STUDENT HANDBOOK

2026 – 2027

South San Antonio Independent School District

South San I.S.D.

210-977-7000
www.southsanisd.net

MARK YOUR CALENDARS 2026-2027 STAAR TEST DATES

Elementary School

Date	Grade Level	Test
April 13, 2027	3rd, 4th, 5th	Reading Language Arts
April 20, 2027	5th	Science
April 27, 2027	3rd, 4th, 5th	Math

Middle School

Date	Grade Level	Test
April 13, 2027	6th, 7th , 8th	Reading Language Arts
April 15, 2027	8th	Social Studies
April 20, 2027	8th	Science
April 27, 2027	6th, 7th , 8th	Math & Algebra I EOC

High School

Date	Grade Level	Test
December 1, 2026(Eng. I) December 2, 2026 (U.S. Hist.) December 3, 2026 (Bio) December 8, 2026 (Eng.II) December 9, 2026 (Alg. I)	All retesters only	All EOCs
April 6 ,2027 (Eng. II) April 13, 2027 (Eng. II)	9th grade, 10th grade & retesters	English I & II EOC
April 15, 2027	9th grade & retesters	Biology EOC
April 20, 2027	11th grade & retesters	U.S. History EOC
April 27, 2027	9th grade & retesters	Algebra I EOC
June 21-24, 2027	All retesters only	All EOCs

SSAISD CAMPUSES		PRINCIPAL	ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	COUNSELOR
	Armstrong Elementary 7111 Apple Valley, 78242 210-623-8787 FAX 210-977-7061 **SCHOOL HOURS** **7:30 AM - 3:00 PM**	Joel Gaines	Alicia San Miguel	Sylvia Sosa
	Benavidez Elementary 8340 I-35 Access Rd, 78224 210-977-7175 FAX 210-977-7466 **SCHOOL HOURS** **7:30 AM - 3:00 PM**	Marisa Garcia	Mark Aguilar	Kathryn Pulliams Lee Sandra Ramirez
	Carrillo Elementary 500 Price Ave, 78211 210-977-7550 FAX 210-977-7312 **SCHOOL HOURS** **7:30 AM - 3:00 PM**	Mario Guillen	Debra Cruz	Patricia Lopez
	Five Palms Elementary 7138 Five Palms, 78242 210-645-3850 FAX 210-977-7064 **SCHOOL HOURS** **7:30 AM - 3:00 PM**	Patricia Merlos		Rachel Mejia
	Madla Elementary 6100 Royalgate, 78242 210-645-3800 FAX 210-977-7059 **SCHOOL HOURS** **7:30 AM - 3:00 PM**	Linda Cruz	Christopher Herrera	Cynthia Olivares
	Hutchins Elementary 1919 W. Hutchins Pl, 78224 210-977-7200 FAX 210-977-7013 **SCHOOL HOURS** **7:30 AM - 3:00 PM**	Charles Garcia	Samantha Martinez	Diana Castilla

	Palo Alto Elementary 1725 Palo Alto Rd, 78211 210-977-7125 FAX 210-977-7018 **SCHOOL HOURS** **7:30 AM - 3:00 PM**	Lauren Kratzenburg	Nora Contreras lucio	Anna Lisa Sanchez
	Price Elementary 245 Price Ave, 78211 210-977-7225 FAX 210-977-7311 **SCHOOL HOURS** **7:30 AM - 3:00 PM**	Eric Boysen	Veronica Renteria	Cynthia Ozuna
	Dwight Middle School 2454 W. Southcross, 78211 210-977-7300 FAX 210-977-7313 **SCHOOL HOURS** **8:05 AM - 3:35 PM**	Lesley Garza	Fernando Gonzalez	Jesse Lopez
	Shepard Middle School 5558 Ray Ellison, 78242 210-623-1875 FAX 210-977-7058 **SCHOOL HOURS** **8:05 AM - 3:35 PM**	Ricardo Moreno	Sandra Sanchez	Linda Suttner
	Zamora Middle School 8638 Larkia Lane, 78224 210-977-7278 FAX 210-977-7008 **SCHOOL HOURS** **8:05 AM - 3:35 PM**	Donna Gomez	Carlos Garza, Assistant Principal Clara Vergara, Academic Dean	Carla Ramirez
	South San High School 7535 Barlite Blvd, 78224 210-977-7400 FAX 210-977-7358 **SCHOOL HOURS** **8:40 AM - 4:15**	Marissa Morales	Jaime Rangel, Assoc. Principal Chazzmin, Academic Dean Assistant Principals: Eduardo	John Davila Ana Flores Barbara Izarraraz Nicolette Douglas

	PM		Narezo	

	Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) 8634 Larkia St, 78224 210-977-7474 **SCHOOL HOURS** **8:05 AM - 3:35 PM**	Florinda Castillo, Principal	Sandra Ramirez, Counselor

Central Administration Office,
5622 Ray Ellison Blvd, San Antonio, TX 78224
(210) 977-7000 www.southsanisd.net

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

PROTECT * PREVENT * PARTICIPATE

Have a concern? Let us know. It's Anonymous. 24/7.

South San Antonio ISD - P3 Anonymous Reporting

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

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

CAMPUS VISITORS

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

STUDENT SIGN-OUT

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

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

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

NO SIGN-OUTS AFTER:

Elementary School.....2:30 pm (*school ends at 3:00 pm*)
Middle School.....3:05 pm (*school ends at 3:35 pm*)
High School.....3:30 pm (*school ends at 4:15 pm*)

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM 5
Preface 18
Parent and Students 18
Accessibility 20
Section One: Parental Rights 21
Consent, Opt-Out, and Refusal Rights 21
Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation 21
Consent to Human Sexuality Instruction 21
Annual Notification 21
Consent to Display a Student's Original Works and Personal Information 24
Consent to Receive Parenting and Paternity Awareness Instruction if a Student is under Age 14 24
Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student when Not Already Permitted by Law 25
Opting Out of Advanced Mathematics in Grades 6-8 25
Prohibiting the Use of Corporal Punishment 25
Limiting Electronic Communications between Students and District Employees 25
Note: Review Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records 27
Objecting to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education (Secondary Grade Levels Only) 27
Participation in Third-Party Surveys 27
Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey 27
Removing a Student from Instruction or Excusing a Student from a Required Component of Instruction 28
Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence in Grades 3–12 28
Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags 29
Religious or Moral Beliefs 29
Tutoring or Test Preparation 29
Right of Access to Student Records, Curriculum Materials, and District Records/Policies 30
Parent Review of Instructional Materials and Plan 30
District Review of Instructional Materials 30
Notices of Certain Student Misconduct to Noncustodial Parent 31
Participation in Federally Required, State-Mandated, and District Assessments 31
Student Records 31
Accessing Student Records 31
Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records 32
Teacher and Staff Professional Qualifications 35
A Student with Exceptionalities or Special Circumstances 35
Children of Military Families 35
Parental Role in Certain Classroom and School Assignments 36
Multiple-Birth Siblings 36
Safety Transfers/Assignments 36
Student Use of a Service/Assistance Animal 37
A Student in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care) 37
Students Who are Homeless 37
Section 504 Referrals 39

Absences/Attendance....42
Section Two: Other Important Information for Parents and Students.... 42
Absences and Attendance.... 42
Compulsory Attendance.... 42
Prekindergarten and Kindergarten....42
Ages 6–18....43
Age 19 and Older....43
Compulsory Attendance Exemptions.... 44
All Grade Levels.... 44
Secondary Grade Levels.... 45
[See Driver License Attendance Verification.].... 45
Compulsory Attendance-Failure to Comply....46
SSAISD Attendance Advocate Contact Information....48
Attendance for Credit or Final Grade (All Grade Levels)....49
Official Attendance-Taking Time (All Grade Levels).... 50
Documentation after Absence (All Grade Levels).... 50
Tardiness.... 52
Academic Integrity (All Grade Levels).... 52
Cheating.... 52
Plagiarism....53
Accountability Under State & Federal Law (All Grade Levels).... 54
Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Test (Grades 10-12)....54
Awards and Honors (All Grade Levels).... 54
Bullying (All Grade Levels).... 55
Career & Technical Education (CTE) Programs....57
Celebrations.... 59
Child Sexual Abuse, Trafficking & Other Maltreatment of Children....60
Duty to Report.... 60
Possible Warning Signs of Child Abuse, Neglect, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children. 60
Physical abuse....60
Sexual Abuse....60
Emotional Abuse.... 61
Neglect.... 61
Description and Warning Signs of Trafficking....61
[See Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking.].... 62
Class Rank/ Highest Ranking Student.... 64
(Secondary Grade Levels Only).... 64
Transferred Grades.... 65
Local Graduation Honors....65
Ranking for Early Graduates.... 65
Valedictorian and Salutatorian....65
Honor Graduates.... 66

Class Schedules....66
(Secondary Grade Levels Only)....66
College and University Admissions and Financial Aid....66
(Secondary Grade Levels only)....66
College Credit Courses....67
(Secondary Grade Levels Only)....67
Communications....68
(All Grade Levels)....68
Parent Contact Information....68
Automated Emergency Communications....69
Automated Nonemergency Communications....69
Standard messaging rates of your wireless phone carrier may apply....69
Complaints and Concerns....69
(All Grade Levels)....69
Conduct....70
(All Grade Levels)....70
Applicability of School Rules....70
Campus Behavior Coordinator....70
Deliveries....70
Disruption of School Operations....70
Social Events....71
Counseling....71
Academic Counseling....72
Elementary and Middle School Grade Levels....72
High School Grade Levels....72
College and career readiness....73
Guidance curriculum and small group counseling....73
The professional school counselor will offer guidance curriculum to all students in South San Antonio ISD. Guidance lessons will include topics addressing, but not limited to character traits, self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision-making, self-management, and....73
relationship skills....73
Small group guidance counseling may also be provided. A parent/guardian may choose to....73
have their child opt out of these small group lessons and can indicate this on the....73
permission slips sent home with the student. For additional questions and answers, please....73
contact the campus professional school counselor....73
Personal Counseling (All Grade Levels)....73
[See Mental Health Support , Child Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children, and Dating Violence.]....74
South San Antonio ISD school age parenting program (SAPP)....74
SAPP provides support services to pregnant and/or parenting students (Males and....74
Females) to stay in school and graduate, pregnancy and parenting education and....74
community referrals. The program's case management consists of homebound services, transportation, childcare assistance, parenting education, counseling, and academic support....74

If your child believes she is pregnant, or he might be a parent, please contact your child's school counselor. 74
Course Credit. 74
Credit Recovery. 74
Grades 9-12. 74
The Credit Recovery opportunity that the district makes available to district students is. 74
Edgenuity. Students may be able to recover a full credit, a partial credit or a 9-weeks. 74
credit, where applicable. Edgenuity is an online program offered for course recovery for. 74
core content areas during the school day and/or after school after a student has failed a. 74
specific course. Not all Grades 9-12 courses are available in Edgenuity. School counselors. 74
can determine if a student is eligible for an Edgenuity Credit Recovery course. Edgenuity. 74
is not for acceleration. 74
[For further information, see the school counselor and policy EHDB(LOCAL).]. 74
Credit by Exam. 74
If a Student Has Taken the Course/Subject (Grades 6–12). 74
Credit by Exam for Advancement/Acceleration—If a Student Has Not Taken the Course/Subject. 75
Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (All Grade Levels). 77
Dating Violence. 77
[See Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking.]. 78
Discrimination. 78
Pregnancy or Related Conditions. 79
Retaliation. 79
Reporting Procedures. 79
Investigation of Report. 80
Distance Learning. 80
(Secondary Grade Levels). 80
Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN) (Secondary Grade Levels). 81
Distribution of Literature, Published Materials, or Other Documents. 81
(All Grade Levels). 81
School Materials. 81
Non School Materials From Students. 81
From Others. 82
Dress and Groom. 83
(All Grade Levels). 83
Accessories not permitted:. 83
Footwear not permitted:. 84
Tattoos:. 84
Electronic Devices and Technology Resources. 85
(All Grade Levels). 85
Safe Use of Technology. 85
Possession and Use of Personal Telecommunications Devices, Including Cell Phones, and Other Electronic Devices. 86

Definitions for purposes of this policy.... 86
Student Possession and Use of Personal Communication Devices....87
Administrative Action.... 87
Devices can be retrieved by a parent or guardian with proper ID at the end of the school day.... 88
Exceptions for Authorized Use.... 88
Instructional Use of Personal Electronic Devices.... 89
Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources.... 89
Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources....89
End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments.... 90
Emergent Bilingual Students.... 90
Enrollment.... 90
Child in DPRS Possession.... 91
Inconsistent Documentation.... 91
Missing Documentation.... 91
Students Under Age Eleven.... 92
False Information....92
Residency Review for Extracurricular Activities.... 92
Change of Address....93
Extracurricular Activities, Clubs and Organizations....93
(All Grade Levels)....93
Standards of Behavior....94
Offices and Elections....94
Fees.... 95
(All Grade Levels)....95
Fundraising....96
(All Grade Levels)....96
Gang-Free Zones....96
(All Grade Levels)....96
Gender-Based Harassment....96
Grade-Level Classification.... 96
Grading Guidelines....97
(All Grade Levels)....97
Citizenship Grading System.... 98
Progress Reports....98
Reporting to Parents....98
Graduation....99
(Secondary Grade Levels Only).... 99
Requirements for a Diploma....99
Testing Requirements for Graduation....99
Foundation Graduation Program.... 100
Credits Required....101
Available Endorsements.... 102
Foundation Program without an Endorsement.... 102

Financial Aid Application Requirement....103
Personal Graduation Plans....103
Available Course Options for All Graduation Programs....104
Certificates of Coursework Completion....104
Students with Disabilities....104
Graduation Activities....105
Graduation Speakers....105
Other Student Graduation Speakers....106
Scholarships and Grants....107
See College and University Admissions and Financial Aid (All Grade Levels)....107
Harassment....107
Hazing....107
Health — Physical and Mental....108
Illness (All Grade Levels)....108
Homebound Services....109
Immunization (All Grade Levels)....109
Lice (All Grade Levels)....110
Medicine at School (All Grade Levels)....111
Asthma and Severe Allergic Reactions....112
Unassigned Epinephrine Delivery Systems....112
Epinephrine delivery systems include brand-name devices such as EpiPens® and Neffy®....112
Unassigned Prescription Asthma Medication....112
Unassigned Medication for Respiratory Distress....113
Unassigned Opioid Antagonists (All Grades)....113
Steroids (Secondary Grade Levels Only)....114
Mental Health Support (All Grade Levels)....114
Physical Activity Requirements....115
Elementary School....115
Middle School....115
Temporary Restriction from Participation in Physical Education....115
Physical Fitness Assessment (Grades 3–12)....115
Physical Health Screenings/Examinations....116
Spinal Screening Program....116
Other Examinations and Screenings (All Grade Levels)....116
Diabetes....117
Food Allergies (All Grade Levels)....117
Seizures (All Grade Levels)....117
Tobacco, E-Cigarettes, and Nicotine Products Prohibited (All Grade Levels)....118
Health-Related Resources, Policies, and Procedures....118
Policies and Procedures that Promote Student Physical and Mental Health (All Grade Levels)....118
School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) (All Grade Levels)....119
Student Wellness Policy/Wellness Plan (All Grade Levels)....120
Homework....120

(All Grade Levels)....120
Law Enforcement Agencies (All Grade Levels)....120
Students Taken into Custody....120
Notification of Law Violations....121
Leaving Campus (All Grade Levels)....121
During Lunch....122
At Any Other Time during the School Day....122
Lost and Found (All Grade Levels)....122
Makeup Work....123
DAEP Makeup Work Grades 9-12....123
In-School Suspension (ISS) and Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) Makeup Work (All Grade Levels) 123
Alternative Means to Receive Coursework....123
Opportunity to Complete Courses....124
Married and/or Pregnant Students....124
Nondiscrimination Statement (All Grade Levels)....125
Nontraditional Academic Programs (Secondary Grade Levels Only)....126
Parent and Family Engagement (All Grade Levels)....126
Parent and Family Engagement Opportunities....127
Parental Rights and Options....128
Working Together....128
Parking and Parking Permits (Secondary Grade Levels Only)....129
Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence (All Grade Levels)....129
Prayer (All Grade Levels)....130
Promotion and Retention....130
Prekindergarten—Grade 2....130
High School Grade Levels....130
Repeating a High-School Credit Course....130
Release of Students from School....131
Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences (All Grade Levels)....131
Retaliation....132
Required State Assessments....132
Standardized Testing for a Student Enrolled Above Grade Level....132
High School Courses End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments....132
Requesting Administration of STAAR/EOC in Paper Format (All Grade Levels)....132
Standardized Testing for a Student in Special Programs....133
Failure to Perform Satisfactorily on STAAR or EOC....133
Personal Graduation Plans — Middle School Students....133
Safe Storage of Firearms....134
Safety (All Grade Levels)....134
Accident Insurance....135
Preparedness Drills: Evacuation, Severe Weather, and Other Emergencies....135
Preparedness Training: CPR and Stop the Bleed....135

Emergency Medical Treatment and Information....135
Emergency School Closing Information.... 136
SAT, ACT, and Other Standardized Tests....136
Schedule Changes.... 136
School Facilities.... 137
Asbestos Management Plan.... 137
1. fax:....138
2. email:.... 138
School-Sponsored Field Trips (All Grade Levels).... 140
Searches and Investigations.... 141
Sexual Harassment.... 142
Special Programs (All Grade Levels).... 142
Standardized Testing....143
Student Speakers (All Grade Levels).... 143
Summer School (Grade 8-12).... 144
Tardies (All Grade Levels).... 144
Textbooks, Electronic Textbooks, Technological Equipment, and Other Instructional Materials (All Grade Levels)....144
Transfers (All Grade Levels)....144
Transportation (All Grade Levels)....147
Buses and Other School Vehicles.... 147
Vandalism (All Grade Levels).... 148
Video Cameras (All Grade Levels)....148
Visitors to the School (All Grade Levels)....149
ALL VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS ON CAMPUS ARE SCREENED THROUGH THE NATIONAL SEX OFFENDER AND CRIMINAL DATABASE.... 149
Unauthorized Persons....149
Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students.... 150
Business, Civic, and Youth Groups.... 150
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... 150
Career Day.... 150
Volunteers (All Grade Levels)....150
Voter Registration (Secondary Grade Levels Only).... 150
Withdrawing from School (All Grade Levels)....150
Glossary.... 151
Appendix: Freedom from Bullying Policy....154
Student Welfare: Freedom from Bullying....154
Bullying Prohibited....154
Minimum Standards....154
Retaliation....154
False Claim....155
Timely Reporting....155

Reporting Procedures....155
Notice of Report....155
Prohibited Conduct....156
Investigation of Report....156
Concluding the Investigation....156
Notice to Parents....156
District Action....156
Confidentiality....157
Appeal....157
Records Retention....157
Access to Policy and Procedures....157
Appendix: Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy....158
Student Rights and Responsibilities: Student and Parent Complaints/Grievances....158
Complaints....158
Other Complaint Processes....158
Notice to Students and Parents....159
Guiding Principles....159
Freedom from Retaliation....160
General Provisions....160
Level One....162
Level Two....162
Level Three....163

Preface

Parent and Students

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year!

