

# Hughes Springs I.S.D.

## HSISD ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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Hughes Springs, Texas 75656  
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*High School Principal*

**Michael Walker**  
*H.S. / J.H. Assistant Principal*

[www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net)

# HSISD!

## Mission Statement

Hughes Springs ISD will provide an exceptional education for all students in a quality environment which develops citizens who are responsible, ethical, literate, competent, and productive.

## We Believe.....

..... in challenging students to be life-long learners.

.....parents and staff lead by example and should continue to learn.

.....all students are unique and deserve the opportunity to achieve their potential.

.....staff, parents, students, and community members are responsible for the learning and success of each student.

.....parental and community involvement are vital to student success.

## Directory of HSISD Elementary School & Administration

### **HSISD Administration Building**

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Hughes Springs, Texas 75656  
Superintendent of Schools

Phone 903.639-3802  
Fax 903.639-2624

### **Hughes Springs Elementary**

809 Russell St.  
Hughes Springs, Texas 75656  
Principal  
Assistant Principal  
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903-639-3881  
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# Handbook Purpose and Organization

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To Students and Parents:

Welcome to school year 2010-2011! Education is a team effort, and we know that students, parents, teachers, and other staff members all working together can make this a wonderfully successful year for our students.

The Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook is designed to provide a resource for some of the basic information that you and your child will need during the school year. The purpose of this student handbook is to give Hughes Springs ISD students and their parents an understanding of the general rules and guidelines for attending and receiving an education in our schools.

When the handbook uses “we” or “our,” it means the District and/or school administrators. When the handbook uses “you” or “yours,” it means the parent, legal guardian, or person who has accepted responsibility for the student, at least in regard to school matters. From time to time, the handbook will use more general terms, such as “parents” and “school officials.” Regardless of the particular terminology, our intention is to speak directly to you as the adults who are responsible for working with us, the school officials, to make your children’s experiences with Hughes Springs ISD elementary school a positive educational experience.

The Student Handbook is designed to be in harmony with board policy and the **Student Code of Conduct**. Please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters or other communications.

In case of conflict between board policy or the **Student Code of Conduct** and any provisions of the Student Handbook, the current provisions of board policy and the **Student Code of Conduct** are to be followed.

After reading through the entire handbook with your child, keep it as a reference during this school year. If you or your child has questions about any of the material in this handbook, please contact the principal.

# General Campus Information

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## Office Hours

The office hours for HSISD elementary campuses are 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

## Building Use – Student Arrival and Departure

The buildings are open at 7:30 a.m. for students. Students are not permitted in the buildings before this time unless they have permission from a teacher or administrator.

### **Elementary Bell Schedule:**

7:35 Breakfast bell    7:55 First Bell    8:00 Class begins    **8:05 Tardy Bell\*\*\*\***    3:10 Dismissal Bell

### **\*\*\*\*TARDY CONSEQUENCES**

The classroom teachers will keep records of tardies for each student and will be responsible for carrying out the consequences. (All consequences are per Six Weeks)

- \* 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> tardies = Verbal Warning
- \* 3<sup>rd</sup> tardy = parents contacted by phone
- \* 4<sup>th</sup> tardy = Warning letter mailed to custodial parent
- \* 5<sup>th</sup> tardy = Recess detention and parent conference
- \* 6<sup>th</sup> tardy = ISS for one day and ISS for each day tardy thereafter

**No student should arrive on campus prior to 7:30 a.m.** Our campus provides after-school supervision for students from 3:10 – 3:20 p.m. **In the afternoon, students should be picked up from the activity room or parent pickup lane for 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders. If picked up anywhere else in building, students must be signed out by an adult.** All students, unless prior arrangements have been made for tutoring or similar events, must be picked up no later than 3:20 p.m. In the event that a student is not picked up from school by 3:20 p.m., the following steps will be taken by the campus principal:

1. At 3:20 p.m., the child's parent or guardian will be contacted. This will be documented in the child's file.
2. The parents (not a minor) must come inside the building, sign the student out, and give a reason to the principal or designee for being late. At this time, the principal will explain the consequences. This will be documented in the child's file.
3. When this becomes excessive, the principal or designee will call CPS (Child Protective Services) at 1.800.252.5400. This will be documented in the child's file.

**Students should be dropped off in the morning in the circle drive.** Students should not be dropped off in large parking lot requiring them to cross the bus lane alone unless accompanied by an adult.

**Changing a student's transportation arrangement:** In order to reduce confusion, please make all changes to your child's transportation needs **before 2:30 pm.** This will allow school personnel to deliver bus notes in a timely manner and reduce the chance of your child getting on the wrong bus or missing the bus.

## Emergency Procedures

In case of an emergency it is essential for all persons to obey promptly and to clear the buildings by the prescribed routes as quickly as possible. Teachers will give students instructions and will follow the students to designated areas. Students are to stay in straight lines and to remain quiet.

### **Fire Drills:**

- 3 bells – fire alarm, march out of building in quiet orderly manner
- 2 bells – return to building
- 1 bell – stop and stand at attention

### **Tornado Drills:**

A weather alert system is in operation on every campus. School officials will advise students and staff of storm warnings. In the event of a tornado or in the threat of a tornado, students and staff should follow the procedures listed below:

- 1 continuous bell - Move from classrooms to designated areas
- 2 bells – return to classroom

**Other Drills:**

During a Code Red Emergency, doors will be locked, lights extinguished, and students moved away from the door and on the floor. Drills will be practiced during the year for emergency situations.

**Weather-Related Closings:**

In the event schools must be closed, either before the school day begins or during the school day, information will be reported to the local radio and television stations. Please listen to these stations rather than call the school.

# Admission & Attendance Information

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## Admission

Documents required for entrance are the following:

- An official city, county or state birth certificate;
- An up-to-date immunization record signed by a physician or by public health personnel;
- A Social Security card; and
- Proof of residence within HSISD.

These are the basic requirements for admission to District schools:

1. The student must live in the District with a parent or legal guardian or one of the student's parents must live in the District, even if the student does not live with that parent.
  - To be eligible for admission based only on the parent's residence in the District, the court that issued a final order in a divorce proceeding must have designated that parent as a managing or possessory conservator for the child.
  - The parent enrolling a student based only on the parent's residence in the District must provide a copy of a current final order, signed by the judge and showing a file stamp from the court, designating the parent as a managing or possessory conservator.
2. The student is under age 18 and lives in the District with an adult resident of the District who has accepted a Power of Attorney/Educational Guardianship from the child's parent or legal guardian. The District has Power of Attorney forms to be completed by both the parent and by the person with whom the student lives.
3. Students under the age of 18 must be enrolled by a parent, legal guardian, or adult resident who has a valid Power of Attorney for the student. Students who are 18 or older, who are legally married, or who have ever been legally married and who have not graduated from high school may enroll themselves.
4. The adult enrolling the student must present current immunization records or make arrangements to begin immunizations as soon as possible. A student may be provisionally admitted to the District schools if the student has begun the required immunizations and continues to receive the necessary immunizations as rapidly as is medically feasible. The school must ensure that the required immunizations are received on schedule.

If a student transfers from one school to another, a grace period of no more than 30 days may be allowed at the new school while awaiting the transfer of the immunization record, during which time the student may be provisionally enrolled.

5. No later than 30 days after a student has been enrolled, the adult enrolling the student must provide a copy of a birth certificate or other acceptable identification for the child and copies of the education records from the school the child last attended.
6. We do not admit underage students to school. Your child must be 5 years old on or before September 1 of the current school year to be admitted to kindergarten. To be admitted to first grade, your child must be 6 years old on or before September 1 of the current year or must have completed kindergarten, or must have been enrolled in first grade in the public schools of another state.
7. The District will offer pre-kindergarten classes if it identifies 15 or more eligible students who are at least four years of age and may offer pre-kindergarten if it identifies 15 or more eligible children who are at least three years of age. A child is eligible for enrollment in pre-kindergarten if the child is at least four years of age and has the following qualifications:
  - Unable to speak or comprehend the English language;
  - Educationally disadvantaged; or
  - Homeless, as defined by federal law, regardless of the residence of the child, of either parent or child, or of the child's guardian or other person having lawful control.
  - Children who have ever been in foster care or other residential care and under the conservatorship of DFPS, as well as children in conservatorship as a result of an adversary hearing with DFPS including children returned to home, kinship placement and adoptions.
  - Parents are in military

**The District will notify the population in the District with children who are eligible for enrollment in a pre-kindergarten program of the availability of the program.**

8. Children of military families will be provided flexibility regarding certain district requirements, including:
- Immunization requirements.
  - Grade level, course, or educational program placement.
  - Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities.

In addition, absences related to a student visiting with his or her parent related to leave or deployment activities may be excused by the district. **The district will permit no more than four excused absences per year for this purpose, two per semester.**

If school officials have reason to question the legitimacy of a child's residency information, they may investigate to determine the student's actual place of residence. If the District finds that a student is not a District resident, the student will be withdrawn, and school officials will take the necessary legal steps to recover the maximum tuition fee the school District can charge or the amount the Board of Trustees budgets as an expense per student.

A person who knowingly falsifies information on a form required for a student's enrollment in the District will 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.

## Attendance Requirements

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 day's, 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 also critical to the District's success, because it is a factor in the District and campus rating under the state accountability system and is a determining factor in the amount of state financial aid the District is entitled to receive. Two state laws, one dealing with compulsory attendance, the other with attendance for course credit, are of special interest to students and parents.

