Willis Independent School District

Student Handbook

2026-2027 School Year

If you have difficulty accessing this handbook because of a disability, please contact Willis ISD at 936-856-1200.

The Willis Independent School District as an equal opportunity educational provider and employer does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability in educational programs or activities that it operates or in employment matters. The District is required by Title VI and Title VII 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, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, as well as Board policy not to discriminate in such a manner. For information about Title IX rights or Section 504/ADA rights, contact the Title IX Coordinator or the Section 504/ADA coordinator at 612 N. Campbell St., Willis, TX 77378, phone: (936) 856-1200.

Willis Independent School District

612 N. Campbell St., Willis 77378; 936.856.1200

Willis High School

10005 Highway 75 North, Willis 77378; 936.856.1250

Brabham Middle School

10000 FM 830, Willis 77318; 936.890.2312

Lynn Lucas Middle School

1304 N. Campbell St., Willis 77378; 936.856.1274

Calfee Middle School

7373 Longmire Road, Conroe 77304; 936.856.1216

Cannan Elementary

7639 County Line Rd., Willis 77378; 936.890.8660

Castleschouldt Elementary

8150 M.P. Clark Road, Conroe, TX 77304; 936.701.5000

Hardy Elementary

701 Gerald St., Willis 77378; 936.856.1241

Lagway Elementary

11505 Pine Valley Dr., Conroe 77304; 936.228.7715

Meador Elementary

10020 FM 830, Willis 77318; 936.890.7550

Parmley Elementary

600 N. Campbell St., Willis 77378; 936.856.1231

Roark Early Education Center

103 Wildkat Dr., Willis 77378; 936.890.1400

Stubblefield Academy

207 Philpot St., Willis 77378; 936.856.1302

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Preface Parents and Students:

Welcome to the new school year!

Education is a team effort. Students, parents, teachers, and other staff members working together will make this a successful year.

The Willis ISD Student Handbook is a general reference guide that is divided into two 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.

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 Willis ISD Student Code of Conduct. To review the Code of Conduct, visit the district’s website at https://www.willisisd.org. 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 your campus Principal’s office.

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 https://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/911.

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:

Dr. Ivan Velasco

Executive Director of Elementary

ivalesco@willisisd.org

Mr. Noah Hollander

Executive Director of Secondary

nhollander@willisisd.org

612 N Campbell St., Willis, TX 77378

936-856-1200

Accessibility

If you have difficulty accessing this handbook because of a disability, please contact:

Willis ISD

612 N Campbell St., Willis, TX 77378

936-856-1200

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 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. The district's mental health liaison or designee will notify the student's parent within a reasonable amount of time after the liaison or designee learns that a student has displayed early warning signs and provide information about available counseling options.

The 89th Texas Legislature passed **Senate Bill 12**, which requires school districts to notify parents of staff services related to mental health and give **parents/guardians the opportunity to opt-out** before mental health-related services are provided to their child. In schools, **counselors may give mental health-related services** as defined by statute. These services fall under the responsibilities outlined in the **Texas Education Code**.

The following are services required by law; only a portion of which are at the discretion of parents.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR RESPONSIBILITIES REQUIRED BY LAW

Comprehensive School Counseling Programs (Texas Education Code §33.005)
A school counselor shall work with the school faculty and staff, students, parents, and the community to plan, implement, and evaluate a comprehensive school counseling program that conforms to the most recent edition of the *Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs* developed by the Texas Counseling Association. The school counselor shall design the program to include a guidance curriculum, a responsive services component, an individual planning system, and system support.

General Duties of School Counselors (Texas Education Code §33.006)
The primary responsibility of a school counselor is to help students fully develop their academic, career, personal, and social abilities. In addition to this, the school counselor shall:

- **participate** in planning, implementing, and evaluating a comprehensive developmental guidance program to serve all students;
- **consult** with a student's parent or guardian and make referrals as appropriate;
- **consult** with school staff, parents, and other community members to help increase the effectiveness of education and promote student success;
- **coordinate** people and resources in the school, home, and community;
- **interpret** standardized test results and other assessment data with the support of school staff to help a student make educational and career plans; and
- **deliver** classroom guidance activities or serve as a consultant to teachers conducting lessons based on the school's guidance curriculum.

Disclaimer:
Professional school counselors work with students who may have mental health issues, family issues, and experimented with drugs and alcohol, to name a few. However, professional school counselors in Texas do not provide long-term therapy. Instead, counselors work directly with students on problem-solving skills, self-regulation, good decision-making patterns, knowing what the student can control and what is beyond their control, etc. These strategies help students be more successful in school and can apply to all areas of their lives.

Mental health-related services that a parent/guardian *may opt-out of* by completing this form:
Psychological or psychiatric examination, testing, or treatment utilizing a method designed to elicit an attitude, habit, trait, opinion, belief, feeling, or mental disorder — or a condition thought to lead to a mental disorder — by any planned means, through the systematic use of a method or technique designed to affect the behavioral, emotional, or attitudinal characteristics of an individual or group. Methods that would be considered include surveys, check-ins, screening, and assessment embedded in academic lessons.

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN CONSENT REQUIREMENT
Notification of your option to opt-out is required annually and may be revoked or reinstated at any time with written notice signed by the parent/guardian. Consent is assumed unless the form linked below is submitted to your child's counselor denying consent for your child to receive mental health-related services provided by a school counselor during the 2026–2027 school year. Any change is effective immediately upon receipt. Please work with your child's school counselor if you wish to adjust your decision as it relates to mental health-related services.

Parental Consent for Mental Health-Related Services

PREVENTION STRATEGIES

District Policy Implementation:

a. A district level Director of Guidance and Counseling (**suicide prevention coordinator)** shall be designated by the Superintendent. This may be an existing staff person. The district Director of Guidance and Counseling will be responsible for planning and coordinating the implementation of this policy for the school district.
b. Each school principal shall designate the school Counselor(s) to act as a point of contact in each school for issues relating to suicide prevention and policy implementation. All staff members shall report students they believe to be at elevated risk for suicide to the school Counselor, who will in turn, notify the campus principal immediately.

Faculty and Staff Professional Development:

- **NEW FACULTY AND STAFF:** All new faculty and staff will receive evidence-based training in the recognition of early mental health needs, trauma-informed practices, suicide intervention, and local campus and district response as a component of new employee orientation. All new faculty and staff will also receive evidence-based training on the identification, recognition, and reporting of child abuse, including sexual abuse and the prevention of bullying.

- **RETURNING FACULTY AND STAFF:** All returning faculty and staff (including substitute teachers and volunteers) will receive annual professional development on risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referrals, post intervention, and resources regarding youth suicide prevention. The professional development will include additional information regarding groups of students at elevated risk for suicide, and how to identify signs on early mental health problems. All returning faculty and staff will also receive annual professional development at the beginning of the school year on the identification, recognition and reporting of child abuse, including child sexual abuse, and the prevention of bullying. In addition, faculty and staff will be provided professional development during available in-service training days in mental health and early substance abuse intervention.

Early Mental Health Recognition and Awareness:

- **STUDENT AWARENESS:** All students in grades K-12 will receive age-appropriate mental health instruction to develop resiliency skills, to identify and respond to bullying as a bystander, and (secondary campuses) to identify suicide risk in peers and refer to an appropriate adult.
- **R U OK? CAMPAIGN:** All campuses will be provided information for dissemination on the R U OK? Campaign, designed to increase students' reports to responsible adults when a friend reports needing help or suicidal ideation.

- **R U OK? TRAINING FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS:** Students in grades K-12 will be provided age appropriate R U OK? Presentations at least once annually, this training will be offered during school hours and parents will be notified ahead of time. Parents will be offered the identical training at least once annually. Parents will also be offered parent education on substance abuse prevention, healthy relationships and mental health identification and assistance.

Access to Mental Health Intervention and Supports:

- **EMPLOYMENT OF A FULL TIME MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL:** The district employs a full-time mental health professional for assessment and crisis intervention during the school day.
- **ACTIVE REFERRAL PROCESSES:** All campuses will utilize a clear and active referral process to ensure that students who are identified as at-risk have access to mental health services. Upon request or by identified need, students will be referred to local community providers and facilities that employ highly trained mental health providers in suicide assessments and crisis intervention.

CLEARLY ARTICULATED PROTOCOL FOR ASSESSMENTS AND CRISES:

Crisis Intervention processes are clearly articulated and detailed. All employees will be provided specific steps for assisting those students who experience a mental health crisis and will be trained on this protocol annually.

ASSESSMENT AND REFERRAL

Referral:

- Teachers, administrators, nurses, students or others will notify the counselor of any student who is exhibiting suicide-related clues or threatening suicide or self-harm.
- If the counselor is not available, the student's administrator will be notified.
- The student is to remain under adult supervision at all times.
- A counselor or administrator will immediately consult with the student and inform the student about the limits of confidentiality.
    - That harm to self, harm to others, or being harmed by others will lead to help by informing parents and/or helping agencies.
    - Counselor or Administrator will complete the suicide intervention protocol forms.

Implement Appropriate Response Plan:

When a student is at risk of suicide, the counselor will implement the following plan:

1. Student is to remain under adult supervision at all times until released to parents/guardians, law enforcement, Tri-County or CPS
2. Counselor/administrator will complete the Suicide Conversation Guide through a discussion with the student.
3. Contact the student's parents/guardian by phone to report to school (student will leave with parent or remain under constant adult supervision if parents/guardians are not available)
4. Information reviewed in the parent conference:
    a. Suicide Information Conversation Guide & Student Suicide Outcry Notification (parents will be provided a copy).
    b. The risks and dangers associated with student's conduct.
    c. A list of appropriate medical and/or mental health providers for evaluation and treatment.
    d. Discuss safety proofing home and all environments that student frequents to secure/remove all lethal means of suicide.
    e. Consent for Disclosure of Confidential to bring upon return to school during the Re-entry meeting. This will allow Willis ISD to be adequately prepared to address and support the continued well-being of the student.
    f. Willis ISD recommends that your child be taken to the appropriate medical and/or mental health providers for evaluation and treatment.
    g. Willis ISD will provide community referrals to help support finding resources in our community that match the family's needs.
        - Any referral information provided to the parent by Willis ISD that identifies medical, mental health, or related agency providers is simply information to consider. The parent is not bound to use such providers in the evaluation and treatment of their child and may select other providers of their own choosing.

Unless otherwise required by law, Willis ISD is not responsible for any medical treatment or evaluation expenses whether the parent uses the referred providers or uses others of their own choosing.

h. Counselor/administrator will follow up with the parent to schedule either the re-entry meeting or the follow-up meeting.
i. The student's school counselor will provide a minimum of 3 follow-up counseling sessions after the student has returned to school.

Follow-up Procedures:

For students returning to school after a risk for suicide, risk for behaviors/self-harming, or risk for illegal or other substance abuse a parent conference will be held.

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

The mental health liaison can be reached at:

Ms. Kelly Locke

Director of Guidance and Counseling

612 N Campbell St., Willis, TX 77378

klocke@willisisd.org 936-856-1200

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

For further information, see **Mental Health Support** on page 83.

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. 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.

Opting Out of Advanced Mathematics in Grades 6-8

The district will automatically enroll a student in grade 6 in an advanced mathematics course if the student performed in the top 40 percent on the grade 5 mathematics STAAR or a local measure that demonstrates proficiency in the student's grade 5 mathematics course work.

Enrollment in an advanced mathematics course in grade 6 will enable students to enroll in Algebra I in grade 8 and advanced mathematics in grades 9-12.

The student's parent may opt the student out of automatic enrollment in an advanced mathematics course.

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 create a social networking page for his or her class to relay information regarding class work, homework, and tests. A parent is welcome to access such a page.

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 and the employee is required to send a copy of the text message to the employee's district email address.

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 school wide 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.

As allowed by state law, the district has identified two directory information lists—one for school-sponsored purposes and a second for all other requests. For district publications and announcements, the district has designated the following as directory information: student name, grade level, address, telephone listing, photograph, date and place of birth, honors and
awards received, dates of attendance, most recent educational institution attended, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and weight and height of members of athletic teams. If a parent does not object to the use of his or her child’s information for these school-sponsored purposes, the school will not ask permission each time the district wants to use the information for these purposes.

For all other purposes, the district has identified the following as directory information: student name, address, honors and awards received, and grade level. If a parent does not object to the use of the student’s information for these purposes, the school **must** release this information when requested by an outside entity or individual.

Note: Review **Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records** on page 17

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.

[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 can 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, including a PPRA Complaint Form.

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

Human Sexuality Instruction

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

State law requires that the district provide written notice before each school year of the board's decision to provide human sexuality instruction.

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.

Per state law, here is a summary of the district's curriculum regarding human sexuality instruction:

Middle School Curriculum

The middle school curriculum with regard to human sexuality will include the following objectives**:**

- summarize the facts related to Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection and sexually transmitted diseases;
- analyze the importance of abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice of behavior in relationship to all sexual activity for unmarried persons of school age;;
- discuss abstinence from sexual activity as the only method that is 100% effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and the sexual transmission of HIV or acquired immune deficiency syndrome, and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity;
- analyze strategies for preventing bullying, harassment, dating violence, and sexual assault; and
- describe the seriousness of various forms of bullying such as harassment, acquaintance rape, and sexual abuse.

The content for this instruction is provided by the state-adopted textbook, Texas Health Skills for Middle School, Published by Goodheart-Willcox Company Inc.