Education is a team effort. Students, parents, teachers, and other staff members working together will make this a successful year.
We believe that students can make responsible decisions regarding their behavior when they understand both the rules and the consequences of violating them. We ask students to please read this Handbook carefully and request all students to listen attentively and actively participate during presentations on this topic at school. If students need assistance, they should ask for help before a problem arises.

The support of parents is critical to success at school; therefore, we request all parents read the Handbook to counsel their children about its content and importance. By working together, we can keep our energy focused upon our primary goal: student success

The South San Antonio ISD Student-Parent 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 South San Antonio ISD Student Code of Conduct. To review the Code of Conduct, visit the district’s website at ***southsanisd.net***. State law requires that the Code of Conduct be prominently displayed or made available for review at each campus.
A HARD COPY OF THE STUDENT HANDBOOK CAN BE REQUESTED AT YOUR STUDENT’S HOME 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 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.

Note: References to board policy codes are included for ease of reference. The hard copy of the district's official policy manual is available for review in the district administration office, and an unofficial electronic copy is available at southsanisd.net.
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 your student's campus administrator.

The following forms are a part of the online enrollment process and must be completed for enrollment:

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

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

Accessibility

If you have difficulty accessing this handbook because of a disability, please contact the communications department.

Alexis Lafosse
Director of Communication
alexis.lafosse@southsanisd.net
210-977-7005

South San Antonio ISD is looking forward to a successful 2026-27 school year, and by working together we can all achieve our goals toward the success of all our students.

Thank you for your support.

Section One: Parental Rights

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

Consent, Opt-Out, and Refusal Rights

Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation

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

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

Consent to Human Sexuality Instruction
Annual Notification

As a part of the district's curriculum, students receive instruction related to human sexuality. The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) makes recommendations for curriculum materials, and the school board adopts the materials and determines the specific content of the instruction.

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

In accordance with state law, a parent may:

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

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

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

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

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

Consent Before Human Sexuality Instruction

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

Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking

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

Annual Notification

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

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

In accordance with state law, a parent may:

- Review, receive a copy of, or purchase a copy of curriculum materials depending on the copyright of the materials. As required by law, any curriculum materials in the public domain used in this instruction will be posted on the district's website at the location indicated above.
- Remove his or her child from any part of this instruction without academic, disciplinary, or other penalties.

- Become involved in the development of this curriculum by becoming a member of the district's SHAC or attending SHAC meetings. (See the campus principal for details.)
- Use the district's grievance procedure concerning a complaint. See **Complaints and Concerns (All Grade Levels)** and FNG for information on the grievance and appeals process.

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

Consent to Provide a Mental Health Care Service

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

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

South San Antonio ISD has partnered with the San Antonio Mobile Mental Wellness Collaborative to offer no-cost mental wellness services at the SSAISD CARE Zone, which is located at 2454 W. Southcross, San Antonio, TX 78211. These evidence-based services include: individual, group, family, and substance abuse counseling, as well as psychiatry, and community education groups.

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

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

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

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

Rosemary Morales
Director of Guidance & Counseling
rosemary.morales@southsanisd.net
210-977-7000

Ron Flores
Licensed Social Worker
ronald.flores@southsanisd.net
210-977-7400

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

[See **Mental Health Support**]

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

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

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

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

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

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

A student under age 14 must have parental permission to participate in the district's Parenting and Paternity Awareness Program (https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/child-support/programs-and-initiatives/parenting-and-paternity-awareness-papa/papa-educators/papa-curriculum).

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:

- School safety
- Classroom instruction or a co-curricular or extracurricular activity
- Media coverage of the school
- 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 60th percentile or higher on the grade 5 mathematics STAAR or in the top 40 percent on 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.

Prohibiting the Use of Corporal Punishment

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

Limiting Electronic Communications between Students and District Employees

The district permits teachers and other approved employees to use electronic communications with students within the scope of professional responsibilities, as described by district guidelines.

For example, a teacher may create a networking page, such as Google Classroom, to relay information about 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.

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

Objecting to the Release of Directory Information

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

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

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

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

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

The district has identified the following as directory information: student name; address; telephone listing; electronic mail address; photograph; date and place of birth; major field of study; degrees, honors, and awards received; dates of attendance; grade level; most recent educational institution attended; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; and weight and height of members of athletic teams. If a parent objects to the release of the

student's information included on the directory information response form, this objection also applies to the use of that information for school-sponsored purposes, such as:

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

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

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

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

- Name
- Address
- Telephone listing

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

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

Participation in Third-Party Surveys

Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) provides parents certain rights regarding participation in surveys, the collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams.
A parent has the right to consent before a student is required to submit to a survey funded by the U.S. Department of Education that concerns any of the following protected areas:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
- Sex behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship;
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, and ministers;

- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parent; or
- Income, except when the information is required by law and will be used to determine the student's eligibility for a program.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- 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.
- 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** and policy EC(LEGAL) for more information.]

Religious or Moral Beliefs

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

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

Tutoring or Test Preparation

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

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

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

In accordance with state law and policy EC, districts must obtain parental permission before removing a student from a regularly scheduled class for remedial tutoring or test preparation for more than 10 percent of the days the class is offered.

If a district offers tutorial services to students, state law requires a student with a grade below 70 for a reporting period to attend.

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

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

Parent Review of Instructional Materials and Plan

A parent has the right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum, and to examine tests that have been administered, whether instruction is delivered in-person, virtually, or remotely.

The district will make instructional materials available for parent review no later than 30 days before the school year begins and for at least 30 days after the school year ends. However, tests that have not yet been administered will not be made available for parent examination.

The district will provide login credentials to each student's parent for any learning management system or online learning portal used in instruction to facilitate parent access and review.

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

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

Teachers are required to provide a copy of the teacher's instructional plan or course syllabus for each class to the parent of each student enrolled in that class before the beginning of each semester. A parent may obtain additional copies of the plan or syllabus by request to the campus administrator.

[For information about parental access to any online library catalog and library materials, including records of their child's checked out library materials, see Library (All Grade Levels).]

District Review of Instructional Materials

A parent may request that the district conduct an instructional material review in a math, English Language Arts, science, or social studies class in which the parent's student is enrolled to determine alignment with state standards and the level of rigor for the grade level.

The district is not required to conduct an instructional material review for a specific subject area or grade level at a specific campus more than once per school year.

For more information about requesting and instructional material review, contact the campus

principal.

Notices of Certain Student Misconduct to Noncustodial Parent

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

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

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

Student Records

Accessing Student Records

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

- Attendance records;
- Test scores;
- Grades;
- Disciplinary records;
- Counseling records;
- Psychological records;
- Applications for admission;
- Health and immunization information;
- Other medical records;
- Teacher and school counselor evaluations;
- Reports of behavioral patterns;
- Records relating to assistance provided for learning difficulties, including information collected regarding any intervention strategies used with the child, as the term "intervention strategy" is defined by law;
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to the child; and
- Teaching materials and tests used in the child's classroom.

Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Legitimate educational interest may include:

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

School officials may include:

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

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

- To authorized representatives of various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers, the U.S. Comptroller General's office, the U.S. Attorney General's office, the U.S. Secretary of Education, the Texas Education Agency, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture's office, and Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers or, in certain cases, other child welfare representatives.
- To individuals or entities granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- To another school, district/system, or postsecondary educational institution to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which the student already is enrolled.
- In connection with financial aid for which a student has applied or has received.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; administer student aid programs; or improve instruction.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- When the district discloses directory information-designated details. [See **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** to prohibit this disclosure.]

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

The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The Director of Student Support Services is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated.

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

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

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

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

Former students may request their records using the district's on-line portal at:
https://southsanisd.scriborder.com/

For any questions regarding student records please contact:
Sandra Castillo
Records Specialist
5622 Ray Ellison Blvd., San Antonio, TX 78242
sandra.castillo@southsanisd.net
210-977-7000

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

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

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

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

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

Teacher and Staff Professional Qualifications

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

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

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

A Student with Exceptionalities or Special Circumstances

Children of Military Families

The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children (https://www.dodea.edu/education/partnership-and-resources/military-interstate-compact) entitles children of military families to flexibility regarding certain district and state requirements, including:

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

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

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

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

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

Parental Role in Certain Classroom and School Assignments

Multiple-Birth Siblings

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

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

Safety Transfers/Assignments

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

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

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

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

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

[See policy FDE for more information.]

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

Student Use of a Service/Assistance Animal

A parent of a student who uses a service/assistance animal because of the student's disability must submit a written request to the principal before bringing the service/assistance animal on campus. The district will try to accommodate a request as soon as possible but will do so within 10 district business days.
Emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition

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

A student in the conservatorship (custody) of the state who enrolls in the district after the beginning of the school year will be allowed credit-by-examination opportunities at any point during the year.
The district will assess the student's available records to determine transfer of credit for subjects and courses taken before the student's enrollment in the district.
The district will award partial course credit when the student only passes one half of a two-half course. [For provisions on partial course credit for students who are not in the conservatorship of the state, see EI(LOCAL).]
A student in the conservatorship of the state who is moved outside the district's or school's attendance boundaries—or who is initially placed in the conservatorship of the state and moved outside the district's or school's boundaries—is entitled to remain at the school the student was attending prior to the placement or move until the student reaches the highest -grade level at that particular school.
If a student in grade 11 or 12 transfers to another district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, the student can request a diploma from the previous district if the student meets its graduation criteria.
For a student in the conservatorship of the state who is eligible for a tuition and fee exemption under state law and likely to be in care on the day preceding the student's 18th birthday, the district will:

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

If you have any questions, please contact the district's foster care liaison: Leticia Rodriguez at (210) 977-7000 or leticia.rodriguez@southsanisd.net

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

Students Who are Homeless

Children who are homeless will be provided provisional enrollment 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.
- 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. The student may opt into state school selection provision (TEC § 25.001 (b)5.

A student who is homeless can select to enroll in any LEA (local education agencies) in the state. The McKinney-Vento liaison will assist in selecting the campus that best meets the needs of the student. Under the state provision, McKinney-Vento transportation does not apply.
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.
For more information on services for students who are homeless, contact the district's homeless education liaison: Leticia Rodriguez at (210) 977-7000 or leticia.rodriguez@southsanisd.net
[See Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration, Course Credit, and Students who are Homeless.]

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

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

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

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

Special Education Referrals

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

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:

Jacob Collazo
Director of Special Education
5622 Ray Ellison Blvd., San Antonio, TX 78242
jacob.collazo@southsanisd.net
210-977-7000 ext. 3583

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

Dr. Krisi Jordan
Coordinator of Evaluations, Compliance & Campus Services
5622 Ray Ellison Blvd., San Antonio, TX 78242
kristi.jordan@southsanisd.net
210-977-7000 ext. 3573

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:

Dr. Krisi Jordan
Coordinator of Evaluations, Compliance & Campus Services
5622 Ray Ellison Blvd., San Antonio, TX 78242
kristi.jordan@southsanisd.net
210-977-7000 ext. 3573

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

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

Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process (https://fw.escapps.net/Display_Portal?destination=/)

Partner Resource Network (http://prntexas.org/)

SPEDTEX: Special Education Information Center (https://www.spedtex.org/)

Texas First Project (http://www.texasprojectfirst.org/)

TEA Special Education Parent and Family Resources (https://tea.texas.gov/academics/special-student-populations/special-education/parent-and-family-resources)

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.

Texas Driving with Disability Program

In accordance with state law, the district will provide notification of the Texas Driving with Disability Program to students who have a health condition or disability that may impede effective communication with a peace officer and receive special education or are covered by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This notification will be provided annually to an eligible student aged 16 years or older until the student's graduation or 21st birthday and to the student's parents.

The Texas Driving with Disability Program focuses on improving the interaction between law enforcement and drivers with disabilities that have unique communication needs.

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

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

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

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

A Student Who Speaks a Primary Language Other than English

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

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

[See Emergent Bilingual Students and Special Programs.]

A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504

A student with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, as defined by law—and who does not otherwise qualify for special education services—may qualify for protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Section 504 is a federal law designed to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities. When an evaluation is requested, a committee will be formed to determine whether the student needs services and 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** and policy FB for more information.]

Section Two: Other Important Information for Parents and Students

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

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

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

Absences and Attendance

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

ATTENDANCE TAKEN TIMES

High School- 10:00
Middle School -10:00
Elementary School -10:00

BELL SCHEDULE

Please adhere to the bell schedule to prevent a student from being tardy. Attendance is taken in the morning and at the beginning of each class period at the secondary level.

Elementary School – 7:30 AM to 3:00 PM
Middle School – 8:05 AM to 3:35 PM
High School – 8:35 AM to 4:15 PM

Compulsory Attendance

Prekindergarten and Kindergarten

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

Ages 6–18

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

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

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

Age 19 and Older

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

SSAISD Student Absence Coding

For official attendance accounting purposes, TEA only recognizes students that are counted "Present" at 10:00 am each SSAISD school day - each campus is then responsible for correctly coding students that are absent.

SSAISD uses the following attendance types for student absences:

Absent Classroom (ABS) - the teacher marked the student absent from their class and a reason verification note was not provided to the school.

Compulsory Attendance Exemptions

REQUIREMENTS FOR A STUDENT TO BE CONSIDERED PRESENT FOR FSP (FUNDING) PURPOSES: (ALL GRADE LEVELS)

All Grade Levels

A student not actually on campus at the time attendance is taken may be considered in attendance for FSP purposes listed below:

- Religious holy days.
- Required court appearances.
- Appearing at a governmental office to obtain U.S. citizenship.
- Taking part in a US naturalization oath ceremony.
- Serving as an election clerk.
- Participates in an activity that is board approved by the school board and is under the direction of a professional staff member, an adjunct staff member, or a professional member of the school district.
- Documented health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences related to autism services and mental health appointments, if the student returns to school on the same day as the appointment and brings a note from the healthcare provider.
- Absences resulting from a serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment that makes a student's attendance infeasible, with certification by a physician on the district's form.
- Absences for attendance in a released time course in religious instruction.
- For students in the conservatorship of the state.
    - An activity required under a court-ordered service plan; or
    - Any other court-ordered activity provided it is not practicable to schedule the student's participation in the activity outside of school hours.

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

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

Secondary Grade Levels

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

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

The district will allow junior and senior students to be absent for up to two days per year to visit a college or university if the following conditions are met:

- The board has authorized such excused absences under policy FEA(LOCAL);
- The principal has approved the student's absence; and
- The student follows campus procedures to verify the visit and makes up for 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 during the student's junior year and two days during the student's senior year for a career investigation day to visit a professional at that individual's workplace to determine the student's interest in pursuing a career in the professional's field, 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 who is absent without permission from school for any class, any required special programs, or any required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.
Withdrawal for Non-Attendance

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

1. The student has been absent ten consecutive school days; and
2. Repeated efforts by the attendance officer and/or principal to locate the student have been unsuccessful.
3. A certified letter has been sent to parents without a response received within the specified timeframe.

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

Students with Disabilities

If a student with a disability is experiencing attendance issues, the student’s ARD or Section 504 committee will determine whether the attendance issues warrant an evaluation, a reevaluation, and/or modifications to the student's individualized education program or Section 504 plan, as appropriate.
Ages 6–19

When a student, age 6 -19, incurs 3 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 Coordinator may be reached:
Gilbert Cavazos
Enrollment, Dropout and Truancy Prevention Coordinator
(210) 977-7000 Ext.3603
gilbert.cavazos@southsanisd.net

If you have questions about your student and the effect of your student's absences from school, please contact the coordinator or any other campus administrator.

For any questions about student absences, parents should first contact the student's teacher.

South San Antonio ISD employs four attendance advocates assigned across district campuses to serve as liaisons between the District and juvenile court authorities regarding student attendance matters. These professionals collaborate with campus personnel, parents or guardians, and community stakeholders to improve student attendance and support student achievement.

Attendance Advocates conduct home visits to verify residences and guardianships, investigate suspected violations of state compulsory attendance laws, and provide counseling to parents, guardians, and students to address and prevent truancy. When attendance law violations occur, the Attendance Advocate pursues appropriate corrective measures to ensure compliance.

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 12–19 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.]

SSAISD Attendance Advocate Contact Information

Advocate Name	Contact Information	Campus
Emily Badillo	(210) 977-7400 ext. 3324 (210) 848-4879 emily.badillo@southsanisd.net	South San High School DAEP
Gilbert Cavazos	(210) 977-7000 ext. 3603 (210) 996-9149 gilbert.cavazos@southsanisd.net	Zamora Middle School Benavidez Elem Hutchins Elem
Jerry Dominguez	(210) 977-7000 ext. 3602 (210) 392-4380 gerardo.dominguez@southsanisd.net	Shepard Middle School Armstrong Elem Five Palms Elem Madla Elem
Irma Munoz	(210) 977-7000 ext. 3644 (210) 833-0456 irma.munoz@southsanisd.net	Dwight Middle School Carrillo Elem Palo Alto Elem Price Elem

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.