### **Compulsory Attendance**

State compulsory attendance laws require all children between the ages of six and eighteen to attend school each day that school is in session 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.. A student who is younger than six and who has ever been enrolled in the first grade is required to attend school. Once a parent enrolls a child in kindergarten or pre-kindergarten, the child is required to attend school that school year.

State law requires attendance in an accelerated reading instruction program when kindergarten, first grade, or second grade students are assigned to such a program. Parents will be notified in writing if their child is assigned to an accelerated reading instruction program as a result of a diagnostic reading instrument.

A student in grades 3-8 will be required to attend any assigned accelerated instruction program, which may occur before or after school or during the summer, if the student does not meet the passing standards on the state assessment for his or her grade level and applicable subject area.

**School officials aggressively enforce the state compulsory attendance laws.** School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent without permission from school; from any class; from required special programs, such as additional special instruction (termed "accelerated instruction" by the state) assigned by a grade placement committee and basic skills for ninth graders; or from required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

Of course, there are times when children are sick or have other legitimate reasons for being absent from school. Regardless of the age of your child, if he/she is sick and will not be at school that day, you should call the school office to let them know of the absence. **Whenever a child is absent from school for any reason, he/she must bring a note signed by the parent explaining the reason for the child's absence when he/she returns to school. (Please note: After the ninth absence during a semester a doctor's note will be required.)** The principal or someone acting for the principal will make the final decision whether an absence is classified as excused or unexcused.

If the child does not bring a signed note, the absence will be classified as unexcused. **A court of law may impose penalties against both the student and his or her parents if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. A student who has unexcused absences for ten or more days or partial days in a six-month period or three or more days or partial days in a four-week period must be referred to the juvenile court for violations of compulsory attendance laws.**

**Doctor and Dental Appointments:** Absences for appointments with doctors, dentists, orthodontists, physical therapists, and other health care professionals will be classified as excused absences for attendance purposes if the student returns to school on the same day as the appointment and presents a note from the health care provider stating the time of the appointment and the time the student left the doctor's office. If the appointment is at the end of the school day and the student has been at school all day up to that time, the absence will be excused if the student brings a note from the health care provider the following day.

**Religious Holidays:** Absences for religious holy days, including up to two days of travel time if necessary, will be classified as excused absences if you make a written request to the principal before the days of absence.

## Attendance and Credit

Separate and apart from the compulsory attendance requirements, students must attend school a certain amount of time in order to receive credit for their academic work. State law requires students to be in attendance for at least ninety percent of the days a class is taught during a semester or year. A student who attends at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered may receive credit for the class if he or she completes a plan, approved by the principal that allows the student to fulfill the instructional requirements for the class. If a student is involved in a criminal or juvenile court proceeding, the approval of the judge presiding over the case will also be required before the student receives credit for the class.

If a student attends less than 75 percent of the days a class is offered or has not completed the plan approved by the principal, then the student will be referred to the attendance review committee to determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit, if appropriate.

Each campus has an attendance committee that will review student attendance records. If the committee decides that extenuating circumstances prevented a student from meeting the minimum attendance for credit standard, the committee can award credit or tell the student what additional work or time needs to be completed in order for the student to receive credit for the grade level or course. In determining whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences, the attendance committee will use the following guidelines:

All absences will be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days. If makeup work is completed, absences for religious holy days, documented health-care appointments, required court appearances, and activities related to obtaining United States citizenship will be considered days of attendance for this purpose. [See policies at FEB.]

A transfer or migrant student begins to accumulate absences only after he or she has enrolled in the district. For a student transferring into the district after school begins, including a migrant student, only those absences after enrollment will be considered.

In reaching a decision about a student's absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that it is in the best interest of the student.

The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student's absences.

The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the student or the student's parent could exercise any control.

The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.

The student or parent will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to talk about ways to earn or regain credit.

The student or parent may appeal the committee's decision to the board of trustees by filing a written request with the superintendent in accordance with policy. The actual number of days a student must be in attendance in order to receive credit will depend on whether the class is for a full semester or for a full year. You will be notified when your child is in danger of losing credit because of absences and will have the chance to meet with the attendance committee to discuss your child's situation.

## Homeless Students

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths, Kim Stovall, at 903-639-3815.

## Inter-District Transfer Students

A nonresident student wishing to transfer into the District must file an application for transfer with the Superintendent or designee by May 1 prior to the school year for which the transfer is requested. Any other requests will be considered by the Board on a case-by-case basis. All transfers are subject to approval by the Superintendent on a space-available basis by grade, subject, and campus.

If a student is receiving special education services at a campus outside his or her attendance zone, the parent or guardian may request that any other student residing in the household be transferred to the same campus, if the appropriate grade level for the transferring student is offered on that campus. Transportation will not be provided to the transferring student.

Any transfer student residing in Texas will be admitted tuition-free to all campuses in the District to the extent the cost of education for such transfer student does not exceed the state revenue received by the District for a resident student.

Students who have been expelled from other Districts will not be enrolled until the matter has been resolved with the home District and the transfer has the consent and approval of the building principal and Superintendent. Nonresident transfer students who are disruptive to the educational process during the school year will be returned to their home District at the discretion of the Superintendent.

Resident students who become nonresidents during the course of a semester will be permitted to continue in attendance for the remainder of the semester. An appeal for an extension may be made to the Board when circumstances warrant.

## Release during the School Day

Students will be allowed to leave school during the school day only with the permission of the principal or someone in the principal's office who has been given the authority to release students. Parents cannot go directly to their children's classroom and take the child away from school during the day. Teachers do not have the authority to let children leave their classrooms with anyone. If you need to take your child from school before the end of the school day, such as for a medical appointment or for a family emergency, you should go to the principal's office and sign the child out. The teacher will send the child to the principal's office, and the student will be released to you at that time.

At the time children are enrolled, the parent or other adult completing the enrollment forms should list those people who are authorized to pick up their children during the school day. Unless the principal has a current court order signed by a judge, showing an official file stamp with the court, and indicating that a parent's right of access to and possession of his or her children has been limited in some way, the principal will release children to either parent.

Students ordinarily will not be released during the school day to participate in private lessons or other instruction. If you believe you have a special situation that would warrant an exception to this rule, please contact the campus principal to schedule a conference about your situation.

## Truancy – Important Notice Regarding an Absence from School

Truancy, absence from school without the knowledge and consent of the student's parent or guardian, is prohibited. Truancy includes an unexcused absence for one or more periods of the school day.

Major changes to the truancy law were made by the 77<sup>th</sup> Legislature, and the District is required to notify all parents at the beginning of school concerning the new truancy law as defined by Senate Bill 1432.

### The new changes are:

1. If a student is absent from school 10 or more days **OR** 10 or more partial days in a 6 month period in the same school year or,
2. If a student is absent from school 3 or more days or 3 or more partial days in a 4-week period,

### **THEN**

The student's **parents or person standing in parental relation to a student are subject to prosecution** for the offense of *Parent Contributing to Truancy* (formerly Thwarting Compulsory Attendance Law) and the **child is also subject to prosecution or referral to the Juvenile Court** for the offense of *Failure to Attend School*.

For truancy offenses, disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with District policy. Previous offenses will be considered in the determination of consequences. Further acts of truancy will continue to be classified as discipline violations and may result in assignment to the Alternative Education Program or more severe disciplinary measures. If any parent or person standing in parental relation to a student fails to require the child to attend school, that person shall be warned in writing by the District that attendance is immediately required. If, after this warning, a parent or person standing in parental relation intentionally, knowingly, or with criminal negligence fails to comply, that person will be subject to punishment as provided by law unless inability to compel the child to attend school can be established. In that case, the student will be subject to action by the juvenile court.

### Withdrawing from School

Children who are under age 18 will not be permitted to withdraw from school unless a parent, legal guardian, or other adult with responsibility for the child comes to the school to complete the necessary forms. Students must return all textbooks issued to them and clear any library fines and other outstanding fees in order for the school to process the withdrawal.

# Conduct & Dress Code Information

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## Academic Dishonesty/Cheating/Plagiarism

Copying another person's work, such as homework, class work, or a test, is a form of cheating. Plagiarism, which is the use as one's own of another person's original ideas or writing without giving credit to the true author, will also be considered cheating, and the student will be subject to academic disciplinary action that may include loss of credit for the work in question. Teachers who have reason to believe that a student has engaged in cheating or other academic dishonesty will assess the academic penalty to be imposed. Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty also will be subject to disciplinary penalties as well, according to the Student Code of Conduct.

## Bullying

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students directs written or verbal expressions or physical conduct against another student and the behavior results in harm to the student or the student's property, places a student in fear of harm to himself or his property, or is so severe that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment. The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit bullying and to respond to reports of bullying.

## Conduct and Discipline

As required by law, the board has adopted a **Student Code of Conduct**. **The Code of Conduct** contains the District's requirements for student conduct and behavior while at school or while under the school's jurisdiction. **The Code of Conduct** also explains the kinds of disciplinary action school officials may take in response to violations of the rules for student conduct and the steps involved in taking disciplinary action. If you have any questions about conduct or discipline rules, please refer to the **Student Code of Conduct** or call your child's principal. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards set out in the **Student Code of Conduct**, as well as campus and classroom rules. To achieve the best possible learning environment for all students, the **Student Code of Conduct** and other campus rules will apply whenever the interest of the district is involved, whether on or off school grounds, in conjunction with classes and school-sponsored activities.

