

Virtual Academy of Cybersecurity

Texas's first 4-year virtual early college pathway. Earn a high school diploma and a FREE Associate Degree from home.

- Class of 2031 (Inaugural Cohort)
- In Partnership with SamPoly (SHSU)
- Launching Fall 2027

Informational Session Attendance

Please scan the QR code below using your mobile device camera to check in

Tomball Virtual Academy of Cybersecurity



TOMBALL
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
DESTINATION EXCELLENCE

SH
Sam Houston
State University

Program Leadership

Leadership & Key Partners

Dedicated leaders driving Texas's first 4–year virtual early college cybersecurity pathway.



Dr. Michael Webb
Tomball ISD
Chief Academic Officer



Jonathan Thomas
SamPoly / SHSU
Assistant Vice President of Industry Partnerships & Workforce Pathways



Dr. Alicia Reeves
Tomball ISD
Assistant Superintendent of Development and Engagement



Karla Sandoval
Tomball ISD
Director of CTE



Dr. Eric Levels
Tomball ISD
Executive Director of Digital Learning and Emerging Technology



Steven Shiels
Tomball ISD
Director of School Counseling

Please place all questions related to the program in Q&A

If you like to ask a live question, select Raise, then you will be given the option of un-muting your microphone.

Q&A

Raise

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Program Overview

A Pioneering College & Career Pathway

Free Associate Degree

60 transferable college credits through Sam Houston State University SamPoly at zero tuition cost.

100% Virtual Flexibility

Asynchronous coursework paired with daily live support and flexible scheduling from home.

High-Demand Career

Fast-track entry into high-wage cybersecurity, technology, and intelligence sectors.

Made possible through Senate Bill 569 (modernizes the framework for virtual and hybrid learning)

By The Numbers

Unmatched Value for Families

60

College Credits

Transferable directly to SHSU bachelor programs

$0

Tuition & Textbook Cost

Complete early college degree standard savings of ~$25,000+

240

Minutes Daily

Flexible daily commitment combining instruction & support

Daily Structure

What Will Students Experience?

240 Flexible Minutes

Daily asynchronous coursework integrated with structured live engagement checkpoints.

80% Unit Mastery

Mastery-based academic progression with targeted re-teaching before advancing.

Extracurricular Access

Full permission to participate in athletics, band, clubs, and campus social events.

Wrap-Around Support

9+ Dedicated Professionals Per Student

7 Teachers of Record

Texas certified virtual learning instructors providing daily lessons and unlimited 1:1 office hours.

1 Success Coach

Bi-monthly required 1:1 coaching focused on motivation, goal setting, pacing, and time management.

1 TISD Dean & Facilitator

Daily live homeroom class for announcements, TSIA 2/SAT tutorials, and technical troubleshooting.

Academic Milestones

4 Year Plan

FRESHMAN YEAR

TSIA Reading & Language Arts

By end of freshman year, demonstrate proficiency on TSIA (Reading Language Arts).

SOPHOMORE YEAR

TSIA Math

Begin of sophomore year, demonstrate proficiency on TSIA (Math).

CORE SUBJECTS

State Assessments

Proficiency on State Assessment in:

- English I
- Algebra I
- Biology I
- US History

JUNIOR YEAR

SAT

SAT Junior Year.

4 Year Academic Plan - One Pager

Career Pathways

Industry Based Certification

JUNIOR LEVEL CERTIFICATION

CompTIA A+

Foundational industry certification validating core technical, hardware, operating system, and IT operational skills.

- Hardware & Network Troubleshooting
- Operating Systems & Software Support
- Operational & Security Fundamentals

SENIOR LEVEL CERTIFICATION

Network+

Advanced technical credential proving expertise in designing, managing, securing, and maintaining essential network infrastructure.

- Network Architecture & Implementation
- Network Security & Operations
- Advanced Routing & Infrastructure Solutions

VALUE & IMPACT — Global Benchmark
Serves as a globally recognized benchmark for foundational IT competence.

CORE KNOWLEDGE — Cross-Platform Concepts
Teaches core concepts that apply across all hardware and platforms.

JOB MARKET — High Industry Demand
Appears in more tech support job listings than any other entry-level credential.

