



**Parents' Rights and Options
Handbook
Fall 2025**



Parents' Rights and Options Handbook

Course of Study

As a condition of accreditation, a district shall provide instruction in the essential knowledge and skills at appropriate grade levels in the foundation and enrichment curriculum. *Education Code 28.002(c); 19 TAC 74.1(b)*

A district shall ensure that all children in the district participate actively in a balanced curriculum designed to meet individual needs. *Education Code 28.002(g)*

Instruction may be provided in a variety of arrangements and settings, including mixed-age programs designed to permit flexible learning arrangements for developmentally appropriate instruction for all student populations to support student attainment of course and grade-level standards. *19 TAC 74.2*

REQUIRED CURRICULUM. (a) Each school district that offers kindergarten through grade 12 shall offer, as a required curriculum:

(1) a foundation curriculum that includes:

(A) English language arts;

(B) mathematics;

(C) science; and

(D) social studies, consisting of Texas, United States, and world history, government, economics, with emphasis on the free enterprise system and its benefits, and geography; and

(2) an enrichment curriculum that includes:

(A) to the extent possible, languages other than English;

(B) health, with emphasis on:

(i) physical health, including the importance of proper nutrition and exercise;

(ii) mental health, including instruction about mental health conditions, substance abuse, skills to manage emotions, establishing and maintaining positive relationships, and responsible decision-making; and

(iii) suicide prevention, including recognizing suicide-related risk factors and warning signs;



Parents' Rights and Options Handbook

(C) physical education;

(D) fine arts;

(E) career and technology education;

(F) technology applications;

(G) religious literature, including the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and New Testament, and its impact on history and literature; and

(H) personal financial literacy.

Counselors at the secondary schools assist students in selecting courses of study. Parents are encouraged to participate in the process. Please contact the school for additional information.

Supplemental Services

Each student who has been identified as being at risk of dropping out of school, who is not performing at grade level, or who did not perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated assessment shall be provided accelerated and/or compensatory educational services.

The District shall provide accelerated instruction in accordance with law if a student fails to perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated assessment.

If a student fails to perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated assessment, a parent's request that the student be assigned to a particular teacher the following school year shall be addressed in accordance with the District's administrative procedures.

A parent complaint about the content or implementation of the accelerated education plan shall be filed in accordance with FNG.

Instructional Materials

Galveston ISD provides instructional materials designed to teach the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and further the District's educational mission. Although the Superintendent ensures that professional staff select instructional materials in accordance with District policy and administrative regulations, the ultimate authority for determining and approving the curriculum and instructional program of the District lies with the Board.



Parents' Rights and Options Handbook

Library Materials

In Galveston ISD Local Policy EFB, "library materials" is defined by law and may include printed and electronic library acquisitions, including online catalogs, and other ancillary or supplementary materials maintained in a campus library. [See EFB(LEGAL)]

The library collection development standards apply to all library materials available for use or display, including material contained in school libraries, classroom libraries, online catalogs, library mobile applications used in the District, and any other library catalog a student may access.

In developing library collections, Galveston ISD considers the age groups, grade levels, and access to library material by all students on a campus.

Health Education Instruction

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) shall make available to each district one or more coordinated health programs in elementary, middle, and junior high school. Each program must provide for coordinating education and services related to:

1. Physical health education, including programs designed to prevent obesity, cardiovascular disease, oral diseases, and Type 2 diabetes and programs designed to promote the role of proper nutrition;
2. Mental health education, including education about mental health conditions, mental health well-being, skills to manage emotions, establishing and maintaining positive relationships, and responsible decision-making;
3. Substance abuse education, including education about alcohol abuse, prescription drug abuse, and abuse of other controlled substances;
4. Physical education and physical activity; and
5. Parental involvement.

School Options, including virtual and remote schooling options

Galveston ISD provides parents of elementary aged students to apply for any elementary school through the Schools of Choice process. Families apply for available seats. Should



Parents' Rights and Options Handbook

the district receive more applications than its available seats, a lottery process is used to assign students.