## Dress and Grooming Code

The District's dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, to instill discipline, to prevent disruption, to avoid safety hazards, and to teach respect for authority. We expect students to come to school in clothes that are clean and neat, and we expect students to exhibit basic cleanliness and grooming that will not be a health or safety threat to themselves or to other students or staff. While we respect students' desires to express themselves in their clothing and grooming styles, we do not permit students to wear certain types of clothing. The principal makes decisions about dress and grooming violations.

The District prohibits any clothing or grooming that, in the principal's judgement, may reasonably be expected to cause disruption or interference with the normal school operations. The District prohibits pictures, emblems, or writings on clothing or on the body that:

- are lewd, offensive, vulgar, or obscene; or
- advertise or depict tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, drugs, or any other substance that students are prohibited from having or using at school.

In addition, unacceptable dress and grooming includes:

- tight or revealing clothing
- bike shorts
- dance gear or tights
- clothing with slits, tears, or holes
- see-through clothing
- visible undergarments
- dressing without appropriate undergarments
- sleeveless shirts/blouses/dresses which foster an inappropriate or disruptive atmosphere
- shirts unbuttoned lower than three (3) inches from the collar
- tube/tank tops, halters, half-shirts, crop-tops, shirts with split sides, buckle blouses
- head gear of any type
- house slippers

- sunglasses
- jewelry requiring body piercing (limited to ears)
- exposed obscene tattoos
- sagging pants
- pants/shorts/dresses shorter than fingertip length when student's arms are placed at his/her side
- any hairstyle that is not neat, clean, and well-groomed
- any hairstyle that is distracting (i.e. Mohawks, long ponytails, stripes or bright colors, etc.)

If your child comes to school wearing clothes that violate the dress code or violating any other dress and grooming standards, he/she will be placed in in-school suspension until he/she is in compliance. We will make efforts to notify you as soon as possible, and if the student changes clothes or otherwise comes into compliance with the dress and grooming standards, he/she will return to regular classes immediately.

# Curriculum and Program Information

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Hughes Springs ISD operates a Pre-K through 12 program that meets all state curriculum requirements. Schools are organized by grade level, with separate campuses for elementary (pre-K-grade 5), middle school (grades 6-8), and high school (grades 9-12).

## Counseling Programs and Services

Counselors are available to provide educational, vocational and personal counseling to students. These trained counselors are available to talk and to listen to students about situations and experiences that may be affecting their ability to be successful in the instructional program. HUGHES SPRINGS ISD offers the opportunity for all parents to meet with their student's counselor to discuss the guidance and counseling program provided for their child. Parents wishing to exclude their children from any aspect of the HUGHES SPRINGS ISD guidance and counseling program may provide HUGHES SPRINGS ISD with a written request specifically outlining the program or programs from which they wish to exclude their children.

## Educational Technology and Acceptable Use

Electronic instructional resources are for use at school and for school-related purposes. Before your child is permitted to use school technology, you and your child must sign a User Agreement that explains school technology regulations. Computers and other instructional media can provide resources through connections to the Internet and World Wide Web. You have the choice to prevent your child from having access to the Internet or e-mail on school computers. However, instruction in certain TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) objectives requires the use of technology. After the signed Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is returned, the staff will provide training on acceptable use of technology such as:

- Plagiarism
- Copyright
- Fair use
- Piracy
- Internet etiquette
- Care of equipment

The following uses of school equipment or network are classified as unacceptable under our policy and the AUP user agreement:

1. Unauthorized use of copyrighted material, including installing any personal software on District equipment without approval of the Technology Coordinator
2. Posting or distributing threatening, racist, harassing, excessively violent, or obscene material
3. Personal political use to advocate for or against a position or a candidate, except when the activity is to fulfill an assignment for class credit
4. Tampering with anyone else's computer, files, or e-mail
5. Forgery of messages or sending unsolicited junk e-mail
6. Using the computer to violate the student code of conduct, District/school policies or administrative regulations
7. Using the computer for commercial activities or commercial gain
8. Advertising for the purchase or sale of any product
9. Downloading third-party software.
10. Sending or posting electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal.

Students who violate the terms of the User Agreement may lose their computer privileges at school, as well as incur consequences under the school's Student Code of Conduct. Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content will be disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct and may, in certain circumstances, be reported to law enforcement. Students and their parents should be aware that e-mail using district computers is not private and will be monitored by district staff.

## Library Facilities, Hours, and Access

Each school has a library available for student research and study, with resources appropriate for needs of the grades served by the campus. Students have access to the library during posted hours.

## Special Programs

To meet the requirements of state and federal law, we also offer several programs designed to meet specific needs of some of our students. We identify students as eligible for one or more of these programs based on assessments made after referrals and recommendations from teachers and counselors, and we will always inform you about the program

beforehand. We also may identify students based on an assessment after a request or referral from you. If you have any questions about the referral and identification process for any of the following programs, please contact your child's teacher(s), counselor, or the campus principal.

### **Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need or May need Special Education:**

If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the campus principal to learn about the district's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior services that are available to all students including a process based on Response to Intervention. The implementation of Response to Intervention has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of school districts to meet the needs of all struggling students.

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within 60 calendar days of the date the district receives the written consent. The district must give a copy of the report to the parent.

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with a written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parent of his or her rights if the parent disagrees with the district. Additionally, the notice must inform the parent how to obtain a copy of the **Notice of Procedural Safeguards—Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities**.

**Special Education:** Hughes Springs ISD provides special education and related services for students with disabilities according to individualized plans developed by teachers, parents, counselors, and other professionals. We decide whether a student needs special education after we complete a comprehensive assessment. Please contact your child's principal to receive full information about our special education programs.

If a student is receiving special education services at a campus outside his or her attendance zone, the parent or guardian may request that any other student residing in the household be transferred to the same campus, if the appropriate grade level for the transferring student is offered on that campus. Transportation will not be provided to the transferring student.

**Bilingual Education/English as a Second Language:** English is the basic language of instruction in our schools. Children who have limited English-speaking skills will have access to programs to help them learn to understand, speak, read, and write the English language. At the time you enroll your children for the first time, you will be asked to complete a Home Language Survey so we know if additional steps are necessary to be sure your child is properly served.

**Gifted and Talented Students:** Some children demonstrate or show a potential for demonstrating a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to other children of similar age, experience, or environment. These children may perform at a very high level in an intellectual, creative, or artistic area, may show an unusually high capacity for leadership, or may excel in a particular academic field. We provide a variety of programs, activities, and learning opportunities for these students.

**Accelerated Instruction/Students At-Risk:** Some students do not qualify for special education programs but still need some additional assistance to be successful in school and to complete the elementary school program. We provide tutorial programs and intensive or accelerated instruction in subjects in which students are showing special difficulty. We also may provide specially-focused instruction to improve students' language and math skills.

**Students with Disabilities:** Decisions regarding grading procedures for a student with a disability who is receiving services under IDEA or Section 504 may be made by the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) Team. The IEP Team will ensure that the annual goals and instructional objectives of the student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) are met.

**Parent Involvement Coordinator:** The Parent Involvement Coordinator, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs is Sarah Dildine and may be contacted at 903-639-3810.

## Student Publications/Materials

All materials prepared and published as part of a school's journalism or language arts programs are under the control and supervision of the administration and the Board of Trustees. The principal has final approval authority on all materials published or distributed in the name of the school.

## Student Records

Both federal and state laws safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and eligible students certain rights of privacy. Before disclosing any 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. For purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is 18 or older OR who is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

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

- The parents – whether married, separated, or divorced-unless the school is given a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student's education records.
- District school officials who have what federal law refers to as a "legitimate educational interest" in a student's records. School officials would include trustees and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals; teachers, counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff; a person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a particular service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or volunteer); 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. "legitimate educational interest" in a student's records includes 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.
- Various governmental agencies
- Individuals granted access in response to a subpoena or court order
- A school or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she is already enrolled.

The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school.

The superintendent is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated.

Records may be inspected by a parent or eligible student during regular school hours. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

A parent or eligible student who provides a written request and pays copying costs may obtain copies. If circumstances prevent inspection during regular school hours and the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals, the district will either provide a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review these records. The address of the superintendent's office is 871 Taylor St., Hughes Springs, TX 75656. The address of the principal's office is 809 Russell St., Hughes Springs, TX 75656.

# Grading Information

## Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten

A developmental report shall be used to indicate progress at pre-kindergarten and kindergarten levels. The reports reflect the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for these grade levels. Documentation of observable skills shall be kept in the grade book.

Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten parents shall receive a progress report each six weeks, either in the form of a parent conference or as a written report card. Parent conferences shall be scheduled for parents of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students at the end of the first and fourth six weeks grading periods. Written report cards shall be issued at the end of the second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth six weeks grading periods for pre-kindergarten students. The following marking system shall be used:

Subject	Marking System
Mathematics Language Arts Science Social Studies Self Awareness (Pre-K only)	1 = Consistently 2 = Sometimes 3 = Unable to do at this time / = Not assessed at this time * = Objective is modified by IEP Team
Social Development/Work Habits Fine Arts Physical Education Motor Skills	E = Excellent S = Satisfactory N = Needs Improvement U = Unsatisfactory
Recognition Skills	✓ = Mastery

## Grades 1-5

In grade levels 1-5, all grades shall reflect student performance in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). In the areas of language arts, mathematics, science/health, and social studies, teachers shall record in the grade book a minimum of one to two grades per week per subject. Grades shall be determined from a composite of the following: daily papers; notebooks; quizzes; homework assignments; teacher observations of participation, skills, demonstrations, or performances; short compositions; unit, chapter, or skills tests; projects; major reports/compositions; journals; and portfolios. Documentation of observable skills will be kept in a grade book. A grade that is determined from only one source is not acceptable.

In fine arts, teachers shall evaluate at least one performance and/or product during each six weeks period in which the students participate in the class. Students may be evaluated in a variety of areas, including visual arts, music, theatre arts or dance. The students shall be evaluated based on the completion of the components leading to the performance/product. The expectation of the students is to perform satisfactorily. Those exceeding or falling short of the normal expectation may be noted on the report card.

Language arts include written and oral communication, the writing process, and spelling. Science and health shall be combined.

## **Progress Reports**

In the areas of language arts, mathematics, science/health, and social studies, a written progress report shall be sent at least once during the grading period to parents of students with an average grade of less than 75. Parents shall also receive written notification if the professional educator notes a substantial change in a student's performance at any point during the six weeks period. The report card or unsatisfactory progress report will state whether tutorials are required for a student who receives a grade lower than 70 in a class or subject.

## Six Weeks Averages and Report Cards

In order to meet the state requirements of numerical recording for promotion standards, numerical grades shall be recorded in the grade book. From the numerical grades in the grade book, the following corresponding marking system shall be used on both the students' work and on the report cards:

Subject	Marking System Grade I	Marking System Grades 2-5
Language Arts Reading Mathematics Science/Health Social Studies	90-100 = E (Excellent) 80-89 = S (Satisfactory) 70-79 = N (Needs Improvement) 0-69 = U (Unsatisfactory)	90-100 = A 80-89 = B 70-79 = C 0-69 = Failure
Fine Arts Physical Education Social Development/Work Habits	E = Excellent 95-100 (above and beyond expectations) S+ = Satisfactory 90-94 S = 85-89 S- = 80-84 (Measured by one's own ability) N+ = Needs Improvement 75-79 N = 70-74 N- = 60-69 (Did not perform up to expectations up to ½ of class time) U = Unsatisfactory 0-59 (Did not perform up to expectations more than ½ class time) NG = less than ½ attendance	E = Excellent 95-100 (above and beyond expectations) S+ = Satisfactory 90-94 S = 85-89 S- = 80-84 (Measured by one's own ability) N+ = Needs Improvement 75-79 N = 70-74 N- = 60-69 (Did not perform up to expectations up to ½ of class time) U = Unsatisfactory 0-59 (Did not perform up to expectations more than ½ class time) NG = less than ½ attendance

## Semester and Yearly Averages

Semester and yearly averages shall be computed in the areas of language arts, mathematics, science/health, and social studies.

## Grading Guidelines

Grading guidelines for each grade level or course will be communicated and distributed to students and their parents by the classroom teacher. These guidelines have been reviewed by each applicable curriculum department and have been approved by the campus principal. These guidelines establish the minimum number of assignments, projects, and examinations required for each grading period. In addition these guidelines establish how the student's mastery of concepts and achievement will be communicated (i.e., letter grades, numerical averages, checklist of required skills, etc.) Grading guidelines also outline in what circumstances a student will be allowed to redo an assignment or retake an examination for which the student originally made a failing grade.

## Promotion Standards

Teachers shall make recommendations for promotion based on the following criteria:

Mastery of objectives in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)

Social development and work habits

Demonstrated proficiency for elementary students is defined by meeting all of the following:

An overall average of 70 or above (computed by averaging yearly grades for reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies and science/health)

A yearly average of 70 or above in math

A combined yearly average of 70 or above in reading and language arts

In addition, at certain grade levels a student-with limited exceptions-will be required to pass the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), if the student is enrolled in a public Texas school on any day between January 1 and the date of the first administration of the TAKS.

\* In order to be promoted to grade 6, students enrolled in grade 5 must perform satisfactorily on the mathematics and reading sections of the grade 5 assessments in English or Spanish.

A student in grade 5 will have two additional opportunities to take a failed assessment. If a student fails a second time, a grade placement committee, consisting of the principal or designee, the teacher, and the students' parent, will determine the additional special instruction the student will receive. After a third failed attempt, the student will be retained; however, the parent can appeal this decision to the committee. In order for the student to be promoted, based on standards previously established by the district, the decision of the committee must be unanimous and the student must complete additional special instruction before beginning the next grade level. Whether the student is retained or promoted, an educational plan for the student will be designed to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year.

**However, failure in any section of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) shall result in retention unless the student successfully completes the summer acceleration program provided by Hughes Springs ISD.**

## All Grade Levels

### **Resource Materials**

In the event that HSISD is unable to provide appropriate resources (i.e. textbooks, graphing calculators); the student shall not suffer an academic penalty.

### **Make-Up Work**

Students shall make up assignments, performance assessments, and/or tests after absences, including absences as a result of suspension, but shall receive a zero for any assignment or test not made up within the 10 school days following the student's return to school.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Decisions regarding grading procedures for a student with a disability who is receiving services under IDEA or Section 504 may be made by the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) Team. The IEP Team will ensure that the annual goals and instructional objectives of the student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) are met.

### **Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need or May need Special Education:**

If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the campus principal to learn about the district's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other support/**intervention** services that are available to all students including a process based on Response to Intervention. The implementation of Response to Intervention has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of school districts to meet the needs of all struggling students.

## Extracurricular Activities

Eligibility for participation in many of these activities is governed by state law and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL)-a statewide association overseeing interdistrict competition. The following requirement applies to all extracurricular activities. A student who receives at the end of a grading period a grade below 70 in any academic class-other than an advanced placement or international baccalaureate course; or an honors or dual credit course in English language Arts, math, science, social studies, economics, or a foreign language-may not participate in extracurricular activities at the time of the contest.

## Honor Roll

An **A** Honor Roll and **AB** Honor Roll are published at the end of each six weeks. Those students maintaining the Honor Roll all year will be recognized at the end of the year. To be eligible for **A** Honor Roll, students must not have lower than a 90 in each subject and S+ in computers, Physical Education, and Art. To be eligible for **AB** Honor Roll, students must not have lower than an 80 in each subject and S in computers, Physical Education and art. Students must have an **A** in conduct to be eligible for either Honor Roll.

## Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences

Report cards with each student's grades or performance and absences in each class or subject are issued to parents at least once every 6 weeks.

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period, parents will be given a written progress report if their child's performance is near or below 70, or is below the expected level of performance. If the student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent will be requested to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject.

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the superintendent and are designed to reflect each student's academic achievement for the grading period, semester, or course. 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.

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.

The report card or unsatisfactory progress report will state whether tutorials are required for a student who receives a grade lower than 70 in a class or subject.

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and should be returned to the school within 2 days.

## Testing and Assessment Programs

In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels will take state-mandated tests (such as TAKS: the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) in the following subjects:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3-11
- Reading, annually in grades 3-9
- Writing, including spelling and grammar, in grades 4 and 7
- English language arts in grades 10 and 11
- Social Studies in grades 8, 10, and 11
- Science in grades 5, 8, 10, and 11
- Any other subject and grade required by federal law

At certain grade levels a student-with limited exceptions-will be required to pass the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), if the student is enrolled in a public Texas school on any day between January 1 and the date of the first administration of the TAKS.

In order to be promoted to grade 6, students enrolled in grade 5 must perform satisfactorily on the mathematics and reading sections of the grade 5 assessments in English or Spanish.

**However, failure in any section of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) for grades 3-5 shall result in retention unless the student successfully completes the summer acceleration program provided by Hughes Springs ISD.**

# Of Special Interest to Parents

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## Cafeteria

Breakfast and lunch are served in the school cafeteria. Prices of meals are subject to change. Students may purchase meals daily in the cafeteria prior to the beginning of the school day or at mealtime. Full price or reduced price meals may be purchased daily or for multiple days.

**Free and Reduced-Price Food Program:** Our schools participate in the federal Child Nutrition Programs, which provide free and reduced price breakfast and lunch programs to students based on family income levels. Households that have difficulty in paying for school meals should contact the HSISD Foodservice Department and apply for free or reduced price meals. We maintain strict confidentiality with student participation in the program. If you would like more information about the program or an application, please contact the Director of Food Services. The phone number is 903-639-3809.

## Care of School Property

The taxpayers of the community have made a sustained financial commitment for the construction and upkeep of school facilities. To ensure that school facilities can serve those for whom they are intended - both this year and in the coming years - littering, defacing, or damaging school property is not tolerated. Students will be required to pay for damages they cause and will be subject to disciplinary consequences in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

## Child Sexual Abuse

As a parent, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

Possible physical warning signs of sexual abuse could be difficulty sitting or walking, pain in the genital areas, and claims of stomachaches and headaches. Behavioral indicators may include verbal references or pretend games of sexual activity between adults and children, fear of being alone with adults of a particular gender, or sexually suggestive behavior. Emotional warning signs to be aware of include withdrawal, depression, sleeping and eating disorders, and problems in school.