Truancy Prevention / Intervention Measures

- If a student is absent without a valid excuse three or more days or parts of days in a four-week period, the designated campus attendance facilitator, as mandated by law will schedule a conference with the student and parent/guardian to issue an attendance warning notice (WN) and develop an individual attendance plan (IAP). TEC Sec. 25.095 and Sec. 25.0915
- The individual attendance plan herein constitutes a behavior improvement plan in that the student and or parent/guardian agree to implement the truancy measures outlined for a period or not fewer than 45 school days to become effective on the date signed.
- If a student continues to be absent without a valid excuse after the issuing of the warning notice and development of the individual attendance plan, the student and or parent/guardian may be subject to a complaint filed in a county, justice, or municipal court. Specifically, if a student accumulates 10 unexcused absences in a six-month period, a student and parent/guardian may be referred for legal action.

A court of law may also impose penalties against both the student and the student's parents if a school-aged student enrolled and is deliberately not attending school. A complaint against the parent and/or student may be filed in court if the student:

- Is absent from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, or
- For a student younger than 12 years of age, the student's parent could be charged with an offense based on the student's failure to attend school.
- If a student, age 12 through age 17, violates the compulsory attendance law, both the parent and the student could be charged with an offense.
  [See policy FEA (LEGAL).]

Attendance for Credit or Final Grade (All Grade Levels)

(Kindergarten–grade 12)

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 the student completes a plan, approved by the principal, that allows the student to fulfill the class's instructional requirements.

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.]

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

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

Official Attendance-Taking Time (All Grade Levels)

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

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

Documentation after Absence (All Grade Levels)
(All grade levels)

A parent must provide an explanation for any absence within three days of returning to school. The student must submit a note signed by the parent. The campus may accept a phone call from the parent but reserves the right to require a written note.
Parent Notes/Excused Absences
During the Fall semester, up to five parent notes will be accepted for excused absences. During the Spring semester, up to five parent notes will be accepted for excused absences. Each parent note excuses only one day of absence. Parents may submit up to five notes per semester. Absences beyond the fifth per semester, even with parental documentation, will be classified as unexcused or determined at the campus level.
A note signed by the student will not be accepted unless the student is age 18 or older or is an emancipated minor under state law.
The campus will document in its attendance records whether the absence is excused or unexcused according to the Texas Education Agency Student Attendance Accounting Handbook.

Note: Unless the absence is for a reason permitted under state compulsory attendance laws, the district retains discretion to excuse or deny any absence request, regardless of parental documentation

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

Within 3 days of returning to school, a student who is absent for more than 3 consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the absence. Otherwise, the absence may be considered unexcused and in violation of compulsory attendance laws.

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

Certification of Absence Due to Severe Illness or Treatment

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

PLEASE CONTACT THE APPROPRIATE CAMPUS ATTENDANCE OFFICE IN THE EVENT THE YOUR CHILD MUST BE ABSENT FROM SCHOOL

Campus	Attendance Clerk	Contact Information

Armstrong Elem	Eva Salazar	(210) 623-8787 ext. 1104 esalazar@southsanisd.net
Benavidez Elem	Lenore McMorries	(210) 911-7175 ext. 1304 lenore.mcmorries@southsanisd.net
Carrillo Elem	Frances Flores	(210) 977-7550 ext. 1404 frflores@southsanisd.net
Five Palms Elem	Ashlyn Gusme	(210) 623-8787 ext. 1504 agusme@southsanisd.net
Hutchins Elem	Zenaida Guerra	(210) 977-7200 ext. 1704 zguerra@southsanisd.net
Madla Elem	Judi Delgado	(210) 645-3800 ext. 1604 judelgado@southsanisd.net
Palo Alto Elem	Alexandrea Serrata	(210) 977-7125 ext. 1904 alexandrea.serrata@southsanisd.net

Price Elem	Margaret Garcia	(210) 977-7225 ext. 2004 mgarcia2@southsanisd.net
Dwight MS	Divina Bravo	(210) 977-7300 ext. 2204 dbravo.pl@southsanisd.net
Shepard MS	Caroline Mora	(210) 623-1875 ext. 2604 cmora@southsanisd.net
Zamora MS	Marie Contreras	(210) 977-7278 ext. 2804 marie.contreras@southsanisd.net
South San HS	Mona Acevedo	(210) 977-7400 ext. 3306 mona.acevedo@southsanisd.net
DAEP	Gina Rojas	(210) 977-7474 ext. 2901 gina.rojas@southsanisd.net

Drivers License Attendance Verification (Secondary Grade Levels Only)
(SECONDARY GRADE LEVELS ONLY)

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

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

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

Tardiness

A student is considered tardy when the student arrives to class after the class bell rings. A student who is tardy to class will be subject to the disciplinary consequences established by the tardy policy. It is the parent's responsibility to explain in writing any tardiness to school. Failure to provide a written explanation will automatically be considered unexcused tardiness. Tardies are accumulated per semester. Students will begin each semester with zero tardiness.
Excessive tardies without an excuse could result in any of the following:

- Warning/Conference
- Referral to Counselor/Social Worker
- Teacher contacts parent
- The student referred to the office.
- Letter sent to the parent.
- Student with perfect attendance and excessive tardies will not be recognized at the Honor Assemblies
- Parent will be required to contact the school and attend a mandatory conference with the principal or designee.
- Student's ability to participate in extra-curricular activities may be affected.
- A student's conduct and/or effort grade may be lowered in the subject missed.
- Students on an inter district (out-of-district) transfers will be returned to home district.

Academic Integrity (All Grade Levels)

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

Cheating

Dishonesty of any kind on a test or examination, written assignment, or project is considered cheating. This includes but is not limited to:

- Illegal possession of test or examination questions
- The use of unauthorized notes or devices (including AI tools) during a test or examination
- Obtaining or giving information about a test or examination from or to another student

- Assisting others to cheat
- Altering grade records
- Using artificial intelligence tools (e.g., ChatGPT, AI writing assistants) to generate or complete assignments, tests, or projects without explicit instructor permission

Plagiarism

Offering the work of another as one's own without proper acknowledgment is plagiarism. A student is guilty of plagiarism if they:

● Fail to give credit for quotations or essentially identical material taken from books, encyclopedias, magazines, internet sources, or other reference works

● Submit the themes, reports, or other writings of a fellow student as their own

● Submit AI-generated content (e.g., essays, code, summaries) without proper citation or authorization, or present it as their original work

Accountability Under State & Federal Law (All Grade Levels)

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

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

Accountability information can be found on the district's website at ***southsanisd.net***. Hard copies of any reports are available upon request to the district's administration office.

TEA maintains additional accountability and accreditation information at:

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

Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Test (Grades 10-12)

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

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

Awards and Honors (All Grade Levels)

Students will receive special recognition by being listed on the school honor roll at the end of each nine weeks if they meet the criteria listed below:

- "A" Honor Roll – All "A's" in all subjects with conduct grade of Excellent or Satisfactory.
- "A" and "B Honor Roll – All "A's" and "B's" in all subjects with conduct grade of Excellent or Satisfactory
- All other honors will be determined by the campus administration and/or classroom teach

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.

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 occurring
- 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

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

The district will use an age-appropriate survey regarding school culture that includes relevant questions on bullying to identify and address student concerns.

Each campus has a committee that addresses bullying by focusing on prevention efforts and health and wellness initiatives. The committee will include parents and secondary students. For more information on this committee, including interest in serving on the committee, contact the campus principal.

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. Any district employee aware of a reporting of a bullying incident will relay the report to an appropriate administrator. Procedures for reporting allegations of bullying may be found on the district's website.

A student may anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying by using the CrisisGo https://webapp.crisisgo.net/tipline-report/mobile/#/report?safetyReportId=2806&reportName=TipLine&workspaceId=14111&reportUserType=1&shareFrom=icontrol

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.

The district will provide research-based interventions, with may include counseling options, for students who engage in bullying behaviors, students who are targeted by bullying behaviors, and any student who witnessed bullying behaviors.

Any action taken in response to bullying will comply with state and federal law regarding students with disabilities.

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**.]

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

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

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

Career & Technical Education (CTE) Programs

(Secondary Grade Levels Only)

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

- Animal Science
- Carpentry
- Air Conditioning, Heating (HVAC)

- Electrical
- Multimedia Arts (Graphic Design & Illustration, Animation, Photography)
- Digital Communications
- Business Management
- Nursing Science
- Culinary Arts
- Cosmetology and Personal Care Services
- Cybersecurity
- Law Enforcement
- Welding
- Engineering
- Automotive Technology
- Automotive Collision & Repair

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

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

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

For information about your rights or grievance procedures, contact the Title IX coordinator and the ADA/Section 504 coordinator.
[See Nondiscrimination Statement for the name and contact information for the Title IX coordinator and ADA/Section 504 coordinator.]

Celebrations

(All Grade Levels)

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

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

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

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

The district has established a plan for addressing child abuse, neglect, trafficking, and other maltreatment of children. The district follows the state mandated guidelines for reporting child abuse which can be accessed at https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/contact_Us/report_abuse.asp. Abuse includes physical abuse, including sexual abuse, and mental and emotional abuse. Trafficking includes both sex and labor trafficking.

Duty to Report

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 the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). See below for information on how to report and respond to allegations of child abuse or neglect.

Possible Warning Signs of Child Abuse, Neglect, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children

Physical abuse

Possible warning signs of physical abuse include:

- Frequent injuries such as bruises, cuts, black eyes, or burns without adequate explanation
- Frequent complaints of pain without apparent injury
- Burns or bruises in unusual patterns that may indicate the use of an instrument or human bite; cigarette burns on any part of the body
- Lack of reaction to pain
- Extreme fear of going home or seeing parents
- Injuries that appear after a child has not been seen for several days
- Unseasonable clothing that may hide injuries to arms or legs

Sexual Abuse

- Possible warning signs of sexual abuse include:
- Physical signs of sexually transmitted diseases
- Evidence of injury to the genital area
- Pregnancy in a young girl
- Difficulty in sitting or walking
- Extreme fear of being alone with adults of a certain sex

- Sexual comments, behaviors, or play beyond what is considered age-appropriate behavior
- Knowledge of sexual relations beyond what is expected for a child's age
- Sexual victimization of other children

Children and adolescents who have experienced dating violence may show similar physical, behavioral, and emotional warning signs. [See Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (All Grade Levels) and Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking]

Emotional Abuse

Possible warning signs of emotional abuse include:

- Over-compliance or low self-esteem caused by scapegoating or verbal abuse by caregivers
- Severe depression, anxiety, or aggression
- Lag in physical, emotional, and intellectual development
- Indicators of a caregiver who belittles the child, withholds love, and seems unconcerned about the child's problems
- Significant changes to behavior, such as withdrawal or over-aggression
- Significant changes to weight, such as substantial weight gain or weight loss

Neglect

Possible warning signs of neglect include:

- Obvious malnourishment
- Consistent lack of personal hygiene that poses a health risk
- Stealing or begging for food
- Child unattended for long periods of time
- Unaddressed need for dental care or other medical attention

Description and Warning Signs of Trafficking

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

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

Possible warning signs of sexual trafficking in children include:

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

Additional warning signs of labor trafficking in children include:

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

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

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

(All Grade Levels)

If your child is a victim of abuse, neglect, trafficking, or other maltreatment, the school counselor or principal will provide information on counseling options for you and your child available in your area. Texas Health and Human Services also manages early intervention counseling programs.

To find out what services may be available in your county, see Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Programs Available in Your County (http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Programs_Available_In_Your_County/default.asp).

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 (www.txabusehotline.org).

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

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

Child Welfare Information Gateway Factsheet (https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/*whatiscan*.pdf)

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

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

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

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

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

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

Consistent Application for Graduating Class

Grade point average and class ranking will be calculated during the following:

- At the end of student's 9th grade year and will be distributed to students in the beginning of their sophomore year.
- At the end of the student's 10th grade year and distributed in the beginning of the Junior year.
- At the end of the student's 11th grade year and distributed in the beginning of the senior year.
- Final GPA and Class Rank will be calculated during the student's senior year at the end of the first semester.

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

Calculation

The District shall include in the calculation of class rank semester grades earned in all high school credit courses taken at any grade level, unless excluded below.

The calculation of class rank shall exclude grades earned in local credit courses (including student aide courses) and all grades earned at a nonaccredited school.

Weighted Grade System

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

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

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

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

Weighted Numerical Grade Average:

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

Category	Weight	Top Grade
Tier 1	plus 15	115
Tier 2	plus 10	110
Tier 3	plus zero	100

The District shall record unweighted numerical grades on student transcripts.

Transferred Grades

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

Local Graduation Honors

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

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

Ranking for Early Graduates

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

Valedictorian and Salutatorian

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

To be eligible for such recognition, a student must:

1. Have been continuously enrolled in the District high school for the three semesters immediately preceding graduation; and

2. Have completed the Recommended Program, the Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program, or the foundation program with

the distinguished level of achievement.

Breaking Ties

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

1. Compute the weighted numerical grade average to a sufficient number of decimal places until the tie is broken.

2. Compare the number of Tier 1 courses taken by each student involved in the tie. Calculate a weighted numerical grade average using only grades earned in Tier 1 courses.

Honor Graduates

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

Class Schedules

(Secondary Grade Levels Only)

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

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

College and University Admissions and Financial Aid

(Secondary Grade Levels only)

For two school years following graduation, a district student who graduates as valedictorian or in the top 10 percent of their class is eligible for automatic admission into four-year public universities and colleges in Texas if the student meets one of the following requirements:

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

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

If a college or university adopts an admissions policy that automatically accepts the top 25

percent of a graduating class, the provisions above will also apply to a student ranked in the top 25 percent of his or her class.

The University of Texas at Austin may limit the number of automatically admitted students to 75 percent of the University's enrollment capacity for incoming resident freshmen. From the summer/fall 2026 term through the spring 2027 applicants, the University will admit the top five percent of a high school's graduating class who meet the above requirements. Additional applicants will be considered by the University through a holistic review process.

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

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

Parents and students will be asked to sign an acknowledgment that they received this information. Students and parents should contact the school counselor for further information about automatic admissions, the application process, and deadlines.

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

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

College Credit Courses

(Secondary Grade Levels Only)

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

- Certain courses taught at the high school campus, which may include courses termed dual credit, Advanced Placement (AP), or college preparatory
- Enrollment in courses taught in conjunction and in partnership with Palo Alto College or St. Philip's College, which may be offered on or off campus
- Enrollment in these programs is based on a student's TSI scores

Under the Financial Aid for Swift Transfer (FAST) program, a student may be eligible to enroll at no cost to the student in dual credit courses at a participating institution of higher education. The FAST program allows students who are or have been educationally disadvantaged at any time during the four years preceding the student's enrollment in a dual credit course to enroll at no cost to the student. The district will determine eligibility upon the student's enrollment in the dual credit course. See the South San High School College and Career Advisor for more information.

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

A student may also earn college credit for certain Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses. See **Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs (Secondary Grade Levels Only)** for information on CTE programs For dual credit purposes, all these methods have eligibility requirements and must be approved before enrollment in the course. Please see the school counselor for more information.

Depending on the student's grade level and the course, a state-mandated end-of-course assessment may be required for graduation.

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

Communications

(All Grade Levels)

Parent Contact Information

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

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

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

A parent may update contact information by contacting the school attendance office.

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

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

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

residence within District boundaries, see policy FDA (Local).

Automated Emergency Communications

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

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

Automated Nonemergency Communications

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

Standard messaging rates of your wireless phone carrier may apply.

If you do not wish to receive such communications, please contact your child's principal. [See Safety (All Grade Levels) for information about 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 grievances policy at FNG(LOCAL) in accordance with Education Code Chapter 26A. This policy describing the grievance process in detail is available in the district's online policy manual at ***southsanisd.net***. A parent may file a grievance by submitting the district grievance form to the campus principal. The district's grievance forms are available on the district's website at and at the principal's or superintendent's office.

In general, the written grievance form should be completed and submitted to the campus principal in a timely manner.

It is the district's policy for the student or parent to conference with a central office administrator prior to meeting with the superintendent.

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

If the concern is still unresolved, the district provides a process for parents and students to appeal to the board of trustees. Hearings at each level will be conducted in accordance with the timelines established by law described in the district's policy at FNG(LOCAL).

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 Student Support Services website at ***southsanisd.net***

Deliveries

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

Parents are permitted to drop off or bring in food with them to eat lunch with their child. However, students are not allowed to order food or beverages during the instructional day through any outside online and or mobile food ordering and delivery companies that connects diners with local takeout restaurants. This is to include any type of delivery services such as Grubhub, Doordash, Uber Eats, etc. School officials will not accept food or beverages from said company on a student's or parent's behalf, nor will the student be allowed to accept such deliveries.

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.

Acknowledgement of the student handbook consents to services provided by the comprehensive school counseling model to include surveys that focus on culture, bullying, and climate. Parents will complete a Notice of and Consent for Counseling Related Services form as part of the registration process.

Academic Counseling

Elementary and Middle School Grade Levels

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

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

High School Grade Levels

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

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

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

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

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

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

College and career readiness

The district utilizes SchooLinks, a modern college and career readiness platform, to empower students in grades 6-12 as they plan for life after graduation. This interactive tool allows students to discover their unique strengths and interests through personality and career assessments, helping them build a personalized "roadmap" for their future. Whether a student is interested in a four-year university, a trade school, the military, or entering the workforce, SchooLinks provides the resources to explore various pathways, manage applications, and track progress in one centralized location.

● Self-Discovery: Complete interactive surveys to identify career interests, learning styles, and personal strengths.
● Academic Planning: Build and manage course plans that align with graduation requirements and long-term career goals.
● College & Career Search: Explore a global database of colleges, search for scholarships, and research real-world industry requirements.
● Application Management: Seniors can use the platform to track college applications, request transcripts, and manage letters of recommendation.
● Parent Engagement: Families are encouraged to create a guardian account to view their student's progress, explore financial aid tools, and stay connected with school counselors.

Guidance curriculum and small group counseling

The professional school counselor will offer guidance curriculum to all students in South San Antonio ISD. Guidance lessons will include topics addressing, but not limited to character traits, self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision-making, self-management, and relationship skills.

