school office for assistance.

Unplanned Absences – On the day the student returns to class, it is the student's responsibility to obtain from each teacher a list of the assignments or make-up work which has not previously been provided.

Due Date – Each teacher will specify a reasonable due date for assignments and make-up work depending upon the nature of the assignment and the length and nature of the absence. If a student is unable to complete the make-up work in the designated time, she/ he should contact the teacher as soon as they become aware that the deadline cannot be met.

Truancy – A student who has been truant shall be expected to make up missed work and may earn a maximum grade of 70.

## **In-School Suspension (ISS) and Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) Makeup Work (All Grade Levels)**

### ***Alternative Means to Receive Coursework***

While a student is in ISS or OSS, the district will provide the student with all course work for the student's foundation curriculum classes that the student misses as a result of the suspension.

### ***Opportunity to Complete Courses***

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

## **MARRIED AND/OR PREGNANT STUDENTS**

1. Any student who shall be married at the time such student seeks enrollment in any school of the District shall report the fact of the marriage, the name of his or her spouse, and place where the spouse resides.
2. Any student who marries after enrollment in any school of this District shall promptly report that fact to the principal of the school attended by the student and shall also report the name of their spouse and the place where the spouse resides.
3. There shall be no discrimination against any married or pregnant student because of marriage or pregnancy. Such student shall be allowed to attend the school where assigned; however, the student shall be expected to attend classes regularly and keep up with their school work. No married student and no pregnant student, except as outlined in paragraph 4, shall be denied the right to be eligible to participate in any extracurricular or other activities of the school because of marriage or pregnancy.
4. In the event that any student shall be or become pregnant during any term while enrolled in a school in this District, then, for the benefit of her health and welfare and that of her expected child, and for the purpose of informing school personnel so that counsel, protection and advice may be given, is strongly encouraged to inform the nurse and/or principal of the school as soon as such condition is known to her. Upon being so informed, a referral is made to the School Age Parenting Program (SAPP). The student, and parent if the student is minor, will be asked to sign a release of medical information. Once completed the SAPP staff shall consult with the physician for the purpose of determining when, and if, in the best interest for the health and welfare of the student and her expected child, other appropriate educational arrangements should be made. After the birth of a child of any pregnant student, the mother shall be permitted to re-enter school upon written advice of her physician and approval of the principal.



5. School-Age Parenting classes and special services are available to assist such students to continue their education. The counselor or school nurse should be consulted for further information.

### **Nondiscrimination Statement (All Grade Levels)**

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, the district does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law in providing education services, activities, and programs, including Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. The district provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

In accordance with Title IX, the district does not and is required not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. The requirement not to discriminate extends employment. Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the district's Title IX Coordinator (see below), to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both.

Other federal laws that prohibit discrimination include Title VI, Section 504, the Age Discrimination Act, the Boy Scouts Act, and Title II.

The district has designated and authorized the following employee as the Title IX Coordinator to address concerns or inquiries regarding discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, or gender-based harassment:

Elizabeth Martinez  
Director of Federal and State Programs  
esmartinez@southsanisd.net  
210-977-7000 ext. 3568

Reports can be made at any time and by any person, including during non-business hours, by mail, phone, or email. During district business hours, reports may also be made in person. Upon the district receiving notice or an allegation of sex-based harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly respond in accordance with the process described at FFH(LOCAL).

The following district representatives have been designated to address concerns or inquiries about other kinds of discrimination:

For concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability, see the ADA/Section 504 Coordinator:

Julie Silva  
Director of Special Education  
julie.silva@southsanisd.net  
210-977-7000 ext. 3583

For all other concerns regarding discrimination, see the superintendent.

[See policies FB, FFH, and GKD for more information.]

### **Nontraditional Academic Programs (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

The Optional Flexible School Day Program (FSD) Program allows students in danger of not meeting state graduation requirements to have a flexible school day schedule. FSD may also include students who must seek employment to support their families, seek childcare during traditional school hours, or who have dropped out of school and wish to complete their education in a nontraditional setting. The FSD program will expand opportunities for students with special circumstances in grades 9-12 to have a more accommodating schedule based on their demonstrated need. Students who have a demonstrated need must apply to the program through their counselors with the final admission decision resting on the campus administration.

### **Parent and Family Engagement (All Grade Levels)**

#### **Working Together**

Experience and research tell us that a child succeeds in education with good communication and a strong partnership between home and school. A parent's involvement and engagement in this partnership may include:

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

plans to improve student achievement. For more information, see policies BQA and BQB and/or contact the campus Principal.

- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and assisting the district in aligning local community values with health education instruction, human sexuality instruction, instruction on prevention of child abuse, family violence, dating violence, and sex trafficking, and other wellness issues. [See **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)** and policies BDF, EHAA, FFA for more information.]
- Being aware of the school's ongoing bullying and harassment prevention efforts.
- Contacting school officials if you are concerned with your child's emotional or mental well-being.
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. Regular board meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at 1450 Gillette Blvd, San Antonio, TX 78224. An agenda for a regular or special meeting is posted no later than 72 hours before each meeting in the glass case located outside of SSAISD Central Office and online at [www.southsanisd.net](http://www.southsanisd.net). [See policies BE and BED for more information.]

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parents who desire private conferences with teachers or the principal should contact the school in advance to arrange conferences during the school day. At no time should a visitor call a teacher from the class for a conference at the door of the room.

Parents are always welcome and are encouraged to visit. A 24-hour advance notice is required to observe a class. All visitors are required to sign in at the attendance office immediately upon entering the building.

No student is to visit another school campus while that school is in session unless prior arrangements have been made by the principal of both schools involved. Any student who makes an unauthorized visit to another school is subject to disciplinary action.

## **Parking and Parking Permits (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

Students who will need a parking permit must be able to provide a valid driver's license and proof of insurance with the student's name on the policy. The cost for a parking permit is \$5.00. Students must complete a Parking Permit Application which will need to be signed by themselves and their parent/guardian prior to receiving the permit. Parking Permit Applications can be requested at the campus front office.

So long as space is available, parking permits may be issued throughout the year.

Students will not be permitted to:

- Speed.
- Double-park.

- Park across a white or yellow line.
- Park in a fire lane.
- Sit in parked cars during school hours.

Students may be subject to disciplinary action for violation of these rules. The district may tow cars (at the expense of the student and parent/guardian) that are parked in violation of these rules.

### **Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence (All Grade Levels)**

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge. [See **Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags.**]

State law requires that one minute of silence follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that minute so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others.

In addition, state law requires that each campus provide for the observance of one minute of silence in remembrance of those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001, at the beginning of the first class period when September 11 falls on a regular school day.

[See policy EC for more information.]

### **Prayer (All Grade Levels)**

Each student has a right to pray individually, voluntarily, and silently or to meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt school activities. The school will not encourage, require, or coerce a student to engage in or refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

### **Promotion and Retention**

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or proficiency. In making promotion decisions, the district will consider:

- Teacher recommendation,
- Grades,
- Scores on criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessments, and
- Any other necessary academic information as determined by the district.

### **Prekindergarten—Grade 3**

A parent may request in writing that a student repeat prekindergarten, kindergarten, or grade 1, 2, or 3. Before granting the request, the district may convene a retention committee to meet and discuss the request and will invite the parent to participate.

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

In grades 1-5, promotion is based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in reading, English/language arts, mathematics, and either science or social studies.

In grades 6-8, promotion is based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in English/language arts, mathematics, and either science or social studies.

### **High School Grade Levels**

To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level standards. A student in grades 9–12 will be advanced a grade level based on the number of course credits earned. [See **Grade-Level Classification**.] Students will also have multiple opportunities to retake EOC assessments. [See **Graduation** and **Standardized Testing**.]

### **Release of Students from School**

[See **Leaving Campus**.]

### **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences (All Grade Levels)**

Report cards with each student's performance and absences in each class or subject are issued at least once every 9 weeks.

At the end of the fourth week of a nine-week grading period, parents will receive a progress report on their child's performance in all course/subject area. If a student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent will be asked to schedule a conference with the teacher. [See **Working Together** for how to schedule a conference.]

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the Superintendent pursuant to the board-adopted policy. Grading guidelines are designed to reflect each student's relative mastery of each assignment. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district's grading policy. [See **Grading Guidelines** and policy EIA(LOCAL) for more information.]

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

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

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and returned to the school within 5 days. The district may communicate academic information about a student electronically, including for progress reporting purposes. An electronic signature will be accepted by the district, but parents are entitled to request a handwritten signature of acknowledgment instead.

## **Retaliation**

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

## **Safety (All Grade Levels)**

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

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or others at risk.
- Follow all behavioral standards in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct or set by district employees.
- Remain alert to any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student or staff member, and promptly report any incidents to a district employee. A student may make anonymous reports about safety concerns by submitting an online report at [www.southsanisd.net](http://www.southsanisd.net)
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

## **Accident Insurance**

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

## **Insurance for Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs**

The district may purchase accident, liability, or automobile insurance coverage for students and businesses involved in the district's CTE programs.

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

Periodically, the school will conduct preparedness drills of emergency procedures. When the command is given or alarm is sounded, students need to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

## **Preparedness Training: CPR and Stop the Bleed**

The district will annually offer instruction in CPR at least once to students enrolled in grades 7–12. The instruction can be provided as part of any course and is not required to result in CPR certification.

The district will annually offer students in grades 7–12 instruction on the use of bleeding control stations to respond to traumatic injury. For more information, see:

- Homeland Security's Stop the Bleed (<https://www.dhs.gov/stopthebleed>)
- [Stop the Bleed Texas](https://stopthebleedtexas.org/) (<https://stopthebleedtexas.org/>)

## **Emergency Medical Treatment and Information**

All parents are asked each year to complete a medical care authorization form, providing written parental consent to obtain emergency treatment and information about allergies to medications or drugs. Parents should contact the school nurse to update emergency care information (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, and the like).

The district may consent to medical treatment, which includes dental treatment, if necessary, for a student if:

- The district has received written authorization from a person having the right to consent;
- That person cannot be contacted; and
- That person has not given the district actual notice to the contrary.

The emergency care authorization form will be used by the district when a student's parent or authorized designee cannot be contacted. A student may provide consent if authorized by law or court order.

Regardless of parental authorization for the district to consent to medical treatment, district employees will contact emergency medical services to provide emergency care when required by law or when deemed necessary, such as to avoid a life-threatening situation.

## **Emergency School Closing Information**

Each year, parents are asked to complete an emergency release form to provide contact information in the event that the district needs to notify parents of early dismissal, delayed opening, or restricted access to a campus because of severe weather, a security threat, or another emergency cause.

The district will rely on contact information on file with the district to communicate with parents in an emergency situation, which may include real-time or automated messages. It is crucial to notify your child's school when a phone number changes. State law requires parents to update contact information within two weeks after the date the information changes.

If the campus must close, delay opening, or restrict access to the building because of an emergency, the district will also alert the community in the following ways:

- Post a notice on the district website
- Post notice on social media
- Automated call from district
- Send alerts to local news sources

[See **Automated Emergency Communications.**]

## **SAT, ACT, and Other Standardized Tests**

[See **Standardized Testing.**]

## **Schedule Changes (Middle School and High School Grade Levels)**

Schedule changes are only allowed for errors and prerequisite requirements. Elective choices made in the spring are final. To solve schedule conflicts, counselors may substitute an alternate choice for an elective. Because of the potential effect on class size, counselors cannot accommodate teacher change requests, "change of mind" requests, or lunch preferences. Necessary schedule changes (listed below) will be made **ONLY** during the first 2 weeks of school.

### **Valid reasons for a schedule:**

- Student has already earned credit for the class in which he/she is enrolled
- The student has not met the prerequisite for the course
- ARD committee decision
- Work-based learning program students who do not have a job by the deadline
- Student has failed the course under the same teacher, another teacher is available, and there is no negative impact on class size

## **School Facilities**

### **Asbestos Management Plan (All Grade Levels)**

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. A copy of the district's asbestos management plan is available in the central administrative office.



If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please contact the district's designated asbestos coordinator:

Andy Rocha  
Director of Purchasing  
andy.rocha@southsanisd.net  
210-977-7000 ext. 3518

### **Food and Nutrition Services (All Grade Levels)**

All District campuses provide a no-cost breakfast and lunch meal to every student. SSAISD campuses participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP). As required by federal law, the District has established nutrition guidelines to ensure that all foods and beverages sold or marketed to students during the school day on each campus adhere to all federal regulations and guidance and are designed to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity.

The district participates in the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced meals daily in accordance with standards set forth in state and federal law.

The district may share information such as a student's name and eligibility status to help enroll eligible children in Medicaid or the state children's health insurance program (CHIP) unless the student's parent requests the student's information not be disclosed.

[See policy CO for more information.]

### ***Vending Machines (All Grade Levels)***

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

### ***Pest Management Plan (All Grade Levels)***

The district is required to follow integrated pest management (IPM) procedures to control pests on school grounds. Although the district strives to use the safest and most effective methods to manage pests, including a variety of non-chemical control measures, periodic indoor and outdoor pesticide use is sometimes necessary to ensure a safe, pest-free school environment.

All pesticides used are registered for their intended use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and are applied only by certified pesticide applicators. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before indoor application. All outdoor applications will be posted at the time of treatment, and signs will remain until it is safe to enter the area.

Parents who have questions or who want to be notified of the times and types of applications prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact the district's IPM coordinator:

Andy Rocha  
Director of Purchasing  
andy.rocha@southsanisd.net  
210-977-7000 ext. 3518

### **Conduct Before and After School (All Grade Levels)**

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at before- or after-school activities. Whether a school activity is on or off district premises, students must follow the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day. Misbehavior will be subject to consequences established by the Student Code of Conduct or any stricter standards of behavior established by the sponsor for extracurricular participants.

### **Library (All Grade Levels)**

Each campus library supports the curriculum and provides a wide variety of materials suitable to the interest and abilities of students in their pursuit of knowledge and love of reading. Information literacy skills for life-long learning are taught, practiced, and applied. Home access to the online catalog is available as well as various online databases and eBooks. In order for each school to maintain a high quality collection, students learn responsibility in caring for library materials. If library materials are lost or damaged, the student is expected to pay for them.