A child who has experienced sexual abuse should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Be aware as a parent or other trusted adult that disclosures of sexual abuse may be more indirect than disclosures of physical abuse, and it is important to be calm and comforting if your child, or another child, confides in you. Reassure the child that he or she did the right thing by telling you.

As a parent, if your child is a victim of sexual abuse, the campus counselor or principal will provide information regarding counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs. To find out what services may be available in your county, see [http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention\\_and\\_Early\\_Intervention/Programs\\_Available\\_In\\_Your\\_County/default.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Programs_Available_In_Your_County/default.asp).

The following Web sites might help you become more aware of child sexual abuse:

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index.aspx?id=2820>

<http://sapn.nonprofitoffice.com/>

<http://www.taasa.org/member/materials2.php>

[http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG\\_Publications/txts/childabuse1.shtml](http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse1.shtml)

[http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG\\_Publications/txts/childabuse2.shtml](http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse2.shtml)

Reports may be made to:

The Child Protective Services (CPS) division of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (1-800-252-5400 or on the Web at <http://www.txabusehotline.org>).

## Class Parties and Social Events

A maximum of three parties may be held each year in each homeroom. This entertainment will be sponsored by class sponsors in cooperation with the classroom teacher.

Parties will be restricted to the last period of the day and will be in observance of Christmas, Valentine's Day and the end of the school year. Party activities and plans must be submitted to the principal for approval well in advance.

## Communication to Parents

Vehicles for communication include press releases to local media, campus newsletters, notes and letters to home as needed, and the HSISD website at [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net).

## Complaint Process

We realize that situations may arise when parents disagree with a decision that affects their children or believe that a policy has been improperly applied to their children. A number of these types of disputes or controversies have specific processes for pursuing those concerns. The principal can provide you with a copy of the relevant policies and procedures.

In general, all parent complaints should be brought initially to the teacher involved or to the campus principal within ten days of the events or situation which concerns you. Often the problem can be resolved through an informal conference with the teacher or principal. On those occasions when a conference does not take care of the problem, you should request a copy of the complaint policy from the principal's office. In order for your concern to be resolved at the earliest possible level, you should put your complaint in writing on the form provided before meeting formally with the principal.

The principal will schedule a conference with you and will give you an oral response within seven days after the conference. If the outcome of the conference with the principal is not to the student or parent's satisfaction, the student or parent may request, within ten days, a conference with the Superintendent or designee, who will schedule and hold a conference. Prior to or at the time of the conference, the student or parent should submit a written complaint that includes a statement of the complaint, any evidence in its support, the solution sought, the parent's signature, and the date of the conference with the principal.

If the outcome of the conference with the Superintendent or designee is not to the student's or parent's satisfaction, the student or parent may submit to the Superintendent a written request to place the matter on the agenda of the next regular Board meeting.

Individual trustees cannot respond to parent complaints beyond referring the matter to the administration. Furthermore, the Board of Trustees will not permit complaints to be heard in the public comment or open forum portion of Board meetings. In order for the Board to take any action on a complaint, you must follow the complaint process established.

## Fees

Although the basic cost of your child's public education is provided through local tax revenues, state funding, and some federal funds, we may assess fees for certain kinds of materials and services, as described in the following list:

- \*\*a fee to cover the cost of materials when the student makes, builds, or prepares some product that becomes the student's personal property
- \*\*dues for voluntary student organizations and clubs and admission fees to voluntary extracurricular activities
- \*\*security deposits for materials or supplies that must be returned to the District
- \*\*Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, yearbooks, etc.
- \*\*Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance
- \*\*Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books

You may request a waiver of any required fee that you are unable to pay by contacting the principal, who will determine ability to pay based on the criteria for identifying students who are eligible for participation in the free and reduced price school breakfast and lunch program.

## Gang-Free Zones

Certain criminal offenses, including those involving organized criminal activity such as gang-related crimes, will be enhanced to the next highest category of offense if they are committed in a gang-free zone. For purposes of the district, a gang-free zone includes a school bus and a location in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any district-owned or leased property for campus playground.

## Health-Related Matters:

**Physical Activity for Students in Kindergarten through grade 5** – In accordance with policies at EHAB and EHAC, the district will ensure that students in kindergarten through grade 5 engage in at least 30 minutes of physical activity per day or 135 minutes per week.

### **Physical Fitness Assessment**

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3-12. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to the Physical Education teacher to obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.

### **School Health Advisory Council**

During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council held six meetings. Additional information regarding the district's School Health Advisory Council is available from the school nurse.

### **Tobacco Prohibited**

The district and its staff strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of tobacco products by students and others on school property and at school-sponsored and school-related activities. (See the **Student Code of Conduct**)

### **Vending Machines**

The district has adopted policies and implemented procedures to comply with state and federal food service guidelines for restricting student access to vending machines. For more information regarding these policies and guidelines see the campus principal.

## Health Services/Medicines

HSISD nurses are either on campuses or on call at all times during the school day. A student who becomes ill during the day may leave class with permission from the teacher, after obtaining a hall pass. Any student who needs to go home because of health reasons should check out in the nurse's office. The District does not provide any medication for students or personnel. Only prescription medication provided by and requested by a parent/guardian will be dispensed.

**Immunizations:** A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical or religious reasons, the student will not be immunized. **The immunizations required are diphtheria, rubeola (measles), rubella, mumps, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, varicella (chicken pox), and meningococcal.** The school nurse can provide information on age-appropriate doses or on an acceptable physician-validated history of illness required by the Texas Department of Health. Proof of immunization may be personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. This form may be obtained by writing the DSHS Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347; or online at <https://webds.dshs.state.tx.us/immco/affidavit.shtm>. The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or school nurse within 90 days of notarization. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student. This exemption does not apply in times of emergency or outbreak declared by the Commissioner of Health or local Health authority. The affidavit or form must be notarized as required by law annually.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required would be harmful to the health and well-being of the student or any member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a life-long condition.

**Prescription Medication:** Often, students have to take prescription medication for a certain period of time as treatment for a medical condition. If at all possible, we ask that you schedule the timing of the doses so that the child takes the medicine at home. Medication given three times a day can be scheduled to be given before school, after school, and at bedtime. If children have to take medicine at school, you must make a written request for the administration and provide only the doses to be administered at school in the original prescription bottle, as State law requires. Only the nurse or other authorized school employees are permitted to administer prescription medicines at school. A written request from a physician is required if the medication is to be administered for more than 10 days.

We do not permit students to carry their own medications and to self-administer. If parents/guardians administer medication to students at school, it must be done so in the office.

A student with asthma or severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) may be permitted to possess and use prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication at school or school-related events only if he or she has written authorization from his or her parent and a physician or other licensed health-care provider. The student must also demonstrate to his or her physician or health-care provider 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 principal and school nurse.

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 for information.

### **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. It is intended to have an altering effect on perception, emotion, or behavior and is commonly described as a mood – or – behavior-altering substance.

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 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.

### **Illness or Injury at School**

We will promptly attempt to notify you or a person you have authorized us to notify if we have knowledge that your child has been injured at school or has become ill at school. We have a school nurse and trained personnel available on each campus and a secluded area where your child can stay if he/she is injured or becomes ill.

One of the forms we ask you to complete at the beginning of each school year is a form authorizing designated school employees to consent to medical treatment in case your child is injured at school or a school-related activity and requires emergency treatment. We, of course, will call you in such a situation and also will call for emergency medical assistance. **It is important, however, that you understand that the District is not responsible for any cost of medical treatment or services provided after an injury at school or a school-related activity. We can not and will not use public funds to pay individual student medical expenses.**

**Insurance Coverage:** At the beginning of each school year, we offer you the opportunity to purchase low-cost student accident insurance that covers the student while at school. You may also purchase a policy that covers the student 24 hours a day.

The District is not the policyholder for this insurance; if you decide that additional protection would be a benefit and protection to you and your family, the contract is between you and the insurance company. We are authorized to, and do purchase accident insurance for students who participate in interscholastic practice and competition.

**Communicable Diseases:** Although we want your child to attend school every day, your child should not attend school if he/she has a communicable disease or is running a fever of 100° or more. Under State and local Health Department regulations, if your child has certain medical conditions, he/she must be excluded from school for a period of time. These diseases include, but are not limited to: chicken pox, common cold with fever, viral gastroenteritis, head lice, hepatitis, impetigo, influenza, measles, meningitis, mumps, pink eye, polio, ringworm of the scalp, salmonellosis, scabies, shigellosis, strep throat, tuberculosis, and whooping cough. The principal or nurse can provide you with a complete list of these and other conditions and periods of exclusion.

### **Bacterial Meningitis**

**What is Meningitis?** Meningitis is an inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by viruses, parasites, fungi, and bacteria. Viral meningitis is most common and the least serious. Bacterial meningitis is the most common form of serious bacterial infection with the potential for serious, long-term complications. It is an uncommon disease, but it requires urgent treatment with antibiotics to prevent permanent damage or death.

**What are the symptoms?** Someone with meningitis will become very ill. The illness may develop over one or two days, but it can also rapidly progress in a matter of hours. Not everyone with meningitis will have the same symptoms.

Children (over 1 year old) and adults with meningitis may have a severe headache, high temperature, vomiting, sensitivity to bright lights, neck stiffness or joint pains, and drowsiness or confusion. In both children and adults, there may be a rash of tiny, red-purple spots. These can occur anywhere on the body.