The Superintendent is authorized to accept or reject any transfer requests, provided that such action is without regard to race, religion, color, sex, disability, national origin, or ancestral language.

A resident student who becomes a nonresident during the course of a semester shall be permitted to continue in attendance for the remainder of the semester.

A nonresident student wishing to transfer into the District shall file an application for transfer each school year with the Superintendent or campus principal. Transfers shall be granted for one regular school year at a time.

High school students may work with their counselors for other educational options available to them. Students are eligible to participate in dual enrollment classes through approved institutions.

Students are also eligible to participate in courses through the Texas Virtual School Network.

Immunizations

Each student shall be fully immunized against diphtheria, rubeola (measles), rubella, mumps, tetanus, and poliomyelitis. The Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) may modify or delete any of these immunizations or may require immunizations against additional diseases as a requirement for admission to any elementary or secondary school. *Education Code 38.001(a), (b)*

Students in kindergarten through twelfth grade shall have the following additional vaccines, according to the immunization schedules set forth in TDSHS regulations: pertussis, hepatitis B, hepatitis A (as applicable to the grade levels specified in state rule), and varicella (chickenpox). TDSHS requires students enrolling in seventh through twelfth grades to have one dose of meningococcal vaccine on or after the student's 11th birthday. *25 TAC 97.63*

Gifted and Talented Programs

Students may be referred for the gifted and talented program at any time by teachers, school counselors, parents, or other interested persons.



Parents' Rights and Options Handbook

Galveston ISD provides assessment opportunities to complete the screening and identification process for referred students at least once per school year.

Galveston ISD schedules a gifted and talented program awareness session for parents that provides an overview of the identification procedures and services for the program prior to beginning the screening and identification process.

The District obtains written parental consent before any special testing or individual assessment is conducted as part of the screening and identification process. All student information collected during the screening and identification process become an educational record, subject to the protections set out in policies at FL.

Data collected through both objective and subjective assessments shall be measured against the criteria approved by the Board to determine individual eligibility for the program. Assessment tools may include, but are not limited to, the following: achievement tests, intelligence tests, creativity tests, behavioral checklists completed by teachers and parents, student/parent conferences, and available student work products.

A placement committee evaluates each referred student according to the established criteria and identifies those students for whom placement in the gifted and talented program is the most appropriate educational setting. The committee is composed of at least three professional educators who have received training in the nature and needs of gifted students, as required by law.

Grades, Promotion, Retention

Promotion and course credit shall be based on mastery of the curriculum. Expectations and standards for promotion shall be established for each grade level, content area, and course and shall be coordinated with compensatory, intensive, and/or accelerated services. [See EHBC] The District shall comply with applicable state and federal requirements when determining methods for students with disabilities [see FB] or students who are English language learners [see EHBE and EKBA] to demonstrate mastery of the curriculum.

Grades 1–4

In grades 1–4, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for reading, mathematics, science, and social studies.



Parents' Rights and Options Handbook

Grades 5–8

In grades 5–8, promotion to the next grade level shall be 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 three of the following areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Grades 9–12

Grade-level advancement for students in grades 9–12 shall be earned by course credits.

[See EI]

Parents are able to check grades through Skyward. More detailed information is available in the document *Elementary Grading and Reporting Procedures* for PreK – grade 4 and *Secondary Grading and Reporting Procedures* for grades 5 – 12.

Graduation

To graduate, a student must complete the courses required by the District in addition to those mandated by the state.

The courses that satisfy District requirements under the foundation program, including courses for the distinguished level of achievement and courses for endorsements offered by the District, are listed in the high school course catalog.

To the extent permitted by state rules, the District shall award state graduation credit in fine arts for participation in an approved community-based fine arts program.

To the extent permitted by state rules, the District awards state graduation credit in physical education for participation in approved activities and elective courses.