Librarians and teachers select materials for each campus library following comprehensive District guidelines which have been established to ensure that up-to-date, accurate information is provided for students' curricular needs and that materials appropriate to the interests, age, maturity, and reading skills level of all students at that campus are available. Because of this need for a broad range of materials, a student may have access to materials that address issues which may be beyond the maturity level of that student. Parents of all students are urged to be aware of their child's choices and to take the opportunity to discuss such materials with them. These issues can lead to good family discussions and learning experiences.

If a concern arises about the selection that a student has made from the library, that concern should be discussed with the campus librarian or administration.

### **Use of Hallways during Class Time (All Grade Levels)**

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

### **Use by Students Before and After School (All Grade Levels)**

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are required to remain in the area where their activity is scheduled to take place. Unless the teacher or sponsor overseeing an activity gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the building or campus.

Students must leave campus immediately after dismissal from school in the afternoon, unless the student is involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher or other authorized employee or adult. Due to limited supervision, students should arrive at school no earlier than 30 minutes prior to the start of the school day.

### SCHOOL HOURS

Elementary School - 7:40 am to 3:00 pm

Middle School - 8:07 am to 3:45 pm

High School - 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

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

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

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

### **School-Sponsored Field Trips (All Grade Levels)**

The district periodically takes students on field trips for educational purposes.

A parent must provide permission for a student to participate in a field trip.

The district may ask the parent to provide information about a student's medical provider and insurance coverage and may also ask the parent to sign a waiver allowing for emergency medical treatment in the case of a student accident or illness during the field trip.

The district may require a fee for student participation in a field trip that is not required as part of a basic educational program or course to cover expenses such as transportation, admission, and meals; however, a student will not be denied participation because of financial need. See **Fees (All Grade Levels)** for more information.

The district is not responsible for refunding fees paid directly to a third-party vendor.

## **Searches**

### **Searches in General (All Grade Levels)**

In the interest of promoting student safety and drug-free schools, district officials may occasionally conduct searches.

District officials may search students, their belongings, and their vehicles in accordance with law and district policy. Searches of students will be conducted without discrimination, based on, for example, reasonable suspicion or voluntary consent or pursuant to district policy providing for suspicionless security procedures, including the use of metal detectors.

In accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, students are responsible for prohibited items found in their possession, including items in their personal belongings or in vehicles parked on district property.

If there is reasonable suspicion to believe that searching a student's person, belongings, or vehicle will reveal evidence of a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, a district official may conduct a search in accordance with law and district regulations.

### **District Property (All Grade Levels)**

Desks, lockers, district-provided technology, and similar items are the property of the district and are provided for student use as a matter of convenience. District property is subject to search or inspection at any time without notice. Students have no expectation of privacy in district property.

Students are responsible for any item found in district property provided to the student that is prohibited by law, district policy, or the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Metal Detectors (All Grade Levels)**

To maintain a safe and disciplined learning environment, the district reserves the right to subject students to metal detector searches when entering a district campus and at off-campus, school-sponsored activities.

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

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

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

[See **Electronic Devices and Technology Resources** and policy FNF(LEGAL) for more information.]

## **Trained Dogs (All Grade Levels)**

The district may use trained dogs to screen for concealed, prohibited items, including drugs and alcohol. Screenings conducted by trained dogs will not be announced in advance. The dogs will not be used with students, but students may be asked to leave personal belongings in an area that is going to be screened, such as a classroom, a locker, or a vehicle. If a dog alerts to an item or an area, it may be searched by district officials.

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

If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the student will be asked to unlock the vehicle. If the student refuses, the district will contact the student's parents. If the parents also refuse to permit the vehicle to be searched, the district may turn the matter over to law enforcement. The district may contact law enforcement even if permission to search is granted.

## **Sexual Harassment**

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

## **Special Programs (All Grade Levels)**

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, students who are homeless, students in foster care, bilingual students, migrant students, English learners, students diagnosed with dyslexia, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact the campus administrator or counselor.

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission's [Talking Book Program](https://www.tsl.texas.gov/tbp/index.html) (<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/tbp/index.html>) provides audiobooks free of charge to qualifying Texans, including students with visual, physical, or reading disabilities such as dyslexia.

## **Standardized Testing**

### **Secondary Grade Levels**

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

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

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

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

Prior to enrollment in a Texas public college or university, most students must take a standardized test called the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) assessment. The TSI assesses the reading, mathematics, and writing skills that first-year students need to perform effectively as undergraduates in Texas public colleges and universities. This assessment may also be required before a student enrolls in a dual credit course offered through the district. Achieving certain benchmark scores on this assessment may also waive certain end-of-course assessment requirements in limited circumstances.

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

#### ***Grades 3–8***

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

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3–8
- Reading, annually in grades 3–8
- Science in grades 5 and 8
- Social Studies in grade 8

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

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

#### ***Failure to Perform Satisfactorily on STAAR Reading or Math***

If a student in grades 3–8 does not perform satisfactorily on the state assessment, the district will provide accelerated instruction for the student. A student who does not attend accelerated instruction may violate school attendance requirements.

For a student who does not perform satisfactorily on the math or reading assessment in grades 3, 5, or 8, the district will establish an accelerated learning committee (ALC), which includes the student's parent, to develop an educational plan for accelerated instruction to enable the student to perform at the appropriate grade level by the conclusion of the next school year. The district will document the educational plan in writing and provide a copy to the student's parent.

The parent of a student in grades 3, 5, or 8 who fails to perform satisfactorily on the math or reading assessment may:

- Request that the district consider assigning the student to a particular classroom teacher in the applicable subject area, if more than one classroom teacher is available.
- File a grievance or complaint regarding the content or implementation of the ALC's educational plan. See **Complaints and Concerns (All Grade Levels)** and FNG(LOCAL).

### ***Standardized Testing for a Student Enrolled Above Grade Level***

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

A student in grades 3–8 shall be assessed at least once in high school with the ACT or the SAT if the student completes the high school end-of-course assessments in mathematics, reading/language arts, or science prior to high school.

### ***Standardized Testing for a Student in Special Programs***

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

### ***Personal Graduation Plans - Middle School Students***

For a middle-school student who does not perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated examination, a school official will prepare a personal graduation plan (PGP).

School officials will also develop a PGP for a middle-school student who is determined by the district to be unlikely to earn a high school diploma within five years of high school enrollment. The plan will, among other items;

- Identify the student's educational goals,
- Address the parent's educational expectations for the student, and
- Outline an intensive instruction program for the student.

[See the school counselor and policy EIF(LEGAL) for more information.]

For a student receiving special education services, the student's IEP may serve as the student's PGP and would therefore be developed by the student's ARD committee.

[See **Personal Graduation Plans** for information related to the development of personal graduation plans for high school students.]

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

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

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

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

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

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

An admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee for a student receiving special education services will determine whether successful performance on the EOC assessments will be required for graduation within the parameters identified in state rules and the student's personal graduation plan (PGP).

[See **Graduation**.]

### ***Failure to Perform Satisfactorily on an EOC***

If a student does not perform satisfactorily on an EOC, the district will provide accelerated instruction. Failure of a student to attend accelerated instruction may result in violations of required school attendance.

### ***Students in Foster Care (All Grade Levels)***

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

If you have questions, please contact the district's foster care liaison:



Carlos (Charlie) F. Gallardo  
Director of Guidance & Counseling  
[cgallardo@southsanisd.net](mailto:cgallardo@southsanisd.net)  
210-977-7000 ext. 3578

[See **A Student in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care)**.]

### **Students Who are Homeless (All Grade Levels)**

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

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

Elizabeth Martinez  
Director of Federal and State Programs  
[esmartinez@southsanisd.net](mailto:esmartinez@southsanisd.net)  
210-977-7000 ext. 3568

[See **A Student Who is Homeless**.]

### **Student Speakers (All Grade Levels)**

The district provides students the opportunity to introduce the following school events: football games and opening announcements and greetings for the school day. If a student meets the eligibility criteria and wishes to introduce one of the school events listed above, the student should submit his or her name in accordance with policy FNA(LOCAL).

[See **Graduation** for information related to student speakers at graduation ceremonies and policy FNA(LOCAL) regarding other speaking opportunities.]

### **Summer School (All Grade Levels)**

South San Antonio ISD offers summer school to students in grades Pre-K through 12 to remediate, engage, and enrich students in meaningful learning experiences as an extension of the regular school year. Please see your campus counselor for more information.

### **Tardies (All Grade Levels)**

A student who is more than 10 minutes tardy to class may be assigned to detention hall or given another appropriate consequence.

### **Textbooks, Electronic Textbooks, Technological Equipment, and Other Instructional Materials (All Grade Levels)**

Instructional materials are any resources used in classroom instruction as part of the required curriculum, such as textbooks, workbooks, computer software, or online services.

The district selects instructional materials in accordance with state law and policy EFA.

The district provides approved instructional materials to students free of charge for each subject or class. Students must treat instructional materials with care, as directed by the teacher.

If a student needs a graphing calculator for a course and the district does not provide one, the student may use a calculator application with graphing capabilities on a phone, laptop, tablet, or other computing device.

A student who is issued a damaged item should report the damage to the teacher.

Any student who does not return an item or returns an item in an unacceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until the item is returned or the damage is paid for by the parent. However, the student will be provided the necessary instructional resources and equipment for use at school during the school day.

For information on library books and other resources students may access voluntarily, see **Library (All Grade Levels)**.

### **Transfers (All Grade Levels)**

**General Provisions:** In accordance with the Texas Education Code (TEC) 25.033 a parent or person standing in parental relation to any student may by petition in writing either:

- (1) request the assignment or transfer of the student to a designated school or to a school to be designated by the board, or
- (2) file objections to the assignment of the student to the school to which the student has been assigned.

Because each type of intra-district transfer services a specific audience, parents are asked to review the information below in order to determine the most appropriate transfer type given your circumstances. A transfer approved for an individual student does not in any way create an agreement to transfer siblings of the student. A student transfer may be requested only one time per school year.

#### **Administrative Transfer**

A transfer may be initiated administratively to assign a student to a different school for reasons including, but not limited to concerns related to discipline, safety, sexual assault, bullying, or extraordinary conditions affecting the family or the school. It must be initiated by the home campus principal or Executive Director of Student Services only if one or more of the conditions described above exist. If a parent/guardian deems that an administrative transfer is warranted,

they should visit the home campus principal. Unless otherwise noted, an Administrative Transfer is valid only for the current school year. Parents inquiring about Administrative Transfer should visit with their home campus principal. The processing of Administrative Transfers is done by the Student Services Department.

### **Child of Employee Transfer**

Requests for Child of Employee (CET) Transfers should be submitted by the employee. You may complete a hard-copy CET form and submit it to the Department of Student Services. Please bring a birth certificate and acceptable proof of residency documents.

A campus or non-campus-based full-time SSAISD employee can submit a Child of Employee Transfer (CET) request for his/her biological child (or legal guardian through a court of law). The employee need not be a SSAISD resident, meaning the employee may or may not reside within SSAISD boundaries. A student approved for a CET is not subject to tuition. A request may be denied by the campus Principal on the basis of the student's record (e.g. excessive absences or tardies, poor conduct), or lack of space. A student who fails to maintain an acceptable record may be subject to revocation of the transfer by the campus principal. The CET is valid only for the school year for which it is approved. Because employment circumstances may change, a CET must be renewed annually. Only once the employee receives the CET approval notification, he/she may contact the campus to begin the registration process.

The transportation for a Child of Employee transfer student is the responsibility of the student and family.

### **Program Transfer (Career & Technology)**

Program Transfers, available at the high school level for upcoming 9th graders only, involve Career and Technology Education concentrated sequence of courses with four or more credits that provide job-specific training and may lead to licensure or certification. A program transfer request for the upcoming school year for a program not offered at the 9th grader's home campus may be submitted in the spring, until the Friday before school starts. Applications received will be ordered sequentially by date/time received by the Student Services Department. Program transfers are approved by the requested Campus Principal after a review of the student's discipline & attendance records and pending availability within the program. Transfers are dependent upon the student being admitted to the specific program and require continuous enrollment to remain in effect. Questions specific to the program type should be directed to the school counselor, administration, and/or program sponsor.

### **Parental Choice Transfer**

South San Antonio ISD parents/guardians may submit a parental choice transfer request for their child(ren) for the upcoming school year to the Department of Student Services in the spring and before the first day of the subsequent school year. Because parent/guardian can request this type of transfer for any reason, a rationale for the transfer request is not required on the

form. Requests received prior to Spring Break, shall receive priority consideration and shall be ordered by lottery.

The approval of parental choice transfer requests is dependent on a number of factors:

- (1) Available space at the requested campus and at the requested grade level if elementary
- (2) Projected enrollment numbers at the requested campus
- (3) Special circumstances to include above target enrollment to preclude future overcrowding
- (4) Principal's review of the student's discipline and attendance records

Parental choice transfer requests to remain at the same school the child was attending at the time of boundary change shall not be accepted for one school year following the boundary change. Further, if an elementary, middle, or high school has a boundary change or cap to reduce enrollment, the school shall be closed for one year following the boundary change. If requests are denied due to lack of space, requests submitted shall be placed on a waiting list ordered by date and time received and will be considered if space becomes available after the beginning of the school year.

All parental choice transfers must be approved by the requested Campus Principal after a review of the student's discipline and attendance records. If the student is new to SSAISD, the parent/guardian should obtain the student records from the last school attended and submit them to Student Services with the Transfer form. If the student fails to maintain an acceptable discipline and/or attendance record, the Principal may revoke the parental choice transfer.

Parental Choice Transfers do not need to be renewed annually, since once approved they are approved for that level of schooling (i.e elementary, middle, or high school level). Transportation for a parental choice transfer student is the responsibility of the family.

### **Moving During the Year**

A student who moves to another attendance zone during the school year may apply to continue at the current campus for the remainder of the school year, provided there are no discipline, attendance, or transportation problems.

A senior student enrolled with enough credits to graduate by the end of the school year may remain at the high school for the rest of the academic year.

### **UIL Eligibility**

A student obtaining an intradistrict transfer to a District high school without a corresponding change of legal residence shall not be eligible for participation in high school varsity athletics for one year at the new school. Participation in other UIL competitions shall be subject to UIL rules and guidelines.

Upon a student's entry into high school athletics, eligibility shall be established based on the location of the student's legal residence, i.e., the bona fide legal address of the parent or guardian and where the student resides.