The diagnosis of bacterial meningitis is based on a combination of symptoms and laboratory results.

**How serious is Bacterial Meningitis?** If it is diagnosed early and treated promptly, the majority of people make a complete recovery. In some cases it can be fatal, or a person may be left with a permanent disability.

**How does Bacterial Meningitis spread?** Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as diseases like the common cold or the flu, and they are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been. The germs live naturally in the back of our noses and throats, but they do not live for long outside the body. They are spread when people exchange saliva (such as kissing; sharing drinking containers, utensils, or cigarettes).

The germ **does not** cause meningitis in most people. Instead, most people become **carriers** of the germ for days, weeks or even months. The bacteria rarely overcome the body's immune system and causes meningitis or another serious illness.

**How can Bacterial Meningitis be prevented?** Do not share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes. Limit the number of persons you kiss.

While there are vaccines for some other strains of bacterial meningitis, they are used only in special circumstances. These vaccines are used when there is a disease outbreak in a community or when people travel to a country where there is a high risk of getting the disease. Also, some groups recommend a vaccine for college students, particularly freshmen living in dorms or residence halls. The vaccine is safe and effective (85-90%). It can cause mild side effects, such as redness and pain at the injection site lasting up to two days. Immunity develops within 7 to 10 days after the vaccine is given and lasts for up to 5 years.

**What you should do if you think you or a friend might have Bacterial Meningitis?** Seek prompt medical attention.

#### **Where can you get more information?**

Your school nurse, family doctor, and the staff at your local or regional health department office are excellent sources for information on all communicable diseases. You may also call your local health department or Regional Department of State Health Services office to ask about a meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at the Web sites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov>, and the Department of State Health Services, <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/>.

## Law Enforcement Issues:

**Disruptions:** In order to protect student safety and to sustain an educational program free from disruption, state law permits the District to take action against any person -- student or non-student -- who:

- Interferes with the movement of people in an exit, an entrance, or a hallway of a District building without authorization from an administrator;

- Interferes with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building;

- Uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly;

- Uses force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly;

- Interferes with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to District property;

- Uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving District property without authorization from an administrator;

- Disrupts classes while on District property or on public property that is within 500 feet of District property (including making loud noises; trying to entice a student away from or trying to prevent a student from attending a required class or activity; entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with profane language or any misconduct);

- Interferes with the transportation of students in District vehicles;

**Questioning Students at School:** As school officials, we have the right to question your child about his or her own conduct at school and, in the investigation of alleged misconduct by other students, to question him or her about the conduct of others. We expect students to cooperate in this process, and the refusal to cooperate will be treated as insubordination. We will not ordinarily contact you before questioning your child about his or her own conduct or about the conduct of other students, but certainly will contact you promptly if our investigation shows that your child has violated school conduct rules. The Code of Conduct provides a complete explanation of the discipline processes and when you will be contacted. Our investigation of possible violations of the Code of Conduct is not a criminal proceeding, and there is no such thing as “taking the Fifth” or a student’s right not to incriminate him or herself in a school discipline investigation.

Sometimes law enforcement officials or investigators from Child Protective Services (CPS) ask to interview students at school. In the case of an investigator from Child Protective Services conducting a child abuse or neglect investigation, we are required by state law to permit the investigator to talk to the child at school. We also will make every effort to cooperate with law enforcement officials conducting an investigation that requires talking to 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, if the questioning or interview 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 or interview the student at school.

The principal ordinarily will make reasonable efforts to notify the parents unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.

The principal ordinarily will be present 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:

1. To comply with an order of the juvenile court.
2. To comply with the laws of arrest.
3. 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.
4. By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
5. By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, 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.
6. To comply with a properly issued directive to take a student into custody.

Before a student is released to a law enforcement officer or other legally authorized person, the principal will verify the officer’s identity and, to the best of his or her ability, will verify the official’s authority to take custody of the student.

The principal will immediately notify the superintendent and will ordinarily attempt to notify the parent unless the officer or other 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 law enforcement officer, 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 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 is required to register as a sex offender or who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors.

**Searches of Students, Lockers, and Property:** Students’ desks and lockers are school property and remain under the control and jurisdiction of the school even when assigned to an individual student. Elementary school students will be searched and certain items seized when a reasonable suspicion exists to believe a student is in possession of certain items that might be in violation of the laws of the State of Texas and/or harmful to the well-being of persons at the school (drugs and weapons). Classrooms and other common areas may be inspected with the use of trained dogs any time when students are not present. The principal or other school administrator can search a student’s outer clothing, pockets, or property if he/she has a reasonable basis to suspect that the search will reveal evidence that the student has violated a school rule. The scope of the search will be related to the suspected violation.

## Lost, Damaged, or Stolen Personal Items:

We ask you to discourage your child from wearing or from bringing to school expensive or irreplaceable jewelry, watches, sunglasses, toys or personal clothing that may be removed during the day. **It is important that you understand the District is not responsible for any personal items that are lost, damaged, or stolen at school or at a school-related activity.**

### **Telecommunications Devices, including Mobile Telephones:**

Students are not permitted to possess such items as radios, CD players, MP3 players, video, or audio recorders, DVD players, cameras, games, or other electronic devices at school, unless prior permission has been obtained from the principal. Without such permission, teachers will collect the items and turn them in to the principal's office. The principal will determine whether to return items to students at the end of the day or to contact parents to pick up the items.

For safety purposes, the district permits students to possess telecommunications devices, including mobile telephones; however, these devices must remain turned off during the instructional day, including during all testing. The use of mobile telephones in locker rooms or restroom areas at any time while at school or at a school-related or school-sponsored event is strictly prohibited.

A student who uses a telecommunications device during the school day shall have the device confiscated. The parent may pick up the confiscated telecommunications device from the principal's office for a fee of \$15.

Confiscated telecommunications devices that are not retrieved by the student or student's parents will be disposed of after the notice required by law.

**Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*. The district will not be responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen telecommunications devices.**

**Money at School:** When it is necessary to send money to school, we request that it be placed in an envelope with the child's name, teacher name, amount of money, and purpose. If the money is lost, it is easier to return to the owner if the information is available. Do not bring large sums of money to school.

## Non-school Distribution of Materials:

Students are not permitted to distribute non-school publications or materials in the classroom or hallways. Before non-school materials or publications are made available to students in the designated area, they must be submitted to the principal or designee for review and approval. To be considered, any nonschool material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization. The decision regarding approval will be made in two school days. Failure to act within that time is interpreted as disapproval. If the materials are disapproved, students may appeal to the Superintendent, who will decide within three days. The Superintendent's failure to respond is interpreted as disapproval. Students may appeal to the Board by making a written request for the Board to consider the Superintendent's decision at the next regular Board meeting. A student may appeal a principal's decision in accordance with policy FNG (LOCAL). Any student who posts nonschool material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*. Materials displayed without the principal's approval will be removed.

## Off-Campus Trips/Transportation

All students must ride to the event with the school. A parent or legal guardian may take their child home from the event, only after meeting with the child's teacher and signing them out. Each teacher will carry a class roster for the parent/guardian to sign. **Students must have an A in conduct to attend all off-campus trips.**

## Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence:

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States 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.

One minute of silence will 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.

## Prayer and Meditation:

Each student has a right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school or at any school activity in a manner that does not disrupt or interfere with the delivery of instruction or other activities in the school. No school employee can or will require, encourage, or coerce a student to engage in or to refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

## School Bus Transportation/Rules and Regulations:

We provide transportation on school buses to and from school for those children who live in our district. Transportation is not provided to transfer students attending a school outside of our district. Students are required to comply with rules for conduct on school buses and to comply with the Student Code of Conduct while at authorized school bus stops waiting for the bus. **Students who misbehave or who violate the Code of Conduct while on the bus will be disciplined according to the Code of Conduct and may be suspended from the bus for a period of time.**

It is important to remember that the bus drivers are in complete charge of the pupils on their buses, and their instructions must be followed at all times. Drinking or eating is not allowed on the bus. When students are waiting for their bus after school, they must stay in the appointed area until the bus arrives. **OFFENSES WILL CARRY THE SAME PUNISHMENT AS SIMILAR OFFENSES AT SCHOOL AND MAY RESULT IN LOSS OF TRANSPORTATION PRIVILEGES.** The rules of conduct for bus passengers are in place for everyone's safety.

## Summer School

**Failure in any section of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) for grades 3-5 shall result in retention unless the student successfully completes the summer acceleration program provided by Hughes Springs ISD.**

## Vehicles and Parking Lots:

Vehicles parked on school property are under the jurisdiction of the school. The school reserves the right to search any vehicle, if reasonable cause exists to do so. The owner has full responsibility for the security of his/her vehicle and must make certain it is locked and that the keys are not given to others. Searches of vehicles may be conducted any time there is reasonable cause to do so, with or without the presence of the owner.

## Visiting School:

You are encouraged to visit your children's schools from time to time; however, we ask that you comply with our policy requiring **all** visitors to go first to the principal's office and sign in. Identification may be required. We have this policy for the safety of your children and our staff. Parents and any other person on campus without the principal's knowledge will be considered as trespassers. We also expect parents to be polite and civil in their dealings with all school staff. We do not permit or tolerate abusive, disrespectful, threatening, lewd, profane, or offensive language from your children at school, and we will not tolerate it from parents.