High School Curriculum

The high school curriculum with regard to human sexuality will include the following objectives**:**

- discuss the legal implications regarding sexual activity as it relates to minor persons;
- explain the relationship between alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs and other substances used by adolescents and the role these substances play in unsafe situations such as Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)/Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) and unplanned pregnancies;
- analyze the relationship between the use of refusal skills and the avoidance of unsafe situations such as sexual abstinence;
- analyze the importance and benefits of abstinence as it relates to emotional health and the prevention of pregnancy and sexually-transmitted diseases;
- analyze the effectiveness and ineffectiveness of barrier protection and other contraceptive methods including the prevention of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), keeping in mind the effectiveness of remaining abstinent until marriage;
- analyze the importance of healthy strategies that prevent physical, sexual, and emotional abuse such as date rape;
- analyze the importance of abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice of behavior in relationship to all sexual activity for unmarried persons of school age;

- discuss abstinence from sexual activity as the only method that is 100% effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and the sexual transmission of HIV or acquired immune deficiency syndrome, and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity; and communicate the importance of practicing abstinence.

The content for this instruction is provided by the state-adopted textbook, Texas Health Skills for High School, Published by Goodheart-Willcox Company Inc.

A parent is entitled to review the curriculum materials. In addition, a parent may remove his or her child from any part of the human sexuality instruction without academic, disciplinary, or other penalties. Willis ISD has opted to not offer sexual education to students.

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 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.

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.

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

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** on page 100 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. Further, the student must 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 schools 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.]

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.

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** on page 11, 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 with the U.S. Department of Education concerning failures by the school to comply with FERPA requirements.

For more information about how to file a complaint, see https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/file-a-complaint.

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. [To prohibit this disclosure, see **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 8]

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 principal 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 and the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals, the district will either provide a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review the records.

You may contact the custodian of records for currently enrolled students or for students who have withdrawn or graduated at the campus principal's office (see the campus directories at the front of this Handbook)

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, as determined by the board of trustees, the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or inconsistent with the district's grading guidelines.

[See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 103, **Complaints and Concerns** on page 50, 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 on the district's website at https://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/911.
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 of 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.

Parental Role in Certain Classroom and School Assignments

Multiple-Birth Siblings

State law permits a parent of multiple-birth siblings (e.g., 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 principal for more information.

[See **Bullying** on page 37, 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 or a neighboring district should both students be high schoolers 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.

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** on page 57, **Course Credit** on page 56, and **Students in Foster Care** on page 112.]

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. When possible, for prompt dispute resolution.
[See **Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration** on page 57, **Course Credit** on page 56, and **Students who are Homeless** on page 114.]

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 Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS). The implementation of MTSS 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 parents 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:

Randi Gay

Director of Special Education

612 N. Campbell St., Willis, TX 77378

rgay@willisisd.org

936-856-1200

For questions regarding post-secondary transitions, including the transition from education to employment, for students receiving special education services, contact the district's transition and employment designee:

Randi Gay

Director of Special Education

612 N. Campbell St., Willis, TX 77378

rgay@willisisd.org

936-856-1200

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:

Mrs. Adriana Velasco

Coordinator of 504

612 N. Campbell St., Willis, TX 77378

936-856-1222

[See **A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504** on page 28.]

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

- Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process
- Partners Resource Network
- Special Education Information Center
- Texas Project First

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

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** on page 68 and **Special Programs** on page 110.]

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 support 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** on page 25 and policy FB 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** on page 68 and **Special Programs** on page 110.]

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 support 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** on page 25 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 principal.

Absences/Attendance

Regular school attendance is essential. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's education. The student and parent should avoid unnecessary absences.

Two important state laws—one dealing with compulsory attendance and the other with how attendance affects the award of a student's final grade or course credit—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 the state assessment for his or her grade level and/or applicable subject area.

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;
- 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, up to five days of absence will be excused to allow a student to visit a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian who is departing for, on leave from, or returning from certain deployments. [See **Children of Military Families** on pages 21 for more information.]

Secondary Grade Levels

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 this:

- Has been authorized by the board under policy FEA(LOCAL) and the student receives approval from the campus principal;
- 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.

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.

The truancy prevention facilitator for the district is:

Mr. Eric King

Director for Student Services 612 N

Campbell St., Willis, TX 77378

eking@willisisd.org

936-890-1462

For any questions about student absences, parents should contact the facilitator or any other campus administrator.

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)

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 at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days may receive credit or a final grade if he or she completes a plan, approved by the principal, which allows the student to fulfill the class's instructional requirements. If a student is involved in a criminal or juvenile court proceeding, the judge presiding over the case must also approve the plan before the student receives credit or a final grade.

If a student attends fewer than 75 percent of the class days or does not complete the principal-approved plan, then the attendance review 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.]

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 use the following guidelines:

- If makeup work is completed, absences listed under **Compulsory Attendance—Exemptions** on page 31 will be considered extenuating circumstances.
- A transfer or migrant student incurs absences only after he or she has enrolled in the district.
- Absences incurred due to the student's participation in board-approved extracurricular activities will be considered by the attendance committee as extenuating circumstances if the student makes up the work missed in each class.
- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student's absences
- The committee will consider whether the student or student's parent had any control over the absences.
- The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.
- The student or parent will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and discuss ways to earn or regain credit or a final grade.

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 campuses will take official attendance every day at:

Willis High School: 9:15 am, Stubblefield Alternate Campus: 10:15 am, Middle School: 10:15 am, All Elementary Campuses: 10:00 am

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)

Parent Notes & Illness-Related Absences

When a student returns to school after being absent, a parent or guardian must provide a written note explaining the reason for the absence. This note must be signed by the parent. Notes signed only by the student will not be accepted unless the student is 18 years old or legally emancipated under Texas law. While a phone call from the parent may be accepted in some cases, the district may still request a written note for documentation purposes.

Each absence will be reviewed by the campus to determine whether it is excused or unexcused based on district guidelines and applicable state law. Please note that unless the absence meets the criteria outlined under **Texas' compulsory attendance exemptions**, the district is not required to excuse the absence—even if the parent provides an explanation.

State-Recognized Attendance Exemptions

WISD 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 law. The following are considered lawful, excused absences under Texas Education Code §25.087, when properly documented:

- **Religious holy days –** including travel time to and from the observance.
- **Required court appearances –** with documentation from the court.
- **Citizenship proceedings –** to attend a U.S. naturalization oath ceremony.
- **Health care appointments –** when a student attends school for part of the day and submits documentation from a licensed health professional. This includes mental and behavioral health care visits.
- **Military deployment-related absences –** for students with parents or guardians on active duty, up to five days per year to visit before deployment, during leave, or upon return.
- **College visits –** for high school juniors and seniors, up to two days per school year to visit accredited institutions of higher education.
- **Sounding "Taps" –** at a military honors funeral for students 21 and under.

- **Serving as an election clerk –** for students age 16 or older, with prior written permission from a parent and verification from the election authority.

- **Student-parent medical absences –** for students who are custodial parents, absences to attend their child's medical appointment are excused with proper documentation.

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

Within three days of returning to school, a student absent for more than three 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.

If a student develops a pattern of frequent absences, the principal or attendance committee may request a note from a licensed medical provider to verify that an illness or medical condition is causing the student to miss school.

In cases of serious or life-threatening illness or ongoing treatment that makes attending school infeasible, the parent must submit documentation from a physician licensed to practice in Texas. This documentation should include a diagnosis and the expected duration of absences.

Health-related absences may also include **telehealth appointments**. However, students who are physically present on campus are **not permitted** to participate in telehealth or virtual appointments during the school day unless they have prior approval from an appropriate administrator. District-issued technology (including Wi-Fi and internet) should not be used for telehealth services, as all activity on district devices and networks is monitored and not considered private.

Unexcused Absences and Truancy Procedures

An **unexcused absence** is any absence that does not meet the criteria outlined by state law or Willis ISD attendance guidelines. This includes absences with or without a parent note when the reason provided is not recognized as valid. Family vacations or trips are not considered excused absences. To ensure consistent communication and legal compliance, the following procedures will be followed.

After 3 Unexcused Absences: The school will send a letter to the parent/guardian listing the dates of the student's unexcused absences. This serves as an early notification and an opportunity to correct attendance issues before further action is taken.

After 8 Unexcused Absences: A meeting will be scheduled with the campus Assistant Principal to review the student's attendance record and create an attendance improvement plan. The parent/guardian will be asked to sign an **attendance contract**. A representative from the Court may also participate in the meeting to provide support and emphasize the importance of regular attendance.

After 10 Unexcused Absences: The Assistant Principal may complete and submit **truancy referral paperwork** to the appropriate court in accordance with Texas Education Code §25.0951. Legal consequences may apply at this stage, and parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to work with the school to avoid escalation.

Parents may submit up to **3 parent-written notes per semester** to excuse absences. Additional absences require **formal documentation** such as doctor's note, court documentation, funeral notice, or other official documentation.

[See policy FEC (LOCAL) for more information.]

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 is available at: https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/driver/forms/VOE.pdf.

Further information may be found on the Texas Department of Public Safety website: https://www.dps.texas.gov/section/driver-license. .

Accountability under State and Federal Law (All Grade Levels)

Willis 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 https://www.willisisd.org/domain/62. Hard copies of any reports are available upon request to the district's administration office.

Tardy Policy for Elementary

- **5 Tardies:**
  Parent/guardian will be asked to sign a **Tardy Contract** to improve punctuality.

- **8 Tardies:**
  Student must **make up missed time** before or after school (as scheduled by staff).

- **10 or More Tardies:**
  A **mandatory meeting** will be scheduled with the **Assistant Principal and Truancy Liaison** (Montgomery County Truancy Court representative).

TEA maintains additional accountability and accreditation information at TEA Performance Reporting Division.

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.

Contact the principal for information about this opportunity.

Awards and Honors (All Grade Levels)

See the campus supplement for information on campus specific awards.

Bullying (All Grade Levels)

The district strives to prevent bullying, in accordance with the district's policies, by promoting a positive school culture; building healthy relationships between students and staff; 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.

The district will integrate into instruction research-based content designed to reduce bullying that is appropriate for students' age groups.

Elementary campuses*:*

Students in elementary grades will participate in:

- Instruction designed so that students can recognize bullying behaviors and how to report them
- Age-appropriate discussions that encourage peers to intervene when they observe bullying occur
- Instruction that characterizes bullying as a behavior that results from the student's need to acquire more mature social or coping skills, not an unchangeable trait

Secondary campuses:

Students in secondary grades will participate in:

- Instruction on the brain's ability to change and grow so the student recognizes bullying behavior can come from a developmental need to acquire more social skills, can change when the brain matures and learns better ways of coping, and is not an unchangeable trait
- Discussions that portray bullying as undesirable behavior and a means for attaining or maintaining social status at school, and that discourage students from using bullying as a tool for social status
- Instruction designed so that students recognize the role that reporting bullying behaviors plays in promoting a safe school community

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 submitting the form on the website at https://report.anonymousalerts.com/willisisd/ .

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 parents, 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** on page 22.]

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** on page 22, **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 59, **Hazing** on page 79, 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) Programs (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

The district offers career and technical education programs in the following areas:

- Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources.
- Architecture & Construction.
- Arts, A/V Technology & Communications.
- Business, Marketing & Finance.
- Education & Training.
- Health Science.
- Hospitality & Tourism.
- Human Services.
- Information Technology.
- Law and Public Service.
- Manufacturing.
- Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics.
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics.

Admission to these programs is based on interest and aptitude, age appropriateness, and class space available.

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** on page 96 for the name and contact information for the Title IX coordinator and ADA/Section 504 coordinator.]

Celebrations (All Grade Levels)

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.

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** on page 88.]

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

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse, trafficking, and other maltreatment of children. Trafficking includes both sex and labor trafficking. See the district website for more information, www.willisisd.org .

Warning Signs of Sexual Abuse

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

- 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** on pages 59-61.]

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, although traffickers frequently make contact with victims online.

- 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 boyfriends or girlfriends.

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

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.

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.

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.

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
- KidsHealth, For Parents, Child Abuse
- Office of the Texas Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Team
- Human Trafficking of School-aged Children
- Child Sexual Abuse Facts & Resources
- National Center of Safe Supportive Learning Environments: Child Labor Trafficking

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

Class rank shall be determined by descending order of students' weighted grade point averages. 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 in the spring semester. Class ranking will be determined using grades available at the time of calculation at the end of the 6th week of the 4th nine week grading period of the senior year. The average of marking period 3 and marking period 4 grades shall be considered as the final semester grade for this purpose. A final graduation class rank shall be calculated at the end of the second semester.

Valedictorian and Salutatorian Selection

The valedictorian and salutatorian shall be the eligible students with the highest and second highest rank, respectively. To be eligible for such recognition, a student must**:**

- Have been continuously enrolled in the District high school for the two school years immediately preceding graduation;
- Have completed the Recommended Program, the Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program, or the foundation program with the distinguished level of achievement;
- Have completed at least one Tier 1 academic course during each of the last two years; and
- Be graduating after exactly eight semesters of enrollment in high school.

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

- Compare the most Tier 1 semester credits.
- Compare the highest weighted GPA based solely on Tier 1 semester credits.

If the tie is not broken after applying these methods for valedictorian, co-valedictorians shall be declared, and no salutatorian shall be recognized. If a tie exists for salutatorian, all students who tie shall be recognized.

Honor Graduate Qualifications

The District shall recognize as an honor graduate each student who has earned a cumulative weighted GPA of at least 4.0.
The District shall recognize at the graduation ceremony all students whose weighted GPAs comprise the top 15 percent of the students in the graduating class as follows:

- Summa Cum Laude: Top five percent
- Magna Cum Laude: 6–10 percent
- Cum Laude: 11–15 percent

Early Graduate Ranking

To be eligible to graduate in three years, the student shall complete all coursework and exit-level testing required of the ninth grade class in which he or she begins high school.

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.

A student's class ranking shall be determined within the graduating class of the school year in which the student completes all requirements for a diploma, regardless of the number of years the student is enrolled in high school. For ranking purposes, a school year begins on the first day of school and ends on the last day of summer school.