If a family changes legal residence from one high school attendance area to another after eligibility has been established, the student may choose to:

1. Retain UIL eligibility at the original school and continue to attend and participate if eligibility has been established by UIL rules; or
2. Participate at the new school, subject to established UIL guidelines and rules.

A student requesting an intradistrict transfer should consult with the athletic department to determine if transferring would result in the forfeiture of varsity eligibility for a year.

[See **Safety Transfers/Assignments, Bullying, and A Student Who Has Learning Difficulties or Who Needs Special Education or Section 504 Services**, for other transfer options.]

## **Transportation (All Grade Levels)**

### **School-Sponsored Trips**

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use school-provided transportation to and from the event. However, in accordance with campus procedures, a parent may provide written consent for his or her child to ride with or be released after the event to the parent or another adult designated by the parent. [See **School-Sponsored Field Trips**.]

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

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living two or more miles from school and to any students who are experiencing homelessness. This service is provided at no cost to students.

Bus routes and stops will be designated annually. Any subsequent changes will be posted at the school and on the district's website. For the safety of the driver and all passengers, students must board district vehicles only at authorized stops and drivers must unload passengers only at authorized stops.

For additional information regarding transportation, please contact:

Jose Fernandez

Director of Transportation

jofernandez@southsanisd.net

210-977-7000 ext. 3530

A parent may designate a child-care facility or grandparent's residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated location must be an approved stop on

an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off location, contact 210-977-7000 ext. 3533.

Students are expected to assist district staff in ensuring that buses and other district vehicles are clean and safe. When riding in district vehicles, students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct. Students must:

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

Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, including loss of the privilege to ride in a district vehicle.

[See the Student Code of Conduct for provisions regarding transportation to the DAEP.]

### **Vandalism (All Grade Levels)**

Littering, defacing, or damaging school property is not tolerated. Students will be required to pay for damages they cause and will be subject to criminal proceedings as well as disciplinary consequences in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Video Cameras (All Grade Levels)**

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

The principal will review the video and audio recordings as needed and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

In accordance with state law, a parent of a student who receives special education services, a staff member (as this term is defined by law), a principal or assistant principal, or the board may make a written request for the district to place video and audio recording equipment in certain self-contained special education classrooms. The district will provide notice before placing a

video camera in a classroom or other setting in which a child receives special education services. For more information or to request the installation and operation of this equipment, contact the campus principal to coordinate the implementation of and compliance with this law.

[See policy EHBAF(LOCAL) for more information.]

[See **Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student when Not Already Permitted by Law** for video and other recording by parents or visitors to virtual or in-person classrooms.]

## **Visitors to the School (All Grade Levels)**

### **General Visitors**

Parents and others are welcome to visit district schools. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must first report to the main office and comply with all applicable district policies and procedures. All visitors should be prepared to show photo identification.

Individuals may visit classrooms or observe virtual instruction during instructional time only with approval of the principal and teacher. Visitors may not interfere with instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct. Disruptive behavior or violations of student privacy will not be permitted.

[See **Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student when Not Already Permitted by Law** for video and other recording by parents or visitors to virtual or in-person classrooms.]

### **Unauthorized Persons**

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

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

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

[See the Student Code of Conduct.]

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

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

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

### ***Career Day***

Each Fall, the district invites representatives to the high schools from colleges and universities and other higher education institutions, prospective employers, and military recruiters to present information to interested students.

### **Volunteers (All Grade Levels)**

South San Antonio ISD provides a quality education for every student in collaboration with a strong family engagement program. Both experience and research tell us that a child succeeds when there is a positive relationship between the home, school, and community. South San Antonio ISD is dedicated to developing and maintaining partnerships with parents/guardians, school staff and community members.

South San Antonio ISD's Family Engagement Committee is comprised of parent/guardians, community members, administrators, teachers, and other staff members. The committee will meet annually to discuss the design and implementation of the Family Engagement Policy and explore ways the district and schools can encourage effective family engagement. CAMPUS FAMILY ENGAGEMENT [BQ (Local)]

Your involvement in this partnership may include:

1. Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
2. Ensuring that your child comes to school ready to learn every day, completes all homework assignments, and attends tutoring as needed.
3. Becoming familiar with all your child's academic programs, school activities, extracurricular activities, and special programs offered on your campus and within the district.
4. Discussing with the principal or appropriate school personnel any questions you may have about the educational opportunities available to your child.
5. Reviewing the requirements of the graduation programs and post-secondary options with your child once your child enters middle school.
6. Monitoring your child's academic progress by building a relationship with your child's teachers and by keeping in close communication with them.
7. Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed.



8. Becoming a school volunteer or mentor on campus.
9. Participating in campus parent organizations, such as PTA. Contact the school about these organizations.
10. Serving as a parent representative on a district-level or campus-level planning committee.
11. Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations.

The district invites and appreciates the efforts of volunteers who are willing to serve our district and students.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact:

Jose Guereca  
Family, Community & Engagement Specialist  
jose.guereca@southsanisd.net  
210-977-7000 ext. 2121

Subject to exceptions in accordance with state law and district procedures, the district requires a state criminal history background check for each volunteer, including parents, guardians, or grandparents of a child enrolled in the district. The volunteer must pay all costs for the background check.

### **Voter Registration (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

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

### **Withdrawing from School (All Grade Levels)**

To withdraw a student under age 18 from school, the parent or guardian must submit a written request to the principal specifying the reasons for withdrawal and the final day the student will be in attendance. Withdrawal forms are available from the attendance office.

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

Please provide the school at least three days' notice of withdrawal so that records and documents may be prepared.

## **Glossary**

**Accelerated instruction, also referred to as supplemental instruction,** is an intensive supplemental program designed to help an individual student acquire the knowledge and skills

required at his or her grade level. It is required when a student does not meet the passing standard on a state-mandated assessment.

**Accelerated learning committee (ALC)** is a committee that must be established when a student does not perform satisfactorily on the math or reading assessment in grades 3, 5, or 8. The committee includes district personnel and the student's parent and develops an educational plan for accelerated instruction to enable the student to perform at the appropriate grade level by the end of the next school year.

**ACT**, or the American College Test, is one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions examinations. The test may be required for admission to certain colleges or universities.

**ACT-Aspire** is designed as a preparatory and readiness assessment for the ACT. This is usually taken by students in grade 10.

**ARD** stands for admission, review, and dismissal. The ARD committee convenes for each student who is identified as needing a full and individual evaluation for special education services. The eligible student and his or her parents are members of the committee.

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

**CPS** stands for Child Protective Services.

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

**DFPS** stands for the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

**DPS** stands for the Texas Department of Public Safety.

**DSHS** stands for the Texas Department of State Health Services.

**ED** stands for the U.S. Department of Education.

**EOC (end-of-course) assessments** are state-mandated and are part of the STAAR program. Successful performance on EOC assessments is required for graduation. These examinations will be given in English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and U.S. History.

**ESSA** is the federal Every Student Succeeds Act.

**FERPA** refers to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, which grants specific privacy protections to student records. The law contains certain exceptions, such as for directory information, unless a student's parent or a student 18 years of age or older directs the school not to release directory information.

**IEP** stands for individualized education program and is the written record prepared by the ARD committee for a student with disabilities who is eligible for special education services.

**IGC** is the individual graduation committee, formed in accordance with state law, to determine a student's eligibility to graduate when the student has failed to demonstrate satisfactory performance on no more than two of the required state assessments.

**ISS** refers to in-school suspension, a disciplinary technique for misconduct found in the Student Code of Conduct. Although different from out-of-school suspension and placement in a DAEP, ISS removes the student from the regular classroom.

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

**PSAT** is the preparatory and readiness assessment for the SAT. It also serves as the basis for the awarding of National Merit Scholarships.

**SAT** refers to the Scholastic Aptitude Test, one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions examinations. The test may be required for admissions to certain colleges or universities.

**SHAC** stands for School Health Advisory Council, a group of at least five members, a majority of whom must be parents, appointed by the school board to help ensure that local community values and health issues are reflected in the district's health education instruction, as well as assist with other student and employee wellness issues.

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

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

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

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

**State-mandated assessments** are required of students at certain grade levels and in specified subjects. Except under limited circumstances, students must pass the STAAR EOC assessments to graduate. Students have multiple opportunities to take the tests, if necessary, for graduation.

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

**TAC** stands for the Texas Administrative Code.

**TEA** stands for the Texas Education Agency, which oversees primary and secondary public education in Texas.

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

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

**TXVSN** stands for the Texas Virtual School Network, which provides online courses for Texas students to supplement the instructional programs of public school districts. Courses are taught by qualified instructors and are equivalent in rigor and scope to a course taught in a traditional classroom setting.

**UIL** refers to the University Interscholastic League, the statewide, voluntary nonprofit organization that oversees educational extracurricular academic, athletic, and music contests.

## **Appendix: Freedom from Bullying Policy**

**Note:** School board policies may be revised at any time. For legal context and the most current copy of the local policy, visit [southsanisd.net](http://southsanisd.net), policy code FFI. Below is the text of South San Antonio ISD's policy FFI(LOCAL) as of the date this handbook was finalized for this school year.

### **Student Welfare: Freedom from Bullying**

Policy FFI(LOCAL) adopted on 11/4/2017

Note: This policy addresses bullying of District students. For purposes of this policy, the term bullying includes cyberbullying.

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

### **Bullying Prohibited**

The District prohibits bullying, including cyberbullying, as defined by state law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of District policy and is prohibited.

#### *Examples*

Bullying of a student could occur by physical contact or through electronic means and may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, or ostracism.

### **Retaliation**

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

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

### **False Claim**

A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a District investigation regarding bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

### **Timely Reporting**

Reports of bullying shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. A failure to immediately report may impair the District's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.

### **Reporting Procedures**

#### *Student Report*

To obtain assistance and intervention, any student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, school counselor, principal, or other District employee. The Superintendent shall develop procedures allowing a student to anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying.

### *Employee Report*

Any District employee who suspects or receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the principal or designee.

### *Report Format*

A report may be made orally or in writing. The principal or designee shall reduce any oral reports to written form.

### **Notice of Report**

When an allegation of bullying is reported, the principal or designee shall notify a parent of the alleged victim on or before the third business day after the incident is reported. The principal or designee shall also notify a parent of the student alleged to have engaged in the conduct within a reasonable amount of time after the incident is reported.

### **Prohibited Conduct**

The principal or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH, including dating violence and harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, or disability. If so, the District shall proceed under policy FFH. If the allegations could constitute both prohibited conduct and bullying, the investigation under FFH shall include a determination on each type of conduct.

### **Investigation of Report**

The principal or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report. The principal or designee shall promptly take interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate.

### **Concluding the Investigation**

Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within ten District business days from the date of the initial report alleging bullying; however, the principal or designee shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

The principal or designee shall prepare a final, written report of the investigation. The report shall include a determination of whether bullying occurred, and if so, whether the victim used reasonable self-defense. A copy of the report shall be sent to the Superintendent or designee.

### **Notice to Parents**

If an incident of bullying is confirmed, the principal or designee shall promptly notify the parents of the victim and of the student who engaged in bullying.

### **District Action**

#### *Bullying*

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, the District shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the District's Student Code of Conduct and may take corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct. The District may notify law enforcement in certain circumstances.

#### *Discipline*

A student who is a victim of bullying and who used reasonable self-defense in response to the bullying shall not be subject to disciplinary action. The discipline of a student with a disability is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Code of Conduct.

#### *Corrective Action*

Examples of corrective action may include a training program for the individuals involved in the complaint, a comprehensive education program for the school community, follow-up inquiries to determine whether any new incidents or any instances of retaliation have occurred, involving parents and students in efforts to identify problems and improve the school climate, increasing staff monitoring of areas where bullying has occurred, and reaffirming the District's policy against bullying.

#### *Transfers*

The principal or designee shall refer to FDB for transfer provisions.

#### *Counseling*

The principal or designee shall notify the victim, the student who engaged in bullying, and any students who witnessed the bullying of available counseling options.

### *Improper Conduct*

If the investigation reveals improper conduct that did not rise to the level of prohibited conduct or bullying, the District may take action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct or any other appropriate corrective action.

### **Confidentiality**

To the greatest extent possible, the District shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

### **Appeal**

A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through FNG(LOCAL), beginning at the appropriate level.

### **Records Retention**

Retention of records shall be in accordance with CPC(LOCAL).

### **Access to Policy and Procedures**

This policy and any accompanying procedures shall be distributed annually in the employee and student handbooks. Copies of the policy and procedures shall be posted on the District's website, to the extent practicable, and shall be readily available at each campus and the District's administrative offices.



Section 3:

*South San Antonio Independent School District*

*Student Code of Conduct*

## Accessibility

If you have difficulty accessing the information in this document because of disability, please contact:

Alexis Castillo  
Director of Communication  
1450 Gillette Blvd, San Antonio, TX 78224  
alexis.castillo@southsanisd.net  
210-977-7005

## Purpose

The Student Code of Conduct (“Code”), as required by Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code, provides methods and options for managing student behavior, preventing and intervening in student discipline problems, and imposing discipline.

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

This Student Code of Conduct has been adopted by the *South San Antonio ISD* board of trustees and developed with the advice of the district-level planning and decision-making committee. It provides information to parents and students regarding standards of conduct, consequences of misconduct, and procedures for administering discipline. This Code remains in effect during summer school and at all school-related events and activities outside the school year until the board adopts an updated version for the next school year.

In accordance with state law, the Code shall be posted at each school campus or shall be available for review at the campus principal’s office. Additionally, the Code shall be available at the campus behavior coordinator’s office and posted on the district’s website. Parents shall be notified of any conduct violation that may result in a student being suspended, placed in a DAEP or JJAEP, expelled, or taken into custody by a law enforcement officer under Chapter 37 of the Education Code.

Because the Student Code of Conduct is adopted by the district’s board of trustees, it has the force of policy. In the event of a conflict between the Code and the Student Handbook, the Code shall prevail.