While we encourage you to be involved in your children's education and knowledgeable about their classes, teachers, and curriculum, it has been our experience that frequent and lengthy visits to the classroom are disruptive both to teaching and to learning. The principal can limit or restrict the frequency and duration of classroom visits to be sure that disruption of the instructional process does not occur.

We encourage you to come to school occasionally and eat lunch with your child; however, children can be removed from the campus during lunch period only by following the established process of signing the child out from the principal's office. Unless we have possession of a court document that limits a possessory conservator's (that is the parent who does not ordinarily have custody of the student) access to their child while at school, we will permit either parent to eat lunch with their children at school.

# Required Legal Notices

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**Asbestos Management Plan:** In accordance with Section 763.93 of the Asbestos-In-School Identification and Notification Rule (40 CFR Part 763) of the availability of the District Asbestos Management Plan, a copy of the inspections and assessments of asbestos-containing materials and the complete District Management Plan are available at the District Administration Building. Additionally, copies of each individual school campus plan are available at the school administrative office for review.

**Check Acceptance Policy:** Our school district has established the following policy for accepting checks and collecting bad checks: For a check to be an acceptable form of payment it must include your current, full and accurate name, address, telephone number, driver's license number and state. In the event your check is returned for non-payment, the face value may be recovered electronically along with a state allowed recovery fee. In the event your check is returned for non-payment, checks will no longer be an acceptable form of payment for the remainder of the school year. Alternative forms of payment may be used instead of a check payment (cash).

**Excusing a Student from Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags:** As a parent, you may request that your child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be in writing. State law does not allow your child to be excused from participation in the required minute of silence or silent activity that follows.

## **Excusing a Student from Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence:**

You may request that your child be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence. State law requires students in social studies classes in grades 3-12 to recite a portion of the text of the Declaration of Independence during Celebrate Freedom Week unless (1) you provide a written statement requesting that your child be excused, (2) the district determines that your child has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or (3) you are a representative of a foreign government to whom the United States government extends diplomatic immunity.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act/Directory Information:** The District creates and keeps general education records for all students enrolled in District schools. Those records are confidential and generally are available only to parents and school personnel or people who are acting on behalf of the District. When we say "parents" have a right of access to and copies of all education records pertaining to their children, we mean both biological parents—whether married, divorced, or separated, unless the school is given a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student's education records—and any other person who is acting as a parent in the absence of the child's parent or legal guardian.

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 counselor evaluations, reports of behavioral patterns, and state assessment instruments that have been administered to your child.

Parents control the access to their children's education records until the child becomes an adult at age 18. When the child reaches age 18, he/she controls the access to records and is the one who can consent to the release of the records to other persons. However, parents continue to have a right to see and to copy their children's education records so long as the person is a dependent for federal income tax purposes, even if the child does not want them to.

If a parent wants to see or to copy his or her child's education records, he/she should contact the principal of the child's school if the child is currently enrolled. If the child has withdrawn or graduated, parents should contact the school superintendent for access to records. Records can be reviewed in administrative offices during regular office hours, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., and someone will be available to answer questions about the records.

Originals may not be removed from the principal's or superintendent's office. Copies will be provided to parents within a reasonable time, usually not more than two or three days, after parents have made a written request for copies. Parents will be charged the District's usual copying fees for copies; however, if circumstances prevent inspection during regular school hours and the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals, the district will either provide a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review these records.

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student's records and request a correction 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 principal. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected and include an explanation of how the information in the record 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 the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the parent or eligible student has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student's grade in a course is handled through the general complaint process found in policy FNG(LOCAL). A grade issued by a classroom teacher can be changed only if, as determined by the board of trustees, the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or inconsistent with the district's grading policy. The parent's or eligible student's right of access to and copies of student records do not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records—such as a teacher's personal notes about a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher—do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

Because parents generally control access to their children's education records, the District ordinarily will not permit access to or copies of education records without at least one parent's written authorization to release the records. **However, under some circumstances, the District can and will provide access to or copies of education records without parent authorization. The most common circumstances are as follows:**

- The District will forward education records on request to a public or private school or institution of higher education in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.
- The District will comply with a lawful subpoena for student education records, but will make reasonable efforts to notify the parents before complying, unless the subpoena indicates that parents should not be notified.
- The District will release educational records to a juvenile justice agency in accordance with an agreement between the District and the agency. The information will be released before the student is adjudicated and will be provided so that the juvenile agency can appropriately serve the student.

The law permits the district to designate certain personal information about students as "directory information." This "directory information" will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

However, release of a student's directory information may be prevented by the parent or an eligible student. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days of your child's first day of instruction for this school year.

Audio and video recordings of extracurricular and co-curricular performances, such as band, orchestra, and choir concerts; marching band performances; and performances of plays, musicals, or skits are treated as directory information.

Video recordings of students made by security cameras on school buses or in common areas of a campus are treated as directory information unless they are used to impose discipline. In that case, the tapes become an educational record of the student or students who are disciplined and are subject to the same restrictions on access and disclosure as any other student education record.

If you want to review the school's entire policy regarding student records, please contact the campus principal, who will be glad to provide a copy for you and to answer any questions you may have about the policy or this notice. If you believe the District is not following the law regarding student records, you have the right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education. The complaint may be mailed to: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Dept. of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-5901.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. District school officials who have what federal law refers to as a "legitimate educational interest" in a student's records. School officials would include trustees and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals; teachers, counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff; a person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a particular service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or volunteer); 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. "Legitimate educational interest" in a student's records includes 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, various governmental agencies, individuals granted access in response to a subpoena or court order, and a school or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she is already enrolled.

## Harassment/Dating Violence/Discrimination/Retaliation:

The district believes that all students learn best in an environment free from harassment, dating violence, discrimination, and retaliation and that their welfare is best served when they can work free from this prohibited conduct while attending school. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop. District employees are expected to treat students with courtesy and respect.

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly respond to inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are based on a person's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, gender, or disability, or any other basis prohibited by law. [See policy FFH] Prohibited harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the 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. A copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office and in the superintendent's office. 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 or intimidating 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 of a student by an employee or volunteer does not include necessary or permissible physical contact not reasonably construed as sexual in nature. However, romantic and other inappropriate social relationships, as well as all sexual relationships, between students and district employees are prohibited, even if consensual. Examples of prohibited sexual harassment may include, but 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.

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. This type of conduct is considered harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the 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 or 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, attempts to isolate the student from friends and family, stalking, or encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

Retaliation against a person who makes a good faith report of discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, is prohibited. Retaliation against a person who is participating in an investigation of alleged discrimination or harassment is also prohibited. A person who makes a false claim or offers false statements or refuses to cooperate with a district investigation, however, may be subject to appropriate discipline.

Retaliation against a student might occur when a student receives threats from another student or an employee or when an employee imposes an unjustified punishment or unwarranted grade reduction. Retaliation does not include petty slights and annoyances from other students or negative comments from a teacher that are justified by a student's poor academic performance in the classroom.

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

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 to comply with law. Allegations of prohibited conduct, which includes dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, will be promptly investigated. The district will notify the parents of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct involving an adult associated with the district.

In the event prohibited conduct involves another student, the district will notify the parents of the student alleged to have experienced the prohibited conduct when the allegations, if proven, would constitute a violation as defined by policy.

If the district's investigation indicates that prohibited conduct occurred, appropriate disciplinary or corrective action will be taken to address the conduct. The district may take disciplinary action even if the conduct that is the subject of the complaint was not unlawful.

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

The Board of Trustees will hear complaints alleging sexual harassment or abuse in a closed meeting, unless otherwise required by the Open Meetings Act.

After exhausting District remedies, a complaint may also be filed separately with the Office of Civil Rights, Region VI, 1200 Main Tower Building, Dallas, Texas 75202.

**Nondiscrimination:** Hughes Springs ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, or disability in providing 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; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended, which incorporates and expands upon the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. The following district staff members have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements:

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex: Sarah Dildine, 903-639-3810
- Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Sarah Dildine, 903-639-3810
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the Superintendent, 903-639-3802.

## **Parental Involvement:**

### **Working Together**

Both experience and research tell us that a child's education succeeds best when there is good communication and a strong partnership between home and school. Your involvement in this partnership may include:

Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis 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 of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.

Discussing with the counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.

Reviewing the requirements of the graduation programs with your child, if your child is entering ninth grade.

Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed.

Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal, please call the school office at 903-639-3881 for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school.

Becoming a school volunteer.

Participating in campus parent organizations, such as PTO.

Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees, assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement.

Serving on the School Health Advisory Council, assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction.

Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. Meetings are held the second Monday of each month at 6:00 located in the Central Office at 871 Taylor St.

## **Parent Organizations/Volunteer Opportunities:**

Our campus has an active parent/teacher organization and we encourage you to actively participate.

We encourage all parents to volunteer in our schools. All volunteers must complete an application form and receive a TB test. The District will obtain a Criminal History Report on all applications for volunteer programs. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer on a campus, please contact Nita Clark at 639-3802.

## Requesting Notices of Certain Student Misconduct:

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 your child's misconduct that may involve placement in a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) or expulsion.

## Rights of Parents:

**Academic Programs:** You may ask the principal to change your child's teacher or class assignment once during the course of the year; however, the principal is not required to make the reassignment and ordinarily will not do so if that change would affect the assignment or reassignment of another student.