Early graduates shall meet the same eligibility standards for honors positions as all other students.

Transfer Grades
Students transferring into the District shall receive credit for all courses passed based upon the sending school's transcript. For a course to receive grade points other than those for general-level classes, the transferred course must be clearly designated as an above-level advanced course or a below-level remedial course on the student's transcript.

Students transferring credits into the District shall receive the numerical grade that was earned in courses at another school.

Letter grades shall be recorded as follows:

A = 95
B = 85
C = 75
F = 69
P = 75

4.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) (2022 Forward)

A 4.0 grade point average (GPA) shall be calculated using semester grades in all high school credit courses regardless of when the credit is earned. All grades entered on a student's transcript, including failing grades and repeated courses, shall be included in determining the student's GPA.

The grade point system used for calculating the GPA for students who are in grades 10, 11, and 12 shall be as follows**:**

NUMBER GRADE	GPA POINTS
100–90	4.0
89–80	3.0
79-75	2.0
74-70	1.0
< 70	0.0

The grade point system used for calculating the GPA for students who start 9th grade in 2022 - 2023 shall be as follows**:**

NUMBER GRADE	GPA POINTS
100–90	4.0
89–80	3.0
79-70	2.0
< 70	0.0

6.0 Weighted Grade Point Average (WGPA)

For purposes of local honor designations, the District shall calculate a weighted GPA and shall include in the calculation of class rank semester grades earned in high school credit courses taken in grades 9–12 and identified in the course catalog on the District's website. Students in the 9th grade during the 2022-2023 school year are subject to new GPA criteria. Please refer to EIC (Local) for additional information. Below is a summary of the weighted GPA (WGPA) updates. Additionally, please contact your school counselor with any questions regarding courses that count toward a student's GPA.

- Students who are classified as 11 and 12 grade beginning in fall of 2023 will continue with current grading guidelines:
  - All core classes (English, Social Studies, Math, Science and World Languages) count toward their weighted GPA. These classes are indicated in the 2021-2022 course catalog as weighted with the letter "Y" under the "Included in WGPA" column. Weighted GPA is used to determine class rank.
  - All classes count toward the 4.0 GPA. This is usually what a college or university requests for admission.
- Students who are classified as 9th grade beginning in the fall of 2022:
  - All classes count toward their weighted GPA. Weighted GPA is used to determine class rank. These classes are indicated in the 2022-2023 course catalog as weighted with the letter "Y" under the "Included in WGPA" column.
  - All classes count toward the 4.0 GPA. This is usually what a college or university requests for admission. The scale has been updated to eliminate "D" as a grade. The "C" range is from 79-70 and it counts as 2 quality points.
  - Students may choose 2 approved classes to exempt from their weighted GPA beginning their 11th grade year. See your student's counselor for more information.

The District shall categorize and weight eligible courses as Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 in accordance with provisions below**:**

- Eligible Advanced Placement (AP), Honors, gifted/talented (G/T), and dual credit courses designated in the course catalog on the District's website shall be categorized and weighted as Tier 1 courses.
- Eligible general-level courses shall be designated in the course catalog on the District's website as Tier 2 courses.
- Eligible courses with modified content or on the modified grading scale shall be designated in the course catalog on the District's website as Tier 3 courses.

The District shall convert grades earned in eligible courses to grade points and shall calculate a weighted GPA for Cohorts 2027, 2028, and 2029 in accordance with the following chart**:**

Number Grade	Tier 1 Classes	Tier 2 Classes	Tier 3 Classes
100	6.0	5.0	4.0
99	5.9	4.9	4.0
98	5.8	4.8	4.0
97	5.7	4.7	4.0
96	5.6	4.6	4.0
95	5.5	4.5	4.0
94	5.4	4.4	4.0
93	5.3	4.3	4.0
92	5.2	4.2	4.0
91	5.1	4.1	4.0
90	5.0	4.0	4.0
89	4.9	3.9	3.0
88	4.8	3.8	3.0
87	4.7	3.7	3.0
86	4.6	3.6	3.0
85	4.5	3.5	3.0
84	4.4	3.4	3.0
83	4.3	3.3	3.0
82	4.2	3.2	3.0
81	4.1	3.1	3.0
80	4.0	3.0	3.0
79	3.9	2.9	2.0
78	3.8	2.8	2.0
77	3.7	2.7	2.0
76	3.6	2.6	2.0
75	3.5	2.5	2.0
74	3.4	2.4	2.0
73	3.3	2.3	2.0
72	3.2	2.2	2.0
71	3.1	2.1	2.0
70	3.0	2.0	2.0
<70	0	0	0

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 occasionally 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** on page 104 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 (a student must graduate with at least one endorsement and must have taken Algebra II as one of the four required math courses); 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.

Should a college or university adopt 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. During the summer and fall 2022 terms and spring 2023 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, the curriculum requirements for financial aid, and the benefits of completing the requirements for automatic admission and financial aid. 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** on page 43 for information specifically related to how the district calculates a student's rank in class, and requirements for **Graduation** on page 73 for information associated with the foundation graduation program.]

[See **Students in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care)** on page 22 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;
- Enrollment in AP or dual credit courses through the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN);

- Enrollment in courses taught in conjunction and in partnership with Lone Star College, which may be offered on or off campus;
- Enrollment in courses taught at other colleges or universities; and
- Certain Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses.

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—Automated (All Grade Levels)

Emergency

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** on page 103 for information regarding contact with parents during an emergency situation.]

Non-emergency

Your child's school will request that you provide contact information for the school to send information specific to your child, your child's school, or the district. If you provide a phone number for this purpose, please notify the school's administration office immediately if your number changes.

The district or school may generate automated or pre-recorded messages, text messages, or real-time phone or email communications that are closely related to the school's mission, so prompt notification of any change in contact information will be crucial.

Standard messaging rates of your wireless phone carrier may apply.

If you have specific requests or needs related to how the district contacts you, please contact your child's principal. [See **Safety** on page 103 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 FNG (LOCAL). This policy can be viewed in the district's policy manual, available online at https://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/911.

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 designee.

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 district's website.

Campus Behavior Coordinators			
Campus	Name	Phone	
Brabham MS	Julie Roth	936.890.2653	jroth@willisisd.org
Cannan ES	Jennifer Fishback	936.890.7301	jfishback@willisisd.org
Calfee MS	Lee Hooker	936-701-5300	lhooker@willisisd.org
Castleschouldt ES	Micah Surface	936-701-5000	msurface@willisisd.org
Hardy ES	James Wilcox	936.856.1304	jwilcox@willisisd.org
Lagway ES	Alicia Clark	936.228.7719	aclark@willisisd.org
Lucas MS	Ashley Soose	936.856.1278	asoose@willisisd.org
Meador ES	Cooper Beltran	936.890.7550	cbeltran@willisisd.org
Parmley ES	Brooke Stanfield	936.856.1221	bstanfield@willisisd.org
Roark EEC	Emily Loney	936.890.1400	eloney@willisisd.org
Stubblefield Acad.	Tanya Maddin	936.856.1288	tmaddin@willisisd.org
Turner ES	Lindsey Graham	936.856.1294	lgraham@willisisd.org
Willis HS	Joseph Vilarreal	936.856.1262	Jvilarreal @willisd.org

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.

Academic Counseling

Elementary and Middle/Junior High 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.

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 contact the campus counselor office. 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** on page 83, and **Child Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children** on page 41 and **Dating Violence** on page 59.]

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.

Beginning with students enrolled in 9th grade (Class of 2029), students taking a two-semester (one-credit) course may receive credit for both semesters under the following conditions:

- If a student fails the first semester but passes the second semester, credit for both semesters will be awarded if the average of the two semesters is at least 70.

- If a student passes the first semester but fails the second semester, the student must repeat the second semester of the course.

Other Credit Opportunities

Campus Permission

- Students who wish to take any course outside of the traditional schedule should complete the appropriate online application prior to enrolling in the course. This allows the school the opportunity to evaluate the program to determine what, if any, credit can be awarded. For graduating seniors, all courses required for graduation taken outside the school day must be completed on or before the first day of the student's final semester.
- The distance learning opportunities that the district makes available to district students are Lone Star College, Texas Tech University Independent High School District, Educere, and University of Texas High School.
- If the student does not receive prior approval, the district may not be able to recognize and apply the course or subject toward graduation requirements or subject mastery.

Correspondence/Virtual/Online Courses

- Correspondence courses are courses taken through the mail or online for high school credit. Willis High School permits high school students to take correspondence or state-approved online courses for non-EOC tested subjects, with the exception of US History for early graduates only. Correspondence courses must be taken through state-accredited institutions of higher education, and students must have this agreement on file prior to enrollment. For graduating students, all

correspondence or online coursework, including any required exams, must be completed on or before the first day of the student's final semester.
    - NCAA eligibility may be affected.
        - Students should be aware that some virtual or online courses may not count towards NCAA eligibility.
    - Students should be aware that the UIL "No pass/No play" rules are applicable to classes taken outside of the regular day for high school purposes. Failing a correspondence course may result in ineligibility.
- Students interested in taking online courses must see their counselor for information. It is important for students to know that online courses are rigorous, and are 100% TEKS aligned.
- Correspondence, Virtual, and Online learning course grades are entered on the student's transcript and counted in the GPA calculation as level grade points unless the course is approved as an Advanced Placement or Dual Credit course.
- It is recommended students go to the link, https://lonestar.smartermeasure.com/, and take the Smarter Measure Assessment to determine their potential for success with online courses. A student should be serious when taking an online course, and should exhibit some of the following attributes and skills in order to be successful when taking an online course: self-starter, effective time manager, proficient in the use of technology, self-disciplined, and keyboarding skills.

Texas Virtual School Network

- 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 on page 54.]
- 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 campus principal, a student will not be allowed to enroll in a TXVSN course if the school offers the same or a similar course.
- A copy of policy EHDE addressing distance learning will be distributed to parents of middle and high school students at least once each year. If you do not receive a copy or have questions about this policy, please contact the campus principal.

Credit by Examination—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."

Credit by Examination—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, bepermitted 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."

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

Willis ISD allows students in grades K-12 to accelerate a grade level or ear course credit without prior instruction by passing a Credit by Exam (CBE) with a score of 80% or higher. Students may not attempt the exam for the same subject or grade more than two times.

How the Acceleration Process Works

- Grades K-5 (Whole Grade Accelaration) : A studnet must achieve a minimum of 80% on all four core subject exams (Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies) in order to skip an entrie grade level.
- Grades 6-12 (Course Credit) : Students can earn credit to specifice courses like (Math, English, or Science) if they have not taken the class before by passing the specific exam with an 80 % or above.
- Testing Limits: State guidelines require that a student may not attempt the assessment for a given course or subject-level more than two times.

Next Steps to Apply

To begin the testing process, you must submit a request and obtain approval from the district.

If you'd like, you can contact the Willis ISD Assessment & Accountability Office directly to get the CBE testing schedule and application deadlines.

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 and online at https://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/911. [See policy FFH for more information.]

Dating Violence

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.

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** on page 37]

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** on page 59.]

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, etc.

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 or designee before selling, posting, circulating, or distributing more than ten (10) 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 non-school material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization. Approval will be granted or denied within two school days.

The campus principal shall designate the location for approved non-school materials to be placed for voluntary viewing or collection by students. [See policy FNAA for more information.] Change due to Policy Review Adjustment

A student may appeal a decision in accordance with policy FNG (LOCAL). Any student who sells, posts, circulates, or distributes non-school 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. Look at policy change - Policy Review Adjustment

To be considered for distribution, any non-school 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.]

The campus principal shall designate a location for approved non-school materials to be placed for voluntary viewing or collection.

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 noncurricular-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 non-school 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 is established to teach grooming and hygiene, prevent disruption, and minimize safety hazards. Students and parents may determine a student's personal dress and grooming standards, provided that they comply with the following**:**

Clothing

1. All clothing must be neat, clean, modest, and appropriately sized (neither too tight nor oversized) for the student.
2. Pants, trousers, or shorts will be worn at or above the waist and fastened appropriately for all students.
3. Students will not dress alike or wear color combinations that denote group affiliation, except for school-approved organizations or activities.
4. Dusters and trench coats are prohibited.
5. Clothing or accessories may not state, imply, or depict hate speech or imagery targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or any other protected classification.
6. No article of clothing will refer to or advertise tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, narcotics, or any other prohibited substance.
7. No undergarments of any kind for any student should be visible at any time.
8. A student's midriff should not be visible during normal movement.
9. Students' shorts, pants, skirts, or dresses must be worn at the waist and extend to at least mid-thigh. Sagging or baggy pants that fall below the waist are prohibited. (Administrators have the authority to decide what is acceptable in length.)
10. Students may not wear a military uniform to school unless it is in conjunction with a school-approved activity.
11. It is never appropriate for students to wear house slippers, pajamas, or sleepwear to school.
12. Revealing clothing may not be worn to school by any student. This includes, but is not limited to, clothing that is strapless, transparent, low-cut, backless, off-the-shoulder, halter-style, or designed with spaghetti straps, holes, cutouts, or openings that expose a student's back, stomach, chest, or

undergarments.

Footwear

1. Proper footwear must be worn at all times for health and safety reasons.
2. Shoes with rollers or skates within them are prohibited.
3. Cleated shoes are not permitted.
4. House shoes, slippers, shower shoes, slides, and similar footwear not designed for regular outdoor use are prohibited.

Jewelry

1. To help prevent loss or theft, students should not wear expensive jewelry. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.
2. Jewelry worn in piercings should be limited to small studs, posts, or rings that are not excessively distracting.

Hair

1. Gang-related designs (letters, numerals, etc.) are not to be shaved into the hair or eyebrows.
2. Extreme hairstyles or distracting hair colors will be addressed by the administration.
3. Sharp-pointed combs, rakes, or picks must not be worn in the hair.