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

### South San Antonio ISD - Campus Behavior Coordinators

Campus	Behavior Coordinator	Email
Armstrong Elementary 210-623-8787	Laura Ramirez	lauraram@southsanisd.net
Athens Elementary 210-977-7055	John Gonzalez	jgonzalez@southsanisd.net
Benavidez Elementary 210-977-7175	Leticia Vasquez	
Carrillo Elementary 210-977-7550	Ramona Vedia	rvedia@southsanisd.net
Five Palms Elementary 210-645-3850	Jacob Gonzales	jgonzales@southsanisd.net
Frank Madla Elementary 210-645-3800	Bette Jackson	bette.jackson@southsanisd.net
Hutchins Elementary 210-977-7200	Charles Garcia	charles.garcia@southsanisd.net
Kindred Elementary 210-977-7575	Sandra Lomas	sandra.lomas@southsanisd.net
Palo Alto Elementary 210-977-7125		
Price Elementary 210-977-7225	Christian Sanchez	christian.sanchez@southsanisd.net
Dwight Middle School 210-977-7300	Eduardo Narezo	eduardo.narezo@southsanisd.net
Kazen Middle School 210-977-7470	Larry Machado	larry.machado@southsanisd.net
Shepard Middle School 210-623-1875	Teresa Pena-Rodriguez	trodriguez@southsanisd.net
Zamora Middle School 210-977-7278	Samantha Lopez	samantha.lopez@southsanisd.net
South San High School 210-977-7400		
West Campus High School 210-977-7015	Dr. David Villalobos	david.villalobos@southsanisd.net

## **South San Antonio ISD believes:**

- Students are responsible for the choices they make.
- Students can be taught behavioral expectations.

The desired outcome of a disciplinary action is for students to learn from the mistake and use the new information to make better choices.

## **School District Authority and Jurisdiction**

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

The district has disciplinary authority over a student:

1. During the regular school day;
2. While the student is traveling on district transportation;
3. During lunch periods in which a student is allowed to leave campus;
4. At any school-related activity, regardless of time or location;
5. For any school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location;
6. When retaliation against a school employee, board member, or volunteer occurs or is threatened, regardless of time or location;
7. When a student engages in cyberbullying, as defined by Education Code 37.0832;
8. When criminal mischief is committed on or off school property or at a school-related event;
9. For certain offenses committed within 300 feet of school property as measured from any point on the school's real property boundary line;
10. For certain offenses committed while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity of another district in Texas;
11. When the student commits a felony, as provided by Education Code 37.006 or 37.0081; and
12. When the student is required to register as a sex offender.

## **Campus Behavior Coordinator**

As required by law, a person at each campus must be designated to serve as the campus behavior coordinator. The designated person may be the principal or any other campus administrator selected by the principal. The campus behavior coordinator is primarily responsible for maintaining student discipline. The district shall post on its website and in the Student Handbook, for each campus, the email address and telephone number of the person serving as campus behavior coordinator.

## **Threat Assessment and Safe and Supportive School Team**

The campus behavior coordinator or other appropriate administrator will work closely with the campus threat assessment safe and supportive school team to implement the district's threat assessment policy and procedures, as required by law, and shall take appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the Code.

## **Searches**

District officials may conduct searches of students, their belongings, and their vehicles in accordance with state and federal law and district policy. Searches of students shall be conducted in a reasonable and nondiscriminatory manner. Refer to the district's policies at FNF(LEGAL) and FNF(LOCAL) for more information regarding investigations and searches.

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

Desks, lockers, district-provided technology, and similar items are the property of the district and are provided for student use as a matter of convenience. District property is subject to search or inspection at any time without notice.

## **Reporting Crimes**

The principal *or* campus behavior coordinator and other school administrators as appropriate shall report crimes as required by law and shall call local law enforcement when an administrator suspects that a crime has been committed on campus.

## **Security Personnel**

To ensure the security and protection of students, staff, and property, the board authorizes the formation of a District police department and employs commissioned police officers. In accordance with law, the board has coordinated with the campus

behavior coordinator and other district employees to ensure appropriate law enforcement duties are assigned to security staff. The law enforcement duties of district peace officers are listed in policy CKE(LOCAL).

The jurisdiction of police officers shall include all territory within District boundaries, as well as all real and personal property outside the boundaries of the District that is owned, leased, or rented by the District, or is otherwise under the District's control. Police officers employed by the District shall have all the powers, privileges, and immunities of police officers on or off duty within the jurisdiction of the District. Subject to limitations in law, District police officers shall have the authority to:

1. Protect the safety and welfare of any person in the jurisdiction of the District and protect the property of the District.
2. Enforce all laws, including municipal ordinances, county ordinances, and state laws, and investigate violations of law as needed. In doing so, District police officers may serve search warrants in connection with District-related investigations in compliance with the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure.
3. Arrest suspects consistent with state and federal statutory and constitutional standards governing arrests, including arrests without warrant, for offenses that occur in the officer's presence or under the other rules set out in the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure.
4. Coordinate and cooperate with commissioned officers of all other law enforcement agencies in the enforcement of this policy as necessary.
5. Enforce District policies, rules, and regulations on District property, in school zones, at bus stops, or at District functions.
6. Investigate violations of District policy, rules, and regulations as requested by the Superintendent and participate in hearings concerning alleged violations.
7. Carry weapons as directed by the chief of police and approved by the Superintendent.
8. Carry out all other duties as directed by the chief of police or Superintendent.

District police officers shall not be assigned routine classroom discipline or administrative tasks.

Complaints against a District police officer shall be in writing on a form provided by the District and shall be signed by the person making the complaint. In accordance with law, the District shall provide to the police officer a copy of the complaint. [See Complaints Against Peace Officers at CKEA(LEGAL)] Appeals regarding this complaint process shall be filed in accordance with DGBA, FNG, or GF, as appropriate.

### **“Parent” Defined**

Throughout the Code of Conduct and related discipline policies, the term “parent” includes a parent, legal guardian, or other person having lawful control of the child.

### **Participating in Graduation Activities**

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

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

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

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

## **South San Antonio ISD**

### **Responsibility of School Community Members**

Each member of the school community has rights and responsibilities for establishing and maintaining good discipline in our schools.

#### **Student Responsibility and District Expectations**

Students are to conduct themselves properly, in a manner prescribed by the teacher, and they must comply with the applicable rules and policies of the District.

Each student is expected to:

1. Demonstrate courtesy, even when others do not.
2. Behave in a responsible manner and cooperate with and assist the school staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline.
3. Exercise self-discipline.
4. Attend all classes regularly and on time.
5. Bring appropriate materials and assignments to class.
6. Meet district and campus standards of grooming and dress.
7. Obey all campus and classroom rules.
8. Respect the rights and privileges of students, teachers, and other district staff and volunteers.
9. Respect the property of others, including district property and facilities.
10. Cooperate with and assist the school staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline.
11. Adhere to the requirements of the Student Code of Conduct.

#### **Parent and/or Guardian Responsibility**

Parents have the responsibility to:

1. Ensure that their child complies with District and school policies, rules and regulations.
2. Send their child to school regularly and on time, well groomed and dressed appropriately.
3. Communicate regularly with the school concerning their child's academic progress and conduct as well as discuss report cards and classroom assignments with their child.
4. Provide for the physical needs of the child.
5. Participate in parent-teacher conferences and other activities in which their child is involved.



6. Cooperate with and support the teachers and the school administrators in their efforts to achieve and maintain a quality school system and help their children grow into self disciplined, mature, and responsible individuals.
7. Inform the school of any problems or conditions in the home which affect their child.
8. Provide a work area free of interruption where their child may study and do homework and encourage the child to develop proper study habits at home.
9. Maintain up-to-date home, work, and emergency telephone numbers at the school.
10. Assist the child to assume responsibility for appropriate behavior, to accept the consequences of inappropriate behavior and to respect authority.

### **Teacher Responsibility**

Teachers have the responsibility to:

1. Provide an effective program of instruction that meets the standards of performance required by the District.
2. Maintain an orderly classroom, conducive to learning.
3. Serve as a model for students by showing respect for themselves, students, parents, and other school personnel.
4. Be punctual and have regular attendance.
5. Communicate regularly with parents regarding their child's progress.
6. Maintain a well-groomed appearance and dress appropriately to serve as a role model for students.
7. Indicate a genuine interest and concern for the welfare of students by establishing rapport and an effective working relationship with parents, students, and other staff members.
8. Teach students responsibility for their actions by enforcing the rules of conduct and discipline fairly and appropriately for those students who violate these rules.
9. Recognize the growth, success, and achievement of students.
10. Obey District and school policies and regulations.

### **Counselor Responsibility**

Counselors have the responsibility to provide:

1. Academic support, including organizational, study, and test-taking skills.
2. College and career awareness, exploration, and planning
3. Lessons on peer relationships, coping strategies, and effective social interactions.
4. Individual and small group counseling.
5. Individual/family/school crisis intervention.
6. Consultation and collaboration.
7. Transition planning.

8. Academic planning.
9. Multicultural/diversity awareness.
10. Substance abuse education.

### **Administrator Responsibility**

Administrators have the responsibility to:

1. Promote effective training and discipline based upon fair and impartial treatment of all students using the Student Code of Conduct as a reference point.
2. Provide appropriate support for teachers in dealing with students who are sent to the office for behaving inappropriately.
3. Implement a flexible curriculum within the limits provided by the District and the state to meet the needs of all students.
4. Establish a climate for learning that is conducive to good teacher performance and maximum student growth and work to assure that the physical surroundings and school grounds are conducive to a learning environment.
5. Encourage parents to keep in regular communication with the school and encourage parental participation in required parent-teacher conferences.
6. Develop a cooperative working relationship among staff and students.
7. Assist students by providing appropriate assistance in learning self discipline.
8. Assume responsibility and instructional leadership for discipline and for evaluation of the discipline management plan.
9. Appear at school in a well-groomed and appropriately dressed manner.
10. Serve as Campus Behavior Coordinator, as designated by the Campus Principal. Pursuant to Texas Education Code 37.0012, the Campus Behavior Coordinator is primarily responsible for maintaining student discipline and the implementation of Texas Education Code, Chapter 37.

## General Conduct Violations

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

### Disregard for Authority

Students shall not:

- Fail to comply with directives given by school personnel.
- Leave school grounds or school-sponsored events without permission.
- Disobey rules for conduct in district vehicles.
- Refuse to accept discipline or consequence assigned by a teacher or principal.

### Mistreatment of Others

Students shall not:

- Use profanity or vulgar language or make obscene gestures.
- Fight or scuffle. (For assault, see **DAEP—Placement and/or Expulsion for Certain Offenses** on page 25.)
- Threaten a district student, employee, or volunteer, including off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
- Engage in bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or making hit lists. (See **glossary** for all four terms.)
- Release or threaten to release intimate visual material of a minor or a student who is 18 years of age or older without the student's consent.
- Engage in sexual or gender-based harassment or sexual abuse, whether by word, gesture, or any other conduct directed toward another person, including a district student, employee, board member, or volunteer.
- Engage in conduct that constitutes dating violence. (See **glossary**.)
- Engage in inappropriate or indecent exposure of private body parts.
- Participate in hazing. (See **glossary**.)
- Coerce an individual to act through the use or threat of force.
- Commit extortion or blackmail.

- Engage in inappropriate verbal, physical, or sexual conduct directed toward another person, including a district student, employee, or volunteer.
- Record the voice or image of another without the prior consent of the individual being recorded or in any way that disrupts the educational environment or invades the privacy of others.

## Property Offenses

Students shall not:

- Damage or vandalize property owned by others. (For felony criminal mischief, see **DAEP—Placement and/or Expulsion for Certain Offenses**.)
- Deface or damage school property, including textbooks, technology and electronic resources, lockers, furniture, and other equipment, with graffiti or by other means.
- Steal from students, staff, or the school.
- Commit or assist in a robbery or theft, even if it does not constitute a felony according to the Penal Code. (For felony robbery, aggravated robbery, and theft, see **DAEP— Placement and/or Expulsion for Certain Offenses**.)
- Enter, without authorization, district facilities that are not open for operations.

## Possession of Prohibited Items

Students shall not possess or use:

- Fireworks of any kind, smoke or stink bombs, or any other pyrotechnic device;
- A razor, box cutter, chain, or any other object used in a way that threatens or inflicts bodily injury to another person;
- A “look-alike” weapon that is intended to be used as a weapon or could reasonably be perceived as a weapon;
- An air gun or BB gun;
- Ammunition;
- A hand instrument designed to cut or stab another by being thrown;
- A firearm silencer or suppressor;
- \*A location-restricted knife;
- \*A club;
- \*A firearm;
- A stun gun;
- Knuckles;
- A pocket knife or any other small knife;
- Mace or pepper spray;
- Pornographic material;

- Tobacco products, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, and any component, part, or accessory for an e-cigarette device;
- Matches or a lighter;
- A laser pointer, unless it is for an approved use; or
- Any articles not generally considered to be weapons, including school supplies, when the principal or designee determines that a danger exists.

\*For weapons and firearms, see **DAEP—Placement and/or Expulsion for Certain Offenses**. In many circumstances, possession of these items is punishable by mandatory expulsion under federal or state law.

### **Possession of Telecommunications or Other Electronic Devices**

Students shall not use a telecommunications device, including a cell phone, or other electronic device in violation of district and campus rules.

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

Students shall not:

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

### **Misuse of Technology Resources and the Internet**

Students shall not:

- Violate policies, rules, or agreements signed by the student or the student’s parent regarding the use of technology resources.

- Attempt to access or circumvent passwords or other security-related information of the district, students, or employees or upload or create computer viruses, including off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
- Attempt to alter, destroy, or disable district technology resources including, but not limited to, computers and related equipment, district data, the data of others, or other networks connected to the district's system, including off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
- Use the internet or other electronic communications to threaten or harass district students, employees, board members, or volunteers, including off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment or infringes on the rights of another student at school.
- Send, post, deliver, or possess electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal, including cyberbullying and "sexting," either on or off school property, if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment or infringes on the rights of another student at school.
- Use the internet or other electronic communication to engage in or encourage illegal behavior or threaten school safety, including off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment or infringes on the rights of another student at school.

## **Safety Transgressions**

Students shall not:

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

## **Miscellaneous Offenses**

Students shall not:

- Violate dress and grooming standards as communicated in the Student Handbook.

- Engage in academic dishonesty, which includes cheating or copying the work of another student, plagiarism, and unauthorized communication between students during an examination.
- Gamble.
- Falsify records, passes, or other school-related documents.
- Engage in actions or demonstrations that substantially disrupt or materially interfere with school activities.
- Repeatedly violate other communicated campus or classroom standards of conduct.