The District awards state graduation credit in physical education for appropriate private or commercially sponsored physical activity programs conducted either on or off campus, upon approval by the commissioner of education. [See also EHAC]

As confirmation of a student's completion and submission of a free application for federal student aid (FAFSA) or a Texas application for state financial aid (TASFA), the District accepts the following:

1. A screenshot that includes the processed date field in ApplyTexas Counselor Suite FAFSA data;



Parents' Rights and Options Handbook

2. Notification, such as a copy of an email, from the United States Department of Education verifying completion of the FAFSA;
3. A copy or screenshot of the FAFSA acknowledgment page;
4. A screenshot of the TASFA submission acknowledgment page (from those institutions that offer an electronic form);
5. An acknowledgment receipt from an institution of higher education (IHE); or
6. A copy of a financial aid award letter from an IHE.

[For students who choose not to complete and submit a FAFSA or a TASFA, see EIF(LEGAL).]

The District shall maintain individual student documentation of the financial aid application requirement as an education record. [See FL]

More information is available through the high school's course catalog and through the counselors' offices.

Class Rank

The District applies the same class rank calculation method and rules for local graduation honors for all students in a graduating class, regardless of the school year in which a student first earned high school credit.

The District categorizes and weights eligible courses as Advanced Placement (AP)/Honors and Regular in accordance with provisions of GISD local policy EIC and as designated in appropriate District publications, including the high school catalog.

Data Collection Practices

Galveston Independent School District maintains a comprehensive system of student records and reports dealing with all facets of the school program operation and ensures through reasonable procedures that records are accessed by authorized persons only, as allowed. These data and records are stored in a safe and secure manner and are conveniently retrievable for use by authorized school officials.

A cumulative record is maintained for each student from entrance into District schools until withdrawal or graduation from the District.



Parents' Rights and Options Handbook

The record custodian is responsible for the education records of the District. These records may include:

1. Admissions data, personal and family data, including certification of date of birth.
2. Standardized test data, including intelligence, aptitude, interest, personality, and social adjustment ratings.
3. All achievement records, as determined by tests, recorded grades, and teacher evaluations.
4. All documentation regarding a student's testing history and any accelerated instruction he or she has received, including any accelerated education plan developed for the student.
5. Health services record, including:
 - a. The results of any tuberculin tests required by the District.
 - b. The findings of screening or health appraisal programs the District conducts or provides. [See FFAA]
 - c. Immunization records. [See FFAB]
6. Attendance records.
7. Student questionnaires.
8. Records of teacher, school counselor, or administrative conferences with the student or pertaining to the student.
9. Verified reports of serious or recurrent behavior patterns.
10. Copies of correspondence with parents and others concerned with the student.
11. Records transferred from other districts in which the student was enrolled.
12. Records pertaining to participation in extracurricular activities.
13. Information relating to student participation in special programs.
14. Records of fees assessed and paid.
15. Records pertaining to student and parent complaints.
16. Other records that may contribute to an understanding of the student.



Parents' Rights and Options Handbook

The District makes student records available to the student's parents, as permitted by law. Each campus uses reasonable procedures to verify the requester's identity before disclosing student records containing personally identifiable information.

Records may be reviewed in person during regular school hours without charge upon written request to the records custodian. For in-person viewing, the designated person at the school designee is available to explain the record and to answer questions. The confidential nature of the student's records is maintained at all times, and records to be viewed are restricted to use only in the Superintendent's, principal's, or school counselor's office, or other restricted area designated on the campus. The original copy of the record or any document contained in the cumulative record shall not be removed from the school.

Copies of records are available at a per copy cost, payable in advance. Copies of records must be requested in writing. Parents may be denied copies of records if they fail to follow proper procedures or pay the copying charge. If the student qualifies for free or reduced-price lunches and the parents are unable to view the records during regular school hours, upon written request of a parent, one copy of the record shall be provided at no charge.

A parent may continue to have access to his or her child's records under specific circumstances after the student has attained 18 years of age or is attending an institution of postsecondary education. [See FL(LEGAL)]

Health Care Services

The District shall support the general wellness of all students by implementing measurable goals to promote sound nutrition and student health and to reduce childhood obesity.