Accessories

1. No head coverings, such as hats, caps, doo-rags, bandanas, or hoods from hoodies, are to be worn over the head in any school building at any time.
2. Sunglasses will not be worn inside any school building except under a doctor's orders.
3. Wallet chains, long key chains, or any other kinds of heavy chains are prohibited.
4. Badges, decals, patches, jewelry, or other similar items are not to be worn if they advocate prohibited substances or actions, vulgar or inappropriate language, violence, or obscenities of any kind.
5. Tattoos that are deemed distracting or gang-related by an administrator must be covered at all times. (Extracurricular sponsors or coaches may require all tattoos to be covered during school-related events.)
6. Students should not bring blankets or pillows.

****<u>Note</u>****

Any part of the dress code that is inappropriate or distracting, as deemed by the campus administrator, will be prohibited.

Enforcement

- Strict enforcement of the Willis ISD Dress code is the responsibility of all campus administrators and staff members, as well as students and their parents.
- It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their child complies daily with the Willis ISD Dress Code.
- A dress code compliance check shall be conducted at the beginning of each school day on all Willis ISD school campuses. All campus administrators and campus staff members will monitor dress code compliance throughout each school day.

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 Communication Devices, Including Cell Phones, and Other Electronic Devices

In accordance with state law, the district prohibits the use of a personal communication device (such as cell phones, tablets, airpods, earbuds, headphones, and smartwatches) while on school property during the school day. For more information about permitted use in certain circumstances and disciplinary measures that apply to this prohibition, see the Student Code of Conduct and policy FNCE(LOCAL).

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.

Personal communication devices are prohibited during the school day, including instructional time, breakfast, lunch, and passing periods. Personal communication devices shall be stored in backpacks and turned off.

If a student uses a personal communication device without authorization during the school day, the device will be confiscated, and the following steps will be taken:

1st offense: The confiscated device will be collected and turned into the principal's office. The principal or principal's designee will contact home. The parent will pick up the device.

2nd offense: The confiscated device will be collected and turned into the principal's office. An administrator will contact the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian will pick up the device. The student will serve lunch or before/after school detention.

3rd offense: The confiscated device will be collected and turned into the principal's office. An administrator will contact the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian will pick up the device. The student will serve 1 day of in-school suspension.

A parent/guardian must retrieve the confiscated device from the campus.

Confiscated communication 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 communications device may be searched by authorized personnel. [See Searches and Investigations and policy FNF for more information.]

The district is not responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen communications 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 or principal's designee will contact parents to pick up the items.

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal telecommunications device may be searched by authorized personnel. [See Searches on page 108 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.

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, 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** on page 73 and **Standardized Testing** on page 110.]

English Learners (All Grade Levels)

A student who is an 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** on page 110, may be administered to an 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 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.

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.

Parental Consent

State law requires the district to obtain written parental consent before a student may participate in a student club that is authorized or sponsored by the district. A parent may obtain consent forms for student clubs by obtaining the form on the WISD website or from a campus main office.

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** on page 115.]

Eligibility for many of these activities is governed by state law and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL), a statewide association overseeing inter district 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 at UIL Parent Information Manual. 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.

[See UIL Texas for additional information on all UIL-governed activities.]

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.

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

However, if a student receives a grade between 60-69 at the end of a grading period in an Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) course, 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 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 ten absences not related to post-district competition, a maximum of five absences for post-district competition prior to state, and a maximum of two 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. See the campus supplement for a listing of organizations found on that campus.

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, etc.
- 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** on page 116.]
- A fee not to exceed $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 requirement. 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.]

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** on page 59.]

Grade-Level Classification (Grades 9–12 Only)

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

Credits Earned	Classification
6	Grade 10 (Sophomore)
13	Grade 11 (Junior)
20	Grade 12 (Senior)

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 (i.e., letter grades, numerical averages, checklist of required skills, etc.);
- 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.
- Grading consequences for academic dishonesty, including cheating or copying the work of another student, plagiarism (including the unauthorized use of artificial intelligence (AI) such as ChatGPT), and unauthorized communication between students during an examination

[See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 103 for additional information on grading guidelines and **Appendix V: WISD 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).
- Students must receive hands-on Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) training.
- Students must receive Peace Officer Interaction Training.

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 two or fewer 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** on page 110.]

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, as described on page 76.
State law prohibits a student from graduating solely under the foundation graduation program without an endorsement unless, after the student's sophomore year, the student and student's parents are advised of the specific benefits of graduating with an endorsement and 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

The foundation graduation program requires completion of the following credits:

Course Area	Number of Credits: Foundation Graduation Program	Number of Credits: Foundation Graduation Program with an Endorsement
English/Language Arts	4	4
Mathematics	3	4
Science	3	4
Social Studies, including Economics	3	3
Physical Education	1	1
Languages other than English	2	2
Fine Arts	1	1
Locally required courses	1	1
Electives	4	6
Total	**22 credits***	**26 credits**

*Graduating on a 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.
- **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 two 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.

Available Endorsements

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

FAFSA or TASFA

Before graduating from high school, each student must complete and submit a free application for federal student aid (FAFSA) or a Texas application for state financial aid (TASFA).

The Willis High School College and Career Center sends out communication throughout the entire year with links to FAFSA/TAFSA virtual information sessions sponsored by Lone Star College but available for any student/family. The College and Career Center is also available each day during lunch or by appointment for students to come in and get help with completing their FAFSA/TAFSA/understanding the financial aid report from the college. Willis High School seniors are also taken through the College/Career website in their English classes and show them how to access the FAFSA resources on the website.

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

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 parents. Before the end of grade 9, a student and his or her parents 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.

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

Graduation activities will include:

- Graduation Practice
- Graduation Ceremony

Students who are eligible to graduate but are assigned to a disciplinary alternative education program at the end of the school year will be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony and related graduation activities.

The following students and student groups shall be recognized at graduation ceremonies:

- Texas Scholars and National Honor Society members
- Class and Student Body Officers
- Valedictorian and Salutatorian

Graduation Speakers

Certain graduating students will be given an opportunity to speak at graduation ceremonies.

A student must meet local eligibility criteria, which may include requirements related to student conduct, to have a speaking role. Students eligible for speaking roles will be notified by the principal and given an opportunity to volunteer.

[See the Student Code of Conduct and policy FNA (LOCAL) for more information.] [For student speakers at other school events, see **Student Speakers** on page 78.]

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** on page 71.]

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

Harassment

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 60.]

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** on page 37 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. Students with vomiting must stay out of school until they are vomit free for 24 hours without medications to reduce vomiting.

A parent should contact the school nurse if a student has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or may have 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. Willis ISD policy is for parents to make every effort to have students picked up within 1 hour of notification.

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.

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. This form may be obtained online at Affidavit Request for Exemption from Immunization or by writing the DSHS Immunization Branch (MC 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. This form expires every 2 years and must be renewed and given to the school nurse prior to expiration.

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.

As noted at **Bacterial Meningitis** on page 86, entering college students must also, with limited exception, furnish evidence of having received a bacterial meningitis vaccination within the five years prior to enrolling in and attending classes at an institution of higher education. A student wanting to enroll in a dual credit course taken off campus may be subject to this or other vaccination requirements.

[See the DSHS website: Texas School & Child Care Facility Immunization Requirements 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.

[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 accordance with legal requirements.
- Nonprescription medication, upon a parent's written request and a note from a medical professional, when properly labeled and in the original container.
- Herbal substances or dietary supplements provided by the parent and only if required by the individualized education program 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(s) 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** on page 88.

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.

Willis ISD has implemented the following age and grade appropriate activities and programs intended to focus on prevention and response to address these mental health, behavioral health, and substance abuse concerns:

Small Group Lessons taught by counselors

- Counselors at all grade levels provide small group counseling to students throughout the year.
- Session topics are based on student needs and follow the 5 Casel competencies - Self Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills and Responsible Decision Making.

Purpose Full People (Pre-K-5 Toolkit):

- Designed to support elementary schools work being done around Character Education and Emotional Intelligence
- PurposeFull People provides a variety of practical and easy-to-use tools that focus on developing character and emotional intelligence skills in students, staff, and families.

Character Strong (6-12):

- The program focuses on fostering the Whole Child with vertically-aligned lessons that teach SEL Emotional Intelligence and character, side-by-side.
- Emotional Intelligence Competencies: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, Responsible Decision-Making
- Character Development: Patience, Kindness, Honesty, Respect, Selflessness, Forgiveness, Commitment, Humility

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 district's mental health liaison 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** on page 3 and **Consent to Provide a Mental Health Care Service** on page 3 for the district's procedures for recommending a mental health intervention and the mental health liaison's contact information;
- **Counseling** on page 53 for the district's comprehensive school counseling program;
- **Physical and Mental Health Resources** on page 88 for campus and community mental and physical health resources; and
- **Policies and Procedures that Promote Student Physical and Mental Health** on page 79 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.

Junior High/Middle School

The district will ensure that students in middle or junior high school will engage in at least 225 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity within each two-week period for at least four semesters, in accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA.

For additional information on the district's junior high and 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 their campus principal.

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 in the first year of middle school competition and the first and third years of high school competition. During the alternate years, the student must complete a medical appraisal form, and the results of this appraisal may prompt the district to require a physical examination.
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 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 who have been residing for more than 30 days outside the United States within the previous 12 months shall provide proof of a tuberculosis test with positive/negative results indicated. [See policy FFAA for more information.] See Local Policy Adjustments

Special Health Concerns (All Grade Levels)

Please see the district's website at https://www.willisisd.org/Page/8625 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** on page 81.]

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 inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact with the particular food. It is important to disclose the food to which the student is allergic as well as the nature of the allergic reaction. Please contact the school nurse 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 website at Allergies and Anaphylaxis.

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 *https://www.willisisd.org/Page/8969*.

[See **Celebrations** on page 41 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** on page 28 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 campus (see the School Directory in the front of this volume) or the following community resources:

- The local public health authority, Montgomery County Public Health District, which may be contacted at 1300 South Loop 336 West Suite 200, Conroe, TX 77304 Phone 936.523.5020.
- The local mental health authority, Tri-County Behavioral Healthcare, which may be contacted at 233 Sgt. Ed Holcomb Blvd S, Conroe, TX 77304 Main Phone 936.521.6100 Crisis Phone 800.659.6994

Policies and Procedures that Promote Student Physical and Mental Health (All Grade Levels)

The district has adopted board policies that promote student physical and mental health. (LOCAL) policies on the topics below can be found in the district's policy manual, available at https://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/911.

- 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.

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:

John Vaglienty, Chief Academic Officer

612 N. Campbell St., Willis TX 77378

jvaglienty@willisisd.org

936-856-1200

School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) (All Grade Levels)

During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) held four meetings. Additional information regarding the district's SHAC is available from the District Nurse

Human Sexuality Instruction (All Grade Levels)

Willis ISD does not offer human sexuality instruction as part of its instructional program.

Under Texas law, a school district's board of trustees may choose to provide instruction related to human sexuality in consultation with the local School Health Advisory Council. However, a specific course in human sexuality is not required as part of the state curriculum.

The State Board of Education has adopted health education standards within the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills that include age-appropriate instruction related to sexual and reproductive health in certain grade levels. While school districts must provide health instruction aligned with the required health education TEKS, Willis ISD does not provide separate human sexuality instruction.

If the district were to consider offering human sexuality instruction in the future, Willis ISD would follow all applicable legal requirements, including consultation with the School Health Advisory Council and required parent notice and consent procedures.

[See 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:

Hailey Dobraski

District Nurse
40 F.M. 830 Willis TX 77378

hdobraski@willisisd.org 936- 890-7484

Homework (All Grade Levels)

The purpose of homework is: (1) to extend and reinforce student learning beyond the classroom; (2) to foster the use of independent research skills and creative thinking; (3) to develop personal responsibility and initiative.

Length of homework assignments is aligned throughout the district to ensure equity for all learners. The following is a "rule of thumb" guide for daily homework assignments:

Pre-Kindergarten	No homework
Kindergarten - 2nd grade	15 to 30 minutes
3rd & 4th grade	45 to 60
minutes	
5th grade	75 minutes per night (maximum)
6th - 12th grade	According to subject area

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. Absent 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

Every WISD campus is a closed campus and no students are allowed to leave during lunch without permission from the principal.

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.

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)

A teacher may assign makeup work to a student who misses class based on instructional objectives and the needs of the student in mastering the essential knowledge and skills or meeting subject or course requirements.

The student will be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work within the time specified by the teacher. A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted by the teacher will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.

The student is encouraged to speak with his or her teacher if the student knows of an absence ahead of time so that the teacher and student may plan any makeup work. Please remember the importance of student attendance at school and that, even though absences may be excused or unexcused, all absences account for the 90 percent threshold regarding the state laws surrounding “attendance for credit or final grade.” [See **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade** on page 33.]

A student involved in an extracurricular activity must notify his or her teachers ahead of time about any absences. A student will be permitted to make up tests and turn in projects due in any class missed because of absence. Teachers may assign a late penalty to any long-term project in accordance with timelines approved by the principal and previously communicated to students.

DAEP Makeup Work

Elementary and Middle/Junior High School Grade Levels

Grades 9–12

If a high school student is enrolled in a foundation curriculum course at the time of removal to a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP), he or she will have an opportunity to complete the course before the beginning of the next school year. The district may provide the opportunity to complete the course through an alternative method, 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 FOCA (LEGAL) for more information.]

(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.]

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 to 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:

Travis Utecht

Executive Director of Human Resources

612 N. Campbell St. Willis, TX 77378

tutecht@willisisd.org

936-856-1200

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:

Mrs. Adriana Velasco

504 Coordinator

612 N. Campbell St., Willis, TX 77378

936-856-1224

For all concerns regarding discrimination, see the superintendent:

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kimberley James

612 N. Campbell St., Willis, TX 77378

936-856-1216

[See policies FB, FFH, and GKD for more information.]