**Exemption from Instruction:** You may temporarily remove your child from a class or other school activity that conflicts with your religious or moral beliefs if you provide a written statement authorizing the removal to your child's teacher. However, you are not entitled to remove your child from class or an activity to avoid taking a test or to prevent your child from taking a subject for an entire semester. Your child will be required to satisfy grade level or graduation requirements, regardless of any periods of temporary removal based on your religious or moral beliefs.

### **Displaying a Student's Artwork and Projects**

The district will seek parental consent before displaying students' artwork, special projects, photographs taken by students, and the like on the district's Web site, in printed material, by video, or by any other method of mass communication.

### **Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights**

Your child will not be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation—funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education—that concerns:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent.
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family.
- Sexual behavior or attitudes.
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
- Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship.
- Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents.
- Income, except when the information is required by law and will be used to determine the student's eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

You will be able to inspect the survey or other instrument and any instructional materials used in connection with such a survey, analysis, or evaluation.

### **“Opting Out” of Surveys and Activities**

As a parent, you have a right to receive notice of and deny permission for your child's participation in:

- Any survey concerning the private information listed above, regardless of funding.
- School activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from your child for the purpose of marketing or selling that information.
- Any nonemergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered and scheduled by the school in advance and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student. Exceptions are hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law.

**Records and Other Information:** As we stated in the “Required Notices” section of this handbook, you have a right to access all written educational records that we maintain concerning your child. You also can receive full information about any and all school activities in which your child is involved. However, as we explained in the section on “Questioning Students at School,” we must comply with a request or directive from a Child Protective Services investigator regarding contact with or information to parents about an investigation.

**Requesting Classroom Assignment for Multiple Birth Siblings:** As a parent, if your children are multiple birth siblings (e.g., twins, triplets, etc.) assigned to the same grade and campus, you may request that they be placed either in

the same classroom or in separate classrooms. Your written request must be submitted no later than the 14<sup>th</sup> day after the enrollment of your children.

**Requesting Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Staff:** You may request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's teachers, including whether a teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; whether the teacher has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived; and undergraduate and graduate degree majors, graduate certifications, and the field of study of the certification or degree. You also have the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to your child.

**School Safety Transfers:** As a parent, you have a right: (1) to request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the superintendent to have been a victim of bullying as the term is defined by Education Code 25.0341. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus.

(2) To request the transfer of your child to attend a safe public school in the district if your child attends school at a campus identified by TEA as persistently dangerous or if your child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds.

**(3) To request the transfer of your child to another campus if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether that assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault.**

**Student Rights:** Each student is expected to respect the rights and privileges of other students, teachers, and the District staff; all administrators and other District personnel are expected to have respect for the rights and privileges of students. The District's rules of conduct and discipline are established to achieve and to maintain order in the schools and to prepare and to instruct students for life in a society in which rules of discipline and conduct abound.

Students who violate the rights of others or who violate rules and regulations of the District or of their school are subject to disciplinary action designed to correct their own misconduct and to promote adherence by them and by other students to the responsibilities of citizens in the school community.

**Student Rights as Citizens:** All students are entitled to enjoy the basic rights of citizenship recognized and protected by law for persons of their age and maturity. Each student is obligated to respect the rights of classmates, teachers, and other school personnel. District schools will foster a climate of mutual respect for the rights of others.

**Student Responsibility to Teachers:** Fundamental to the process of education is to expect students to obey teachers. This basic relationship between students and teachers exists not only in the classroom but also in any school-related contact on or off the campus. The responsibility of teachers is to provide supervision and direction; the responsibility of students is to respond in a cooperative manner.

**Student Responsibility to Substitutes:** Substitute teachers are to be accorded the same respect as regular classroom teachers. Any student failing to maintain a proper relationship with a substitute teacher will be dealt with according to the Student Code of Conduct. It is the responsibility of the student to treat a substitute with the respect and courtesy that is due all persons on the campus.

**Teaching Materials:** You may review all teaching materials, textbooks and other teaching aids used in your child's classroom and may review all tests administered to your child, after the test is given. To review these materials, please contact the principal, who will make arrangements to provide you with access to those materials at school during regular school hours.

**Textbooks:** Textbooks are the property of the State of Texas and are issued to students at no charge for use while enrolled in the District. Each book is issued to the Hughes Springs Independent School District by the State at the new or original price, regardless of the age of the book. Textbooks must be paid for in full if they are lost or damaged extensively. At the time books are issued, each student must fill out a book card and make detailed notes regarding the condition of each book. At the close of each semester, books will be checked and fines assessed according to an established schedule for damage other than routine wear. Students are responsible for the return or replacement of all instructional materials and textbooks issued.

Textbook covers are available. Each student is responsible for keeping books covered at all times. Appropriate care of books by students shows both appreciation for the free textbook service and respect for the student who will use the

book the next year. Replacement cost will be charged for lost or defaced textbooks or instructional materials. Fines are assessed for damage to textbooks or instructional materials.

Textbooks are issued by serial number and HSISD number. Returned textbooks and instructional materials must reflect the serial number and/or HSISD number issued to the student.

**Video and Audio Recording:** We will obtain your written consent before any school employee makes an audio or video recording of your child. State law, however, permits the school to make a video or voice recording without parental permission for the following circumstances:

- safety purposes, including maintaining order and discipline in common areas of the school or on school buses; or
- a purpose related to a co-curricular or extracurricular activity; or
- a purpose related to regular classroom instruction; or
- media coverage of the school.

**Section 504 Child Find Notice:** Pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the District has a duty to identify, refer, evaluate and if eligible, provide a free, appropriate public education to disabled students. For additional information about the rights of parents of eligible children, or for answers to any questions you might have about identification, evaluation and placement into Section 504 programs, please contact the campus principal.

**Use of Pesticides:** The district applies only pest control products that comply with state and federal guidelines. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before application. Parents who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact HUGHES SPRINGS ISD Maintenance Office.

## **Glossary**

**Accelerated instruction** is an intensive supplemental program designed to address the needs of an individual student in acquiring the knowledge and skills required at his or her grade level and/or as a result of a student not meeting the passing standard on a state-mandated assessment.

**ACT** refers to one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions exams: the American College Test. The test may be a requirement for admission to certain colleges or universities.

**ARD** is the admission, review, and dismissal committee convened for each student who is identified as needing a full and individual evaluation for special education services. The eligible student's parents are part of the committee.

**Attendance review committee** is sometimes responsible for reviewing a student's absences when the student's attendance drops below 90 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 lost because of absences.

**DAEP** stands for disciplinary alternative education program, a placement for students who have violated certain provisions of the Student Code of Conduct.

**FERPA** refers to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act that 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 or older directs the school not to release directory information.

**IEP** is the written record of the individualized education program prepared by the ARD committee for a student with disabilities who is eligible for special education services. The IEP contains several parts, such as a statement of the student's present educational performance; a statement of measurable annual goals, with short-term objectives; the special education and related services and supplemental aids and services to be provided, and program modifications or support by school personnel; a statement regarding how the student's progress will be measured and how the parents will be kept informed; accommodations for state or districtwide tests; etc.

**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.

**LAT** stands for linguistically accommodated testing, which is an assessment process for recent immigrant English language learners who are required to be assessed in certain grades and subjects under the NCLB Act.

**NCLB Act** is the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

**PGP** stands for Personal Graduation Plan, which is recommended for all students entering grade 9 and is required by state law for any student in middle school or higher who fails a section on a state-mandated test or is identified by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year after he or she begins grade 9.

**SAT** refers to one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions exams: the Scholastic Aptitude Test. The test may be a requirement 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 assist the district in ensuring that local community values and health issues are reflected in the district's health education instruction.

**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.

**State-mandated assessments** are required of students at certain grade levels and in specified subjects. Successful performance sometimes is a condition of promotion, and passing the grade 11 exit-level test is a condition of graduation. Students have multiple opportunities to take the tests if necessary for promotion or graduation.

**Student Code of Conduct** is developed with the advice of the district-level committee and adopted by the board and identifies the circumstances, consistent with law, when a student may be removed from the classroom or campus. It also sets out the conditions that authorize or require the principal or another administrator to place the student in a DAEP. It 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.

**TAKS** is the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, the state's standardized achievement test currently given to students in certain subjects in grades 3–11.

**TAKS-Accommodated** is a state mandated assessment based on the same grade-level academic achievement standards of TAKS available to certain students who receive special education services and who need specific accommodations, as determined by the student and his or her ARD committee.

**TAKS-Alternate** is an alternate state mandated assessment designed for students with severe cognitive disabilities receiving special education services who meet the participation requirements, as determined by the student and his or her ARD committee.

**TAKS-Modified** is an alternate state mandated assessment based on modified achievement standards and is administered to eligible students receiving special education services, as determined by the student and his or her ARD committee.

**TELPAS** stands for the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System, which assesses the progress that English language learners make in learning the English language, and is administered for those who meet the participation requirements in kindergarten–grade 12.

**TxVSN** is the Texas Virtual School Network, which provides online courses for Texas students to supplement the instructional programs of public school districts. Courses are taught by qualified instructors, and courses are equivalent in rigor and scope to a course taught in a traditional classroom setting.

**UIL** refers to the University Interscholastic League, the statewide voluntary nonprofit organization that oversees educational extracurricular academic, athletic, and music contests.