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

### **Discipline Management**

Students shall be treated fairly and equitably. Discipline shall be based on a careful assessment of the circumstances of each case. Duration and severity of consequences will depend on, but are not limited to, the offense, the nature of the violation, the student's age, disciplinary history, intent, disability, status as a student who is homeless or in the conservatorship of DFPS and the overall effect upon student welfare and the learning environment. While these factors are considered, the severity of an incident remains the primary factor in determining what specific disciplinary action will be taken. Records of students receiving special services will be reviewed. In most cases, discipline shall be administered so that penalties generally increase proportionately to the severity and/or persistence of the misbehavior.

The principal/CBC or his/her designee may suspend students who engage in conduct identified in the Student Code of Conduct. An out-of-school suspension may not exceed three (3) school days for a single incident.

A student who is enrolled in a grade level below grade three and/or homeless may not be placed in out-of-school suspension unless while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property, the student engages in:

1. Conduct that contains the elements of an offense related to weapons under Section 46.02 or 46.05, Penal Code;
2. Conduct that contains the elements of a violent offense under Section 22.01, 22.011, 22.02, or 22.021, Penal Code; or
3. Selling, giving, or delivering to another person or possessing, using, or being under the influence of any amount of:

- a. marijuana or a controlled substance, as defined by Chapter 481, Health and Safety Code, or by 21 U.S.C. Section 801 et seq.;
- b. a dangerous drug, as defined by Chapter 483, Health and Safety Code; or
- c. an alcoholic beverage, as defined by Section 1.04, Alcohol Beverage Code.

### **Students with Disabilities**

The discipline of students with disabilities is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Code of Conduct. In the event of any conflict, the district shall comply with federal law. For more information regarding discipline of students with disabilities, see policy FOF(LEGAL).

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

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

### **Discipline Techniques**

Disciplinary strategies and/or consequences may include, but are not limited to, the following, which are not necessarily listed in order of progressive severity:

- Verbal corrections and warnings (oral or written).
- Seating changes.
- Temporary confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process.
- Special assignments or duties.
- Parent/guardian - teacher conferences.
- Behavioral contracts.
- Counseling/mediation by staff, student peers, and community leaders, outside agencies of the federal, state, or local governments.
- "Stay Away" agreement or no contact orders issued by the principal/CBC or designee.
- Withdrawal of privileges.
- Withdrawal of school activities.
- Revocation of Acceptable Use Policy (AUP), which allows use of District technology resources.



- Partial or complete denial of attendance and/or participation in extracurricular activities.
- Probation.
- Demerits.
- Duty assignments.
- Detention, including outside regular school hours.
- Modified day.
- Individualized behavior modification.
- Referral to the school administrator.
- Referral to an outside agency.
- Overnight suspension.
- In-school alternative assignment.
- Reassignment of classes.
- Temporary removal from class.
- Temporary or permanent removal from District transportation.
- Police involvement.
- Parent/guardian - administrative conferences.
- Restitution of damages.
- In School Suspension (ISS).
- Out of School Suspension (OSS).
- Revocation of magnet program enrollment.
- Disciplinary Alternative Educational Programs (DAEP).
- Expulsion to Juvenile Justice Academy Educational Program (JJAEP).
- Filing a criminal complaint or civil action.
- Other strategies and/or consequences created by unforeseeable special circumstances.

### **Removal from the School Bus**

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

To transport students safely, the vehicle operator must focus on driving and not be distracted by student misbehavior. Therefore, when appropriate disciplinary management techniques fail to improve student behavior or when specific misconduct warrants immediate removal, the principal or the campus behavior coordinator may restrict or revoke a student's transportation privileges, in accordance with law.

## **Removal from the Regular Educational Setting**

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

## **Notification of Discipline**

The campus behavior coordinator shall promptly notify a student's parent by phone or in person of any violation that may result in in-school or out-of-school suspension, placement in a DAEP, placement in a JJAEP, or expulsion. The campus behavior coordinator shall also notify a student's parent if the student is taken into custody by a law enforcement officer under the disciplinary provisions of the Education Code.

A good-faith effort shall be made to provide written notice of the disciplinary action to the student, on the day the action was taken, for delivery to the student's parent. If the parent has not been reached by telephone or in person by 5:00 p.m. of the first business day after the day the disciplinary action was taken, the campus behavior coordinator shall send written notification by U.S. Mail. If the campus behavior coordinator is not able to provide notice to the parent, the principal or designee shall provide the notice.

Before the principal or appropriate administrator assigns a student under age 18 to detention outside regular school hours, notice shall be given to the student's parent to inform him or her of the reason for the detention and permit arrangements for necessary transportation.

The home campus of expelled students will evaluate and may promote or award credit to students based upon work completed as students at the Juvenile Justice Academy. Expelled students who meet special education or 504 eligibility criteria will receive educational services as determined by the appropriate review committee (MDR/504).

## **Appeals**

Questions from parents regarding disciplinary measures should be addressed to the teacher, campus administration, or campus behavior coordinator, as appropriate. Appeals or complaints regarding the use of specific discipline management techniques should be addressed in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL). A copy of the policy may be obtained from the principal's office, the campus behavior coordinator's office, or the central administration office.

The district shall not delay a disciplinary consequence while a student or parent pursues a grievance. In the instance of a student who is accused of conduct that meets the

definition of sexual harassment as defined by Title IX, the district will comply with applicable federal law, including the Title IX formal complaint process. See policies FFH(LEGAL) and (LOCAL).

### **Routine Referral**

A routine referral occurs when a teacher sends a student to the campus behavior coordinator's office as a discipline management technique. The campus behavior coordinator shall employ alternative discipline management techniques, including progressive interventions. A teacher or administrator may remove a student from class for behavior that violates this Code to maintain effective discipline in the classroom.

### **Out-of-School Suspension**

#### **Misconduct**

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

The district shall not use out-of-school suspension for students in grade 2 or below unless the conduct meets the requirements established in law.

A student below grade 3 or a student who is homeless shall not be placed in out-of-school suspension unless, while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property, the student engages in:

- Conduct that contains the elements of a weapons offense, as provided in Penal Code sections 46.02 or 46.05;
- Conduct that contains the elements of assault, sexual assault, aggravated assault, or aggravated sexual assault, as provided by the Penal Code; or
- 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 defined by federal or state law.

The district shall use a positive behavior program as a disciplinary alternative for students below grade 3 who commit general conduct violations instead of suspension or placement in a DAEP. The program shall meet the requirements of law.

## **Process**

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

Before being suspended a student shall have an informal conference with the campus behavior coordinator or appropriate administrator, who shall inform the student of the alleged misconduct and give the student an opportunity to respond to the allegation before the administrator makes a decision.

The campus behavior coordinator shall determine the number of days of a student's suspension, not to exceed three school days.

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

1. Self-defense (see glossary),
2. Intent or lack of intent at the time the student engaged in the conduct,
3. The student's disciplinary history,
4. A disability that substantially impairs the student's capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of the student's conduct,
5. A student's status in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services (foster care), or
6. A student's status as homeless.

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

## **Coursework During Suspension**

The district shall ensure a student receives access to coursework for foundation curriculum courses while the student is placed in in-school or out-of-school suspension, including at least one method of receiving this coursework that doesn't require the use of the internet.

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

## Categories of Offenses

### **CATEGORY I OFFENSES MANDATORY EXPULSIONS TEC 37.007**

Students SHALL BE expelled to the JJAEP for any of the following offenses if committed on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property:

1. Bring to school or possess at school, including any setting that is under the district's control or supervision for the purpose of a school activity, a firearm, as defined by federal law.
2. Engage in conduct that contains the offenses under Section 46.02, Penal Code, or elements of an offense relating to weapons under Section 46.05, Penal Code.
3. Engage in behavior containing the elements of the following offenses under the Texas Penal Code:
  - a. Aggravated assault, sexual assault, aggravated sexual assault.
  - b. Arson.
  - c. Murder, capital murder, or criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder.
  - d. Indecency with a child.
  - e. Aggravated kidnapping.
  - f. Aggravated robbery.
  - g. Manslaughter.
  - h. Criminally negligent homicide.
  - i. Continuous sexual abuse of a young child or disabled individual.
4. Engage in conduct specified by Section 37.006 (a)(2)(C) or (D) if the conduct is punishable as a felony.
5. Engage in retaliation against a school employee or volunteer combined with one of the above listed offenses on or off school property or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity.

Students involved in a first time Category I offense will be expelled for a period not to exceed 90 school days except for firearm violations. Expulsion for subsequent offenses may be longer than 90 school days. Days absent do not count towards the assigned days. The District will follow the guidelines set by federal and state laws.

Students who violate the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct and who are expelled shall be referred to the JJAEP. Pursuant to Chapter 37.010 and the Memorandum of Understanding between South San Antonio ISD and the Bexar County Juvenile Board, students expelled will be referred to the Bexar County Juvenile Probation Department and assigned a Probation Officer. The JJAEP is supervised by the Bexar County Juvenile Probation Department and provides educational services for those students who are expelled. The JJAEP is located at 1402 N. Hackberry. The Board or its designee shall set a term for the expulsion, which may extend beyond the end of the current school year.

\*Note: A student who is younger than ten (10) years of age shall be removed from class and placed in a DAEP for engaging in conduct listed above except for firearm offenses. In accordance with federal law, a student who brings a firearm to school will be expelled regardless of age. Due to the seriousness of Category I offenses, assignments to discipline alternative education programs for violations in this category of offenses will be longer in duration than in other categories.

**STUDENTS ARE PROHIBITED FROM ATTENDING OR PARTICIPATING IN A SCHOOL-SPONSORED OR SCHOOL-RELATED ACTIVITY ON OR OFF SCHOOL PROPERTY. STUDENTS WHO VIOLATE THIS WARNING WILL BE SUBJECT TO ARREST FOR CRIMINAL TRESPASS (TEXAS PENAL CODE, SECTION 30.05).**

#### **Provision For Appeal of Student Expulsions**

A process for appeal of student expulsions is outlined in South San Antonio ISD Board Policy FNG (Local) and affords students and parents/guardians due process. The appeal process shall meet the requirements of Board policy. The discipline placement assigned to students will remain in effect pending the outcome of an appeal. The expulsion placement of students who qualify for protection under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is governed by the applicable policy/law.

## CATEGORY II OFFENSES

Students **MAY BE** expelled to the JJAEP, if students:

- I. Regardless as to where the conduct occurs:
  1. Engage in bullying that encourages a student to commit or attempt to commit suicide.
  2. Incite violence against a student through group bullying.
  3. Release or threaten to release intimate visual material of a minor or of a student who is 18 years of age or older without the student's consent.
  4. Engage in conduct that contains the elements of assault under Penal Code 22.01(a)(1) in retaliation against a school employee or volunteer.
  5. Engage in criminal mischief, if punishable as a felony.
  6. Engage in conduct that contains the elements of one of the following offenses against another student:
    - a. Aggravated assault, sexual assault, or aggravated sexual assault.
    - b. Murder, capital murder, or criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder.
    - c. Aggravated robbery.
  7. Engage in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of breach of computer security under the Section 33.02 Penal Code.
  8. Engage in conduct involving a public school that contains the elements of the offense of false alarm or report under the Section 42.06 Penal Code, or terroristic threat under Section 22.07, Penal Code.
- II. While on campus or within 300 feet of school property, as measured from any point on the school's real property boundary line, or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property:
  1. Sell, give, deliver to another person, possess, use, or is under the influence of:
    - a. Marijuana or a controlled substance as defined by Chapter 481, Health and Safety Code.
    - b. A dangerous drug as defined by Chapter 483, Health and Safety Code in an amount not constituting a felony offense.
    - c. An alcoholic beverage, as defined by Section 1.04, Alcoholic Beverage Code or commits a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol.
  2. Engage in conduct that contains the elements of an offense relating to an abusable volatile chemical under Sections 485.031 through 485.034, Health and Safety Code.

3. Engage in conduct that contains the elements of assault under Section 22.01 (a) (1) of the Penal Code, against a school district employee or a volunteer.
  4. Engage in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of deadly conduct.
- III. While off campus but within 300 feet of school property, as measured from any point on the school's property boundary line (Off Campus 300 Foot Zone):
1. Use, exhibit or possess a firearm specified in Texas Education, Section 37.007 (a) (1) (A).
  2. Uses, exhibit or possess a location-restricted knife, or prohibited weapon specified in Texas Education Code, Section 37.007 (a) (1) (B-D).
  3. Engage in aggravated assault, sexual assault, or aggravated sexual assault.
  4. Commit arson.
  5. Commit murder, capital murder, or criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder.
  6. Commit indecency with a child, aggravated kidnapping, manslaughter, criminally negligent homicide, or aggravated robbery.
  7. Engage in continuous sexual abuse of a young child or disabled individual.
  8. Engage in conduct specified by Section 37.006 (a)(2)(C) or (D) if the conduct is punishable as a felony.
- IV. While off campus and not in attendance at a school-sponsored or school-related activity (Texas Education Code, Sections 37.006, 37.008, and 37.0081):
1. Receive deferred prosecution under Section 53.03, Family Code, for conduct defined as a felony offense in Title 5, Penal Code or the felony offense of aggravated robbery under Section 29.03, Penal Code;
  2. A court or jury find that the student has engaged in delinquent conduct under Section 54.03, Family Code, for conduct defined as a felony offense in Title 5, Penal Code or the felony offense of aggravated robbery under Section 29.03, Penal Code;
  3. Is charged with engaging in conduct defined as a felony offense in Title 5, Penal Code or the felony offense of aggravated robbery under Section 29.03, Penal Code;
  4. Has been referred to a juvenile court for allegedly engaging in delinquent conduct under section 54.03, Family Code, for conduct defined as a felony offense in Title 5, Penal Code or the felony offense of aggravated robbery under Section 29.03, Penal Code;



5. Has received probation or deferred adjudication for a felony offense under Title 5, Penal Code or the felony offense of aggravated robbery under Section 29.03, Penal Code;
  6. Has been convicted of a felony offense under Title 5, Penal Code or the felony offense of aggravated robbery under Section 29.03, Penal Code; or
  7. Has been arrested for or charged with a felony offense under Title 5, Penal Code or the felony offense of aggravated robbery under Section 29.03, Penal Code; and
  8. The board or the board's designee determines that the student's presence in the regular classroom:
    - a. Threatens the safety of other students; or
    - b. Will be detrimental to the educational process; or
    - c. Is not in the best interest of the district's students.
- V. While placed in a DAEP engage in documented serious misbehavior that violates the District's Student Code of Conduct.
- VI. While on the property of another school district in Texas or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity of a school in another district in Texas, commits any offense that is a state-mandated expellable offense.