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** on page 55.]
- 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 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** on page 103.]
- Becoming a school volunteer. [See **Volunteers** on page 118 and policy GKG for more information.]
- Participating in campus parent organizations. See the campus principal for a list of 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 contact your campus principal.
- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and assisting the district in

aligning local community values with health education instruction and other wellness issues. [See **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)** on page 89 and policies BDF, EHAA, FFA for more information.]

- Being aware of the school's ongoing bullying and harassment prevention efforts.
- Contact 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 second Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p. m. at the SHJ Administration Building at 612 N. Campbell, Willis, TX 77378. An agenda for a regular or special meeting is posted no later than 72 hours before each meeting at the SHJ Administration Building at 612
  N. Campbell, Willis, TX 77378 and online at https://www.willisisd.org/Page/2350. [See policies BE and BED for more information.]

Parking and Parking Permits (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

A student must present a valid driver's license and proof of insurance to be eligible for a parking permit.

Students must request a parking permit and pay a fee of $100.00 to park in a school parking lot. 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 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** on page 16.]

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.

In addition, at certain grade levels a student—with limited exceptions—will be required to pass the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) if the student is enrolled in a public Texas school on any day between January 1 and the date of the first administration of the STAAR.

Elementary and Middle School Grade Levels

In grades 1–3, 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 English language arts and mathematics.

In grades 4–5, 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) in English language arts, mathematics, and science and a grade of 70 or above in English language arts and mathematics.

In grades 6–8, 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**:** English language arts, mathematics, and either science, or social studies.

If a student in grade 5 or 8 is enrolled in a high-school credit course with a corresponding end-of-course (EOC) assessment, the student will not be subject to the promotion requirements described above for the relevant grade 5 or 8 assessment. The student will instead take the corresponding EOC assessment.

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.

[See **Standardized Testing** on page 110.]

For the student to be promoted based on standards previously established by the district, the decision of the committee must be unanimous and the student must complete additional special instruction before beginning the next grade level. Whether the student is retained or promoted, an educational plan for the student will be designed to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year. [See policy EIE for more information.]

Repeating Kindergarten — Grade 8 at Parent Request
A parent may request in writing that a student repeat kindergarten, or any grade in grade 1-8. Before granting the request, the district may convene a retention committee to meet and discuss the request and will invite the parent to participate.

Certain students—some with disabilities and some classified as English learners—may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing.

A student at or above grade 3 who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her state-mandated examinations will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. The district will notify the parent of their child's participation in this program. The student may be required to participate in this instruction before or after normal school hours or outside of the normal school year. Failure of a student to attend these programs may result in violations of required school attendance as well as the student not being promoted to the next grade level.

For a middle-school student who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her state-mandated examinations, 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.]

[See **Personal Graduation Plans** on page 76 for information related to the development of personal graduation plans for high school students.]

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** on page 72.]

Students will also have multiple opportunities to retake EOC assessments. [See **Graduation** on page 73 and **Standardized Testing** on page 110.]

Release of Students from School

[See **Leaving Campus** on page 94.]

Remote Instruction

The district may offer remote instruction when authorized by TEA.

All district policies, procedures, guidelines, rules, and other expectations of student behavior will be enforced as applicable in a remote or virtual learning environment.

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 nine weeks.

At the end of the fourth week of a nine-week grading period], parents will receive a progress report of their child's performance in any course. 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** on page 98 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** on page 71, **Appendix V: 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 five 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** on page 59.]

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 outlined in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct, as well as those established 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 https://report.anonymousalerts.com/willisisd/*
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Immediately follow the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

- Help secure the campus by keeping all exterior doors closed, latched, and locked unless a door is actively monitored by a district employee.

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/AED and Stop the Bleed

The district will annually offer instruction in CPR/AED 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/AED 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 and Stop the Bleed Texas.

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, etc.).

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 is unable to 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.

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:

- Radio broadcast on KSAM 101.7 FM, KSTAR/KVST 99.7 FM, and Lone Star Community Radio on 104.5 FM & 106.1 FM
- Television broadcast on Houston Channels 2, 11, 13 and Bryan Channel 3
- Automated call-out system
- District website, X and Facebook

[See **Communications-Automated, Emergency** on page 50.]

SAT, ACT, and Other Standardized Tests

[See **Standardized Testing** on page 110.]

Schedule Changes (Middle/Junior High and High School Grade Levels)

Middle and High School schedules are developed in the spring for the following year. Each campus will set the last day for schedule changes to be submitted.

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:

Mr. Bob Eaton

Chief of Operations and Construction

612 N. Campbell St., Willis, TX 77378

beaton@willisisd.org

936-890-1425

Food and Nutrition Services (All Grade Levels)

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.

Some students are eligible for free and reduced-price meals based on financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential. 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. Participating students will be offered the same meal options as their peers and will not be treated differently from their peers.

See the School Nutrition office at 936.890.7729 or campus front office to apply for free or reduced-price meal services.

[See policy CO for more information.]

Parents should continually monitor their child's meal account balance. When a student's meal account is depleted, the district will notify the parent. The student may continue to purchase meals according to the grace period set by the school board. The district will present the parent with a schedule of repayment for any outstanding account balance and an application for free or reduced meals.

If the district is unable to work out an agreement with the student's parent on replenishment of the meal account and payment of any outstanding balance, the student will receive a meal. The district will make every effort to avoid bringing attention to the student.

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 Executive Director of Support Services. [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:

Mr. Bryan Grimm

Director of Maintenacne

612 N. Campbell St., Willis, TX 77378

brgimm@willisisd.org

936-856-1218

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 are subject to 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)

The library is open for independent student use during the times listed in each campus supplement.

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. See the Campus Supplement for more information or contact the campus Principal.

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 of school in the afternoon, unless the student is involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher or other authorized employee or adult.

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 to cover expenses such as transportation, admission, and meals; however, a student will not be denied participation because of financial need. 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 suspicion less 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** on page 66 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.

Drug Testing (High School Grade Levels Only)

The District requires the random drug-testing of any student in grades 9-12 who chooses to participate in school-sponsored extracurricular activities or request a permit to park a vehicle on school property See Appendix IV for specifics of the drug-testing program.

The district's policy FNF (LOCAL) addresses board authorization for drug testing of students as described in the policy, but specifics of the drug-testing program should be addressed in administrative regulations, such as this handbook or your extracurricular conduct guide.

[See **Steroids** on page 83.]

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** on pages 59-60.]

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:

John Vaglienty

Chief Academic Officer

612 N. Campbell St., Willis, TX 77378

jvaglienty@willisisd.org

936-856-1214

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission's Talking Book Program provides audiobooks free of charge to qualifying Texans, including students with visual, physical, or reading disabilities such as dyslexia.

Standardized Testing

CIRCLE (Center for Improving the Readiness of Children for Learning and Education) Progress Monitoring is:

- A research-based and teacher-friendly assessment tool
- Designed for prekindergarten through early first grade
  Focused on early literacy, math, and social-emotional skills

NWEA MAP (Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress)

Students in grades K-12 will participate in the NWEA MAP Growth assessment three times per year—fall, winter, and spring. This nationally normed, computer-adaptive test measures academic progress in reading, mathematics, and other subject areas depending on grade level.

MAP Growth provides:

- A clear picture of each student's academic strengths and areas for growth
- Personalized learning data to help teachers tailor instruction
- Progress monitoring across the school year to track academic growth over time

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.

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 the satisfactory performance standard, the student will have opportunities to retake the assessment.

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 freshmen-level 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 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** on page 73.]

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:

Mr. Eric King

Director of Student Services

612 N. Campbell St. Willis, TX 77378

eking@willisisd.org

936-890-1462

[See **A Student in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care)** on page 22.]

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:

Mr. Eric King

Director of Student Services

612 N. Campbell St. Willis, TX 77378

eking@willisisd.org

936-890-1462

See **A Student Who is Homeless** on page 24.]

Student Speakers (All Grade Levels)

The district provides students the opportunity to introduce the following school events: High school pep rallies, Student banquets, Freshman Fish Camp, Honor assemblies, and Senior class picnic. 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** on page 78 for information related to student speakers at graduation ceremonies and policy FNA(LOCAL) regarding other speaking opportunities.]

Summer School (All Grade Levels)

Willis ISD offers Summer School each year consisting of high school credit recovery, End-of-Course test preparation sessions, Pre-K and Kindergarten Bilingual program. The size and scope of Summer School will be based on student need and available resources.

Tardies (All Grade Levels)

Each campus level (Elementary School, Middle School, and High School) shall establish a standard tardy time and publish it in the local campus supplement.

Textbooks, Electronic Textbooks, Technological Equipment, and Other Instructional Materials (All Grade Levels)

The district provides textbooks and other approved instructional materials to students free of charge for each subject or class. Students must treat any books with care and place covers on them, as directed by the teacher. The district may also provide electronic textbooks and technological equipment to students, depending on course objectives.

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.

Transfers (All Grade Levels)

The principal is authorized to transfer a student from one classroom to another.

The superintendent or designee is authorized to investigate and approve transfers between schools.

[See **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 22, **Bullying** on page 37, and **A Student Who Has Learning Difficulties or Who Needs Special Education or Section 504 Services** on page 25, 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** on page 107.]

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. 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, speak with the principal or the Director of Special Education, who the district has designated to coordinate the implementation of and compliance with this law.

[See policy EHBAF (LOCAL) for more information.]

[For video and other recordings by parents or visitors to virtual or in-person classrooms, see **Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student when Not Already Permitted by Law** on page 9.]

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 identification.

Individuals may visit classrooms 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.

[For video and other recording by parents or visitors to virtual or in-person classrooms, see **Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student when Not Already Permitted by Law** on page 9.]

Unauthorized Persons

In accordance with Education Code 37.105, a school administrator, school resource officer (SRO), 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.

- 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

The Willis HS College and Career Center invites representatives from colleges and universities and other higher education institutions, prospective employers, and military recruiters to present information to interested students.

Volunteers (All Grade Levels)

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 the campus principal for more information and to complete an application.

The district requires state criminal history background checks for volunteers who are parents, guardians, or grandparents of a child enrolled in the district.

Subject to exceptions in accordance with state law and district procedures, other volunteers will be subject to a state criminal history background check, and 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 principal's 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 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.

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 are 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 perform successfully on some state-mandated assessments to be promoted and students must pass the STAAR EOC assessments to graduate. Students have multiple opportunities to take the tests, if necessary, for promotion or 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.

TEC stands for the Texas Education Code.

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 I:
Freedom From Bullying Policy

Note that school board policies may be revised at any time. For legal context and the most current copy of the local policy, visit http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/911?filter=FFI .

DEFINITION (See FFI (LEGAL))

"Bullying"**:**

1. Means 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 satisfies the applicability requirements below and that**:**

a. 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;

b. Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student;

c. Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school; or

d. Infringes on the rights of the victim at school; and

2. Includes cyberbullying.

"Cyberbullying" means 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.

Below is the text from the Willis Independent School District's policy FFI (LOCAL) as of the date this Handbook was finalized for this school year.

STUDENT WELFARE: FREEDOM FROM BULLYING **FFI (LOCAL)**

Adopted on 11/17/2017

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

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 con-duct 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 cam-pus and the District's administrative offices

APPENDIX II:

Willis ISD Student Bus Safety Manual

Student Transportation Services
Willis Independent School District
(936) 856-1220

Dear Parent(s)**:**

The Willis Independent School District provides bus transportation to and from school as a privilege for students residing in the District. The State of Texas outlines the conditions governing school bus operations and funds just a portion of the cost of the services.

Our goal is to safely deliver each child to and from school on a daily basis. To promote bus safety, the district provides safe equipment and trained, qualified drivers. The safety of the students on the school bus is also affected by their behavior.

In order to meet the conditions outlined by the state and provide safe, prompt movement of all students, the district has adopted standard regulations and procedures, and has provided restrictive measures for violations of procedures or rules. They are herein outlined for your information and for guidance of your child. You may assist in doing so by reading the Bus Safety Manual provided. We ask your cooperation with school personnel in developing proper behavior patterns for those students who ride buses.

Riding a school bus is a privilege provided by the school district and should be treated as such. Your child needs to be registered to ride **EACH** year before school starts. The information is vital to the transportation department in case of any emergencies.

If you should need information concerning routes or student misconduct on buses, call the Transportation Office at 936-856-1220 or visit us at www.wisd.org

Thank you,

Michael

Haggerty

Director of

Transportation

General Safety Rules:

1. Obey the instructions of the bus driver. At no time will a student act toward, or address comments to, a bus driver in a disrespectful manner, or refuse to cooperate with the driver.
2. Get on and off the bus at your designated stop.
3. All students must ride only their assigned bus.
4. Do not ask to ride home on another bus with a friend.
5. It is the responsibility of the PARENT to provide transportation to school if a child misses or is suspended from the bus.
6. All Students will follow WISD dress code policy while on the bus.

Procedures for Waiting for the Bus:

1. Be at your bus stop five minutes before scheduled pickup time. The driver **will not wait** or honk the horn for individuals or daycares.
2. Stand on the sidewalk or back from the roadway in a safe place while waiting for the bus. Be in plain sight of the approaching bus driver and other traffic. Be watchful and do not play around.
3. Before the bus approaches, form a line and be prepared to load immediately. Be at least ten feet back from the bus stop.
4. Stand still and clear of the bus. Move toward the bus only after the bus has stopped and has opened the door and/or the driver signals you to load.
5. If you miss the bus, go home immediately.
6. Parents should instruct their children on what procedures to follow if the bus is missed.