Small group guidance counseling may also be provided. A parent/guardian may choose to have their child opt out of these small group lessons and can indicate this on the permission slips sent home with the student. For additional questions and answers, please contact the campus professional school counselor.

Personal Counseling (All Grade Levels)

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

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

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

South San Antonio ISD school age parenting program (SAPP)

SAPP provides support services to pregnant and/or parenting students (Males and Females) to stay in school and graduate, pregnancy and parenting education and community referrals. The program's case management consists of homebound services, transportation, childcare assistance, parenting education, counseling, and academic support.

If your child believes she is pregnant, or he might be a parent, please contact your child's school counselor.

Course Credit

(Secondary Grade Levels Only)

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

Credit Recovery
Grades 9-12

The Credit Recovery opportunity that the district makes available to district students is Edgenuity. Students may be able to recover a full credit, a partial credit or a 9-weeks credit, where applicable. Edgenuity is an online program offered for course recovery for core content areas during the school day and/or after school after a student has failed a specific course. Not all Grades 9-12 courses are available in Edgenuity. School counselors can determine if a student is eligible for an Edgenuity Credit Recovery course. Edgenuity is not for acceleration.

[For further information, see the school counselor and policy EHDB(LOCAL).]

Credit by Exam

If a Student Has Taken the Course/Subject (Grades 6–12)

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

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

The attendance review committee may also offer a student with excessive absences an

opportunity to earn credit for a course by passing an examination.

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

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

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

A student will be permitted to earn credit by examination for an academic course or subject area for which the student had no prior instruction for advancement or to accelerate to the next grade level. The examinations offered by the district are approved by the district's board of trustees. Testing windows for these examinations will be published in district publications and on the district's website. A student may take a specific examination only once per testing window.

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

When another entity administers an examination, the student and the district must comply with the testing schedule of the other entity.
If a student plans to take an examination, the student or parent must register with the school counselor no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. [See policy EHDC for more information.]

Kindergarten Acceleration

Automatic Eligibility

For the purposes of this provision, a child who is five years old on or before September 1 is automatically eligible for grade 1 rather than kindergarten if:

- The student has completed public school kindergarten; or
- The student has been enrolled and received direct instruction in grade 1 in a public school in another state prior to transferring to a Texas public school.

Currently In Kindergarten

Request Process for Placement in 1st Grade. A child who is five years old on or before September 1 may be assigned to grade 1 rather than kindergarten in accordance with the following process:

- A parent shall request in writing to the campus principal that they wish for their child to be considered for acceleration into grade 1.

- Requests shall be made no earlier than upon registration completion for the most current school year and no later than the end of the first full week of instruction at the beginning of the school year.

- No later than two weeks after the first day of instruction, the student shall take a District-designated readiness or achievement assessment (to include literacy and math).

Criteria for Acceleration

1. Scores on readiness tests or achievement tests that may be administered by appropriate District personnel.

2. Recommendation of the kindergarten or preschool the student has attended.

3. Chronological age and observed social and emotional development of the student.

4. Other criteria deemed appropriate by the principal and Superintendent.

Students in Grades 1–5

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

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

Students in Grades 6–12 Advancement/Acceleration of a Course

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Dating Violence

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

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

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

- Physical or sexual assaults;
- Name-calling;

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

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

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

For more information on dating violence, see:

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

The CDC's Preventing Teen Dating Violence (https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/teendatingviolence/fastfact.ht m l).

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

Discrimination

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

Harassment

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

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

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

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

Sexual Harassment and Gender-Based Harassment

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

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

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

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

Pregnancy or Related Conditions

The district does not discriminate on the basis of pregnancy or a related condition.

Please contact the campus counselor or campus nurse for pregnancy-related accommodations.

Retaliation

Retaliation against a person who makes a report or participates in an investigation of discrimination, harassment, or dating violence is prohibited.

Reporting Procedures

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

Upon receiving a report, the district will determine whether the allegations, if proven, constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH. If not, the district will refer to policy FFI to determine whether the allegations, if proven, constitute bullying, as defined by law and policy

FFI. If the alleged prohibited conduct also meets the statutory and policy definitions for bullying, an investigation of bullying will also be conducted. [See **Bullying**]

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

Investigation of Report

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Distance Learning

(Secondary Grade Levels)

Distance Learning and correspondence courses include courses that encompass the state required essential knowledge and skills but are taught through multiple technologies and alternative methodologies such as mail, satellite, internet, video-conferencing, and instructional television.

South San Antonio ISD does not provide courses through distance learning.
If a student wishes to enroll in a correspondence course or a distance learning course that is not provided through the Texas Virtual Network (TXVSN), as described below, to earn credit in a course or subject, the student must receive permission from the principal prior to enrolling in the

course or subject. If the student does not receive prior approval, the district may not recognize and apply the course or subject toward graduation requirements or subject mastery.

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

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

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

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

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.

Distribution of Literature, Published Materials, or Other Documents

(All Grade Levels)

School Materials

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

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

Non School Materials From Students

Students must obtain prior approval from the campus principal before selling, posting, circulating, or distributing copies of written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school. All non-school literature intended for distribution by students on school campuses or other District premises under this policy shall be submitted to the principal or designee for prior review in accordance with the following:

1. Materials shall include the name of the person or organization sponsoring the distribution.

2. Using the standards found in this policy at Limitations on Content, the principal or designee shall approve or reject submitted materials within two school days of the time the materials were received.

Approval will be granted or denied within two school days.

Each campus principal shall designate times, locations, and means by which non-school literature that is appropriate for distribution, as provided in this policy, may be made available or distributed by students to students or others at the principal's campus. [See policy FNAA for more information.]

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.

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.]

Prior review will not be required for:

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

The Superintendent shall designate times, locations, and means for distribution of non-school literature by students at District facilities other than school campuses, in accordance with this policy. 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 Groom

(All Grade Levels)

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

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

Requirements:

- All students must be clean and well groomed at all times;
- Undergarments should not be visible;
- Eyes should be visible at all times;
- Shorts, skirts or skorts must not be shorter than four (4) inches above the top of the kneecap and should not create a distraction; they should be appropriately sized and properly secured at the waist;
- Shirts and blouses must be appropriately sized and should not be revealing.
- Shirts and blouses must not expose bare backs or cleavage.
- Backpacks must be clear or mesh

Prohibited Items:

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

Accessories not permitted:

- Bandannas, rags, or gloves;
- Sunglasses worn unless medically prescribed;
- Headgear for students unless medically prescribed and/or religiously affiliated;
- Appropriate head coverings will be determined by the campus administration;
- Prescriptive/non-prescriptive eccentric contact lenses;

Clothing not permitted:

- See-through garments of any kind;
- Oversized, sagging clothes or trench coats;
- Muscle shirts, tube tops, strapless tops, halter tops, racer back shirts, spaghetti strap blouses, swimsuits, or any other garments that expose the midriff, chest, or back, including shirts that show the navel (belly button);
- Pants that sag below the waistline;
- Pants with major holes or jeans with excessive rips higher than 4 inches above the knees;
- Biker shorts or pajama pants;
- Leggings/yoga pants without an appropriately lengthen shirt (shirt should cover below the torso of the body);
- Shorts/pants NOT secured at the waist;
- Skirt, dress and short length higher than 4 inches above the knee.

Outerwear such as windbreakers, fleece, sweaters, or sweatshirt-type jackets or pullovers must adhere to all acceptable guidelines. Spirit outerwear in the appropriate school colors acknowledging the school or mascot in which the student attends is acceptable. **Hoods inside the building are NOT permitted at any time.**

Hair and hair styles:

Acceptability of facial hair and hair styles will be determined by the campus administration.

Footwear not permitted:

Including but not limited to:

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

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

Body Piercing/Jewelry not permitted:

- Excessive jewelry/Rosaries may not be worn as jewelry;
- Chains worn as an accessory;
- Pointed or spiked earrings on the ear;
- Grills or temporary decorations on teeth are prohibited;
- Nose rings are not permitted at the elementary school level.

Tattoos:

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

and should be covered;
- Final determination in regards to tattoos will rest with the campus administration.A basic rule to remember is that student dress and grooming should not be suggestive, indecent, and/or so unusual as to detract from the classroom environment.

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

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

Electronic Devices and Technology Resources
(All Grade Levels)

Safe Use of Technology

The district is committed to ensuring that students use technology safely and will follow all federal and state requirements to protect students from excessive data collection or materials that are considered harmful to minors. The district considers parents as partners in cybersecurity and online safety.

In accordance with state and federal law, the district will:

- Install a filter that blocks and prohibits pornographic or obscene materials or applications, including from unsolicited pop-ups, installations, and downloads, before transferring an electronic device to a student to be used for an educational purpose
- Block or filter students' internet access to pictures that are obscene, contain child pornography, or have been determined to be harmful to minors in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)
- Require direct and informed parental consent for a student's use of software, other than software excluded from the consent requirement by law [See Required State Assessments and Standardized Testing]
- Require direct and informed parental consent for a student's use of software that conducts mental health assessments or other assessments unrelated to education curricula that are intended to collect information about students [See Consent to Conduct a Psychological or Psychiatric Evaluation]

If you want to know more about partnering with the district regarding cybersecurity and online safety, or if you have complaints or concern about student use of electronic devices, please contact the Director of Technology, Armando Ontiveros, at 210-977-7375 or armando.ontiveros@southsanisd.net.

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

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

Extensive research has shown that cell phone and social media use can negatively impact student well-being and academic performance. In response, Texas House Bill 1481, passed during the 89th Legislative Session, now requires all school systems to establish and enforce a policy that prohibits students from using personal communication devices on school property during the school day.

Beginning June 20, 2025, any unauthorized use of such devices during school hours will result in disciplinary consequences as outlined in this Code of Conduct. This policy has been adopted in compliance with state law and to support a more focused and productive learning environment for all students.

Definitions for purposes of this policy

"Personal Communication Device (PCD)" means any device that can electronically (using cellular, wireless or other means) send, receive, record, or store voice, video, or data, including but not limited to:

- Cell phones
- Tablets
- Smartwatches
- Personal laptop computers
- Digital cameras
- Gaming devices
- Fitness trackers
- Smart pens
- Smart glasses
- Wired/Wireless Earbuds/Headphones
- Any other device capable of sending or receiving data electronically

"School Day" means the time of day beginning with the first bell of the day and ending with the last bell of the day. It is when a student is under the supervision of school staff for instructional or campus-related activities, including transitions, recess, lunch, and dismissal. Before- or after-school activity for a school-sponsored extracurricular activity is not part of the school day.

"School Property" means anywhere on a school's campus or in a district facility where instruction is provided, including but not limited to: classrooms, hallways, restrooms, gyms, cafeterias, band halls and all other extracurricular spaces; outdoor fields, tracks, and other athletic areas; all breezeways, courtyards, playgrounds, and other outdoor areas, specifically including all school parking lots.

"Use" is defined as a device in possession of a student that is turned on and capable of receiving or sending any form of a communication signal.

"Possession" is defined as being on the person of the student, directly held, in pockets, in a backpack, in a pouch, or otherwise accessible and under the control of the student directly.

"Authorized use" refers to the use of a personal communication device (PCD) that has been explicitly approved by the school district in accordance with documented educational, medical, legal, or safety-related needs.

Student Possession and Use of Personal Communication Devices

Students are permitted to possess personal communication devices (PCDs) on school property during the school day, subject to the following limitations:

- All PCDs must be powered off and stored out of reach in the student's clear or mesh backpack for the entire duration of the school day.
- At the start of the school day, before entering school property, students are required to power off their PCDs and secure them in their backpacks. Devices must remain unused, unseen, and out of hand throughout the school day.
- Students shall not hold, carry, or physically access their device at any time during the school day. This includes reaching into backpacks, purses, or similar items to access the device. Any such action is considered a violation of this policy.
- At the conclusion of the school day, once the student has exited the school campus or district facility, PCDs may be powered on and used, subject to any additional applicable rules.

Administrative Action

All district administrators and staff members are authorized to confiscate a personal communication device (PCD) used in violation of this policy. When a staff member confiscates a device, they shall deliver it to the administrator's office at the earliest convenient time during the school day.

A student who violates this policy is subject to disciplinary consequences, which may include—but are not limited to—the following, based on the frequency and severity of the violation.

1st Offense	● The device(s) shall be confiscated and stored in the main office for the remainder of the school day; the student's parent or guardian will be notified. ● The school shall issue a written warning to both the student and the parent or guardian about further consequences for failing to comply with this policy. ● Only the student's parent or guardian is permitted to pick up confiscated device(s). ● The incident will be recorded in the student's Skyward student profile.
2nd Offense	● The device(s) shall be confiscated and stored in the main office for the remainder of the school day; the student's parent or guardian will be notified. ● The parent or guardian will be permitted to retrieve a confiscated device(s) only after an in-person meeting between the principal or designee, student, and parent or guardian. ● The incident will be recorded in the student's Skyward student profile. ● The student will be assigned lunch detention.
3rd Offense or higher	● The device(s) shall be confiscated and stored in the main office until the conditions for retrieval after a third offense (or higher) are met; the student's parent or guardian will be notified of the requirement for an in-person meeting. ● The parent or guardian will be permitted to retrieve a confiscated device(s) only after an in-person meeting between the principal or designee, student, and parent or guardian. ● The incident will be recorded in the student's Skyward student profile. ● The student will be assigned 1- 3 days of in-school suspension (ISS). ● The school may impose additional consequences, up to and including placement at the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP). The incident will be treated as insubordination and a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Failure to Comply	Refusing to surrender a device is considered defiance and a violation of the Code of Conduct. An administrator will intervene, and additional disciplinary action will be taken, including suspension or placement in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP). The device will not be returned and the student will not be permitted to return to class until a parent or guardian attends an in-person conference with the principal or designee and the student.

Retrieval of Confiscated Devices

Devices can be retrieved by a parent or guardian with proper ID at the end of the school day.

If a personal communication device is in the possession of the school, the school will take appropriate efforts to keep the device safely stored and free from damage. However, parents should note the school specifically disclaims any liability for devices that are damaged or lost while in the school's possession. Parents will not be compensated for devices that have been in the school's possession in the event those devices are lost or damaged while in possession of the school.

Parents or guardians who allow their child to bring a personal communication or electronic device onto District property shall be responsible for all information sufficient to identify the device.

If a personal communication device is not retrieved by a parent or guardian within two weeks of the school sending notice, the school shall send a second notice that specifies that the school will dispose of the device if not retrieved within 90 days of the second notice. The school may dispose of the device if not retrieved within 90 days of sending a second notice to the student's parent or guardian.

Exceptions for Authorized Use

A student may use a personal communication device (PCD) during the school day only under the following circumstances:

- The device is required to implement the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), Section 504 Plan, or a comparable educational plan;
- Use of the PCD authorized by a Texas-licensed physician based on documented medical necessity. The directive must outline when and why the student needs access during the school day. Parents may be asked to consent to staff contacting the physician for clarification. Use must be non-disruptive and may be limited by the district. Authorization may be revoked if use disrupts the learning environment.; or
- The device is needed to comply with a legal health or safety requirement or to support implementation of the school system's official safety protocols.

Prior to use, all supporting documentation must be submitted to and approved by the district office or its designee. Once approved, the documentation will be shared with appropriate school personnel to ensure proper implementation.

Any student who is provided an exception in accordance with the above remains subject to disciplinary measures if the student uses a personal communication device outside the scope of the documented authorized use.

Instructional Use of Personal Electronic Devices

Students must obtain prior approval to use personal electronic devices allowed by law for instructional purposes while on campus. The district may not permit use of a prohibited personal communication device except as required by law. [See Possession and Use of Personal Communications Devices, Including Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices] Students must also sign a user agreement that contains applicable rules for use (separate from this handbook).

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

Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources

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

Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources

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

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

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

In accordance with the state law, the district prohibits the installation or use of Tik Tok or any successor application or service on a district device, along with any other social media application or service determined by the governor.

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

End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments

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

Emergent Bilingual Students

(All Grade Levels)

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

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

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

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

Enrollment

Registration of New Students

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

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

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

To register your child in school you will need:

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

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

Child in DPRS Possession

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

Inconsistent Documentation

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

Missing Documentation

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

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

Students Under Age Eleven

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

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

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

False Information

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

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

Residency Review for Extracurricular Activities

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

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

Change of Address

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

Extracurricular Activities, Clubs and Organizations

(All Grade Levels)

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 from the student club sponsor.

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 (All Grade Levels)**]

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

To report alleged noncompliance with required safety training or an alleged violation of safety rules required by law and the UIL, please contact the curriculum division of TEA at (512) 463-9581 or curriculum@tea.texas.gov.

[See UIL Texas (https://www.uiltexas.org/) 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 extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.

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

If a student is enrolled in a state-approved course that requires demonstration of the mastery of an essential knowledge and skills in public performance and the student receives a grade below 70 in any course at the end of the grading period, the student may participate in a performance so long as the general public is invited.

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

In addition, the following applies to all extracurricular activities:

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

Standards of Behavior

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

Offices and Elections

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

Fees
(All Grade Levels)

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

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

Any required fee or deposit may be waived if the student and parent are unable to pay. Application for such a waiver may be made to the campus principal.

[See policy FP for more information.]

Fundraising

(All Grade Levels)

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

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

Schools that participate in the NSLP or SBP may sell food and beverages that do not meet nutritional standards as part of a fundraiser, during the school day, for up to six days per school

year on each school campus, provided that no specially exempted fundraiser foods or beverages may be sold in competition with school meals in the food service area during the meal service.

Definitions:
"School day" means the midnight before, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "School campus" means all areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the school that are accessible to students during the school day.

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

Gang-Free Zones

(All Grade Levels)

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

Gender-Based Harassment

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

Grade-Level Classification

(Grades 9–12 Only)

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

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

Grading Guidelines

(All Grade Levels)

Academic Grading System

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

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

Citizenship Grading System

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

Progress Reports

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

Reporting to Parents

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

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

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

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

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

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

Graduation

(Secondary Grade Levels Only)

Requirements for a Diploma

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

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

Testing Requirements for Graduation

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

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

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

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

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

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

[See **Standardized Testing**.]