CAREER ADVANCEMENT — Beyond Entry-Level
Moves holders beyond entry-level support into roles like junior network administrator, network field technician, or system support specialist.

EARNING POTENTIAL — Career Growth
Helps qualify holders for roles with average starting salaries ranging from $45,000 - $60,000/yr.

FUTURE PATHWAY — Advanced Certifications
Stepping-stone to advanced certifications.

Higher Education Partner

Sam Houston State University (SamPoly)



Academic Excellence

Coursework delivered via Blackboard LMS with direct professor oversight, academic tutoring centers, and seamless transition into SHSU 4-year degree programs.

Employer-Informed Curriculum

Programs designed with industry advisory boards to meet active cybersecurity workforce demands.

Industry Certifications

Direct alignment with recognized professional certifications alongside college credits.

Technical & Durable Skills

Builds hard technical skills paired with problem-solving, communication, and digital ethics.

Additional Support provided by SamPoly



Workforce Development

Cybersecurity Outlook as a Career

Computer User Support Specialists

Median Wage

$51,823

Annual Openings

6,387

10-Yr Growth

21%

Software Developers

Median Wage

$127,000

Annual Openings

12,350

10-Yr Growth

36%

Information Security Analysts

Median Wage

$115,042

Annual Openings

1,760

10-Yr Growth

49%

Aligned Industry Certifications

CompTIA A+ Certification, CompTIA Network+, *Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH)*

Digital Safety

Keeping Students Safe Online

Content Filtering

Lightspeed Systems blocks inappropriate domains and monitors self-harm/cyber bullying keywords 24/7.

Managed Accounts

TISD Google Workspace blocks unauthorized external contacts and maintains secure digital borders.

Parent Visibility

Dedicated Parent Portals provide guardians clear insight into courseware activity and web history.

Candidate Profile

Is The Virtual Academy Right For Your Child?

1. Academic Achievement

Strong performance on 7th grade RLA & Math STAAR; Algebra I completion in 8th grade preferred.

2. Advanced Preparation

Enrollment in honors/GT math and language arts; readiness for college-level reading and logic.

3. Student Ownership

Self-motivation, strong organization, proactive communication, and disciplined digital study habits.

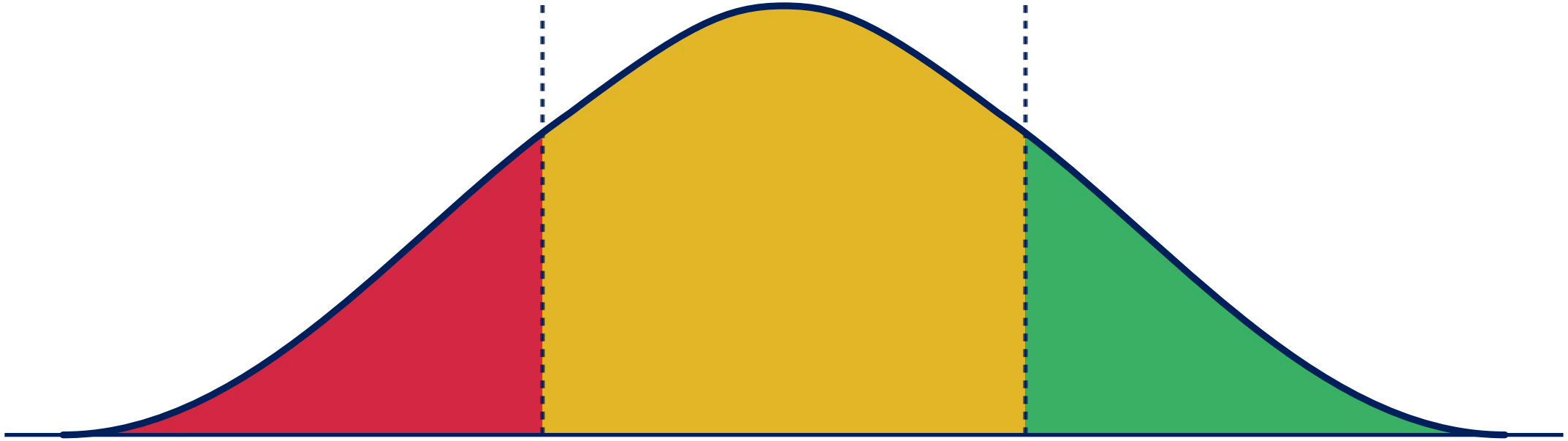
Candidate Profile Release

Wednesday, Oct 21, 2026

Click Here

Candidate Profile

Is The Virtual Academy Right For Your Child?