The local school health advisory council (SHAC), on behalf of the District, reviews and considers evidence-based strategies and techniques and develops nutrition guidelines and wellness goals as required by law. In the development, implementation, and review of these guidelines and goals, the SHAC permits participation by parents, students, representatives of the District's food service provider, physical education teachers, school



Parents' Rights and Options Handbook

health professionals, members of the Board, school administrators, and members of the public.

Special Education

Eligible students with disabilities shall enjoy the right to a free appropriate public education, which may include instruction in the regular classroom, instruction through special teaching, or instruction through approved contracts. Instruction shall be supplemented by the provision of related services when appropriate. Education Code 29.003(a)

The Galveston Independent School District Special Education Department is committed to meeting the needs of all students with disabilities and providing them an appropriate education.

"Free appropriate public education" (FAPE) means special education and related services that:

1. Have been provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge;
2. Meet standards set out by the Texas Education Agency (TEA);
3. Include an appropriate preschool, elementary school, or secondary school education; and
4. Are provided in conformity with the student's individualized education program (IEP).

A district shall ensure that, to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, shall be educated with children who are not disabled. Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment shall occur only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. *20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(5); 34 C.F.R. 300.114(a)(2)*

For assistance, contact Galveston ISD Special Education Department at (409) 761-3920.



Parents' Rights and Options Handbook

Bilingual Education and Special Language Programs

The mission of the Galveston Independent School District Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language Programs Handbook is to provide a guide for success in the delivery of effective services to Emergent Bilingual (EBs) and English learners (ELs) that are in compliance with state and federal requirements.

Objectives

- To recognize that proficiency in more than one language is a valuable skill to be cultivated and nurtured in our schools, our Bilingual Education Program implements both one-way and two-way dual language immersion models where our PK-6th grade bilingual education classes receive at least half of their daily instruction in Spanish.
- To enable EBs/ELs to become proficient in English listening, speaking, reading, and writing within 5 to 7 years through the integrated use of second language methods as specified in the state's English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS).
- To emphasize mastery of English or Spanish language skills, as well as math, science, and social studies as specified in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) such that ELs may be successful on STAAR assessments in English or Spanish in 4 years or less.

For more information, visit the Galveston Independent School District website

<https://www.gisd.org/departments/bilinguales/bilingual-handbook>

Student and Parent Complaints/Grievances

The Board encourages students and parents to discuss their concerns with the appropriate teacher, principal, or other campus administrator who has the authority to address the concerns. Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level.

A student or parent may initiate the formal process described below by timely filing a written complaint form.

Complaint forms and appeal notices may be filed by hand-delivery, by electronic communication, including email and fax, or by U.S. Mail. Hand-delivered filings shall be timely filed if received by the appropriate administrator or designee by the close of business on the deadline. Filings submitted by electronic communication shall be timely



Parents' Rights and Options Handbook

filed if they are received by the close of business on the deadline, as indicated by the date/time shown on the electronic communication. Mail filings shall be timely filed if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on or before the deadline and received by the appropriate administrator or designated representative no more than three days after the deadline.

The District shall make reasonable attempts to schedule conferences at a mutually agreeable time. If a student or parent fails to appear at a scheduled conference, the District may hold the conference and issue a decision in the student's or parent's absence.

At Levels One and Two, "response" shall mean a written communication to the student or parent from the appropriate administrator. Responses may be hand-delivered, sent by electronic communication to the student's or parent's email address of record, or sent by U.S. Mail to the student's or parent's mailing address of record. Mailed responses shall be timely if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on or before the deadline.

"Days" shall mean District business days, unless otherwise noted. In calculating timelines under this policy, the day a document is filed is "day zero." The following business day is "day one."

Level One

Complaint forms must be filed:

1. Within 15 days of the date the student or parent first knew, or with reasonable diligence should have known, of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint or grievance; and
2. With the lowest level administrator who has the authority to remedy the alleged problem.

In most circumstances, students and parents shall file Level One complaints with the campus principal.