Foundation Graduation Program

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

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

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

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

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

State law generally prohibits a student from graduating solely under the foundation graduation program without an endorsement. However, after the student's sophomore year, the student and student's parent may request that the student graduate without an endorsement. The district will advise the student and the student's parent of the specific benefits of graduating with an endorsement. The student and the student's parent must then submit written permission to the school counselor for the student to graduate without an endorsement.

A student who wishes to attend a four-year university or college after graduation must carefully consider whether graduation under the foundation program without an endorsement will satisfy the admission requirements of the student's desired college or university.

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

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

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

Credits Required

Course Area	**South San ISD Graduation Credit Requirements**
English/Language Arts	4
Mathematics	4
Science	4
Social Studies	3.5
Economics	.5
Physical Education	1
Languages other than English	2
Fine Arts	1
Electives	6
Total	**26 credits**
Endorsement	YES
Distinguished Level of Achievement	YES

EOC Requirements	English I, English II Algebra I Biology US History

Additional considerations apply in some course areas, including:

- **Mathematics:**To obtain the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation graduation program, a student must complete an endorsement and take Algebra II as one of the 4 mathematics credits. A student's completion of the distinguished level of achievement is a requirement to be considered for automatic admission to a Texas four-year college or university and will be included on a student's transcript.
- **Physical education:** A student who is unable to participate in physical activity due to a disability or illness may be able to substitute a course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, or another locally determined credit-bearing course for the required credit of physical education. This determination will be made by the student's ARD committee, Section 504 committee, or other campus committee, as applicable.
  The District shall not award state graduation credit in physical education for private or commercially sponsored physical activity programs conducted either on or off campus. [See also EHAC] EIF (LOCAL)
- **Languages other than English:** Students are required to earn 2 credits in the same language other than English to graduate. Any student may substitute computer programming languages for these credits.
  - A student may satisfy one of the 2 required credits by successfully completing in elementary school a dual language immersion program or a course in American Sign Language.
  - In limited circumstances, a student may be able to substitute this requirement with other courses, as determined by a district committee authorized by law to make these decisions for the student.
- **Fine Arts:** The District shall not award state graduation credit in fine arts for participation in a community-based fine arts program. EIF (LOCAL)

Available Endorsements

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

Foundation Program without an Endorsement

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

Financial Aid Application Requirement

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

The college and career advisor at the high school assists students and parents with the completion of the FAFSA. South San Antonio ISD partners with representatives from Cafe College and the San Antonio Education Partnership and TRIO to assist students with completing the financial aid process.

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

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

Please contact the school counselor for more information.

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

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

Personal Graduation Plans

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

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

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

career placement and advancement, and facilitates the transition from secondary to postsecondary education.

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

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

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 include:

- Graduation ceremony
- Senior Parade
- Senior Trip
- Senior Walk
- Senior Field Day
- Senior Breakfast

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

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

Graduation Speakers

Opening and Closing Remarks

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

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

Eligibility

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

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

Content of Opening and Closing Remarks

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

Other Student Graduation Speakers

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

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

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

Disclaimer

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

student volunteers, and the District refrained from any interaction with student speakers regarding the student speakers' viewpoints on permissible subjects."

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

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

Graduation Expenses

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

Scholarships and Grants

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

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

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

Harassment

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

Hazing

(All Grade Levels)

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

- Any type of physical brutality;
- An activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the student's mental or physical health, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement to small spaces, calisthenics, or consumption of food, liquids, drugs, or other substances;

- An activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to perform a duty or task that violates the Penal Code; and
- Coercing a student to consume a drug or alcoholic beverage in an amount that would lead a reasonable person to believe the student is intoxicated.

The district will not tolerate hazing. Disciplinary consequences for hazing will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. It is a criminal offense if a person engages in hazing; solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in hazing; or has firsthand knowledge of an incident of hazing being planned or having occurred and fails to report this to the principal or superintendent.

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

Health — Physical and Mental

The district is required to provide notice of each health-related service offered at a student's campus. A parent may withhold consent for or decline a health-related service.

The following health related services are offered at all district campuses:

- Chronic Disease Management: Long-term illnesses like diabetes and asthma
- Medication Administration: Topical and Oral
- State Mandated Health Screenings: Performing hearing, vision, acanthosis and scoliosis screenings at appropriate grade levels
- Lice screening
- Coordination of health services

Illness (All Grade Levels)

When your child is ill, please contact the school to let us know they 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, a child with a fever over 100 degrees must stay out of school until fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medications. Students with diarrheal illnesses must stay home until they are diarrhea-free without use of diarrhea-suppressing medications for 24 hours.

A full list of conditions for which the school must exclude children can be obtained from the school nurse.

If a student becomes ill during the school day and the school nurse determines that the child should go home, the nurse will contact the parent.

The district is required to report certain contagious (communicable) diseases or illnesses to the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) or our local/regional health authority. The school nurse can provide information from DSHS on these notifiable conditions.

The school nurse is available to answer any questions for parents who are concerned about whether or not their child should stay home.

Homebound Services

Students are provided homebound instruction when they are too medically fragile to attend school due to a diagnosed medical condition. The purpose of the homebound instruction is to provide students with academic instruction at home or hospital bedside, during a temporary period of absence, so that they can re-engage successfully when they return to their home campus.

Students who are eligible for the General Education Homebound Program must meet the following criteria:

1. The student is expected to be confined at home or hospital bedside for a minimum of 4 weeks.

2. The student is confined at home or hospital bedside for medical reasons only.

3. The student's medical condition is documented by a physician licensed to practice in the United States.

The Section 504 committee works in collaboration with a designated committee to make decisions regarding the General Education Homebound placement. In making the decisions, the General Education Homebound Committee considers information from the student's licensed physician. However, documentation from the licensed physician is not the sole determining factor in the committee's decision-making process.

For information regarding Homebound or 504 Services contact Dr. Kristi Jordan, Coordinator of Evaluations, Compliance & Campus Services at (210) 977-7000 ext. 3573 or kristi.jordan@southsanisd.net.

Immunization (All Grade Levels)

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized.

For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. You may access the DSHS exemption form (https://dshs.texas.gov/immunize/school/exemptions.aspx) online or by writing to this address:

Texas Department of State Health Services
Immunization Section, Mail Code 1946
P.O. Box 149347
Austin, Texas 78714-9347

The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or school nurse within 90 days of notarization. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required are:

- Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis
- Polio
- Measles, mumps, and rubella
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella (chicken pox)
- Meningococcal
- Hepatitis A

The school nurse can provide information on immunization requirements. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. registered and licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or a member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a lifelong condition.

For information on immunization against bacterial meningitis and college enrollment and attendance, see **Bacterial Meningitis**.

[See the DSHS's School and Childcare Vaccine Requirements (https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunizations/school) 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, head lice spread 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 is available on the DSHS website Managing Head Lice in School Settings and at Home (https://www.dshs.texas.gov/texas-school-health/skilled-procedures-texas-school-health/managing-head-lice-school) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website About Head Lice (https://www.cdc.gov/lice/about/head-lice.html).

[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 their own medication because of asthma or a severe allergy as described below or as otherwise allowed by law.

The district will not purchase nonprescription medication to give to a student. In accordance with policy FFAC, authorized employees may administer:

- Prescription medication in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request.
- Prescription medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse or another qualified district employee from the original, properly labeled container provided by the parent along with a written request.
- Nonprescription medication in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request. **Note:** Insect repellant is considered nonprescription medication.
- Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.

An elementary or secondary student may possess and self-apply sunscreen to avoid overexposure to the sun. An elementary 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. If a secondary 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 they have written authorization from a parent and a physician or other licensed health-care provider. The student must also demonstrate to their 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** (All Grade Levels)]

Unassigned Epinephrine Delivery Systems

In accordance with Chapter 38, Subchapter E of the Education Code, the board has adopted a policy to allow authorized school personnel who have been adequately trained to administer an unassigned epinephrine auto-injector to a person who is reasonably believed to be experiencing a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis).

An “unassigned epinephrine delivery system” is an epinephrine delivery system, including an auto-injector or nasal spray, prescribed by an authorized health-care provider in the name of the school issued with a non-patient-specific standing delegation order for the administration of an epinephrine delivery system.
Epinephrine delivery systems include brand-name devices such as EpiPens® and Neffy®.

Authorized and trained individuals may administer an epinephrine delivery system at any time to a person experiencing anaphylaxis on a school campus.

The district will ensure that at each campus a sufficient number of school personnel are trained to administer epinephrine so that at least one trained individual is present on campus during regular school hours and when school personnel are physically on site for school-sponsored activities.

Unassigned Prescription Asthma Medication

In accordance with Chapter 38, Subchapter E of the Education Code, the board has adopted a policy to allow a school nurse to administer an unassigned prescription asthma medication on a school campus to a student with diagnosed asthma if the nurse, in his or her professional

judgment, reasonably believes the student is experiencing symptoms of asthma that warrant administration of the medication and the district has obtained prior written consent from the student's parent or guardian.

The school nurse may only administer unassigned prescription asthma medication to a student on a school campus. Please be aware that a school nurse will not always be available at a campus to administer this medication.

For additional information, see FFAC(LOCAL).

Authorized and trained individuals may administer an unassigned epinephrine delivery system to a person experiencing anaphylaxis at an off-campus school event or while in transit to or from a school event when an unassigned epinephrine delivery system is available.

For additional information, see FFAC(LOCAL).

Unassigned Medication for Respiratory Distress

In accordance with Chapter 38, Subchapter E of the Education Code, the board has adopted a policy to allow authorized and trained campus health professionals to administer a medication for respiratory distress on a school campus or at a school-related activity to a person reasonably believed to be experiencing symptoms of respiratory distress. .

The district will provide at each campus [*school personnel and/or school volunteers*] who are trained to administer prescription medication for respiratory distress during regular school hours.

"Unassigned medication for respiratory distress" means albuterol, levalbuterol, or another medication designated by the executive commission of the Health and Human Services Commission for treatment of respiratory distress, prescribed by an authorized health-care provider in the name of the district with a non-patient-specific standing delegation order for the administration of a medication for respiratory distress, and issued by an authorized health-care provider.

For additional information, see FFAC(LOCAL).

Unassigned Opioid Antagonists (All Grades)

In accordance with Chapter 38, Subchapter E of the Education Code, the board has adopted a policy to allow authorized and trained school personnel at each campus to administer an opioid antagonist, such as Narcan or Naloxone, to an individual who is reasonably believed to be experiencing an opioid-related drug overdose.

One or more authorized and trained individuals will be present on each campus subject to this policy during regular school hours.

Steroids (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

State law prohibits students from possessing, dispensing, delivering, or administering an anabolic steroid. Anabolic steroids are for physician-prescribed medical use only.

Bodybuilding, muscle enhancement, or the increase of muscle bulk or strength through the use of an anabolic steroid or human growth hormone by a healthy student is not a valid medical use and is a criminal offense.

Mental Health Support (All Grade Levels)

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

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

If a student has been hospitalized or placed in residential treatment for a mental health condition or substance abuse, the district has procedures to support the student's return to school. Please contact the campus counselor or social worker 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 or Psychiatric Evaluation and Consent to Provide a Mental Health Care Service for the district's procedures for recommending a mental health intervention and the mental health liaison's contact information
- Counseling for the district's comprehensive school counseling program

- Physical and Mental Health Resources (All Grade Levels) for campus and community mental and physical health resources
- Policies and Procedures that Promote Student Physical and Mental Health (All Grade Levels) for board-adopted policies and administrative procedures that promote student health

Physical Activity Requirements

Elementary School

The district will ensure that students in full-day prekindergarten–grade 5 engage in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day or 135 minutes per week, in accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA.

For additional information on the district's elementary school student physical activity programs and requirements, please see the principal.

Middle School

The district will ensure that students in middle school will engage in 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity per day for at least four semesters, in accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA.

For additional information on the district's middle school student physical activity programs and requirements, please see the principal.

Temporary Restriction from Participation in Physical Education

Students who are temporarily restricted from participation in physical education will not actively participate in skill demonstration but will remain in class to learn the concepts of the lessons.

Physical Fitness Assessment (Grades 3–12)

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3–12 who are enrolled in a physical education course or a course for which physical education credit is awarded.

At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year by contacting:

Raymond Carroll
Assistant Director of Athletics
rcarroll@southsanisd.net
210-977-7000 ext. 3446

Physical Health Screenings/Examinations

Athletics Participation (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

For certain extracurricular activities, a student must submit certification from an authorized health-care provider. The certification must state that the student has been examined and is physically able to participate in the relevant program, including:

- A district athletics program
- District marching band
- Any district extracurricular program identified by the

superintendent This examination is required to be submitted annually to

the district.

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 the required physical examination.

See the UIL's explanation of sudden cardiac arrest (https://www.uiltexas.org/health/info/sudden-cardiac-death) for more information.

Spinal Screening Program

School-based spinal screening helps identify adolescents with abnormal spinal curvature at an early stage when the curve is mild and may go unnoticed. Early detection is key to controlling spinal deformities. Spinal screening is non-invasive and conducted in accordance with the most recent nationally accepted and peer-reviewed standards.

All students who meet the Texas Department of State Health Services criteria will be screened for abnormal spinal curvature before the end of the school year. As appropriate, students will be referred for follow-up with their physician.

For information on spinal screening by an outside professional or exemption from spinal screening based on religious beliefs, contact the superintendent or see policy FFAA(LEGAL).

Other Examinations and Screenings (All Grade Levels)

Students are required to undergo a risk assessment for Type 2 diabetes at the same time the district screens students for hearing and vision issues or for abnormal spinal curvatures.

[See policy FFAA for more information.]

Special Health Concerns (All Grade Levels)

Bacterial Meningitis (All Grade Levels)

Please see the district's website at
https://www.southsanisd.net/departments/health-services/home
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** (All Grade Levels)]

Diabetes

In accordance with a student's individual health plan for management of diabetes, a student with diabetes will be permitted to possess and use monitoring and treatment supplies and equipment while at school or at a school-related activity. See the school nurse or principal for information. [See policy FFAF(LEGAL) for more information.]

Food Allergies (All Grade Levels)

Parents should notify the district when a student has been diagnosed with a food allergy, especially an allergy that could result in dangerous or life-threatening reactions either by breathing, eating, or touching the particular food. It is important to disclose the food to which the student is allergic as well as the nature of the allergic reaction. Please contact the school nurse or campus principal if your child has a known food allergy or as soon as possible after any diagnosis of a food allergy.

The district has developed and annually reviews a food allergy management plan, based on the Texas Department of State Health Services' (DSHS) *Guidelines for the Care of Students with Food Allergies At-Risk for Anaphylaxis* found on the DSHS Allergies and Anaphylaxis website (https://www.dshs.texas.gov/schoolhealth/allergiesandanaphylaxis/)

When the district receives information that a student has a food allergy that puts the student at risk for anaphylaxis, an individual care plan will be developed to assist the student in safely accessing the school environment. The district's food allergy management plan can be accessed at https://www.southsanisd.net/departments/child-nutrition/special-dietary-needs.

[See **Celebrations** and policy FFAF for more information.]

Seizures (All Grade Levels)

To address the care of a student with a seizure disorder while at school or participating in a school activity, a parent may submit a seizure management and treatment plan to the district before the beginning of the school year, upon enrollment of the student, or as soon as practicable following diagnosis of a seizure disorder. A parent who submits a plan must use the Seizure Management and Treatment Plan Form

(https://tea.texas.gov/academics/tea-seizure-management-form.pdf) developed by the Texas Education Agency.

[See **A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504** and contact the school nurse for more information.]

Tobacco, E-Cigarettes, and Nicotine Products Prohibited (All Grade Levels)

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. With limited exceptions for medication, [see Medicine at School (All Grade Levels)] students are also prohibited from possessing or using any type of nicotine product, including nicotine pouches, regardless of whether the product contains tobacco, while on school property or while attending an off-campus school-related activity.

The district and its staff strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of all tobacco products, e-cigarettes, or any other electronic vaporizing device by students and all others on school property and at school-sponsored and school-related activities. [See the Student Code of Conduct and policies FNCD and GKA for more information.]

Health-Related Resources, Policies, and Procedures

Physical and Mental Health Resources (All Grade Levels)

Parents and students in need of assistance with physical and mental health concerns may contact the following campus and community resources:

- The campus nurse or school counselor.
- The San Antonio Community Resource Directory at https://sacrd.org/directory/

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

The district has adopted (LOCAL) board policies that promote student physical and mental health policies on the topics below can be found in the district's policy manual, available at ***https://pol.tasb.org/PolicyOnline?key=177***

- Food and nutrition management: CO, COA, COB
- Wellness and Health Services: FFA
- Physical Examinations: FFAA
- Immunizations: FFAB
- Medical Treatment: FFAC
- Communicable Diseases: FFAD

- School-Based Health Centers: FFAE
- Care Plans: FFAF
- Crisis Intervention: FFB
- Trauma-informed Care: FFBA
- Student Support Services: FFC
- Student Safety: FFF
- Child Abuse and Neglect: FFG
- Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation: FFH
- Freedom from Bullying: FFI

In addition, the District Improvement Plan details the district's strategies to improve student performance through evidence-based practices that address physical and mental health. District Improvement Plan Goal 3, Strategy 4, references student mental health and wellness through the implementation of guidance lessons, social-emotional learning and behavior supports by embedding Character Strong lessons and Conscious Discipline. Teachers and staff receive ongoing professional development to integrate these programs into daily instructions and interactions, fostering a safe, supportive, and emotionally responsive learning environment the prioritizes student well-being and builds skills in empathy, self-regulation, and responsible decision making.

For further information regarding these procedures and access to the District Improvement Plan, please contact:

Dr. Jennifer Gutierrez
Deputy Superintendent
(210) 977-7000 ext.
jennifer.gutierrez@southsanisd.net

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

During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) held 4 meetings. Additional information about the district's SHAC is available from the Coordinator of Student Health Services, Diane Vallejo, at 210-977-7000 ext.3636 or diane.olivo@southsanisd.net.