Students expelled for a Category II offense will be assigned to JJA for a period not to exceed 90 school days. Expulsion for subsequent offenses may be longer than 90 school days. Days absent do not count towards the assigned days.

Students assigned to a DAEP for a Category II offense will be assigned for a period not to exceed 90 school days. Length of assignment may be extended based upon factors which may include, but are not limited to, the seriousness of the incident and/or the number of repeated offenses. Days absent do not count towards the assigned days.

Students who violate the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct and who are expelled may be referred to the JJAEP. Pursuant to Chapter 37.010 and the Memorandum of Understanding between South San Antonio ISD and the Bexar County Juvenile Board, students expelled will be referred to the Bexar County Juvenile Probation Department and assigned a Probation Officer. The Juvenile Justice Academy is supervised by the Bexar County Juvenile Probation Department and provides educational services for those students who are expelled. The Juvenile Justice Academy is located at 1402 N. Hackberry. The Board or its designee shall set a term for the expulsion, which may extend beyond the end of the current school year.

*Any DAEP decision of the Board of Trustees or the Board's designee under this section is final and may not be appealed and the District will not engage in any further discussion regarding the DAEP placement.*

**STUDENTS ARE PROHIBITED FROM ATTENDING OR PARTICIPATING IN A SCHOOL-SPONSORED OR SCHOOL-RELATED ACTIVITY ON OR OFF SCHOOL PROPERTY. STUDENTS WHO VIOLATE THIS WARNING WILL BE SUBJECT TO ARREST FOR CRIMINAL TRESPASS (TEXAS PENAL CODE, SECTION 30.05).**

## **CATEGORY III OFFENSES**

Students SHALL BE removed from class and placed in a DAEP, as provided by Section 37.006, Texas Education Code, if students:

- I. Regardless as to where the conduct occurs:
  1. Engage in conduct involving a public school that contains the elements of the offense of false alarm or report under the Section 42.06 Penal Code, or terroristic threat under Section 22.07, Penal Code.
  2. Engage in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of retaliation under Section 36.06, Penal Code against any school employee. [Texas Education Code 37.006 (b)]
- II. While on campus or within 300 feet of school property, as measured from any point on the school's real property boundary line, or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property:
  1. Engage in conduct punishable as a felony.
  2. Sell, give, deliver to another person, possess, use, or is under the influence of:
    - a. Marijuana or a controlled substance as defined by Chapter 481, Health and Safety Code.
    - b. A dangerous drug as defined by Chapter 483, Health and Safety Code in an amount not constituting a felony offense.
    - c. An alcoholic beverage, as defined by Section 1.04, Alcoholic Beverage Code or commits a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol.
  3. Engage in conduct that contains the elements of an offense relating to an abusable volatile chemical under Sections 485.031 through 485.034, Health and Safety Code.
  4. Engage in conduct that contains the elements of assault under Section 22.01 Penal Code.
  5. Engage in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of public lewdness under Section 21.07, Penal Code, or indecent exposure under Section 21.08, Penal Code.
  6. Engage in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of harassment under Section 42.07, Penal Code, against an employee of the school district.
- III. While off campus and not in attendance at a school-sponsored or school-related activity (Texas Education Code, Sections 37.006, 37.008, and 37.0081):

1. Receive deferred prosecution under Section 53.03, Family Code, for conduct defined as a felony offense in Title 5, Penal Code or the felony offense of aggravated robbery under Section 29.03, Penal Code;
2. A court or jury find that the student has engaged in delinquent conduct under Section 54.03, Family Code, for conduct defined as a felony offense in Title 5, Penal Code or the felony offense of aggravated robbery under Section 29.03, Penal Code;
3. Is charged with engaging in conduct defined as a felony offense in Title 5, Penal Code or the felony offense of aggravated robbery under Section 29.03, Penal Code;
4. Has been referred to a juvenile court for allegedly engaging in delinquent conduct under section 54.03, Family Code, for conduct defined as a felony offense in Title 5, Penal Code or the felony offense of aggravated robbery under Section 29.03, Penal Code;
5. Has received probation or deferred adjudication for a felony offense under Title 5, Penal Code or the felony offense of aggravated robbery under Section 29.03, Penal Code;
6. Has been convicted of a felony offense under Title 5, Penal Code or the felony offense of aggravated robbery under Section 29.03, Penal Code; or
7. Has been arrested for or charged with a felony offense under Title 5, Penal Code or the felony offense of aggravated robbery under Section 29.03, Penal Code; and
8. The board or the board's designee determines that the student's presence in the regular classroom:
  - a. Threatens the safety of other students; or
  - b. Will be detrimental to the educational process; or
  - c. Is not in the best interest of the district's students.

***Any DAEP decision of the Board of Trustees or the Board's designee under this section is final and may not be appealed and the District will not engage in any further discussion regarding the DAEP placement.***

Students assigned to a DAEP for a Category III offense will be placed for a period not to exceed 90 school days. The length of an assignment may be extended based upon factors which may include, but are not limited to, the seriousness of the incident and/or the number of repeated offenses, etc. Days absent do not count towards the assigned days.

**STUDENTS ARE PROHIBITED FROM ATTENDING OR PARTICIPATING IN A SCHOOL-SPONSORED OR SCHOOL-RELATED ACTIVITY ON OR OFF SCHOOL PROPERTY. STUDENTS WHO VIOLATE THIS WARNING WILL BE SUBJECT TO ARREST FOR CRIMINAL TRESPASS (TEXAS PENAL CODE, SECTION 30.05).**

## CATEGORY IV OFFENSES

Students **MAY BE** placed in a DAEP for offenses while on school property, at any school facility, at any school sponsored or school-related activity, or on a school bus, if students:

1. Make threatening statements regarding another person, their property or District property.
2. Possess any weapon not classified in the Texas Penal Code including, but not limited to, knuckles, tasers, stun guns, any bladed instrument including butterfly knives, switchblades, throwing knives, throwing stars or the like and pocket knives.
3. In addition, chemical dispensing devices, razors, chains, air guns, pellet/BB guns, or other object used as a weapon and/or threaten or inflict bodily injury on another person or that the principal determines the object is a danger to any student, District employee, or District property by virtue of possession or use of the object.
4. Possess, distribute or are under the influence of a drug or the like, natural or man-made, that has not been identified as an illegal substance.
5. Possess drug paraphernalia.
6. Engage in bullying; or engage in bullying that encourages suicide; incites violence through group bullying; or promotes, releases, or threatens to release intimate visual material of a minor or an adult student without consent.
7. Engage in harassment.
8. Engage in and/or incite others to engage in any form of retaliation toward another student.
9. Engage in vandalism, including but not limited to, tagging, graffiti, and/or property destruction.
10. Engage in criminal mischief not punishable as a felony.
11. Participate in gangs or gang activities including, but not limited to, exhibiting gang graffiti, clothing, or gang insignias.
12. Participate in fraternities, sororities, or secret societies.
13. Engage in burglary, robbery, or theft not punishable as a felony.
14. Engage in extortion, coercion, or blackmail.
15. Engage in fighting and/or habitual fighting, or repeated commission of physical abuse or threat of physical abuse.
16. Display flagrant or extreme insubordination.

17. Participate in aggressive, and/or disruptive action or group demonstration that substantially disrupts or materially interferes with school activities.
18. Engage in verbal abuse including, but not limited to name-calling, racial/ethnic slurs, or derogatory statements that may disrupt the school environment or incite violence.
19. Exhibit disrespect, display pornography, or use profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures.
20. Inappropriately display private body parts through such acts as, but not limited to, "mooning," or "flashing," or "pantsing."
21. Possess or distribute sexual materials.
22. Engage in offensive verbal or physical behavior of a sexual nature, which may include, but is not limited to, requests for sexual favors, or similar intimidation directed toward another student, or sexual harassment.
23. Engage in sexual contact/conduct while on campus or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off campus.
24. Engage in distribution of non-school materials.
25. Engage in any action or behavior that is, or could be, dangerous or harmful to the person or another.
26. Participate in or commit hazing.
27. Possess/use prohibited items.
28. Engage in any conduct that disrupts the instructional and/or school environment.
29. Commit persistent misbehavior.
30. Engage in gambling.
31. Possess, use, sell, gift, or deliver on campus, any product, including but not limited to, over-the-counter products, homeopathic remedies, herbs, vitamins, dietary supplements, weight loss products, pills, etc. and/or are under the influence if taken in amounts exceeding the recommended dosage of over the counter products, such as, but not limited to, those stated above.
32. Possess, use, or delivery of simulated controlled substances and/or representation of an item as a prohibited substance.
33. Commit a cell phone violation/misuse of a wireless communication device, including, but not limited to, text messaging texts or sharing schoolwork information with others, taking pictures, or cyber bullying.

34. Use any device that permits the recording of a voice or image of another in any way that invades the privacy of others, is made without the prior consent of the individual(s) being recorded, or disrupts the education environment.
35. Commit any infraction of a bus rule, general school rules, and other behavior identified in the Student/Parent Handbook not listed in this category.
36. Participate in creating or possessing a "hit list" that targets specific individuals to be physically or psychologically harmed.
37. Provide false information or falsely accusing other students, teachers, school administrators, and/or other school employees of misconduct.
38. Possess or use fireworks, explosives, "poppers," or other such devices.
39. Misuse school documents and/or forge notes/documents.
40. Place offensive photos, obscene material, derogatory statements, threatening or other similar content on an internet site that disrupts the school environment.
41. Bring to school or possess any de-militarized or replica rifle. Special circumstances such as the JROTC program shall have the approval of the principal and appropriate supervision of the JROTC instructor.
42. Engage in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of breach of computer security under Section 33.02, Penal Code.
43. Possess or use electronic cigarettes/electronic devices, including but not limited to, nicotine products, cartridges, oils or the like.
44. Take pictures and/or video in any area where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as a bathroom and/ or locker room.
45. Commit any other conduct that constitutes a violation of state, local, or federal law or local policy that is not listed above.

Secondary students involved in a Category IV offense may be assigned to a DAEP for a time period not to exceed 90 school days. Length of assignment may be extended based upon, but not limited to, the seriousness of the incident and/or the number of repeated offenses, etc. Days absent do not count towards the assigned days.

***Any DAEP decision of the Board of Trustees or the Board's designee under this section is final and may not be appealed and the District will not engage in any further discussion regarding the DAEP placement.***

**STUDENTS ARE PROHIBITED FROM ATTENDING OR PARTICIPATING IN A SCHOOL-SPONSORED OR SCHOOL-RELATED ACTIVITY ON OR OFF SCHOOL PROPERTY. STUDENTS WHO VIOLATE THIS WARNING WILL BE SUBJECT TO ARREST FOR CRIMINAL TRESPASS (TEXAS PENAL CODE, SECTION 30.05).**



## **Student Withdrawal Prior to Discipline**

Withdrawing a student from school does not prevent the District from investigating any alleged violation and obtaining any necessary information or evidence from an outside agency to support a disciplinary recommendation whether that recommendation occurs in the same or subsequent school year. Consequences may include a referral for a DAEP or expulsion placement. Withdrawing a student also does not affect the District's authority to schedule and conduct a discipline conference or hearing on the student's conduct and enter an order for a removal to a DAEP or to the JJAEP; regardless of whether the student or parent/guardian is present to participate. The order for removal will be included with records sent to a transferring school district. The District reserves the right to enforce the disciplinary consequence should the student re-enroll in the District and the assigned consequence has not been served in completion at another school district within the current or subsequent school year.

## **CRIMINAL TRESPASS WARNING (CTW) [Section 37.105, TEC]**

A principal/CBC or his/her designee or school district police officer may refuse to allow a person to enter on or may eject a person from property under the district's control if:

- the person refuses to leave peaceably on request
- the person poses a substantial risk of harm to any person
- the person behaves in a manner that is inappropriate for a school setting and the administrator or officer issues a verbal warning to the person but the person persists in that behavior

DAEP (Disciplinary Alternative Education Placement) students are NOT permitted to return to any other South San Antonio ISD campus/property for the time of their assignment to DAEP. This includes their home campus as well as all other elementary, middle school, and high school campuses, and any other school facilities.

A CTW under this section may not exceed two years.

Identification may be required of any person on school property or property under district control.

Any parent/guardian who has been issued a CTW will be provided the opportunity to participate in their child's admission, review, and dismissal committee or in the child's team established under Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Section 794), in accordance with federal law. Accommodations can be made by contacting the campus principal. A CTW appeal may be made by following the District's grievance procedure outlined in Board Policy FNG (Local) and submitting a complaint form.

## **Additional Disciplinary Information/Procedures**

### **ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS**

No student shall possess, consume, use, transmit or be under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol, such as, but not limited to, any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic, tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, cannabidiol (CBD), alcoholic beverage, toxicant inhalant, marijuana like substances that are commonly found in K2, Spice, and other synthetic marijuana products, or any substance with hallucinogenic or mind-altering properties or other intoxicant (as those items are defined by law), or over-the-counter drugs medications/ remedies, such as but not limited to, homeopathic products, vitamins, herbs, dietary supplements, etc.:

- On school grounds during any school term
- Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event
- Within 300 feet of District property

This policy shall apply in the event pills or other substances are simulated or represented as any of the previously mentioned controlled substances or over-the-counter drugs and shall apply to any type of drug paraphernalia.

Students who use a drug as authorized by a licensed physician through a prescription specifically issued for the student's use shall not be considered to have violated this rule as long as they follow the guidelines set forth by South San Antonio ISD Health Services.

Cars and lockers may be searched for any contraband including alcohol and drugs in accordance with Board Policy FNF (Local). Students are held responsible for any prohibited item(s) found in their locker, car, or on their person and are subject to disciplinary action.

Students who violate this policy on alcohol and drug use shall be subject to disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent or his designee, which may include, but is not limited to, removal to alternative education placement and/or expulsion.

### **DRUG FREE SCHOOLS**

South San Antonio ISD believes that student use of alcohol and illicit drugs is both wrong and harmful. Consequently, the District has established a Student Code of Conduct that prohibits using, giving, selling, possessing, being under the influence of, and/or distributing alcohol and/or illicit drugs or prescription drugs by students on school premises or within 300 feet of District property or as part of any school activity, regardless of its location.

