

Principles of Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security

Course Overview

This course introduces students to professions in law enforcement, protective services, corrections, firefighting, and emergency management services. Students examine the roles and responsibilities of police, courts, corrections, private security, and protective agencies of fire and emergency services. The course provides a comprehensive overview of the skills necessary for careers in law enforcement, fire service, protective services, and corrections — equipping students with both foundational knowledge and professional readiness for their chosen pathway.

Course Philosophy

This course prepares students for career pathways in public safety and law, emphasizing critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and professional conduct aligned with industry standards. Students will explore real-world scenarios, constitutional principles, and the human impact of careers in public service.

Teacher Information

Teacher	William Townsend
Room	206
Conference Period	7:30am - 8:15am
Email	
Tutorial Hours	3:00pm - 4:00pm (Mondays)

TEKS Correlation (19 TAC Chapter 127, Subchapter C)

*This course aligns with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Career and Technical Education under **§127.272 – Principles of Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security**. The following standards guide instruction and assessment throughout the year.*

Strand 1: Career Development and Employability Skills

- Demonstrate professional standards including punctuality, reliability, and ethical use of technology
- Develop personal goals and career plans within the Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security career cluster
- Demonstrate teamwork, leadership, and communication skills required in public safety professions

Strand 2: Introduction to Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security

- Describe the history and development of law enforcement, corrections, and the judicial system in the United States
- Identify the components of the criminal justice system including law enforcement, courts, and corrections
- Explain constitutional rights and civil liberties as they relate to public safety professionals
- Define terminology related to law enforcement, corrections, firefighting, and emergency services

Strand 3: Law Enforcement

- Describe the structure and function of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies
- Explain the role of community policing and crime prevention strategies
- Identify the basic steps of criminal procedures including arrest, booking, and due process

- Describe the elements of criminal law including types of crimes, elements of offenses, and defenses

Strand 4: Courts and the Judicial System

- Identify the structure of the federal and state court systems
- Explain the roles of key participants in the courtroom including judges, attorneys, jurors, and defendants
- Describe the stages of a criminal trial from arraignment to sentencing
- Distinguish between civil and criminal law and their respective proceedings

Strand 5: Corrections

- Describe the goals and philosophies of corrections including punishment, rehabilitation, and deterrence
- Identify types of correctional facilities and the populations they serve
- Explain the rights of incarcerated individuals and the role of correctional officers
- Describe community corrections options including probation, parole, and alternative sentencing

Strand 6: Private Security and Protective Services

- Distinguish between public law enforcement and private security roles and responsibilities
- Describe career pathways in private security, loss prevention, and protective services
- Explain the legal authority and limitations of private security personnel

Strand 7: Fire and Emergency Management Services

- Identify the structure and function of fire departments and emergency management agencies
- Describe the basic principles of fire behavior, prevention, and suppression

- Explain the roles of emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and first responders
- Identify the components of emergency management including preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation

Strand 8: Professional Ethics and Leadership

- Define ethics as applied to law, public safety, and corrections professions
- Identify ethical dilemmas commonly faced by public safety professionals
- Apply ethical frameworks to decision-making scenarios in public safety contexts
- Demonstrate professional conduct and attitude consistent with public safety career standards

Pacing Guide

The following pacing guide outlines instruction across approximately 18 weeks (one semester). Timelines are flexible based on student needs and campus calendar adjustments.