Notification of upcoming SHAC meetings will be posted at each campus administrative office at least 72 hours before the meeting. Notification of upcoming SHAC meetings, meeting minutes, and a recording of each meeting will be posted on the district website at: https://www.southsanisd.net/departments/health-services/school-health-advisory-council-shac

[See **Consent to Human Sexuality Instruction**, **Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking**, and policies BDF and EHAA. for more information.]

Student Wellness Policy/Wellness Plan (All Grade Levels)

To encourage healthy habits in our students, the district has developed a board-adopted wellness policy at FFA(LOCAL) and corresponding plans and procedures to implement it. For questions about the content or implementation of the district's wellness policy and plan, please contact:

Diane Vallejo, BSN, RN
Health Services Coordinator
diane.olivo@southsanisd.net
210-977-7033

Homework

(All Grade Levels)

Specific Homework Policies are set at each campus and grades are entered in the daily work performance category. Parents are asked to help their child by providing the time, place, cooperation and encouragement needed to complete assignments.

Students should be reminded to take their books, work and supplies to school each day. To promote responsibility students are generally not allowed to call home for forgotten work or supplies.

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)

Student attendance is crucial. Appointments should be scheduled outside of school hours if possible. Except for extenuating circumstances, students will not regularly be released before the end of the school day.

Parental consent is required before any student leaves campus for any part of the school day.

For students in elementary and middle school, a parent or authorized adult must come to the office and show identification to sign the student out. A campus representative will ask the student to report to the office. For safety purposes and stability of the learning environment, we cannot allow any unescorted adult to go to the classroom or other area to pick up the student. If the student returns to campus the same day, the parent or authorized adult must sign the student back in through the main office upon the student's return. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will also be required.

The same process applies to students in high school if a parent picks the student up from campus. If the student's parent authorizes the student to leave campus unaccompanied, a note provided by the parent must be submitted to the main office no later than two hours prior to the student's need to leave campus. A phone call from the parent may be accepted, but the school may ultimately require a note for documentation purposes. The student must sign out through the main office and sign in upon his or her return if the student returns the same day.

If a student becomes ill during the school day and the school nurse or other district personnel determines that the student should go home, the nurse will contact the student's parent and document the parent's wishes regarding release from school.

Unless the parent directs district personnel to release the student unaccompanied, the parent or other authorized adult must follow the sign-out procedures listed above. If a student is permitted by his or her parent to leave campus unaccompanied, the nurse will document the time of day the student was released. Under no circumstances will a student in elementary or middle school be released unaccompanied.

If a student is 18 years of age or is an emancipated minor, the student may sign him- or herself out of school. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will be required.

During Lunch

Students are not authorized to leave campus during lunch for any reason, except with the permission of the principal or parent check-out.

At Any Other Time during the School Day

Students are not authorized to leave campus during regular school hours for any other reason, except with the permission of the principal or parent check-out.

Students who leave campus in violation of these rules will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Lost and Found (All Grade Levels)

A lost and found collection box is located in the campus office. A student who loses an item should check the lost and found box. The district discourages bringing personal items of high

monetary value to school, as the district is not responsible for lost or stolen items. The campus will dispose of lost and found items at the end of each semester.

Makeup Work

Makeup Work Because of Absence (All Grade Levels)

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 the 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. With limited exceptions, all absences count for the 90 percent threshold set in state law regarding attendance for credit or final grade. [See Attendance for Credit or Final Grade (All Grade Levels)]

A student involved in an extracurricular activity must notify 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

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), the student 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.]

In-School Suspension (ISS) and Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) Makeup Work (All Grade Levels)

Alternative Means to Receive Coursework

While a student is in ISS or OSS, the district will provide the student with all course work for the student's foundation curriculum classes that the student misses as a result of the suspension.

Opportunity to Complete Courses

A student removed from the regular classroom to ISS or another setting, other than a DAEP, will have an opportunity to complete before the beginning of the next school year each course the student was enrolled in at the time of removal from the regular classroom. The district may provide the opportunity by any method available, including a correspondence course, another SAPPdistance learning option, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. [See policy FO(LEGAL) for more information.]

Married and/or Pregnant Students

1. Any student who shall be married at the time such student seeks enrollment in any school of the District shall report the fact of the marriage, the name of his or her spouse, and place where the spouse resides.

2. Any student who marries after enrollment in any school of this District shall promptly report that fact to the principal of the school attended by the student and shall also report the name of their spouse and the place where the spouse resides.

3. There shall be no discrimination against any married or pregnant student because of marriage or pregnancy. Such student shall be allowed to attend the school where assigned; however, the student shall be expected to attend classes regularly and keep up with their school work. No married student and no pregnant student, except as outlined in paragraph 4, shall be denied the right to be eligible to participate in any extracurricular or other activities of the school because of marriage or pregnancy.

4. In the event that any student shall be or become pregnant during any term while enrolled in a school in this District, then, for the benefit of her health and welfare and that of her expected child, and for the purpose of informing school personnel so that counsel, protection and advice may be given, is strongly encouraged to inform the nurse and/or principal of the school as soon as such condition is known to her. Upon being so informed, a referral is made to the School Age Parenting Program (SAPP). The student, and parent if the student is minor, will be asked to sign a release of medical information. Once completed the SAPP staff shall consult with the physician for the purpose of determining when, and if, in the best interest for the health and welfare of the student and her expected child, other appropriate educational arrangements should be made. After the birth of a child of any pregnant student, the mother shall be permitted to re-enter school upon written advice of her physician and approval of the principal.

5. School-Age Parenting classes and special services are available to assist such students to continue their education. The counselor or school nurse should be consulted for further information.

Nondiscrimination Statement (All Grade Levels)

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, the district does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law in providing education services, activities, and programs, including Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. The district provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

In accordance with Title IX, the district does not and is required not to discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination 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 U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, 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's nondiscrimination policy and grievance procedures are in the FFH series of policies in the district's policy manual, available at https://pol.tasb.org/PolicyOnline?key=177

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:

Monica Garcia
Student Support Services Director
Monica.garcia@southsanisd.net
210-977-7370

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 in the FFH series of policies.

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:

Jacob Collazo
Director of Special Education
jacob.collazo@southsanisd.ne
t 210-977-7000 ext. 3583

For all other concerns regarding discrimination, see the office of the Deputy Superintendent.

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

Nontraditional Academic Programs (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

The Optional Flexible School Day (OFSD) Program allows students in danger of not meeting state graduation requirements to have a flexible school day schedule.OFSD may also include students who must seek employment to support their families, seek childcare during traditional school hours, or who have dropped out of school and wish to complete their education in a nontraditional setting. The OFSD program will expand opportunities for students with special circumstances in grades 9-12 to have a more accommodating schedule based on their demonstrated need. Students who have a demonstrated need must apply to the program through their counselors with the final admission decision resting on the campus administration. Criteria must be met to be eligible for the program.

For more information regarding the Optional Flexible School Day Program contact Rosemary Morales at (210) 977-7304 or rosemary.morales@southsanisd.net.

Parent and Family Engagement (All Grade Levels)

Family-School Partnerships to Support Student Success

In accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Sec (1111 and 1116), South San Antonio Independent School District recognizes parents and families as essential partners in promoting academic achievement and student success. The district is committed to building the capacity of schools and families to develop strong, meaningful partnerships that support improved student outcomes and equitable educational opportunities for all students.

State law further affirms that parents have the right to direct the moral and religious training of their child, make decisions concerning their child's education, and consent to medical, psychiatric, and psychological treatment without obstruction or interference from governmental entities, including public school districts.

Information regarding additional parental rights is available on the district website:
Parent Rights Information

Shared Responsibility for Student Achievement

ESSA emphasizes the importance of collaboration between schools, families, and communities to improve student academic achievement. Families are encouraged to actively participate in their child's education by:

- Supporting regular school attendance and encouraging high expectations for academic achievement.
- Ensuring students arrive at school prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Monitoring completion of homework assignments, projects, and other academic responsibilities.
- Becoming familiar with district and campus academic programs, intervention services, enrichment opportunities, and special programs available to students.
- Reviewing student academic progress, assessment results, and accountability information to support informed educational decisions.
- Communicating regularly with teachers, counselors, and campus administrators regarding student performance and available supports.

- Discussing graduation requirements, college and career readiness pathways, and postsecondary opportunities beginning in middle school and continuing through high school.
- Participating in scheduled parent-teacher conferences and requesting additional meetings as needed. The district will provide opportunities for meaningful communication regarding student progress throughout the school year.
- Volunteering and participating in campus activities that strengthen school-family partnerships.
- Joining campus parent organizations and advisory groups that support school improvement initiatives.
- Serving on district or campus committees responsible for developing, reviewing, and improving educational programs and school improvement plans as required under ESSA schoolwide and targeted assistance provisions.
- Participating in the development, review, and evaluation of district and campus Parent and Family Engagement Policies, School-Parent Compacts, and Title I programs.
- Providing input regarding the use of federal funds and strategies designed to improve student outcomes and close achievement gaps.
- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and supporting initiatives related to student wellness, safety, and health education.
- Staying informed about district efforts related to bullying prevention, mental health supports, school safety, and student well-being.
- Contacting school personnel when concerns arise regarding a child's academic, emotional, social, or behavioral needs.

Parent and Family Engagement Opportunities

Consistent with ESSA Section 1116, South San Antonio ISD will:

Involve parents and families in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs and policies.

- Provide timely information about curriculum, assessments, student progress, and academic expectations.
- Offer opportunities for regular, two-way, meaningful communication between school staff and families in a language and format families can understand.
- Build the capacity of both families and school staff to strengthen effective partnerships that improve student achievement.
- Coordinate parent and family engagement activities with early childhood programs, Head Start, community organizations, and other educational initiatives when applicable.
- Ensure equitable opportunities for participation for families of migratory students, multilingual learners, students experiencing homelessness, students with disabilities, and other historically underserved populations.

Participation in District Governance and Transparency

Parents are encouraged to remain informed regarding district operations and educational decisions by attending school board meetings and participating in public engagement opportunities.

Regular board meetings are held monthly at the SSAISD Administration Building located at 5622 Ray Ellison Blvd., San Antonio, Texas 78242. Meeting agendas are posted no later than three business days prior to scheduled meetings and are available online at:

SSAISD Board Meetings and Agendas

Through ongoing collaboration among families, schools, and the community, South San Antonio ISD remains committed to creating learning environments where every student has access to high-quality instruction and the support needed to succeed academically and beyond.

Parental Rights and Options

State law provides that a parent has the right to direct the moral and religious training of the parent's child, make decisions concerning the child's education, and consent to medical, psychiatric, and psychological treatment of the child without obstruction or interference from a governmental entity of Texas, including a school district.

In addition to referring to the rights of parents, including the right to withhold consent for or exempt the parent's child from certain activities and instruction specified throughout this handbook, parents may access additional information regarding parental rights at the district's website at: https://www.southsanisd.net/parents/senate-bill-12

Working Together

Experience and research tell us that a child succeeds in education with good communication and a strong partnership between home and school. A parent's involvement and engagement in this partnership may include:

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child every day to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the school counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.Reviewing the requirements and options for graduation with your child in middle school and again while your child is enrolled in high school.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed. [See Academic Counseling]
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. The district will provide at least two opportunities for in-person conferences during each school year for each parent of a child enrolled in the district with the child's teachers. 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 their conference period or before or after school. [See Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences (All Grade Levels)]
- Becoming a school volunteer. [See Volunteers (All Grade Levels) and policy GKG for more information.]
- Participating in campus parent organizations.
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees that develop educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For more information, see policies BQA and BQB and contact the campus

administration.
- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and assisting the district in aligning local community values with health education instruction, human sexuality instruction, instruction on prevention of child abuse, family violence, dating violence, and sex trafficking, and other wellness issues. [See School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) (All Grade Levels) and policies BDF, EHAA, FFA for more information.]
- Being aware of the school's ongoing bullying and harassment prevention efforts.
- Contacting school officials if you are concerned with your child's emotional or mental well-being.
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. Regular board meetings are held on the third Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at the SSAISD Administration Building, 5https://www.southsanisd.net/parents/senate-bill-12. An agenda for a regular or special meeting is posted no later than 3 business days before each meeting at 5622 Ray Ellison Blvd., San Antonio, Texas 78242 and online at https://www.southsanisd.net/about-us/school-board/board-meetings. [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 from the Campus Administration Office and pay a $5.00 fee 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**.]

State law requires that one minute of silence follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that minute so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others.

In addition, state law requires that each campus provide for the observance of one minute of silence in remembrance of those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001, at the beginning of the first class period when September 11 falls on a regular school day.

[See policy EC for more information.]

Prayer (All Grade Levels)

Each student has a right to pray individually, voluntarily, and silently or to meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt school activities. The school will not encourage, require, or coerce a student to engage in or refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

Promotion and Retention

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or proficiency. In making promotion decisions, the district will consider:

- Teacher recommendation,
- Grades,
- Scores on criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessments, and
- Any other necessary academic information as determined by the district.

Prekindergarten—Grade 2

A parent may request in writing that a student repeat prekindergarten, kindergarten, or grade 1 or 2. Before granting the request, the district may convene a retention committee to meet and discuss the request and will invite the parent to participate. Elementary and Middle School Grade Levels

In grades 1-5, promotion is based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in reading, English/language arts, mathematics, and either science or social studies.

In grades 6-8, promotion is based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in English/language arts, mathematics, and either science or social studies.

High School Grade Levels

To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level standards. A student in grades 9–12 will be advanced a grade level based on the number of course credits earned. [See **Grade-Level Classification**.] Students will also have multiple opportunities to retake EOC assessments. [See **Graduation** and **Standardized Testing**.]

Repeating a High-School Credit Course

A parent may request in writing that a student repeat a high-school credit course in which the student was enrolled during the previous school year unless the district determines that the

student has met all requirements for graduation.

Before granting the request, the district may convene a retention committee to meet and discuss the request and will invite the parent to participate.

Only the student's first passing grade will be included in the calculation of class ranking.

Release of Students from School

[See Leaving Campus.]

Remote Instruction

South San Antonio ISD does not provide remote instruction.

Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences (All Grade Levels)

Report cards with each student's performance and absences in each class or subject are issued at least once every 9 weeks.

At the end of the third and sixth week of a nine-week grading period, parents will receive a progress report on their child's performance in all course/subject area. If a student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent will be asked to schedule a conference with the teacher. [See **Working Together** for how to schedule a conference.]

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the Superintendent pursuant to the board-adopted policy. Grading guidelines are designed to reflect each student's relative mastery of each assignment. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district's grading policy. [See **Grading Guidelines** and policy EIA(LOCAL) for more information.]

Questions about grade calculation should first be discussed with the teacher. If the question is not resolved, the student or parent may request a conference with the principal in accordance with FNG(LOCAL).

The report card or unsatisfactory progress report will state whether tutorials are required for a student who receives a grade lower than 70.

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and returned to the school within 5 days. The district may communicate academic information about a student electronically, including for progress reporting purposes. An electronic signature will be accepted by the district, but parents are entitled to request a handwritten signature of acknowledgment instead.

Retaliation

[See Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (All Grade Levels)]

Required State Assessments

STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) for 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

Standardized Testing for a Student Enrolled Above Grade Level

If a student in grades 3-8 is enrolled in a class or course intended for students above his or her current grade level in which the student will be administered a state-mandated assessment, the student will be required to take an applicable state-mandated assessment only for the course in which he or she is enrolled, unless otherwise required to do so by federal law. A student in grades 3-8 shall be assessed at least once in high school with the ACT or the SAT if the student completes the high school end-of-course assessments in mathematics, reading/language arts, or science prior to high school.

High School Courses End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments

STAAR end-of-course (EOC) assessments are administered for the following courses:

- Algebra I (Grade 8 & 9)
- English I (Grade 9)
- English II (Grade 10)
- Biology (Grade 9)
- U.S. History (Grade 11)

Satisfactory performance on the applicable assessments is required for graduation, unless waived or substituted as allowed by state law and rules.

There are three testing windows during the year in which a student may take an EOC assessment. The windows occur in the fall, spring, and summer months. If a student does not meet satisfactory performance, the student will have opportunities to retake the assessment.

Requesting Administration of STAAR/EOC in Paper Format (All Grade Levels)

STAAR and EOC assessments are administered electronically.

A parent or teacher may request that a STAAR or EOC be administered to a student in paper format. The district may grant this request for any single administration for up to three percent of

the number of students enrolled in the district. Requests will be granted in the order in which they are received.

Requests for paper format for a fall administration of a STAAR or EOC must be submitted no later than September 15 each school year.

Requests for paper format for a spring administration of a STAAR or EOC must be submitted no later than December 1 each school year.

Standardized Testing for a Student in Special Programs

Certain students — some with disabilities and some classified as emergent bilingual students — may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing. For more information, see the principal, school counselor, or special education director.

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 54.]

STAAR Spanish is available for eligible students for whom a Spanish version of STAAR is the most appropriate measure of their academic progress.

For more information, see the principal, school counselor, or special education director

Failure to Perform Satisfactorily on STAAR or EOC

If a student does not perform satisfactorily on a required state assessment in any subject, the district will provide accelerated instruction for the student in the subsequent school year by:

- Assigning the student to a teacher who is certified as a master, exemplary, or recognized teacher if one is available in the grade and subject matter of the state assessment on which the student did not perform satisfactorily, or
- Providing supplemental instruction.

A student may be required to attend any assigned supplemental instruction program before or after school or during the summer.

When a student fails to perform satisfactorily on a required state assessment in the same subject area for two or more years, the district shall develop an accelerated education plan. Parents are encouraged to participate in developing this plan.

Personal Graduation Plans — Middle School Students

For a middle school student who does not perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated examination, a school official will prepare a personal graduation plan (PGP).

School officials will also develop a PGP for a middle school student who is determined by the district to be unlikely to earn a high school diploma within five years of high school enrollment. The plan will, among other items:

- Identify the student's educational goals.
- Address the parent's educational expectations for the student.
- Outline an intensive instruction program for the student.

[See the school counselor and policy EIF(LEGAL) for more information.]