Compliance with this Student Code of Conduct is mandatory, and students shall be disciplined if they are found to have violated this Student Code of Conduct. Students found to be involved in alcohol and/or drug violations are subject to removal to a DAEP of not fewer than 45 school days and/or a possible expulsion from the District. [Safety Code 481.134 and 483.001]

NOTE: A student with a valid prescription for low-THC cannabis as authorized by Chapter 487 of the Texas Health and Safety Code does not violate this provision.

## **BULLYING**

South San Antonio ISD prohibits bullying or cyberbullying as defined by David's Law and Board Policy FFI (Local). Effective communication between parents/guardians, students, and the principal/CBC or his/her designee is a key component in handling bullying allegations. Retaliation against anyone reporting bullying is prohibited. [See Definitions and Terminology Section]

The District prohibits the bullying of any student:

1. during any educational program or activity conducted by the District; during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity or on a school bus;
2. through the use of any electronic device or data while on school grounds; on a school bus; or through the use of computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network of the District. The physical location or time of access of a computer-related incident cannot be raised as a defense in any disciplinary action initiated under this section; or
3. through threats, using any of the above methods, to be carried out on school grounds. This includes threats made outside of school hours that are intended to be carried out during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity or on a school bus; or
4. through the use of any electronic device or data that is made outside of school hours on or off campus if a student's ability to receive an education or the school's ability to provide an education is significantly impaired as determined by the District administration.

It is further prohibited to bully in a manner reasonably perceived to be motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristics, such as race; ethnicity, color; religion; ancestry, national origin; gender; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity and expression; marital status; socio-economic background; social/family background; linguistic preference; political beliefs; or a mental, physical, or sensory disability, or impairment; or by any other distinguishing characteristic or because of one's association with a particular person or group of persons.

Any student who believes that he/she has experienced bullying or believes that another student is being bullied should obtain help by immediately reporting the alleged act(s)

orally or in writing, to a teacher, counselor, principal/CBC, or parent/guardian. Other options of reporting include reporting anonymously online through the school or District website and/or by contacting the campus police officer.

Any report given orally will be reduced by the principal or designee to a written form. A failure to immediately report may impair the District's ability to investigate and address the alleged conduct. A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a District investigation regarding bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

When a bully allegation is made the principal/CBC or his/her designee will conduct an investigation based on the allegations reported. Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation will begin within 24 hours and be completed within ten (10) school business days from the date of the initial report alleging bullying; however, the principal/CBC or his/her designee shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation. To the greatest extent possible, the district shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. The limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation. The principal/CBC shall take interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate. The principal/CBC or his/her designee shall determine whether the allegations reported constitute bullying and respond by taking appropriate disciplinary actions in accordance with the District's Student Code of Conduct. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying. Consequences for a student who commits an act of harassment or bullying shall be unique to the individual incident and shall vary in method and severity according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student and the student's history of problem behaviors and performance.

Be advised that Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code has been amended to allow for an expulsion or placement in a DAEP for a student who

1. Engages in bullying that encourages suicide;
2. Incites violence through group bullying; or
3. Releases or threatens to release intimate visual material of a minor or an adult student without consent.

If an incident of bullying is reported, the principal/CBC or his/her designee shall notify the parent/guardian of the victim(s) on or before the third business day after the incident is reported and within a reasonable time, notice will be given to the parent/guardian of the student who engaged in bullying. Follow up contact with parents/guardians will be made if bullying is confirmed. Available school counseling options will be provided to these individuals. After an investigation is completed, the principal/CBC may report to law enforcement if the principal/CBC or his/her designee has reasonable grounds to believe that the student has engaged in assault or harassment.

If a student is found repeating bullying behavior after the school has imposed disciplinary actions or the bullying behavior is extreme or significant, the principal/CBC in consultation with the board designee may transfer the student to another campus in the district. The parent/guardian of a student who has been determined by the district to be a victim of bullying may request that his/her child be transferred to another classroom or campus within the district.

There are many internet resources on bullying. The US Department of Education website, [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov) , provides information and multiple resources regarding bullying.

It is important that the school and parents/guardians work together to reinforce a culture of tolerance and respect. Visit your campus website, the District website and/or call your school administrator and/or counselor to acquire information regarding the various programs that reinforce positive behavior to promote tolerance and respect and their specific reporting procedures. [TEC 37.0832]

## **DISTRIBUTION OF NON-SCHOOL MATERIALS**

Any attempt to avoid the established procedure for administrative approval of activities such as the production for distribution and/or the distribution of petitions or printed documents of any kind, sort, or type on school grounds, without the specific approval of the principal, shall be cause for disciplinary action. This may include suspension and/or assignment to a DAEP.

## **FALSELY ACCUSING OTHERS OF MISCONDUCT**

Students who falsely accuse other students, teachers, school administrators, and/or other school employees of misconduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures including, but not limited to, suspension and/or placement in an alternative education program.

## **FIGHTING (Mutual Combat)**

Individual or group fights at school, school sponsored events, school related activities, or while on District transportation will not be tolerated. Students found to be encouraging others to fight is prohibited. Parents/guardians of students involved will be notified. The seriousness and determination of self-defense of each case will determine the disciplinary action taken. Self-defense is not an acceptable reason for misconduct that seriously disrupts the educational environment, or endangers or seriously affects others. Students who engage in fighting will be subject to disciplinary consequences such as, but not limited to, suspensions and removal to an alternative education placement.

## **GANG/CREW ACTIVITY**

A "gang" is defined as any group of two or more individuals whose purposes may include the commission of illegal acts.

In addition, for purposes of this policy, a "gang" is a prohibited fraternity or society as defined by Texas Education Code, Section 37.121. By this policy, the Board of Trustees acts to prohibit the existence of gangs and gang activity. (FNCC Legal)

Students are prohibited from gang involvement or gang activities while at school, at any school facility, at any school-sponsored activity, or on a school bus. Gang activities and gang involvement include but are not limited to the following:

1. Wearing, possessing, using, distributing, displaying, or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, signs, graffiti, or other affiliation in any gang.
2. Committing any act or omission, or using, any speech, either verbal or nonverbal (gestures, handshakes, etc.), showing membership or affiliation in a gang.
3. Using any speech or committing any act or omission in furtherance of the interest of any gang or gang activity, including but not limited to:
  - a. Soliciting others for membership in any gangs.
  - b. Requesting any person to pay for protection or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person.
  - c. Inciting other students to act with physical violence upon any other person.
  - d. Engaging in concert with others in intimidating, fighting, assaulting, or threatening to assault others.
  - e. Committing any other illegal act or other violation of school district policies.

## **GANG-FREE ZONES**

Certain criminal offenses, including those involving organized activity such as gang-related crimes, will be enhanced to the next highest category of offense if they are committed in a gang-free zone. For purposes of the District, a gang-free zone includes a school bus and a location in, on, or within 1000 feet of any District-owned or leased property or campus playground.

## **GANG LAW VIOLATIONS**

1. A person commits an offense if the person:
  - a. Is a member of, pledges to become a member of, joins, or solicits another person to join or pledge to become a member of a public school fraternity, sorority, secret society, or gang; or

b. Is not enrolled in a public school and solicits or coerces another person to attend a meeting of a public school fraternity, sorority, secret society, or gang or a meeting at which membership in one of those groups is encouraged.

2. The District will place in a DAEP or expel any student who violates section 1 above.

## **HAZING: SECTION TEC 37.151**

The Texas Education Code provides criminal penalties for students and organizations that engage in or have association with acts of hazing “occurring on or off the campus of an educational institution.” Hazing is defined as, “any intentional, knowing, or reckless act...by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student, for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, or holding office in an organization or maintaining membership in an organization.”

Students who violate the District hazing policies or state law [FNCC (Legal)], Texas Education Code Chapter 37, Subchapter F, South San Antonio ISD Student Code of Conduct shall be subject to disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent or his designee which may include, but is not limited to, suspension, removal to alternative educational placements and/or expulsion if criteria for expulsion are met (Texas Education Code 37.007). Students may also face probation or removal from extra-curricular activities.

## **THREATS**

Bullying behavior that goes beyond harassment may amount to a threat. Most threats of violence are illegal, and all are prohibited on school campuses regardless of whether the threat is directed at a person or facility or whether it meets the elements of a criminal offense. Disciplinary consequences will apply even if the student states he/she does not intend to carry out the threat. The act of making the threat is itself the basis for the imposition of the applicable disciplinary consequence.

### **Terroristic Threats**

A person commits an offense if he/she threatens to commit any offense involving violence to any person or property with intent to:

- Cause a reaction of any type to his/her threat by an official or volunteer agency organized to deal with emergencies;
- Place any person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury;
- Prevent or interrupt the occupation or use of a building, room, place of assembly, place to which the public has access, place of employment or occupation, aircraft, automobile or other form of conveyance, or other public place;
- Cause impairment or interruption of public communications, public transportation, public water, gas or power supply, or other public service;

- Place the public or a substantial group of the public in fear of serious bodily injury; or
- Influence the conduct or activities of a branch or agency of the federal government, the state or a political subdivision of the state, such as a school district.

### **False Alarm or Bomb Threat**

A false alarm is a terroristic threat that is false. A person commits an offense if he or she knowingly initiates, communicates or circulates a report of a present, past or future bombing, fire, offense or other emergency that he or she knows is false or baseless and that would ordinarily:

- Cause action by an official or volunteer agency organized to deal with emergencies;
- Place a person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury; or
- Prevent or interrupt the occupation of a building, room, place of assembly, place to which the public has access, or aircraft, automobile or other mode of conveyance.

A false alarm or report that involves a school is a higher degree offense.

### **General Threats to Students, Staff and/or Schools**

For those instances where the threat does not meet the elements of a terroristic threat or false alarm, such that no criminal charge is filed, the District retains the discretion to assign a student to the DAEP when a student makes any kind of threat to harm a person, group, or the school in general. This would include instances where the threat is made on social media outside of school. This is again, regardless of whether the student actually intends to carry out the threat. Instead, the act of making the threat is the basis for the imposition of the discipline consequence.

## **TITLE IX – DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED HARASSMENT**

South San Antonio ISD believes that all students have the right to participate in District educational programs and school-related activities free from all forms of retaliation, harassment and discrimination on the basis of sex or gender. This District considers harassment of students and discrimination on the basis of sex or gender to be serious and, if confirmed after an investigation, will consider the full range of disciplinary options and/or remedies, up to and including expulsion, according to the nature of the offense.

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly address inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are prohibited by Title IX [see FFH (Local)].

All students are expected to treat one another courteously, with respect for the other person's feelings; to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop these



behaviors when asked or told to stop. All students are prohibited from engaging in offensive verbal or physical conduct of a harassing nature directed toward another.

Dating violence occurs when a person in a current or past relationship uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other person in the relationship or any of the person's past or subsequent partners.

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee occurs when a school employee causes the student to believe that the student must submit to the conduct in order to participate in a school educational program or activity, or that the employee will make an educational decision based on whether or not the student submits to the conduct.

Sexual harassment by a student includes unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct.

Gender-based harassment includes, but is not limited to harassment based on a student's gender, expression by the student of stereotypical characteristics associated with the student's gender, or the student's failure to conform to stereotypical behavior related to gender.

Dating violence, sexual and gender-based conduct as defined above are considered harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct:

1. 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;
2. Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the student's academic performance; or
3. Otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities.

Anyone who believes they have been harassed or have witnessed a person be harassed, should contact the principal/CBC, other administrators, teachers, or counselors immediately to report the incident. Staff members who receive a complaint alleging sexual harassment shall report the incident to the campus Title IX Coordinator immediately. On the campus, the principal/CBC serves their respective campus as the Title IX Coordinator.

A complaint may also be reported to the District Title IX Coordinator:

Elizabeth Martinez  
Director of Federal and State Programs  
[esmartinez@southsanisd.net](mailto:esmartinez@southsanisd.net)  
210-977-7000 ext. 3568

An individual may make a report alleging sexual discrimination or sexual harassment at any time, including non-business hours, in person, by mail, by telephone, by email using the contact information provided.

Upon receiving any complaint of alleged sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will comply with the process to investigate established by South San Antonio ISD policy (FFH).

Retaliation against any individual involved in the complaint process is a violation of the District policy and is prohibited.

## **TOBACCO/VAPE PRODUCTS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

South San Antonio ISD prohibits the following in accordance with Texas Education Code Section 38.006 and Texas Health and Safety Code Section 161.081:

1. Any adult and/or student from smoking cigarettes, tobacco, tobacco products, electronic, vapor, smokeless or any other substitute form of cigarettes, tobacco or tobacco-like products, as well as the use of any devices which are used for the purpose of ingesting or transmitting any type of tobacco or tobacco-like products at a school-related or school-sanctioned activity on or off school property.
2. Students from possessing or using cigarettes, tobacco, tobacco products, electronic, vapor, smokeless or any other substitute form of cigarettes, tobacco or tobacco-like products, as well as the use of any devices which are used for the purpose of ingesting or transmitting any type of tobacco, or tobacco-like products at a school-related or school-sanctioned activity on or off school property.

Use of e-cigarettes or vapor products is prohibited at school, and before/after-school programs, including the premises, playground, transportation vehicles, and during field trips. 40 TAC § 744.2603(d) (2022)

South San Antonio ISD will ensure that school personnel will enforce the tobacco/vapor rules. State law prohibits the possession, purchase, consumption or acceptance of an electronic cigarette, cigarette or tobacco product by an individual who is younger than 21 years of age. An offense under state law is punishable by a fine. Additionally, students will face disciplinary consequences which could include a DAEP placement or an expulsion for a THC or CBD related violation.

## **UNACCEPTABLE AND INAPPROPRIATE USE OF TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES**

Students are prohibited from possessing, sending, forwarding, posting, accessing, flashing or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition also applies to conduct off school property, or during participation of virtual or distance learning whether the equipment used to send such messages is district-owned or personally owned, if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, possessing, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content, commonly referred to as “sexting,” will be disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct, may be required to complete an educational program related to the dangers of this type of behavior, and, in certain circumstances, may be reported to law enforcement. Because engaging in this type of behavior can lead to bullying or harassment, as well as possibly impede future endeavors of a student, we encourage you to review with your child <http://beforeyoutext.com>, a state-developed program that addresses the consequences of engaging in inappropriate behavior using technology.