Lower Range (33%)

Needs Support / High Risk

Students requiring targeted intervention and foundational skill development. No recommended for an ECHS virtual environment

Mid Range (33%)

Developing / On Track

Students performing at core baseline levels with moderate growth potential in a ECHS virtual environment..

Upper Range (33%)

Advanced / High Performing

Students exceeding grade-level standards and suitable for advanced pathways and ECHS virtual environment.

STUDENT SUPPORT & EXPECTATIONS

What if my Child is not Successful?

1. Program Requirements

MUST KEEP PACE TO REMAIN ENROLLED

- Passing State Assessment (English I, Algebra I, Biology I, US History)
- Passing TSIA benchmarks (College Ready)
- Acquiring credits & college hours on pace
- Earning a "C" or better in all university dual credit courses
- Advancing through courseware with an "80" or above for each Unit

2. Interventions Provided

COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT SUPPORT

- **TSIA & SAT Tutorials**
  Targeted preparation for college readiness exams.
- **Live Interaction Support**
  Direct access to instructors and real-time guidance.
- **Success Coach**
  Personalized mentoring and academic tracking.
- **Academic Tutorials**
  Focused intervention sessions for subject mastery.

3. Following Intervention

NEXT STEPS & POLICY

Student must re-enroll at their home campus if they cannot meet program requirements following intervention.

Program Graduation Goals:

- High School Diploma
- 60 College Hours

STUDENT SUPPORT & EXPECTATIONS

Does my child have to become a cybersecurity professional?

01. Flexible Pathway

Diploma & Associate Degree

No. Families can capitalize on the flexibility of the virtual environment in acquiring a high school diploma and applied associates degree.

02. Credit Transfer

Transferable College Hours

Students can take most, if not all college credit hours earned and transfer the credits to any other university (depending on course of study).

03. Full Future Access

Equal Opportunities

Students retain every opportunity available to them following graduation as any other high school graduate.

04. Core Takeaway

No Career Lock-In

Students meet all high school requirements, earn college credit through rigorous coursework, and explore career fields.

Students are NOT locked into a cybersecurity career following high school graduation.

Parent Collaboration

What Support will Parents Receive?

QUARTERLY SYNCHRONOUS SESSIONS

Quarterly parent synchronous sessions by TISD designed to support the overall student experience in virtual learning, parent strategies and tools to ensure the virtual environment is impacting student learning.

01. Student Experience Support

Empowering students for active engagement and success in virtual learning.

02. Parent Strategies & Tools

Actionable guidance and effective techniques for managing learning at home.

03. Impactful Learning Environment

Optimizing the virtual environment to drive continuous academic achievement.

TOMBALL ISD

PARENT U

ENGAGED IN EXCELLENCE

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Extending District Excellence to Cybersecurity

TOMBALL ISD CAREER
Character • Accountability • Responsibility • Excellence • Effort • Respect

BEGOLD

Campus character foundation.

Core Focus: Culture & Character

BECATS

Campus community values.

Core Focus: Culture & Character

BESAFE

Virtual academy durable skills framework.

Core Focus: Workforce & Cyber Readiness

The BESAFE Core Values At A Glance

B Build
Trust and Confidentiality

E Express
Ideas Clearly

S Solve
Problems Ethically

A Adapt
To Constant Change

F Foster
Ethical Standards

E Enforce
Data Security

STUDENT LIFE & ENGAGEMENT

Potential Virtual Student Clubs & Organization Formation

TOMBALL ISD CAREER
Character • Accountability • Responsibility • Excellence • Effort • Respect

Cyber Defense Team

Participate in national capture-the-flag (CTF) competitions, ethical hacking challenges, and hands-on defense simulations.

COMPETITIVE

Coding & Scripting Club

Collaborate on Python automation, security tooling, software development projects, and algorithmic problem-solving.

SKILL-BUILDING

Student Cyber Council

Represent the Virtual Academy student body, organize online campus events, and promote BESAFE core values.