Loading the Bus:

1. Do not push or shove.
2. Stay out of the bus “Danger Zone” (10 ft. on the side, 10 ft. in front and never behind). Wait until the door opens or the driver gives the signal before approaching the bus.
3. Use the handrails and steps. One step at a time.
4. Go directly to your assigned seat. The bus will not move until all students are seated. Delays affect traffic and schedules.
5. The driver **will** assign students’ seats.

*** During a bus route, all property within 100 Ft of the bus is considered school property. Students shall conduct themselves appropriately.**

Conduct on the Bus:

1. Remain in your assigned seat at all times.
2. A student shall not refuse to sit in an assigned seat or deny another student a place to sit.

3. Normal conversation is permitted; any loud noises that may distract the driver and create an unsafe condition will not be tolerated.
4. Scuffling, fighting and the use of profane or vulgar language and gestures are forbidden.
5. Do not throw objects inside or out of the bus.
6. Do not litter, mark, cut or scratch any part of the bus. The student(s) responsible for damages will not ride the bus until the school district has been compensated for those damages.
7. Students should only use the emergency and exit door controls during supervised drills or actual extreme emergencies.
8. Students shall never attempt to operate the passenger door or other controls except in case of extreme emergency.
9. Students shall face forward for the duration of the trip, and shall keep their feet in front of them and out of the bus aisle.
10. Electronic devices, personal telecommunications, or any device with a camera may not be used to take pictures. If listening to music or playing games, earbuds must be worn. NO TALKING ON CELL PHONE.

Getting off the Bus:

1. Stay seated until the bus is completely stopped at your designated stop and the door has been opened.
2. Use the handrail and take one step at a time when leaving the bus.
3. Wait for your turn to leave the bus. Pushing and crowding will only slow exiting and may cause an accident.
4. Stay out of the bus “Danger Zone” (within 10 ft. of the bus).
5. If an article drops or rolls near or under the bus, **do not go after it!** Go to the bus door and alert the driver and ask the driver for help.

Letting off Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten

Parents or a designated adult **must** be at the bus stop to receive PK and K students. If no one is there to receive the student they will be returned to their campus. It is the responsibility of the parent to see that students who are returned to school are picked up.

Designated Stop:

Students will be picked up and dropped off only at their designated bus stop. After ten consecutive days of not using the bus service, that service may be discontinued. Only **one location** for pick up and **one location** for delivery will be allowed. Any request for change must be made to and approved by the campus of attendance, and they will inform transportation of the authorized change. Requests received after 12:00 noon will be processed the following day. Multiple changes confuse the children and staff.

Crossing the Street or Highway:

1. All students living on the left side of the roadway shall exit the bus and move to a point 15 feet in front of the right bumper and wait for the driver to signal that it is safe to cross.
2. Check in both directions and walk directly across the road.
3. **Never** cross the road behind the bus.
4. **Caution!** Be alert for the vehicles that do not stop when the bus is loading or unloading students.
5. Obey all traffic signals and signs on your way to and from the bus stop.

Prohibited Items:

1. Tobacco or tobacco products, matches or cigarette lighters.
2. Any animals or insects, dead or alive.
3. Glass containers, golf clubs, skateboards, baseball bats, ropes, chains, weapons, explosive devices or aerosol containers.
4. Alcoholic beverages, drugs or chemicals.
5. All items, including band instruments, must be kept on the student's lap or within **their** seating compartment and may not deny another student a seat, block the aisle or an emergency exit.
6. Food, chewing gum, and drinks (other than clear plastic bottled water) are not permitted.
7. All items listed in the student handbook for their school of attendance.
8. The District prohibits students from using cameras or cell phones to take pictures while on school property or while attending school-sponsored or school-related activities on or off school property. When seen, district employees shall confiscate any of the devices, and are not responsible for such items.
9. No headgear of any type will be allowed on the students head while on the bus. We need to be able to identify all students while on the bus.

Accidents or Emergencies:

1. Follow the driver's instructions.
2. No student or employee is allowed to leave the site unless released by a school administrator after the investigation is completed.
3. The following procedures will be used for evacuation in an emergency situation**:**
    - Students nearest the door will open the door and hold open.
    - Leave the bus in a single file line as quickly and quietly as possible.

- Evacuation will start with the seat nearest the front door unless otherwise instructed.

Extra-curricular Trips:

1. Bus riders rules apply to all school- sponsored events.

SCHOOL BUS DISCIPLINE

Riding the bus is a privilege. Video cameras may be used in district vehicles to promote compliance with the rules of conduct. Videotapes or portions of videotapes may be protected student records. (FERPA)

Any means of bus transportation shall be treated as an extension of the class-room. Students are expected to assist the district in ensuring that buses remain in good condition and that transportation is provided safely.

Willis ISD schools will be consistent across the district this year with bus procedures and consequences for major and minor safety concerns. We feel this is in the best interest of the students and parents. No more than two (2) minor referrals will be issued to any student during a school year, after which all referrals are considered MAJOR.

A MINOR OFFENSE IS AN INFRACTION OF THE FOLLOWING RULES; STUDENTS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO ENGAGE IN THE FOLLOWING BEHAVIORS:

Students will not engage in the following:

1. Excessive loud talking, yelling, or disturbing others.
2. Not staying seated while bus is in motion in assigned seat/ not seated correctly while bus is in motion.
3. Leaving paper/ debris on the bus.
4. Late to bus stop.
5. Pushing, tripping and/ or hitting other students.
6. Not following driver's direction.
7. Feet and backpacks not kept out of aisles.
8. Having any prohibited items**:** live animals or insects, glass containers, Flowers, balloons, balls, or objects too large to be carried on students lap.
9. Throwing objects out the window.
10. Inappropriate attire, no head gear allowed to be worn on the bus.

BUS PROCEDURES FOR A MINOR OFFENSE:

1st and 2nd warnings: The transportation department will attempt to contact a parent or guardian.

3rd Referral: Depending upon the offense, campus administrator will conference with child, issue consequences and contact parent.

A MAJOR OFFENSE IS AN INFRACTION OF THE FOLLOWING RULES:

Students will not engage in the following:

1. Using profanity, verbal abuse, harassment, or obscene gestures towards driver or other students.
2. Distracting driver's attention from safe operation of the bus.
3. Aggressive behavior towards other students, and / or FIGHTING.
4. Purposely excreting bodily fluids inside and/or out of the door or window of bus.
5. Vandalism to bus (restitution will be assessed according to damage).
6. Throwing or propelling dangerous objects inside or outside of the bus.
7. Arms, head, hands or any part of the body out the window of the bus.
8. Sexual or racial language or gestures – inappropriate sexual behavior or contact.
9. Gang related activity, items, language or gestures.
10. Riding or attempting to ride any bus during a bus suspension.
11. Riding unassigned bus without a bus pass or using an unassigned bus stop.
12. Having any prohibited item**:** weapons, explosive devices, matches, cigarette lighters, tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, harmful drugs or chemicals.

BUS PRODEDURES FOR MAJOR OFFENSE:

No Warnings:

1st referral: Three (3) days suspension from bus. Phone contact made with parent or guardian, referral forwarded.

2nd referral: Five (5) day suspension from bus. Phone contact will be made with parent or guardian, referral forwarded.

3rd referral: Ten (10) day suspension from bus. Phone contact will be made with parent or guardian, referral forwarded.

4th referral: Thirty (30) day suspension from bus. Phone contact will be made with parent or guardian, referral forwarded

5th referral: Removed from bus for the rest of the year. Phone contact made with parent or guardian, referral mailed.

THE ABOVE LISTED CONSEQUENCES IS THE MINIMUM NUMBER OF DAYS GIVEN FOR INFRACTIONS. THE CAMPUS ADMINISTRATOR HAS THE RIGHT TO INCREASE THE CONSEQUENCES BASED ON THE SEVERITY OF THE INFRACTION.

APPENDIX III:

STUDENT RESPONSIBLE USE GUIDELINES FOR TECHNOLOGY

Willis Independent School District makes a variety of communications and information technologies available to students through computer/network/Internet access. These technologies, when properly used, promote educational excellence in the District by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. Illegal, unethical or inappropriate use of these technologies can have dramatic consequences, harming the District, its students and its employees. These Student Responsible Use Guidelines for Technology (hereinafter referred to as the Responsible Use Guidelines) are intended to minimize the likelihood of such harm by educating District students and setting standards which will serve to protect the District. The District firmly believes that digital resources, information and interaction available on the computer/network/Internet far outweigh any disadvantages.

Mandatory Review

To educate students on proper computer/network/Internet use and conduct, students are required to review these guidelines at the beginning of each school year. All District students shall be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of all guidelines governing use of the system and shall agree in writing to allow monitoring of their use and to comply with such guidelines. The parent or legal guardian of a student user is required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of the District's Responsible Use Guidelines as part of their review of the Student Handbook. Employees supervising students who use the District's system must provide training emphasizing its appropriate use.

Definition of District Technology System

The District's computer systems and networks (system) are any configuration of hardware and software. The system includes but is not limited to the following**:**

- Chromebooks, Chrome bases, laptops and tablets
- Device monitoring systems
- Telephones, cellular telephones, and voicemail technologies;
- Email accounts;
- Servers;
- Computer hardware, tablets and peripherals;

- Software including operating system software and application software;
- Digitized information including stored text, data files, email, digital images, and video and audio files;
- Internally or externally accessed databases, applications, tools (Internet- or District-server based);
- District-provided Internet access;
- District-filtered public Wi-Fi;
- Virtual environments; and
- New technologies as they become available.
- District-provided cloud resources and devices.

Availability of Access

Acceptable Use: Computer/Network/Internet access will be used to enhance learning consistent with the District's educational goals. The District requires legal, ethical and appropriate computer/network/Internet use.

Privilege: Access to the District's computer/network/Internet is a privilege, not a right.

Access to a Computer/Network/Internet: Access to the District's electronic communications system, including the Internet, shall be made available to students for instructional purposes. Each District computer and public Wi-Fi (on district devices for students who bring their own personal telecommunication devices) has filtering software that blocks access to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, inappropriate for students, or harmful to minors, as defined by the federal Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Filtered Internet access is provided to students as defined by CIPA.

Student Access: Computer/Network/Internet access is provided to all students unless parents or guardians request in writing to the campus principal that access be denied. Student Internet access will be under the direction and guidance of a District staff member. Students may also be allowed to use the local network and public Wi-Fi with campus permission.

Students 13 or younger: For students under the age of 13, the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) requires additional parental permission for educational software tools. Parents wishing to deny access to these educational tools must do so in writing to the campus principal indicating their child should be denied access to these tools. Examples of these tools are Discovery Education, blogs, and Google Drive (grades 2-5). These tools can be accessed through the District's single-sign-on tool.

Use of Personal Telecommunication Devices: The District believes technology is a powerful tool that enhances learning and enables students to access a vast amount of academic resources. The District's goal is to increase student access to digital tools and facilitate immediate access to technology-based information, much the way that students utilize pen and

paper. To this end, the District will provide a filtered, wireless public network through which students are able to connect privately owned (personal) telecommunication devices. Students using personal telecommunication devices must follow the guidelines stated in this document while on school property, attending any school-sponsored activity, or using the Willis ISD network.

Security: A student who gains access to any inappropriate or harmful material is expected to discontinue the access and to report the incident to the supervising staff member. Any student identified as a security risk or as having violated the District's Responsible Use Guidelines may be denied access to the District's system. Other consequences may also be assigned. A student who knowingly brings prohibited materials into the school's electronic environment will be subject to suspension of access and/or revocation of privileges on the District's system and will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Content/Third-Party Supplied Information: Students and parents of students with access to the District's system should be aware that use of the system may provide access to other electronic communication systems in the global electronic network that may contain inaccurate and/or objectionable material.

Subject to Monitoring: All District computer/network/Internet usage shall not be considered confidential and is subject to monitoring by designated staff at any time to ensure appropriate use. Students should not use the computer system to send, receive or store any information, including email messages, that they consider personal or confidential and wish to keep private. All electronic files, including email messages, transmitted through or stored in the computer system will be treated no differently than any other electronic file. The District reserves the right to access, review, copy, modify, delete or disclose such files for any purpose. Students should treat the computer system like a shared or common file system with the expectation that electronic files, sent, received or stored anywhere in the computer system, will be available for review by any authorized representative of the District for any purpose. Personal telecommunication devices are subject to examination in accordance with disciplinary guidelines if there is reason to believe that the Responsible Use Guidelines have been violated.

Student Computer/Network/Internet Responsibilities

District students are bound by all portions of the Responsible Use Guidelines. A student who knowingly violates any portion of the Responsible Use Guidelines will be subject to suspension of access and/or revocation of privileges on the District's system and will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Use of Digital Tools: Students may participate in District-approved digital learning environments related to curricular projects or school activities and use digital tools, such as, but not limited to, mobile devices, blogs, discussion forums, RSS feeds, podcasts, wikis, Google Drive, and online meeting sessions. The use of a learning management system, blogs, wikis, podcasts, and other digital tools are considered an extension of the classroom. Verbal or written language that is considered inappropriate in the classroom is also inappropriate in all uses of

blogs, wikis, podcasts, and other District-approved digital tools. Digitally transmitted content that includes inappropriate language, images or content is prohibited.

Use of System Resources: Students are asked to purge email or outdated files on a regular basis.

Password Confidentiality: Students are required to maintain password confidentiality by not sharing their password with others. Students may not use another person's system account.

Reporting Security Problem: If knowledge of inappropriate material or a security problem on the computer/network/Internet is identified, the student should immediately notify the supervising staff member. The security problem should not be shared with others.