Unit	Topics Covered	TEKS Strand(s)	Suggested Weeks
Unit 1: Introduction & Career Exploration	Course overview; career cluster introduction; professional standards and employability skills; career planning and post-secondary pathways	Strand 1	Weeks 1–2
Unit 2: History & Foundations of Criminal Justice	History of law enforcement; U.S. criminal justice system overview; constitutional foundations; rights and civil liberties; terminology and vocabulary	Strand 2	Weeks 3–4
Unit 3: Law Enforcement	Federal, state, and local agencies;	Strand 3	Weeks 5–7

Unit	Topics Covered	TEKS Strand(s)	Suggested Weeks
	community policing; criminal procedures; elements of criminal law; arrest and due process		
Unit 4: Courts & the Judicial System	Court structure; courtroom participants; criminal trial stages; civil vs. criminal law; landmark cases	Strand 4	Weeks 8–10
Unit 5: Corrections	Correctional philosophy; types of facilities; inmate rights; roles of correctional officers; community corrections; recidivism	Strand 5	Weeks 11–12
Unit 6: Private Security & Protective Services	Public vs. private security; career pathways; legal authority; loss prevention; homeland security	Strand 6	Weeks 13–14
Unit 7: Fire & Emergency Management Services	Fire departments; fire behavior and prevention; EMS roles; emergency management phases; FEMA and Incident Command System (ICS)	Strand 7	Weeks 15–16
Unit 8: Ethics, Leadership & Capstone	Professional ethics; ethical decision-making; leadership in public safety; career portfolio; final project/presentation	Strand 8	Weeks 17–18

Grading Policy

Grading in this course follows the Lake Dallas ISD Secondary Grading Guidelines (2026–2027) for on-level courses. All grades are recorded and reported in alignment with LDISD policy as outlined below.

Grading Breakdown

Category	Weight	Description
Daily Grades (<i>Classwork, Homework, Quizzes</i>)	50%	Includes classwork, homework, notebooks, quizzes, and other daily assignments. A minimum of nine (9) daily grades shall be recorded each nine-week grading period.
Major Grades (<i>Tests, Exams, Projects, Essays</i>)	50%	Includes unit tests, examinations, projects, essays, and alternative assessments. A minimum of three (3) major grades shall be recorded each nine-week grading period.

Grade Scale

Numeric Average	Letter Grade
90–100	A
80–89	B
70–79	C
69 and below	F

Late Work Policy

- Work submitted beyond the due date will result in a deduction of points from the assignment grade per campus late work guidelines.

Classroom Expectations & Procedures

PRIDE Expectations

All students in this course are expected to uphold the following PRIDE principles at all times:

Principle	Expectation
P — Prepared	Bring all materials daily; arrive on time and ready to learn
R — Respectful	Treat classmates, teacher, and guests with dignity and courtesy at all times
I — Involved	Actively participate in discussions, activities, and group work
D — Determined	Give your best effort on every assignment and assessment
E — Ethical	Demonstrate honesty, integrity, and accountability in all work

Required Materials

- 1-inch binder or folder with pockets
- Composition notebook
- Blue/black ink pens
- Yellow Highlighter
- Access to district-provided media device

Technology Policy

Unauthorized use of devices will result in disciplinary action per campus policy. Students are expected to use all technology ethically and responsibly.

Academic Integrity

Cheating, plagiarism, or dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Any student found in violation of the academic integrity policy will receive a zero on the assignment and may face additional consequences per campus guidelines. Students are encouraged to ask for help rather than compromise their integrity.

Course Goals & Student Learning Outcomes

This course is designed to build the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions needed to pursue a career in the Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security career cluster. By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe the structure and function of the U.S. criminal justice system
- Identify career pathways and educational requirements in law, public safety, corrections, and security
- Apply constitutional principles to law enforcement and corrections scenarios
- Analyze ethical dilemmas faced by public safety professionals and propose solutions
- Demonstrate professional communication and employability skills valued by the industry
- Distinguish among law enforcement, corrections, private security, fire service, and emergency management roles
- Develop a career plan or personal portfolio aligned with a chosen public safety pathway

A Note to Students

The careers you will explore in this course — law enforcement officers, firefighters, paramedics, correctional officers, and security professionals — represent some of the most important and impactful roles in our communities. This class is your first step toward understanding and potentially joining that community of service. Come prepared, stay engaged, and approach every topic with the professionalism that these careers demand.