GOVERNANCE

Girls Who Code / CyberWomen

Empowering underrepresented voices in technology through mentorship, guest speaker webinars, and collaborative tech projects.

LEADERSHIP

Digital Forensics Society

Investigate simulated cyber incidents, analyze network traffic, and learn how real-world security analysts investigate breaches.

SPECIALIZED

HARDWARE & PROVISIONING POLICY

Device Requirements & Provisioning Options

TOMBALL ISD CAREER
Character • Accountability • Responsibility • Excellence • Effort • Respect

Baseline Technical Standards

Required to run cybersecurity tools, packet capture software, and virtual lab environments.

Operating System
Windows 11 (Home, Pro, or Enterprise)

Processor
Intel Core i5 (10th Gen or newer, or AMD Ryzen equivalent)

System Memory (RAM)
16 GB RAM Minimum (Required for Virtual Machines)

Storage
512 GB SSD (Solid State Drive) minimum

Connectivity
High-Speed Wi-Fi / Internet Connection

Opt-In: District-Provided Device

$0 COST TO FAMILIES • FULLY MANAGED

Families can opt in to receive a fully configured, high-performance laptop meeting all SHSU Poly technical standards at **$0 cost**.

- Hardware support & maintenance managed by Tomball ISD.
- Pre-configured with all required cybersecurity software.

Opt-Out: Use Your Own Device

USE PERSONAL LAPTOP

Parents who already own a personal laptop that **meets or exceeds** baseline specifications may opt out of receiving a district device.

- Must meet specs: **16 GB RAM / 512 GB SSD / Windows 11**.
- Student will use personal machine for all program coursework.

Parent Information

Virtual Information Sessions

In-Person Session Option 2

Wednesday, Nov 11, 2026

6:00 PM (Tomball Event Center)

Session Option 3

Wednesday, Dec 2, 2026

1:00 PM (Live Online)

Session Option 4

Thursday, Jan 7, 2027

1:00 PM (Live Online)

Session Option 5

Tuesday, Jan 19, 2027

6:00 PM (Live Online)

Session Option 6

Thursday, Feb 18, 2027

6:00 PM (Live Online)

PARENT COMMUNICATION

October 26, 2026 Parent Letter Overview

Key components included in the official Parent Letter release on October 26, 2026:

01

Website

Official portal links and online resource access for parents and guardians.

Includes:

- Direct link to Academy Portal
- Program details & FAQ access
- Support contact links

02

Application Instructions

Step-by-step guidance on completing and submitting student applications.

Includes:

- HAC submission steps
- Key timeline & deadlines
- Verification requirements

03

Candidate Profile

Overview of student profile attributes and program qualification criteria.

Includes:

- Student readiness criteria
- Academic expectations
- Commitment guidelines

Phase 1 Timeline

Tomball ISD Admissions Schedule

Monday, Oct 26, 2026	Applications OPEN for current TISD 8th Graders (Class of 2031) via Home Access Center (HAC)
Friday, Jan 15, 2027	Phase 1 Application Window CLOSES for TISD Students (Virtual Academy Lottery held if needed)
Friday, Jan 22, 2027	Student Commitment Deadline for accepted Tomball ISD applicants

Phase 2 & 3 Timeline

Statewide Admissions Schedule

Monday, Nov 30, 2026	Applications OPEN for 8th Grade Students across Texas
Friday, Jan 29, 2027	Phase 2 CLOSES for all Texas students (Lottery held if needed)
Friday, Feb 5, 2027	Official Notification of Acceptance sent to applicants
Friday, Feb 19, 2027	Phase 3 Recruitment Opens (if seats remain available)

NEXT STEPS & ACTION ITEMS

What are my next steps?

01

Complete Candidate Profile

Fill out and submit your official profile to begin the process.

02

Have Questions?

Ask any question, at any time by emailing **ericlevels@tomballisd.net**

03

Family Discussion

Talk with your child and make a family decision together.

04

Access Resources

Review all available materials, guides, and program documentation.

05

Submit Application

Complete the official **Application** (Live on Monday, October 26th)



Questions & Next Steps

www.tomballisd.net | Destination Excellence

WELCOME TO THE INFORMATIONAL SESSION

Informational Session Attendance

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