In addition, any student who engages in conduct that results in a breach of the district’s computer security will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, and, in some cases, the consequence may rise to the level of expulsion.

## **UNAUTHORIZED ORGANIZATIONS**

South San Antonio ISD Policy FNCC (Legal) specifically prohibits the existence of organizations on a public school campus which have not been authorized by the principal.

Under district policy, a person commits an offense if the person is a member of, pledges to become a member, or joins, or solicits another person to join or pledge to become a member of a public school fraternity, sorority, secret society, or gang. In this section, "public school fraternity, sorority, secret society, or gang" means an organization composed wholly or in part of students of public primary or secondary schools that seeks to perpetuate itself by taking in additional members from the students enrolled in school on the basis of the decision of its membership rather than on the free choice of a student in the school who is qualified by the rules of the school to fill the special aims of the organization. The term does not include an agency for public welfare, including Boy Scouts, Hi-Y, Girls Reserves, DeMolay, Rainbow Girls, Pan-American Clubs, scholarship societies, or other similar educational organizations sponsored by state or national education authorities. [TEC 37.121 (d)]

The Board of Trustees or an educator shall recommend placing in an alternative education program any student under the person's control who violates this provision.

## **WEAPONS/EXPLOSIVES**

In addition to weapons prohibited by state and federal law, students shall not post, possess, handle, use, display, and/or transport any object that can be considered a weapon, including, but not limited to:

1. Explosives, including fireworks of any kind, poppers, stink bombs, etc.
2. Razors.
3. Any bladed instrument.

4. Stun guns, tasers, BB guns, pellet guns, air guns, laser guns, tranquilizer guns, etc.
5. Chemical dispensers sold commercially for personal protection that is not covered by the Texas Penal Code (e.g., mace, pepper spray, or other irritants).
6. Bows, arrows, nunchucks, boomerangs, crossbows.
7. Clubs.
8. Ammunition.
9. Acid.
10. Metal pipes.
11. Sharpened sticks.
12. Pyrotechnics.
13. Chains.
14. Any other object used in a way that threatens or inflicts bodily injury on another person, or that the principal or designee determines presents a danger to any student, District employee, or District property by virtue of possession or use of the object.

Students who violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent or his designee which may include, but not be limited to, suspension, removal to a DAEP, and/or expulsion.

Students who have reasonable grounds to suspect a violation of the school district's policy relating to the possession of weapons/explosives are required to report such suspicion immediately to a school administrator or police officer. Students can also call the South San Antonio ISD Police Department's 24-hour number (210) 977-7500 to report any suspicious activities or behaviors.

## **Glossary**

**Abuse** is improper or excessive use.

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

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

**Armor-piercing ammunition** is defined by Penal Code 46.01 as handgun ammunition used in pistols and revolvers and designed primarily for the purpose of penetrating metal or body armor.

**Arson** is defined in part by Penal Code 28.02 as a crime that involves:

1. Starting a fire or causing an explosion with intent to destroy or damage:
  - a. Any vegetation, fence, or structure on open-space land; or
  - b. Any building, habitation, or vehicle:
    - (1) Knowing that it is within the limits of an incorporated city or town,
    - (2) Knowing that it is insured against damage or destruction,
    - (3) Knowing that it is subject to a mortgage or other security interest,
    - (4) Knowing that it is located on property belonging to another,
    - (5) Knowing that it has located within it property belonging to another, or

(6) When the person starting the fire is reckless about whether the burning or explosion will endanger the life of some individual or the safety of the property of another.

2. Recklessly starting a fire or causing an explosion while manufacturing or attempting to manufacture a controlled substance if the fire or explosion damages any building, habitation, or vehicle; or

3. Intentionally starting a fire or causing an explosion and in so doing:

a. Recklessly damaging or destroying a building belonging to another, or

b. Recklessly causing another person to suffer bodily injury or death.

**Assault** is defined in part by Penal Code 22.01 as intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing bodily injury to another; intentionally or knowingly threatening another with imminent bodily injury; or intentionally or knowingly causing physical contact with another that can reasonably be regarded as offensive or provocative.

**Breach of computer security** includes knowingly accessing a computer, computer network, or computer system without the effective consent of the owner as defined in Penal Code 33.02, if the conduct involves accessing a computer, computer network, or computer system owned by or operated on behalf of a school district and the student knowingly alters, damages, or deletes school district property or information or commits a breach of any other computer, computer network, or computer system.

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

1. Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or damage to the student's property;

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

3. Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school; or

4. Infringes on the rights of the victim at school.

Bullying includes cyberbullying. (See below.) This state law on bullying prevention applies to:

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

**Chemical dispensing device** is defined by Penal Code 46.01 as a device designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of dispensing a substance capable of causing an adverse psychological or physiological effect on a human being. A small chemical dispenser sold commercially for personal protection is not in this category.

**Club** is defined by Penal Code 46.01 as an instrument, specially designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury or death by striking a person with the instrument, and includes but is not limited to a blackjack, nightstick, mace, and tomahawk

**Controlled substance** means a substance, including a drug, an adulterant, and a dilutant, listed in Schedules I through V or Penalty Group 1, 1-A, 1-B, 2, 2-A, 3, or 4 of the Texas Controlled Substances Act. The term includes the aggregate weight of any mixture, solution, or other substance containing a controlled substance. The term does not include hemp, as defined by Agriculture Code 121.001, or the tetrahydrocannabinols (THC) in hemp.

**Criminal street gang** is defined by Penal Code 71.01 as three or more persons having a common identifying sign or symbol or an identifiable leadership who continuously or regularly associate in the commission of criminal activities.

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

**Dangerous drug** is defined by Health and Safety Code 483.001 as a device or a drug that is unsafe for self-medication and that is not included in Schedules I through V or Penalty Groups 1 through 4 of the Texas Controlled Substances Act. The term includes a device or drug that federal law prohibits dispensing without prescription or restricts to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

**Dating violence** occurs when a person in a current or past dating relationship uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control another person in the relationship. Dating violence also occurs when a person commits these acts against a person in a marriage or dating relationship with the individual who is or was once in a marriage or dating relationship with the person committing the offense, as defined by Section 71.0021 of the Family Code.

**Deadly conduct** under Penal Code 22.05 occurs when a person recklessly engages in conduct that places another in imminent danger of serious bodily injury, such as knowingly discharging a firearm in the direction of an individual, habitation, building, or vehicle.

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

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

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

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

**E-cigarette** means an electronic cigarette or any other device that simulates smoking by using a mechanical heating element, battery, or electronic circuit to deliver nicotine or other substances to the individual inhaling from the device or a consumable liquid solution or other material aerosolized or vaporized during the use of an electronic cigarette or other device described by this provision. The term includes any device that is manufactured, distributed, or sold as an e-cigarette, e-cigar, or e-pipe or under another product name or description and a component, part, or accessory for the device, regardless of whether the component, part, or accessory is sold separately from the device.



**Explosive weapon** is defined by Penal Code 46.01 as any explosive or incendiary bomb, grenade, rocket, or mine and its delivery mechanism that is designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury, death, or substantial property damage, or for the principal purpose of causing such a loud report as to cause undue public alarm or terror.

**False alarm or report** under Penal Code 42.06 occurs when a person knowingly initiates, communicates, or circulates a report of a present, past, or future bombing, fire, offense, or other emergency that he or she knows is false or baseless and that would ordinarily:

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

**Firearm** is defined by federal law (18 U.S.C. 921(a)) as:

1. Any weapon (including a starter gun) that will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive;
2. The frame or receiver of any such weapon;
3. Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer, defined as any device for silencing, muffling, or diminishing the report of a portable [firearm](#); or
4. Any destructive device, such as any explosive, incendiary or poison gas bomb, or grenade.

Such term does not include an antique firearm.

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

**Handgun** is defined by Penal Code 46.01 as any firearm that is designed, made, or adapted to be fired with one hand.

**Harassment** includes:

1. Conduct that meets the definition established in district policies DIA(LOCAL) and FFH(LOCAL);

2. Conduct that threatens to cause harm or bodily injury to another person, including a district student, employee, board member, or volunteer; is sexually intimidating; causes physical damage to the property of another student; subjects another student to physical confinement or restraint; or maliciously and substantially harms another student's physical or emotional health or safety, as defined in Education Code 37.001(b)(2); or

3. Conduct that is punishable as a crime under Penal Code 42.07, including the following types of conduct if carried out with the intent to harass, annoy, alarm, abuse, torment, or embarrass another:0.

a. Initiating communication and, in the course of the communication, making a comment, request, suggestion, or proposal that is obscene, as defined by law;

b. Threatening, in a manner reasonably likely to alarm the person receiving the threat, to inflict bodily injury on the person or to commit a felony against the person, a member of the person's family or household, or the person's property;

c. Conveying, in a manner reasonably likely to alarm the person receiving the report, a false report, which is known by the conveyor to be false, that another person has suffered death or serious bodily injury;

d. Sending repeated electronic communications in a manner reasonably likely to harass, annoy, alarm, abuse, torment, embarrass, or offend another; and

e. Publishing on an internet website, including a social media platform, repeated electronic communications in a manner reasonably likely to cause emotional distress, abuse, or torment to another person, unless the communications are made in connection with a matter of public concern, as defined by law.

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

1. Any type of physical brutality;

2. An activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the student's mental or physical health, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement to small spaces, calisthenics, or consumption of food, liquids, drugs, or other substances;
3. An activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to perform a duty or task that violates the Penal Code; or
4. Coercing a student to consume a drug or alcoholic beverage in an amount that would lead a reasonable person to believe the student is intoxicated. 0.

**Hit list** is defined in Education Code 37.001(b)(3) as a list of people targeted to be harmed, using a firearm, a knife, or any other object to be used with intent to cause bodily harm.

**Improvised explosive device** is defined by Penal Code 46.01 as a completed and operational bomb designed to cause serious bodily injury, death, or substantial property damage that is fabricated in an improvised manner using nonmilitary components.

**Indecent exposure** is defined by Penal Code 21.08 as an offense that occurs when a person exposes the person's anus or any part of the person's genitals with intent to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person, and is reckless about whether another is present who will be offended or alarmed by the act.

**Intimate visual material** is defined by Civil Practices and Remedies Code 98B.001 and Penal Code 21.16 as visual material that depicts a person with the person's intimate parts exposed or engaged in sexual conduct. "Visual material" means any film, photograph, video tape, negative, or slide of any photographic reproduction or any other physical medium that allows an image to be displayed on a computer or other video screen and any image transmitted to a computer or other video screen.

**Location-restricted knife** is defined by Penal Code 46.01 as a knife with a blade over five and one-half inches.

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

**Look-alike weapon** means an item that resembles a weapon but is not intended to be used to cause serious bodily injury.

**Machine gun** as defined by Penal Code 46.01 is any firearm that is capable of shooting more than two shots automatically, without manual reloading, by a single function of the trigger.

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

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

**Possession** means to have an item on one's person or in one's personal property, including, but not limited to:

1. Clothing, purse, or backpack;
2. A private vehicle used for transportation to or from school or school-related activities, including, but not limited to, an automobile, truck, motorcycle, or bicycle;
3. Telecommunications or electronic devices; or
4. Any school property used by the student, including, but not limited to, a locker or desk.

**Prohibited weapon** under Penal Code 46.05(a) means:

1. The following items, unless registered with the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives or otherwise not subject to that registration requirement or unless the item is classified as a curio or relic by the U.S. Department of Justice: An explosive weapon;
  - a. A machine gun;
  - b. A short-barrel firearm;
2. Armor-piercing ammunition;
3. A chemical dispensing device;
4. A zip gun;
5. A tire deflation device; or
6. An improvised explosive device.

**Public Lewdness** is defined by Penal Code 21.07 as an offense that occurs when a person knowingly engages in an act of sexual intercourse, deviate sexual intercourse, or sexual contact in a public place or, if not in a public place, when the person is reckless about whether another is present who will be offended or alarmed by the act.

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

**Reasonable belief** is that which an ordinary person of average intelligence and sound mind would believe. Chapter 37 requires certain disciplinary decisions when the superintendent or designee has a reasonable belief that a student engaged in conduct punishable as a felony offense. In forming such a reasonable belief, the superintendent or designee may use all available information, including the notice of a student's arrest under Code of Criminal Procedure Article 15.27.

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

**Serious misbehavior** means:

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

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

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

**Short-barrel firearm** is defined by Penal Code 46.01 as a rifle with a barrel length of less than 16 inches or a shotgun with a barrel length of less than 18 inches, or any weapon made from a rifle or shotgun that, as altered, has an overall length of less than 26 inches.

**Terroristic threat** is defined by Penal Code 22.07 as a threat of violence to any person or property with intent to:

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

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

**Title 5 felonies** are those crimes listed in Title 5 of the Penal Code that typically involve injury to a person and may include:

- Murder, manslaughter, or homicide under Sections 19.02–.05;
- Kidnapping under Section 20.03;
- Trafficking of persons under Section 20A.02;
- Smuggling or continuous smuggling of persons under Sections 20.05–.06;
- Assault under Section 22.01;
- Aggravated assault under Section 22.02;
- Sexual assault under Section 22.011;
- Aggravated sexual assault under Section 22.021;
- Unlawful restraint under Section 20.02;
- Continuous sexual abuse of a young child or disabled individual under Section 21.02;
- Bestiality under Section 21.09;
- Improper relationship between educator and student under Section 21.12;
- Voyeurism under Section 21.17;
- Indecency with a child under Section 21.11;
- Invasive visual recording under Section 21.15;
- Disclosure or promotion of intimate visual material under Section 21.16;
- Sexual coercion under Section 21.18;
- Injury to a child, an elderly person, or a disabled person of any age under Section 22.04;
- Abandoning or endangering a child under Section 22.041;
- Deadly conduct under Section 22.05;
- Terroristic threat under Section 22.07;
- Aiding a person to commit suicide under Section 22.08; and
- Tampering with a consumer product under Section 22.09.

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

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

**Zip gun** is defined by Penal Code 46.01 as a device or combination of devices that was not originally a firearm and is adapted to expel a projectile through a smooth-bore or rifled-bore barrel by using the energy generated by an explosion or burning substance.