Personally-owned Devices

The following guidelines must be adhered to by students using a personally-owned telecommunication device at school**:**

- Internet access is filtered by the District on personal telecommunication devices in the same manner as District-owned equipment. If network access is needed, connection to the filtered, wireless network provided by the District is required.
- These devices are the sole responsibility of the student owner. The campus or District assumes no responsibility for personal telecommunication devices if they are lost, loaned, damaged or stolen and only limited time or resources will be spent trying to locate stolen or lost items.
- These devices have educational and monetary value. Students are prohibited from trading or selling these items to other students on District property, including school buses, and at school-sponsored or school-related activities on or off school property.
- Each student is responsible for his/her own device**:** setup, maintenance, charging, and security. Staff members will not store student devices at any time, nor will any District staff diagnose, repair, or work on a student's personal telecommunication device.
- Availability of telecommunication devices will not be used as a factor in grading or assessing student work. Students who do not have access to personal telecommunication devices will be provided with comparable District-owned equipment or given similar assignments that do not require access to electronic devices.
- Telecommunication devices are only to be used for educational purposes at the direction of a classroom teacher or as stated for specific age groups.
- Campus administrators and staff members have the right to prohibit use of devices at certain times or during designated activities (i.e. STAAR testing, classroom testing situations, campus presentations, theatrical performances, or guest speakers) that occur during the school day.

- An appropriately-trained administrator may examine a student's personal telecommunication device and search its contents, in accordance with disciplinary guidelines.

Inappropriate Use

Inappropriate use includes, but is not limited to, those uses that violate the law, that are specifically named as violations in this document, that violate the rules of network etiquette, or that hamper the integrity or security of this computer/network/Internet system or any components that are connected to it. The following actions are considered inappropriate uses, are prohibited, and will result in revocation of the student's access to the District computer/network/Internet.

Violations of Law: Transmission of any material in violation of any federal or state law is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to**:**

- threatening, harassing, defamatory or obscene material;
- copyrighted material;
- plagiarized material;
- material protected by trade secret; or
- blog posts, Web posts, or discussion forum/replies posted to the Internet which violate federal or state law.

Tampering with or theft of components from District systems may be regarded as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. Any attempt to break the law through the use of a District computer/network/Internet account may result in prosecution against the offender by the proper authorities. If such an event should occur, the District will fully comply with the authorities to provide any information necessary for legal action.

Modification of Computer: Modifying or changing computer settings and/or internal or external configurations without appropriate permission is prohibited.

Transmitting Confidential Information: Students may not redistribute or forward confidential information without proper authorization. Confidential information should never be transmitted, redistributed or forwarded to outside individuals who are not expressly authorized to receive the information. Revealing personal information (such as, but not limited to, home addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, birthdates) about oneself or of others is prohibited.

Commercial Use: Use of the system for any type of income-generating activity is prohibited. Advertising the sale of products, whether commercial or personal, is prohibited. Marketing by Non-WISD Organizations. Use of the system for promoting activities or events for individuals or organizations not directly affiliated with or sanctioned by the District is prohibited.

Vandalism/Mischief: Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy District equipment, materials or data, or the malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user of the District's system, or any of the agencies or other networks to which the District has access is prohibited. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance are violations of District policy and

administrative regulations and may constitute criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. Such prohibited activity includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creating of computer viruses. Vandalism as defined above is prohibited and will result in the cancellation of system use privileges. Students committing vandalism will be required to provide restitution for costs associated with system restoration and may be subject to other appropriate consequences. *[See the Student Code of Conduct.]*

Intellectual Property/Copyright Violations: Students must always respect copyrights and trademarks of third-parties and their ownership claims in images, text, video and audio material, software, information and inventions. The copy, use, or transfer of others' materials without appropriate authorization is not allowed. Downloading or using copyrighted information without following approved District procedures is also prohibited. Plagiarism. Fraudulently altering or copying documents or files authored by another individual is prohibited.

Impersonation: Attempts to log on to the computer/network/Internet impersonating a system administrator or District employee, student, or individual other than oneself, will result in revocation of the student's access to computer/network/Internet and disciplinary actions as deemed appropriate by the campus.

Cyberbullying: Cyberbullying is defined by Section 37.082 of the Education Code as bullying that is done through the use of an 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. This includes, but may not be limited to**:**

- Sending abusive text messages to cell phones, computers, or Internet-connected game consoles.
- Posting abusive comments on someone's blog or social networking site (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Vine, Tango etc.)
- Creating a social networking site or webpage that masquerades as the victim's personal site and using it to embarrass him or her.
- Making it appear that the victim is posting malicious comments about friends to isolate him or her from friends.
- Posting the victim's personally identifiable information on a site to put them at greater risk of contact by predators.
- Sending abusive comments while playing interactive games.
- Taking photos – often using a cell phone camera – and posting them online, sometimes manipulating them to embarrass the target.

Illegally Accessing or Hacking Violations: Intentional or unauthorized access or attempted access of any portion of the District's computer systems, networks, or private databases to view, obtain, manipulate, or transmit information, programs, or codes is prohibited. This includes VPN apps.

File/Data Violations: Deleting, examining, copying, or modifying fi les and/or data belonging to other users, without their permission is prohibited.

System Interference/Alteration: Deliberate attempts to exceed, evade or change resource quotas are prohibited. The deliberate causing of network congestion through mass consumption of system resources is prohibited.

Student Email Accounts and Electronic Communication Tools

Electronic communication is an important skill for 21st Century students. By providing this tool, the District is equipping students with the skills necessary for success in the business. Students in grades K - 12 are given access to a restricted District student email account that only receives email from Willis ISD accounts and outside approved educational sites. This account is set up with the student's user ID. Email and other digital tools such as, but not limited to blogs and learning management systems, are tools used to communicate within the District. The use of these communication tools should be limited to instructional, school-related activities, or administrative needs. Email is subject to monitoring by appropriate staff.

Students should keep the following points in mind:

Perceived Representation: Using school-related email addresses, blogs, wikis, and other communication tools might cause some recipients or other readers of the email to assume that the student's comments represent the District or school, whether or not that was the student's intention.

Privacy: Email, blogs, wikis, and other communication within these tools should not be considered a private, personal form of communication. Private information, such as home addresses, phone numbers, last names, pictures, or email addresses, should not be divulged. To avoid disclosing email addresses that are protected, all email communications to multiple recipients should be sent using the blind carbon copy (bcc) feature.

Inappropriate Language: Using obscene, lewd, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language in emails, blogs, wikis, or other communication tools is prohibited. Sending messages that could cause danger or disruption, personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks are prohibited.

Political Lobbying: Consistent with State ethics laws, District resources and equipment, including, but not limited to, emails, blogs, wikis, or other communication tools must not be used to conduct any political activities, including political advertising or lobbying. This includes using District communication tools to create, distribute, forward, or reply to messages, from either internal or external sources, which expressly or implicitly support or oppose a candidate for nomination or election to either a public office or an office of a political party or support or oppose an officeholder, a political party, or a measure (a ballot proposition). These guidelines prohibit direct communications as well as the transmission or forwarding of emails, hyperlinks, or other external references regarding any political advertising.

Forgery: Forgery or attempted forgery of email messages is prohibited. Attempts to read, delete, copy or modify the email of other system users, deliberate interference with the ability of other system users to send/receive email, or the use of another person's user ID and/or password is prohibited.

Junk Mail: Generally students should refrain from forwarding emails which do not relate to the educational purposes of the District. Emails intended for forwarding or distributing to others is prohibited. Creating, distributing or forwarding any annoying or unnecessary message to a large number of people (spamming) is also prohibited.

Consequences of Agreement Violation: Any attempt to violate the provisions of this agreement may result in revocation of the student's access to the computer/network/Internet, regardless of the success or failure of the attempt. In addition, school disciplinary and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

Denial, Revocation, or Suspension of Access Privileges: With just cause, the System Administrator and/or building principal, may deny, revoke, or suspend computer/network/Internet access as required, pending an investigation.

Warning

Sites accessible via the computer/network/Internet may contain material that is illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or controversial. Each District computer with Internet access has filtering software that blocks access to sites that are obscene, pornographic, inappropriate for students, or harmful to minors, as defined by the federal Children's Internet Protection Act. The District makes every effort to limit access to objectionable material; however, controlling all such materials on the computer/network/Internet is impossible, even with filtering in place. With global access to computers and people, a risk exists that students may access material that may not be of educational value in the school setting.

Disclaimer

The District's system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The District does not make any warranties, whether expressed or implied, including, without limitation, those of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose with respect to any services provided by the system and any information or software contained therein. The District does not guarantee that the functions or services performed by, or that the information or software contained on the system will meet the system user's requirements, or that the system will be uninterrupted or error free, or that defects will be corrected. Opinions, advice, services, and all other information expressed by system users, information providers, service providers, or other third-party individuals in the system are those of the providers and not the District. The District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the District's electronic communications system.

APPENDIX IV:

WILLIS ISD STUDENT DRUG TESTING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

In June of 2002, the Supreme Court broadened the authority of public schools to test students for illegal drugs. Because of this ruling, schools are now allowed to randomly drug test all middle school and high school students who participate in extracurricular activities.

Monitoring the Future, a national survey that tracks drug use among America's youth reported in 2002 more than half of all students had used illicit drugs by the time they finished high school. Adding to this dilemma is the 2002 *National Household Survey on Drug Abuse* that revealed, of the 4.5 million people age 12 and older who needed drug treatment, 23 percent were teenagers. Here in Montgomery County according to the Justice of the Peace Court, citable offenses by juveniles involving drugs, alcohol, and tobacco has been on a steady rise since 2001. These facts about our youth and dangerous drugs are alarming.

Willis Independent School District is committed to providing our youth a safe and drug free environment in which to grow and flourish. Because of this commitment, Willis ISD has implemented a drug-testing program for all students participating in UIL activities. Research shows that people who make it through their teenage years without using tobacco, alcohol, or drugs are much less likely to start them when they are older. If testing can keep kids off drugs and alcohol, if it can help free young minds for learning and allow growing bodies to escape the devastating cycle of dependence or addiction, it will be a valuable and important tool against drugs.

Willis ISD has not implemented a drug-testing program to identify and punish students who have made bad decisions about drugs. This program has been established to give kids who face daily pressure from their peers to experiment with drugs an out by participating in UIL activities. If a student has already made a bad decision about drugs, this program will identify them so that a drug intervention program can be implemented to prevent future drug use.

PURPOSE OF THE DRUG TESTING PROGRAM

Willis ISD has a vital interest in maintaining a positive learning environment that is safe and healthy for all students. To fulfill that purpose and as a proactive measure to keep our schools drug free, the District is adopting a random drug testing policy for: (1) students participating in school-sponsored UIL activities, and (2) students wishing to park their vehicles on school property.

By adopting a random drug testing policy, the District desires to: (1) to provide for the health and safety of all students, (2) to undermine the effects of peer pressure by providing a legitimate reason for students to refuse to use illegal drugs, (3) deter students from using drugs, (4) prevent injury or harm to students that may arise as a result of drug use, and (5) to encourage students who use drugs to participate in drug treatment programs.

STUDENTS SUBJECT TO TESTING

A. <u>Students in UIL Activities</u>. UIL activities include all athletic programs and non-athletic programs that compete under the umbrella of UIL.

Since drug use can increase the risk of injury to students participating in athletic programs and students involved in school, state, and national club organizations are often role models to other students, the District shall require all students participating in these programs in grades 9 through 12 to undergo random drug testing.

Participation includes practice, competition, and involvement in events of UIL activities. Participation does not include attendance at school events such as athletic contests, drama productions, or social functions.

B. Students Parking on School Property. Since drug use can increase the risk of injury to students driving to and from school, the District shall require all students in grades 9 through 12 who receive a parking permit allowing them to park their vehicles on school property during the school day to undergo random drug testing.

INFORMED CONSENT FOR TESTING

A. Students Competing in UIL Activities. Written parental consent to random drug testing must be completed before a student is allowed to participate in UIL activities. No student may participate in a practice or competition until the consent form is executed and on file with the designated school official. If the student is of legal age (age 18 or older), he or she must also sign the permission form. Consent forms are valid for the current school year only.

Because participation in UIL activities is a privilege and not a right, refusal to consent to random drug testing will result in the denial of participation in the identified UIL activities.

B. Students Parking on School Property. Written parental consent to random student drug testing must be completed before a student is issued a parking permit and allowed to park his or her vehicle on school property. No student may receive a parking permit or park on school property until the consent form is executed and on file with the designated school official. If the student is of legal age (age 18 or older), he or she must sign the permission form. Consent forms are valid for the current school year only.

Because parking on school property is a privilege and not a right, refusal to consent to random drug testing will result in the denial of parking privileges.

TESTING PROCEDURES

A. Frequency. Each school year the Board of Trustees or its designee will determine the percentage of students to be tested based on the number participants; the Board of Trustees or its designee may determine that up to 100% of the identified student participants will be tested.

The testing entity will select the dates for conducting the monthly random drug test; the selection of dates will not follow any recognizable pattern. Tests will be conducted at least six times during the school year.

B. Random selection of students. The District will provide the testing laboratory with a list of all identified UIL activity participants and parking permit holders. Students will be chosen for testing by computer-generated random selection conducted by the testing laboratory. The random selection process is intended to eliminate subjective factors from playing a role in the selection of the students to be tested.

C. Testing standards. Testing will be conducted through accepted scientific means using approved practices and procedures established by the testing laboratory selected by the District. The testing parameters shall be set at industry standards as defined by the National Institute for Drug Abuse. The testing laboratory will be certified by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

(SAMHSA) and have greater than five (5) years experience in toxicology testing and chain-of-custody procedures.

The drug test is performed by urinalysis. The specimen is analyzed using immunoassay methodology. All presumptive positive results are confirmed by a second test of the same specimen using a gas chromatography/mass spectroscopy methodology.

D. Collection of the sample. Three school days prior to the testing entity's arrival at school, the randomly selected student names and associated Student ID number will be given to the designated school official, who will arrange for these students to report to the collection area. The names of selected students will not be called over the public address system.