If the only administrator who has authority to remedy the alleged problem is the Superintendent or designee, the complaint may begin at Level Two following the procedure, including deadlines, for filing the complaint form at Level One.

If the complaint is not filed with the appropriate administrator, the receiving administrator must note the date and time the complaint form was received and immediately forward the complaint form to the appropriate administrator.



Parents' Rights and Options Handbook

The appropriate administrator shall investigate as necessary and schedule a conference with the student or parent within ten days after receiving the written complaint. The administrator may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

Absent extenuating circumstances, the administrator shall provide the student or parent a written response within ten days following the conference. The written response shall set forth the basis of the decision. In reaching a decision, the administrator may consider information provided at the Level One conference and any other relevant documents or information the administrator believes will help resolve the complaint.

Level Two

If the student or parent did not receive the relief requested at Level One or if the time for a response has expired, the student or parent may request a conference with the Superintendent or designee to appeal the Level One decision.

The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the District, within ten days of the date of the written Level One response or, if no response was received, within ten days of the Level One response deadline.

After receiving notice of the appeal, the Level One administrator shall prepare and forward a record of the Level One complaint to the Level Two administrator. The student or parent may request a copy of the Level One record.

The Level One record shall include:

1. The original complaint form and any attachments.
2. All other documents submitted by the student or parent at Level One.
3. The written response issued at Level One and any attachments.
4. All other documents relied upon by the Level One administrator in reaching the Level One decision.

The Superintendent or designee shall schedule a conference within ten days after the appeal notice is filed. The conference shall be limited to the issues and documents considered at Level One. At the conference, the student or parent may provide information concerning any documents or information relied upon by the administration for the Level One decision. The Superintendent or designee may set reasonable time limits for the conference.



Parents' Rights and Options Handbook

The Superintendent or designee shall provide the student or parent a written response within ten days following the conference. The written response shall set forth the basis of the decision. In reaching a decision, the Superintendent or designee may consider the Level One record, information provided at the Level Two conference, and any other relevant documents or information the Superintendent or designee believes will help resolve the complaint.

Recordings of the Level One and Level Two conferences, if any, shall be maintained with the Level One and Level Two records.

Level Three

If the student or parent did not receive the relief requested at Level Two or if the time for a response has expired, the student or parent may appeal the decision to the Board.

The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the District, within ten days of the date of the written Level Two response or, if no response was received, within ten days of the Level Two response deadline.

The Superintendent or designee shall inform the student or parent of the date, time, and place of the Board meeting at which the complaint will be on the agenda for presentation to the Board.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide the Board the record of the Level Two appeal. The student or parent may request a copy of the Level Two record.

The Level Two record shall include:

1. The Level One record.
2. The notice of appeal from Level One to Level Two.
3. The written response issued at Level Two and any attachments.
4. All other documents relied upon by the administration in reaching the Level Two decision.

The appeal shall be limited to the issues and documents considered at Level Two, except that if at the Level Three hearing the administration intends to rely on evidence not included in the Level Two record, the administration shall provide the student or parent notice of the nature of the evidence at least three days before the hearing.



Parents' Rights and Options Handbook

The District shall determine whether the complaint will be presented in open or closed meeting in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and other applicable law. [See BE]

The presiding officer may set reasonable time limits and guidelines for the presentation, including an opportunity for the student or parent and administration to each make a presentation and provide rebuttal and an opportunity for questioning by the Board. The Board shall hear the complaint and may request that the administration provide an explanation for the decisions at the preceding levels.

In addition to any other record of the Board meeting required by law, the Board shall prepare a separate record of the Level Three presentation. The Level Three presentation, including the presentation by the student or parent or the student's representative, any presentation from the administration, and questions from the Board with responses, shall be recorded by audio recording, video/audio recording, or court reporter.

The Board shall then consider the complaint. It may give notice of its decision orally or in writing at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. If the Board does not make a decision regarding the complaint by the end of the next regularly scheduled meeting, the lack of a response by the Board upholds the administrative decision at Level Two.

See Board Policy FNG on gisd.org for more information.