For a student receiving special education services, the student's IEP may serve as the student's PGP and would therefore be developed by the student's ARD committee.

[See Personal Graduation Plans on page 58 for information related to the development of personal graduation plans for high school students.]

Safe Storage of Firearms

A firearm should be stored unloaded in a safe or locked container, with ammunition stored elsewhere.

It is unlawful to store, transport, or abandon an unsecured firearm in a place where children are likely to be and can obtain access to the firearm. Under the Penal Code, a person commits the offense of making a firearm accessible to a child if the child gains access to a readily dischargeable firearm, and the person with criminal negligence:

- Failed to secure the firearm; or
- Left the firearm in a place to which the person knew or should have known the child would gain access

The penalty for allowing a child access to a firearm can range from a Class C misdemeanor (punishable by a $500 fine) to a Class A misdemeanor (punishable by a $4000 fine, a year in jail, or a combination of the two).

Safety (All Grade Levels)

Student safety on campus, at school-related events, and in district vehicles is a high priority of the district. The cooperation of students is essential to ensuring school safety. A student is expected to:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or others at risk.
- Follow all behavioral standards in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct or set by district employees.
- Help secure the campus by keeping all exterior doors closed, latched, and locked unless the door is actively monitored by a district employee.
- Follow instructions from teachers and other district employees regarding classroom doors.

- 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://www.southsanisd.net/departments/anonymous-reporting

- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

Accident Insurance

Soon after the school year begins, parents will have the opportunity to purchase low-cost accident insurance that would help meet medical expenses in the event of injury to their child.Insurance for Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs

The district may purchase accident, liability, or automobile insurance coverage for students and businesses involved in the district's CTE programs.

Preparedness Drills: Evacuation, Severe Weather, and Other Emergencies

Periodically, the school will conduct preparedness drills of emergency procedures. When the command is given or alarm is sounded, students need to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

Preparedness Training: CPR and Stop the Bleed

The district will offer instruction in CPR and the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED) at least once to students enrolled in in grades 7-12. The instruction can be provided as part of any course and is not required to result in CPR or 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 Stop the Bleed Texas (https://stopthebleedtexas.org/).

Emergency Medical Treatment and Information

All parents are asked each year to complete a medical care authorization form, providing written parental consent to obtain emergency treatment and information about allergies to medications or drugs. Parents should contact the school nurse to update emergency care information (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, and the like).

The district may consent to medical treatment, including dental treatment, if necessary, for a student if all of the following requirements are met:

- The district has received written authorization from a person having the right to consent
- That person cannot be contacted
- That person has not given the district actual notice to the contrary

The emergency care authorization form will be used by the district when a student's parent or authorized designee cannot be contacted. A student may provide consent if authorized by law

or court order.

Regardless of parental authorization for the district to consent to medical treatment, district employees will contact emergency medical services to provide emergency care when required by law or when deemed necessary, such as to avoid a life-threatening situation.

Emergency School Closing Information

Each year, parents are asked to complete an emergency release form to provide contact information in the event that the district needs to notify parents of early dismissal, delayed opening, or restricted access to a campus because of severe weather, a security threat, or another emergency cause.

The district will rely on contact information on file with the district to communicate with parents in an emergency situation, which may include real-time or automated messages. It is crucial to notify your child's school when a phone number changes. State law requires parents to update contact information within two weeks after the date the information changes.

If the campus must close, delay opening, or restrict access to the building because of an emergency, the district will also alert the community in the following ways:

- Post a notice on the district website
- Post notice on social media
- Automated call from district
- Send alerts to local news sources

[See Parent Contact Information and Automated Emergency Communications.]

SAT, ACT, and Other Standardized Tests

[See **Standardized Testing**.]

Schedule Changes

(Middle School and High School Grade Levels)

Schedule changes are only allowed for errors and prerequisite requirements. Elective choices made in the spring are final. To solve schedule conflicts, counselors may substitute an alternate choice for an elective. Because of the potential effect on class size, counselors cannot accommodate teacher change requests, "change of mind" requests, or lunch preferences. Necessary schedule changes (listed below) will be made ONLY during the first 2 weeks of school.

Valid reasons for a schedule:

- Student has already earned credit for the class in which he/she is enrolled
- The student has not met the prerequisite for the course
- ARD committee decision
- Work-based learning program students who do not have a job by the deadline
- Student has failed the course under the same teacher, another teacher is available, and

there is no negative impact on class size

School Facilities

Asbestos Management Plan

(All Grade Levels)

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. A copy of the district's asbestos management plan is available in the central administrative office.

If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please contact the district's designated asbestos coordinator:

Andy Rocha
Executive Director of Operations
andy.rocha@southsanisd.net
210-977-7000 ext. 3518

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. All District campuses provide a no-cost breakfast and lunch meal to every student.

The following information is published as required by the USDA for participation in the National School Lunch Program:

> "In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.
>
> "Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.
>
> "To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights

violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

mail:
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

1. **fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

2. **email:**
Program.Intake@usda.gov

"This institution is an equal opportunity provider."

The responsible state agency that administers the program is the Texas Department of Agriculture (https://www.texasagriculture.gov/Home/Contact-Us), which can be reached at (800) TELL-TDA (835-5832) or (800) 735-2989 (TTY).

The local agency that administers the program is the district. [See Nondiscrimination Statement (All Grade Levels) for the name and contact information for the Title IX coordinator, ADA/Section 504 coordinator, and superintendent for other concerns about discrimination.]

[See policy COB for more information.]

Vending Machines (All Grade Levels)

The district has adopted and implemented the state and federal policies for food service, including guidelines to restrict student access to vending machines. For more information regarding these policies and guidelines, see the campus principal. [See policy FFA for more information.]

Pest Management Plan (All Grade Levels)

The district is required to follow integrated pest management (IPM) procedures to control pests on school grounds. Although the district strives to use the safest and most effective methods to manage pests, including a variety of non-chemical control measures, periodic indoor and outdoor pesticide use is sometimes necessary to ensure a safe, pest-free school environment.

All pesticides used are registered for their intended use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and are applied only by certified pesticide applicators. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before indoor application. All outdoor applications will be posted at the time of treatment, and signs will remain until it is safe to enter the area.

Parents who have questions or who want to be notified of the times and types of applications prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact the district's IPM coordinator:

Andy Rocha
Executive Director of Operations

andy.rocha@southsanisd.net
210-977-7000 ext. 3518

Conduct Before and After School (All Grade Levels)

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at before- or after-school activities. Whether a school activity is on or off district premises, students must follow the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day. Misbehavior will be subject to consequences established by the Student Code of Conduct or any stricter standards of behavior established by the sponsor for extracurricular participants.

Library (All Grade Levels)

The library is open for independent student use before and after school as well as during school hours.

The district provides a wide range of library materials for students and faculty that support student achievement and present varying levels of difficulty, diversity of appeal, and a variety of points of view. The district follows the Texas State Library and Archive Commission's standards for school library collection development.

The Board has established a school library advisory council (SLAC). The SLAC shall meet at least two times each year but may hold additional meetings in order to consider recommendations from District staff and fulfill its statutory duties. The District shall ensure the members of the SLAC, librarians, professional library staff, and other designated professional staff are trained or receive information on the proper collection development standards. Librarians and other professional staff shall assist the SLAC in developing the list of library material recommendations to be presented to the Board. The librarians and other professional staff shall ensure that the materials:

1. Enrich and support the TEKS and the state and local curriculum, taking into consideration students' varied interests, maturity levels, abilities, and learning styles.
2. Foster growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and societal standards.
3. Encourage the enjoyment of reading, foster high-level thinking skills, support personal learning, and encourage discussion based on rational analysis.
4. Represent ethnic, religious, and cultural groups of the state and their contributions to the state, the nation, and the world.

Parents are the primary decision makers regarding their student's access to library material. The district encourages parental involvement in library acquisition, maintenance, and campus activities. Parents are encouraged to communicate with the campus librarian and their child's teacher about special considerations regarding library materials self-selected by their student. A parent may submit to the district a list of library materials that their child may not be allowed to check out or otherwise access for use outside of the school library by submitting the list to the campus librarian.

A parent may access to the school's library by making an appointment with the school librarian.

The district welcomes student and parent feedback on library materials and services. Parents may contact the Office of the Deputy Superintendent with questions or comments about their child's campus library. A district employee, parent, or person residing in the district may submit a written challenge to the inclusion of any library material in the catalog of the school library by submitting the form available on the district's website.

Use of Hallways during Class Time (All Grade Levels)

During class times, loitering or standing in the halls is not permitted, and a student must have a hall pass to be outside the classroom for any purpose. Failure to obtain a pass will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Use by Students Before and After School (All Grade Levels)

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are required to remain in the area where their activity is scheduled to take place. Unless the teacher or sponsor overseeing an activity gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the building or campus.

Students must leave campus immediately after dismissal from school in the afternoon, unless the student is involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher or other authorized employee or adult. Due to limited supervision, students should arrive at school no earlier than 30 minutes prior to the start of the school day.

SCHOOL HOURS

Elementary School - 7:30 am to 3:00

pm Middle School - 8:05 am to 3:35 pm

High School - 8:40 am to 4:15 pm

Meetings of Non-Curriculum-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.

Parental consent is required before a student may participate in a student club that is authorized or sponsored by the district. [See Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations (All Grade Levels)]

School-Sponsored Field Trips (All Grade Levels)

The district periodically takes students on field trips for educational purposes.

A parent must provide permission for a student to participate in a field trip.

The district may ask the parent to provide information about a student's medical provider and insurance coverage and may also ask the parent to sign a waiver allowing for emergency medical treatment in the case of a student accident or illness during the field trip.

The district may require a fee for student participation in a field trip that is not required as part of a basic educational program or course to cover expenses such as transportation, admission, and meals; however, a student will not be denied participation because of financial need. See **Fees (All Grade Levels)** for more information.

The district is not responsible for refunding fees paid directly to a third-party vendor.

Searches and Investigations

Searches in General (All Grade Levels)

In the interest of promoting student safety and drug-free schools, district officials may occasionally conduct searches and investigations.

District officials may conduct investigations in accordance with law and district policy and may question students regarding a student's own conduct or the conduct of others. [For questioning of students by law enforcement officials, see Law Enforcement Agencies (All Grade Levels).]

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 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.

Personal Communications 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 (All Grade Levels) and policy FNF(LEGAL) for more information.]

Trained Dogs (All Grade Levels)

The district may use trained dogs to screen for concealed, prohibited items, including drugs and alcohol. Screenings conducted by trained dogs will not be announced in advance. The dogs will not be used with students, but students may be asked to leave personal belongings in an area that is going to be screened, such as a classroom, a locker, or a vehicle. If a dog alerts to an item or an area, it may be searched by district officials.

Vehicles on Campus (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the student will be asked to unlock the vehicle. If the student refuses, the district will contact the student's parents. If the parents also refuse to permit the vehicle to be searched, the district may turn the matter over to law enforcement. The district may contact law enforcement even if permission to search is granted.

Sexual Harassment

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

Special Programs (All Grade Levels)

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, students who are homeless, students in foster care, bilingual students, migrant students, English learners, students diagnosed with dyslexia, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact the campus administrator or counselor.

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission's Talking Book Program (https://www.tsl.texas.gov/tbp/index.html) provides audiobooks free of charge to qualifying Texans, including students with visual, physical, or reading disabilities such as dyslexia.

Standardized Testing

SAT/ACT (Scholastic Aptitude Test and American College Test)

Many colleges require either the American College Test (ACT) or the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for admission. These assessments are usually taken at the end of the junior year. Students are encouraged to talk with the school counselor early during their junior year to learn about these assessments and determine the appropriate examination to take. The Preliminary SAT (PSAT) and ACT-Aspire are the corresponding preparatory and readiness assessments for the SAT and ACT.

Note: These assessments may qualify a student to receive a performance acknowledgment on the student's transcript under the foundation graduation program and may qualify as a substitute for an end-of-course testing requirement in certain circumstances. A student's performance at a certain level on the SAT or ACT also makes the student eligible for automatic admission to a Texas public institution of higher education.

TSI (Texas Success Initiative) Assessment

Prior to enrollment in a Texas public college or university, most students must take a standardized test called the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) assessment. The TSI assesses the reading, mathematics, and writing skills that first-year students need to perform effectively as undergraduates in Texas public colleges and universities. This assessment may also be required before a student enrolls in a dual credit course offered through the district. Achieving certain benchmark scores on this assessment may also waive certain end-of-course assessment requirements in limited circumstances.

Student Speakers (All Grade Levels)

The district provides students the opportunity to introduce the following school events: football games and opening announcements and greetings for the school day. If a student meets the eligibility criteria and wishes to introduce one of the school events listed above, the student should submit his or her name in accordance with policy FNA(LOCAL).

[See **Graduation** for information related to student speakers at graduation ceremonies and policy FNA(LOCAL) regarding other speaking opportunities.]

Summer School (Grade 8-12)

South San Antonio ISD offers summer school to students in grades 8 through 12 to remediate courses required for graduation. Please see your campus counselor for more information.

Tardies (All Grade Levels)

Elementary school students are considered tardy if they are not in their assigned classroom at 7:30 am when the bell rings, middle school students at 8:05 am and high school students at 8:40 am.

Middle and High school students who are less than 5 minutes late to their class period will be marked Tardy by their classroom teacher. If a student misses more than 5 minutes of the class period they will be marked “Absent By Tardy” - this means that the student missed more than 10% of the class instruction. Accumulated tardies will be handled administratively. Every minute of instruction counts!

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

Instructional materials are any resources used in classroom instruction as part of the required curriculum, such as textbooks, workbooks, computer software, or online services.

The district selects instructional materials in accordance with state law and policy EFA.

The district provides approved instructional materials to students free of charge for each subject or class. Students must treat instructional materials with care, as directed by the teacher.

If a student needs a graphing calculator for a course and the district does not provide one, the student may use a calculator application with graphing capabilities on a phone, laptop, tablet, or other computing device.

A student who is issued a damaged item should report the damage to the teacher.

Any student who does not return an item or returns an item in an unacceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until the item is returned or the damage is paid for by the parent. However, the student will be provided the necessary instructional resources and equipment for use at school during the school day.

For information on library books and other resources students may access voluntarily, see **Library** (All Grade Levels).

Transfers (All Grade Levels)

General Provisions: In accordance with the Texas Education Code (TEC) 25.033 a parent or person standing in parental relation to any student may by petition in writing either:

(1) request the assignment or transfer of the student to a designated school or to a school to be designated by the board, or

(2) file objections to the assignment of the student to the school to which the student has been assigned.

Because each type of intra-district transfer services a specific audience, parents are asked to review the information below in order to determine the most appropriate transfer type given your circumstances. A transfer approved for an individual student does not in any way create an agreement to transfer siblings of the student. A student transfer may be requested only one time per school year.

Administrative Transfer

A transfer may be initiated administratively to assign a student to a different school for reasons including, but not limited to concerns related to discipline, safety, sexual assault, bullying, or extraordinary conditions affecting the family or the school. It must be initiated by the home campus principal or Executive Director of Student Services only if one or more of the conditions described above exist. If a parent/guardian deems that an administrative transfer is warranted, they should visit the home campus principal. Unless otherwise noted, an Administrative Transfer is valid only for the current school year. Parents inquiring about Administrative Transfer should visit with their home campus principal. The processing of Administrative Transfers is done by the Assessment and Accountability Department.

Parental Choice Transfer

South San Antonio ISD parents/guardians may submit a parental choice transfer request for their child(ren) for the upcoming school year to the requested campus attendance office in the spring and before the first day of the subsequent school year. Requests received prior to Spring Break, shall receive priority consideration and shall be ordered by lottery.

The approval of parental choice transfer requests is dependent on a number of factors:

(1) Available space at the requested campus and at the requested grade level

(2) Projected enrollment numbers at the requested campus

(3) Special circumstances to include above target enrollment to preclude future overcrowding

(4) Principal's review of the student's discipline, grades and attendance records

Parental choice transfer requests to remain at the same school the child was attending at the time of boundary change shall not be accepted for one school year following the boundary change. Further, if an elementary or middle school has a boundary change or cap to reduce enrollment, the school shall be closed for one year following the boundary change. If requests are denied due to lack of space, requests submitted shall be placed on a waiting list ordered by

date and time received and will be considered if space becomes available after the beginning of the school year.

All parental choice transfers must be approved by the receiving Campus Principal after a review of the student's discipline, grades and attendance records. If the student is new to SSAISD, the parent/guardian should obtain the student records from the last school attended and submit them to the requested campus with the on-line or paper transfer form. If the student fails to maintain an acceptable discipline and/or attendance record, the Principal may revoke the parental choice transfer.

Parental Choice Transfers do not need to be renewed annually, since once approved they are approved for that level of schooling (i.e elementary, middle, or high school level). Out-of-District transfer requests must be resubmitted to enter 6th and 9th grades. Transportation for a parental choice transfer student is the responsibility of the family.

Moving During the Year

A student who moves to another attendance zone during the school year may apply to continue at the current campus for the remainder of the school year, provided there are no discipline, attendance, or transportation problems.

A senior student enrolled with enough credits to graduate by the end of the school year may remain at the high school for the rest of the academic year.

UIL Eligibility

A student obtaining an intradistrict transfer to a District high school without a corresponding change of legal residence shall not be eligible for participation in high school varsity athletics for one year at the new school. Participation in other UIL competitions shall be subject to UIL rules and guidelines.

Upon a student's entry into high school athletics, eligibility shall be established based on the location of the student's legal residence, i.e., the bona fide legal address of the parent or guardian and where the student resides.

If a family changes legal residence from one high school attendance area to another after eligibility has been established, the student may choose to:

1. Retain UIL eligibility at the original school and continue to attend and participate if eligibility has been established by UIL rules; or
2. Participate at the new school, subject to established UIL guidelines and rules.

A student requesting an intradistrict transfer should consult with the athletic department to determine if transferring would result in the forfeiture of varsity eligibility for a year.

[See **Safety Transfers/Assignments**, **Bullying**, and **A Student Who Has Learning Difficulties or Who Needs Special Education or Section 504 Services**, for other transfer options.]