Students will be tested in an isolated facility under the supervision of a school official of the same sex who will assist the testing entity representative. Students will provide a urine sample in a restroom or other private facility behind a closed stall. Neither the supervising school official nor the testing entity representative will directly observe the students providing their urine sample. Facilities are secure with only one student testing at a time to assure security and confidentiality of each individual.

The urine sample will be collected in a sealed specimen collection container provided by the testing entity. The students will provide the collected sample to the testing entity representative and the supervising school official will confirm that the student's identification information on the sample is correct. The sealed specimen collection container will be sealed and witnessed by the student. The testing entity representative will take all specimens to the laboratory for analysis.

E. Refusal. Refusal to provide a sample or noncompliance with the testing procedures by any student will be considered a positive test result and will be reported to the appropriate school representatives.

F. Substances. The District reserves the right to test for amphetamines, anabolic steroids, barbiturates, cocaine, LSD, marijuana, methadone, opiates, and phencyclidine.

TEST RESULTS

A. Confidentiality of results. Student privacy will be protected in accordance with all applicable laws. Records of test results will be kept confidential and provided only to parents, administrators, personnel responsible for administering the UIL activity, other school officials with a legitimate interest in the information, or as otherwise required by law or overriding health and safety concerns.

Test results are kept separate from other school records. School personnel are only allowed to view the information if they have a legitimate educational interest in the results. Results will not be shared with law enforcement except as required by law. Upon written request of a parent/guardian or a student of legal age, test results may be released to treatment facilities.

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B. Medical Review Officer (MRO). The testing entity will provide an MRO for interpreting and verifying test results. The MRO services will be provided by a licensed physician who is certified by the Medical Review Officer Certification Council or the American Association of Medical Review Officers as having proven by examination to have had the appropriate medical training to interpret and evaluate drug test results and thus qualified for certification as an MRO.

C. Retest. Students that test positive may request a second test. A request for a retest must be made to the designated school official in writing within forty-eight (48) hours from the time the parents were first notified of a positive test result.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

This drug testing policy does not in any way modify the disciplinary provisions of the Willis ISD Student Code of Conduct or Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code. If a student sells, gives, delivers, possesses, uses, or is under the influence of marijuana, a controlled substance, a dangerous drug, or alcohol the student will be subject to the disciplinary provisions of the Student Code of Conduct. A positive drug test is not in and of itself proof that a student has violated the Student Code of Conduct. For more information on the District's disciplinary rules regarding drugs and alcohol, please refer to the Willis ISD Student Code of Conduct.

CONSEQUENCES

Any student who tests positive for a drug in a test conducted under the provisions of this policy will face the following consequences. Offenses are cumulative for the duration of a student's attendance during grades 9 through 12.

A. **First positive test result.** A conference must be held between the designated school official, personnel responsible for administering the UIL activities the student participates in (if applicable), the student, and the parent or guardian.

If applicable, the student will be suspended from participation in all UIL activities identified in this policy and/or will relinquish all parking privileges for thirty (30) calendar days.

In order to have parking and UIL activity privileges reinstated, the student must:

1. Provide documentation that he/she attended and successfully completed 4 hours of substance abuse counseling from an approved provider during the suspension period;

2. Submit to a new drug test and have a negative (clean) test result following the thirty (30) day suspension; and

3. Following the expiration of the suspension, submit a letter of intent expressing his/her desire to regain parking and UIL activity privileges, as applicable.

Failure to meet these requirements within the specified time lines will result in continuation of the suspension until such time as the student completes the requirements outlined above.

B. **Second positive test result.** A conference must be held between the designated school official, personnel responsible for administering the UIL activities the student participates in (if applicable), the student, and the parent or guardian.

The student will be suspended from participation in all UIL activities identified in this policy and/or will relinquish all parking privileges for ninety (90) calendar days. The student will automatically be tested during each subsequent random drug testing event for one calendar year.

In order to have parking and UIL activity privileges reinstated, the student must:

1. Provide documentation that he/she attended and successfully completed 4 hours of substance abuse counseling from an approved provider during the suspension period;

2. Submit to a new drug test and have a negative (clean) test result following the ninety (90) day suspension; and

3. Following the expiration of the suspension, submit a letter of intent expressing his/her desire to regain parking and UIL activity privileges, as applicable.

Failure to meet these requirements within the specified time lines will result in continuation of the suspension until such time as the requirements are completed.

C. **Third positive test result.** A conference must be held between the designated school official, personnel responsible for administering the UIL activities the student participates in (if applicable), the student, and the parent or guardian.

The student will be suspended from participation in all UIL activities identified in this policy and/or will relinquish all parking privileges for the remainder of the student's attendance at Willis ISD.

D. **End-of-the-year suspensions.** A student serving a suspension that is not completed at the end of the school year shall complete the suspension during the first semester of the following school year until the entire length of the suspension has been served.

E. **Substance abuse counseling.** The District will approve substance abuse counseling provided by a certified chemical dependency counselor or at any agency certified by the Texas Department of Health or the Texas Department of Alcohol and Drug Addition Services. A list of approved substance abuse counseling providers may be obtained from the principal upon request.

F. **Refusal.** Refusal to participate in a drug test after signing the consent form will result in the same consequences as if the student had received a positive test.

G. **Academically non-punitive.** A positive drug test will not affect the student's grade in any curricular class associated with the UIL activities.

However, if participation in the UIL activities is required for the class or affects the student's grade, the student may be required to satisfy participation requirements in alternative ways. The result of the drug tests will not be documented in the student's academic records.

APPEAL PROCESS

A parent or student may appeal a positive result in accordance with District Policy FNG (Local) governing student and parent complaints. Consequences established in this drug testing policy will not be deferred pending the completion of the appeal process

Appendix V:

2026 - 2027 WISD Grading Guidelines

GRADING PHILOSOPHY

Grades serve as a crucial means of communication between schools and parents/guardians regarding a student's academic progress and achievement. Grading regulations are established to provide clarity and consistency in evaluating students' mastery of learning objectives, defined by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), and is delineated by the Willis ISD curriculum according to board-approved policies. They also reflect the educational philosophy of the district and translate it into practical grading methods used in classrooms. It's important that grading encompasses both formative and summative assessments. Additionally, clear and consistent grading policies help ensure fairness and equity in evaluating student achievement across different classrooms and schools within the district. All campuses and teams agree to the guidelines below and shall not deviate from any of the set forth protocols.

- The weighted grade distribution will be 60% major and 40% minor.
- A minimum of 3 major grades will be given each grading period. End Of Unit exams will go into the gradebook as major grades.
- A minimum of 9 daily grades will be given each grading period. Middle Of Unit checks will go into the gradebooks as minor grades.

The district required a variety of approaches to grading, which incorporates various practices to accurately assess student performance. These include:

1. Grading is based on multiple measures, encompassing both formative and summative evaluations.

2. Clear performance criteria, including rubrics, are utilized to evaluate student responses, products, or performances to ensure consistency in scoring and provide clarity regarding student performance expectations.

3. Feedback on assessments is provided consistently and promptly to students of their academic growth.

GRADING CATEGORIES

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS (minor grades) are progress monitoring tools that determine how we can help students in the process of learning. They are assessments for learning. It involves gathering and interpreting evidence of student learning from multiple points throughout the unit of study prior to the end of the unit of study. Formative Assessments are considered minor grades and may include: class work, quizzes, demonstration labs, journals, and other similar assignments. Constructive and timely feedback is critical to the learning process and should be communicated to parents.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS (major grades) measure how much the students have learned over time. These are assessments of learning. They assess mastery of the curriculum standards and are a collection of information at the conclusion of a unit, marking period, semester, or course. Summative assessments should all be common and created prior to instruction to measure the intended learning outcomes. Summative Assessments are major grades and may include: curriculum based assessments, tests, published writings, performance labs, and other similar assignments.

HOMEWORK is practice and should be learning centered, necessary, reasonable and high quality. It should give students an opportunity to apply learned skills, and allow them to reflect on their learning. Teachers will use homework to inform instructional strategies, provide feedback for improvement, differentiate assignments, foster positive study habits and provide growth opportunities toward mastery. WISD wants parents/guardians to be a part of their child's learning. Students who elect to challenge themselves by taking Honors, Advanced Placement, and Dual Credit courses may be required to complete homework as part of their rigorous coursework.

FEEDBACK AND PROGRESS MONITORING

Students will be expected to demonstrate mastery on in-class events that measure the TEKS. Teachers will provide feedback to students on how they can improve in their learning. Students will retake portions of assessments and other in-class assignments in order to demonstrate mastery.

RETEACHING/REASSESSMENT: WISD's commitment to providing a well-balanced curriculum aligned with state-prescribed TEKS/standards ensures that students have the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for success. By adhering to these standards, WISD aims to equip students with a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. Students not demonstrating mastery of the learning targets within the nine weeks period will participate in reteaching/reengagement.

- Reteaching will occur through small group instruction, tutoring, and/or spiraling standards in warm-ups. Test corrections are not a valid re-teaching/reassessment method. Retests should not be given on the same day as the original test, but must occur within a timely manner. Retest should only occur after re-teaching.

Elementary

- All students who earn a grade below 80 on a major grade may participate in a reteach/retest opportunity to demonstrate mastery.
- Elementary students can earn up to an 80 on reassessments.

Secondary

- All students who earn a grade below 80 on a major grade may participate in a reteach/retest opportunity to demonstrate mastery.
- Secondary students can earn up to an 80 on reassessments.

*** AP, DC and some other courses' grading guidelines follow the policy of their governing body.

APPENDIX VI:

WILLIS HIGH SCHOOL
CLEAR BACKPACK POLICY

Effective Date: September 28, 2026
Revised: September 23, 2026

Legal Authority: Texas Education Code §§11.151 and 37.001; Willis ISD Student Code of Conduct; and applicable District policy.

Willis ISD is committed to providing a safe and secure learning environment for all students and staff. In response to recent safety concerns at Willis High School, including the discovery of firearms on campus, the District is implementing a clear backpack requirement as an additional layer of campus safety.

This requirement increases visibility of items brought onto campus, helps identify prohibited items, deters students from bringing unsafe or prohibited items to school, and establishes consistent safety expectations.

This policy applies to all students in grades 9–12 whenever they are present on the Willis High School campus during school hours.

Students are not required to carry a backpack. However, any backpack brought onto campus must comply with this policy unless specifically exempted below.

Students who bring a backpack onto campus shall use a fully transparent clear plastic or vinyl backpack that allows the contents to be readily visible.

Clear backpacks may contain colored straps, handles, zippers, trim, and small logos, provided those features do not substantially obstruct visibility.

The following are not permitted as a student's regular backpack:

- Traditional nontransparent backpacks;
- Mesh backpacks;
- Tinted, colored, frosted, or cloudy transparent backpacks;
- Nontransparent drawstring bags; or
- Backpacks altered, covered, decorated, or lined in a manner that substantially obstructs visibility.

Students may not intentionally place material inside or outside a clear backpack for the purpose of concealing its contents or defeating the purpose of this policy.

Students may carry one small nontransparent personal pouch or purse not exceeding approximately 6 inches by 9 inches for personal hygiene products, identification, money, personal care items, or other appropriate personal belongings.

Students may also bring a lunch bag or lunch container that may not exceed 10 inches wide × 8 inches high × 6 inches deep. Lunch bags and personal pouches shall not be used as substitutes for backpacks or for transporting general school materials.

All permitted bags and containers remain subject to search when authorized under District policy and applicable law.

Students participating in athletics, fine arts, CTE, or other approved school programs may bring necessary equipment bags, athletic bags, instrument cases, garment bags, or other program-specific bags.

These bags shall not substitute for clear backpacks.

Upon arrival on campus, take specialized bags directly to and store them in the designated locker room, classroom, equipment room, office, or other approved storage location.

Unless school personnel specifically authorize it, students shall not carry these bags throughout campus

during the instructional day and must pick them up after school if they take them home.
Reasonable exceptions apply to medically necessary equipment, medication, disability-related items, or other documented student needs.
Medically necessary or disability-related bags are not required to be clear.

All medically necessary or disability-related bags must be approved by campus administration.
A clear backpack does not prevent school officials from inspecting or searching a student's backpack, bag, container, or other personal belongings when authorized by District policy and applicable law.

All bags brought onto the Willis High School campus remain subject to applicable District search procedures.

The clear backpack requirement does not, by itself, create additional search authority beyond that provided by law and District policy.

A student who brings a noncompliant backpack onto campus may be required to:

1. Transfer necessary materials into an approved clear bag, when available;
2. Secure the noncompliant bag in a location designated by campus administration; or
3. Return the noncompliant bag to a parent, guardian, or vehicle when appropriate.

The primary response to an initial violation should be to correct the violation and communicate the requirement while minimizing disruption to instruction.

Repeated or intentional violations, including refusal to comply with a reasonable administrative directive regarding this policy, may result in disciplinary action consistent with the Willis ISD Student Code of Conduct.

Possession of a weapon, controlled substance, vaping device, or other prohibited or illegal item shall be addressed separately under the Student Code of Conduct, District policy, and applicable law.

The principal or designee may establish procedures to implement and enforce this policy, approve reasonable exceptions, designate storage locations for specialized bags, address circumstances not covered by this policy, and take additional reasonable measures to maintain campus safety.

The clear backpack requirement is one component of Willis High School's comprehensive approach to school safety. It does not replace law enforcement, threat assessment, controlled access, surveillance, student identification, searches authorized by law or District policy, or other campus security measures.

No single safety measure can eliminate every potential threat. The clear backpack requirement provides an additional layer of visibility, prevention, detection, and deterrence to support a safe environment for teaching and learning.

Additional questions should be directed to your campus administration.