Transportation (All Grade Levels)

School-Sponsored Trips

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use school-provided transportation to and from the event. However, in accordance with campus procedures, a parent may provide written consent for his or her child to ride with or be released after the event to the parent or another adult designated by the parent. [See **School-Sponsored Field Trips**]

Buses and Other School Vehicles

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living within the school district 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 transportation 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.

A parent may designate a child-care facility or grandparent's residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated location must be an approved stop on an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off location, contact the district transportation department.

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.]

For additional information regarding transportation, please contact:

Carlos Garza
Director of Transportation
carlos.garza@southsanisd.net
210-977-7000 ext. 3530

Vandalism (All Grade Levels)

Littering, defacing, or damaging school property is not tolerated. Students will be required to pay for damages they cause and will be subject to criminal proceedings as well as disciplinary consequences in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Video Cameras (All Grade Levels)

For safety purposes, the district uses video and audio recording equipment to monitor student behavior, including on buses and in common areas on campus. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used.

The principal will review the video and audio recordings as needed and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

In accordance with state law, a parent of a student who receives special education services, a staff member (as this term is defined by law), a principal or assistant principal, or the board may make a written request for the district to place video and audio recording equipment in certain self-contained special education classrooms. The district will provide notice before placing a video camera in a classroom or other setting in which a child receives special education services. For more information or to request the installation and operation of this equipment, contact the campus principal to coordinate the implementation of and compliance with this law.

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

[See **Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student when Not Already Permitted by Law** for video and other recording by parents or visitors to virtual or in-person classrooms.]

Visitors to the School (All Grade Levels)

General Visitors

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

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:

- Request entry to the school at the primary entrance unless otherwise directed by a district employee
- Report to the main office
- Be prepared to show photo identification
- Exit the school at the primary entrance and leave all exterior doors closed, latched, and locked unless actively monitored by a district employee
- Comply with all applicable district policies and procedures

If requested by a district employee, a visitor must provide identification such as a driver's license, other picture identification issued by a government entity, or employee or student identification issued by the district. A person who refuses to provide identification and who reasonably appears to have no legitimate reason to be on district property may be ejected from district property.

Individuals may visit classrooms or observe virtual instruction during instructional time only with approval of the principal and teacher. Visitors may not interfere with instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct. Disruptive behavior or violations of student privacy will not be permitted.

[See Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student When Not Already Permitted by Law for video and other recording by parents or visitors to virtual or in-person classrooms.]

Unauthorized Persons

In accordance with Education Code 37.105, a school administrator or district police officer has the authority to refuse entry to or eject a person from district property if the person refuses to leave peaceably on request and:

- The person poses a substantial risk of harm to any person; or
- The person behaves in a manner that is inappropriate for a school setting and persists in the behavior after being given a verbal warning that the behavior is inappropriate and may result in refusal of entry or ejection.

Appeals regarding refusal of entry or ejection from district property may be filed in accordance with policies FNG(LOCAL) or GF(LOCAL).

[See the Student Code of Conduct.]

Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students

Business, Civic, and Youth Groups
The district may invite representatives from patriotic societies listed in Title 36 of the United States Code to present information to interested students about membership in the society.

Career Day

Each Fall, the district invites representatives to the high schools from colleges and universities and other higher education institutions, prospective employers, and military recruiters to present information to interested students.

Volunteers (All Grade Levels)

The district invites and appreciates the efforts of volunteers who are willing to serve our district and students.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact:
Jose Guereca
Family, Community & Engagement Specialist
jose.guereca@southsanisd.net
210-977-7000 ext. 2121

Subject to exceptions in accordance with state law and district procedures, the district requires a state criminal history background check for each volunteer, including parents, guardians, or grandparents of a child enrolled in the district. The volunteer must pay all costs for the background check.

Voter Registration (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

A student who is eligible to vote in any local, state, or federal election may obtain a voter registration application at the main campus office.

Withdrawing from School (All Grade Levels)

To withdraw a student under age 18 from school, the parent or guardian must submit a written request to the principal specifying the reasons for withdrawal and the final day the student will be in attendance. Withdrawal forms are available from the attendance office.

A student who is age 18 or older, who is married, or who has been declared by a court to be an emancipated minor may withdraw without parental signature.

Please provide the school at least three days' notice of withdrawal so that records and documents may be prepared. A counselor or administrator will also conduct an exit interview with the guardian and student regarding the withdrawal.

Glossary

Accelerated instruction, including supplemental instruction, is an intensive educational program designed to help an individual student acquire the knowledge and skills required at their grade level. It is required when a student does not meet the passing standard on a state-mandated assessment. Accelerated instruction may be provided by assigning a student to a classroom teacher who is certified as a master, exemplary, or recognized teacher or by providing supplemental instruction in addition to regular instruction.

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 their 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.

Emergent bilingual student refers to a student of limited English proficiency. Other related terms include English learner, English language learner, and limited English proficient student.

EOC (end-of-course) assessments are state-mandated and are part of the STAAR program. Successful performance on EOC assessments is required for graduation. These examinations will be given in English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and U.S. History.

ESSA is the federal Every Student Succeeds Act.

FERPA refers to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, which grants specific privacy protections to student records. The law contains certain exceptions, such as for directory information, unless a student's parent or a student 18 years of age or older directs the school not to release directory information.

IEP stands for individualized education program and is the written record prepared by the ARD committee for a student with disabilities who is eligible for special education services.

IGC is the individual graduation committee, formed in accordance with state law, to determine a student's eligibility to graduate when the student has failed to demonstrate satisfactory performance on no more than two of the required state assessments.

ISS refers to in-school suspension, a disciplinary technique for misconduct found in the Student Code of Conduct. Although different from out-of-school suspension and placement in a DAEP, ISS removes the student from the regular classroom.

PGP stands for personal graduation plan, which is required for high school students and for any student in middle school who fails a section on a state-mandated test or is identified by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year after beginning 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.

Safe and Supportive School Team is a team established at each campus that is responsible for conducting a threat assessment regarding individuals who make threats of violence or exhibit harmful, threatening, or violent behavior and determining appropriate intervention, and providing guidance to students and school employees on recognizing harmful, threatening, or violent behavior that may pose a threat to the community, school, or individual.

SAT refers to the Scholastic Aptitude Test, one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions examinations. The test may be required for admissions to certain colleges or universities.

SHAC stands for School Health Advisory Council, a group of at least five members, a majority of whom must be parents, appointed by the school board to help ensure that local community values and health issues are reflected in the district's health education instruction, as well as assist with other student and employee wellness issues.

Section 504 is the federal law that prohibits discrimination against a student with a disability, requiring schools to provide opportunities for equal services, programs, and participation in activities. Unless the student is determined to be eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), general education with appropriate instructional accommodations will be provided.

STAAR is the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, the state's system of standardized academic achievement assessments.

STAAR Alternate 2 is an alternative state-mandated assessment designed for students with severe cognitive disabilities receiving special education services who meet the participation requirements, as determined by the student's ARD committee.

STAAR Spanish is an alternative state-mandated assessment administered to eligible students for whom a Spanish version of STAAR is the most appropriate measure of their academic progress.

State-mandated assessments are required of students at certain grade levels and in specified subjects. Except under limited circumstances, students must pass the STAAR EOC assessments to graduate. Students have multiple opportunities to take the tests, if necessary, for graduation.

Student Code of Conduct is developed with the advice of the district-level committee and adopted by the board and identifies the circumstances, consistent with law, when a student may be removed from a classroom, campus, or district vehicle; sets out the conditions that authorize or require the principal or another administrator to place the student in a DAEP; and outlines conditions for out-of-school suspension and for expulsion. The Student Code of Conduct also addresses notice to the parent regarding a student's violation of one of its provisions.

TAC stands for the Texas Administrative Code.

TEA stands for the Texas Education Agency, which oversees primary and secondary public education in Texas.

TELPAS stands for the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System, which assesses the progress that emergent bilingual students 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.

UIL refers to the University Interscholastic League, the statewide, voluntary nonprofit organization that oversees educational extracurricular academic, athletic, and music contests.

Appendix: Freedom from Bullying Policy

Note: School board policies may be revised at any time. For legal context and the most current copy of the local policy, visit:
https://pol.tasb.org/PolicyOnline/PolicyDetails?key=177&code=FFI#localTabContent

Below is the text of South San Antonio ISD*'s* policy FFI(LOCAL) as of the date this handbook was finalized for this school year.

Student Welfare: Freedom from Bullying

Policy FFI(LOCAL) adopted on 6/21/2023

Note: This policy addresses bullying of District students. For purposes of this policy, the term bullying includes cyberbullying.

For provisions regarding discrimination and harassment involving District students, see FFH. Note that FFI shall be used in conjunction with FFH for certain prohibited conduct. For reporting requirements related to child abuse and neglect, see FFG.

Bullying Prohibited

The District prohibits bullying, including cyberbullying, as defined by state law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of District policy and is prohibited.

Examples

> Bullying of a student could occur by physical contact or through electronic means and may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, or ostracism.

Minimum Standards

> In accordance with law, the Superintendent shall develop administrative procedures to ensure that minimum standards for bullying prevention are implemented.

Retaliation

The District prohibits retaliation by a student or District employee against any person who in good faith makes a report of bullying, serves as a witness, or participates in an investigation.

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

False Claim

A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a District investigation regarding bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Timely Reporting

Reports of bullying shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. A failure to immediately report may impair the District's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.

Reporting Procedures

Student Report

> To obtain assistance and intervention, any student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, school counselor, principal, or other District employee. The Superintendent shall develop procedures allowing a student to anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying.

Employee Report

> Any District employee who suspects or receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the principal or designee.

Report Format

> A report may be made orally or in writing. The principal or designee shall reduce any oral reports to written form.

Periodic Monitoring

> The Superintendent shall periodically monitor the reported counts of bullying incidents, and that declines in the count may represent not only improvements in the campus culture because bullying declines but also declines in the campus culture because of a decline in openness to report incidents.

Notice of Report

When an allegation of bullying is reported, the principal or designee shall notify a parent of the alleged victim on or before the third business day after the incident is reported. The principal or designee shall also notify a parent of the student alleged to have engaged in the conduct within a reasonable amount of time after the incident is reported.

Prohibited Conduct

The principal or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH, including dating violence and harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, or disability. If so, the District shall proceed under policy FFH. If the allegations could constitute both prohibited conduct and bullying, the investigation under FFH shall include a determination on each type of conduct.

Investigation of Report

The principal or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report. The principal or designee shall promptly take interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate.

Concluding the Investigation

Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within ten District business days from the date of the initial report alleging bullying; however, the principal or designee shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

The principal or designee shall prepare a final, written report of the investigation. The report shall include a determination of whether bullying occurred, and if so, whether the victim used reasonable self-defense. A copy of the report shall be sent to the Superintendent or designee.

Notice to Parents

If an incident of bullying is confirmed, the principal or designee shall promptly notify the parents of the victim and of the student who engaged in bullying.

District Action

Bullying

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, the District shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the District's Student Code of Conduct and may take corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct. The District may notify law enforcement in certain circumstances.

Discipline

A student who is a victim of bullying and who used reasonable self-defense in response to the bullying shall not be subject to disciplinary action. The discipline of a student with a disability is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Code of Conduct.

Corrective Action

Examples of corrective action may include a training program for the individuals involved in the complaint, a comprehensive education program for the school community, follow-up inquiries to determine whether any new incidents or any instances of retaliation have occurred, involving parents and students in efforts to identify problems and improve the school climate, increasing staff monitoring of areas where bullying has occurred, and reaffirming the District's policy against bullying.

Transfers

The principal or designee shall refer to FDB for transfer provisions.

Counseling

The principal or designee shall notify the victim, the student who engaged in bullying, and any students who witnessed the bullying of available counseling options.

Improper Conduct

If the investigation reveals improper conduct that did not rise to the level of prohibited conduct or bullying, the District may take action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct or any other appropriate corrective action.

Confidentiality

To the greatest extent possible, the District shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

Appeal

A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through FNG(LOCAL), beginning at the appropriate level.

Records Retention

Retention of records shall be in accordance with CPC(LOCAL).

Access to Policy and Procedures

This policy and any accompanying procedures shall be distributed annually in the employee and student handbooks. Copies of the policy and procedures shall be posted on the District's website, to the extent practicable, and shall be readily available at each campus and the District's administrative offices.

Appendix: Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy

Note: School board policies may be revised at any time. For legal context and the most current copy of the local policy, visit https://pol.tasb.org/PolicyOnline/PolicyDetails?key=177&code=FNG#localTabContent

Below is the text of South San Antonio ISD's policy FNG(LOCAL) as of the date this handbook was finalized for this school year.

Student Rights and Responsibilities: Student and Parent Complaints/Grievances

Policy FNG(LOCAL) adopted on 9/18/2024

Complaints

In this policy, the terms "complaint" and "grievance" shall have the same meaning.

Other Complaint Processes

Student or parent complaints shall be filed in accordance with this policy, except as required by the policies listed below. Some of these policies require appeals to be submitted in accordance with FNG after the relevant complaint process:

1. Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, age, or disability shall be submitted in accordance with the FFH series.
2. Complaints concerning dating violence shall be submitted in accordance with the FFH series.
3. Complaints concerning retaliation related to discrimination and harassment shall be submitted in accordance with the FFH series.
4. Complaints concerning bullying or retaliation related to bullying shall be submitted in accordance with FFI.
5. Complaints concerning failure to award credit or a final grade on the basis of attendance shall be submitted in accordance with FEC.
6. Complaints concerning expulsion shall be submitted in accordance with FOD and the Student Code of Conduct.
7. Complaints concerning any final decisions of the gifted and talented selection committee regarding selection for or exit from the gifted program shall be submitted in accordance with EHBB.
8. Complaints within the scope of Section 504, including complaints concerning identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student with a disability, shall be submitted in accordance with FB and the procedural safeguards handbook.
9. Complaints within the scope of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, including complaints concerning identification, evaluation, educational placement, or discipline of a student with a disability, shall be submitted in accordance with

EHBAE, FOF, and the procedural safeguards handbook provided to parents of all students referred to special education.

10. Complaints concerning instructional resources shall be submitted in accordance with the EF series.
11. Complaints concerning a commissioned peace officer who is an employee of the District shall be submitted in accordance with the CKE series.
12. Complaints concerning intradistrict transfers or campus assignment shall be submitted in accordance with FDB.
13. Complaints concerning admission, placement, or services provided for a homeless student shall be submitted in accordance with FDC.
14. Complaints concerning disputes regarding a student's eligibility for free or reduced-priced meal programs shall be submitted in accordance with COB.

Complaints regarding refusal of entry to or ejection from District property based on Education Code 37.105 shall be filed in accordance with this policy. However, the timelines shall be adjusted as necessary to permit the complainant to address the Board in person within 90 calendar days of filing the initial complaint, unless the complaint is resolved before the Board considers it. [See GKA(LEGAL)]

Notice to Students and Parents

The District shall inform students and parents of this policy through appropriate District publications.

Guiding Principles

Informal Process

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

Informal resolution shall be encouraged but shall not extend any deadlines in this policy, except by mutual written consent.

Formal Process

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

Even after initiating the formal complaint process, students and parents are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their concerns. A student or parent whose concerns are resolved may withdraw a formal complaint at any time.

The process described in this policy shall not be construed to create new or additional rights beyond those granted by law or Board policy, nor to require a full evidentiary hearing or “mini-trial” at any level.

Freedom from Retaliation

Neither the Board nor any District employee shall unlawfully retaliate against any student or parent for bringing a concern or complaint.

General Provisions

Filing

Complaint forms and appeal notices may be filed by hand-delivery, by electronic communication, including email and fax, or by U.S. Mail. Hand-delivered filings shall be timely filed if received by the appropriate administrator or designee by the close of business on the deadline. Filings submitted by electronic communication shall be timely filed if they are received by the close of business on the deadline, as indicated by the date/time shown on the electronic communication. Mail filings shall be timely filed if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on or before the deadline and received by the appropriate administrator or designated representative no more than three days after the deadline.

Scheduling Conferences

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

Response

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

Days

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

Representative

"Representative" shall mean any person who or organization that is designated by the student or parent to represent the student or parent in the complaint process. A student may be represented by an adult at any level of the complaint.

The student or parent may designate a representative through written notice to the District at any level of this process. If the student or parent designates a representative with fewer than three days' notice to the District before a scheduled conference or hearing, the District may reschedule the conference or hearing to a later date, if desired, in order to include the District's counsel. The District may be represented by counsel at any level of the process.

Consolidating Complaints

Complaints arising out of an event or a series of related events shall be addressed in one complaint. A student or parent shall not file separate or serial complaints arising from any event or series of events that have been or could have been addressed in a previous complaint.

Untimely Filings

All time limits shall be strictly followed unless modified by mutual written consent.

If a complaint form or appeal notice is not timely filed, the complaint may be dismissed, on written notice to the student or parent, at any point during the complaint process. The student or parent may appeal the dismissal by seeking review in writing within ten days from the date of the written dismissal notice, starting at the level at which the complaint was dismissed. Such appeal shall be limited to the issue of timeliness.

Costs Incurred

Each party shall pay its own costs incurred in the course of the complaint.

Complaint and Appeal Forms

Complaints and appeals under this policy shall be submitted in writing on a form provided by the District.

Copies of any documents that support the complaint should be attached to the complaint form. If the student or parent does not have copies of these documents, copies may be presented at the Level One conference. After the Level One conference, no new documents may be submitted by the student or parent unless the student or parent did not know the documents existed before the Level One conference.

A complaint or appeal form that is incomplete in any material aspect may be dismissed but may be refiled with all the required information if the refiling is within the designated time for filing.

Level One

Complaint forms must be filed:

1. Within 15 days of the date the student or parent first knew, or with reasonable diligence should have known, of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint or grievance; and

2. With the lowest level administrator who has the authority to remedy the alleged problem.

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

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

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

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

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

Level Two

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

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

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

The Level One record shall include:

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

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

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

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

Level Three

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

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

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

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

The Level Two record shall include:

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

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

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

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

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

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