

# Hughes Springs I.S.D.

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Hughes Springs, Texas 75656

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www.hsisd.net

2015-2016

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# 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**

871 Taylor St.  
Hughes Springs, Texas 75656  
Superintendent of Schools

Phone 903.639-3802  
Fax 903.639-2624  
Rick Ogden

### **Hughes Springs Elementary**

809 Russell St.  
Hughes Springs, Texas 75656  
Principal  
Assistant Principal  
Counselor

903-639-3881  
Fax 903.639-3930  
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# Handbook Purpose and Organization

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## To Students and Parents:

Welcome to school year 2015-2016! 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.

Both students and parents should become familiar with the Hughes Springs ISD Student Code of Conduct, which is a document adopted by the board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document may be found on the district’s website at [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net) and is available in hard copy upon request.

The Student Handbook is a general reference guide only and is designed to be in harmony with board policy and the **Student Code of Conduct**. Please be aware that the handbook is not a complete statement of all policies, procedures, or rules that may be applicable in a given circumstance.

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.

Also, please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. The district encourages parents to stay informed of proposed board policy changes by attending board meetings. Changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters or other communications. The district reserves the right to modify provisions of the Student Handbook at any time, whenever it is deemed necessary. Notice of any revision or modification will be given as is reasonably practical under the circumstances.

Although the Student Handbook may refer to rights established through law or district policy, the Student Handbook does not create any additional rights for students and parents. It does not, nor is it intended to, create contractual or legal rights between any student or parent and the district.

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:**

7:30 Breakfast bell    7:50 First Bell    7:55 Class begins    **8:00 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 circle drive for K-2<sup>nd</sup> graders 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, 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 12:30 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. Also, bus changes will only be made for the two destinations stated on bus rider destination card. All other destination changes must be made in person to the office by 12:30.

## 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:**

Bell: fire alarm, march out of building in quiet orderly manner; stop and stand at attention; wait for instructions

### **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:

Bell - Move from classrooms to designated areas; wait for instructions

### **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.

### **Emergency School-Closing Information:**

Each year, parents are asked to complete an emergency release form to provide contact information in the event that school is dismissed early or opening is delayed because of severe weather or another emergency, or if the campus must restrict access due to a security threat.

If the campus must close, delay opening, or restrict access to the building because of an emergency, the district will alert the community in the following ways: local radio and television stations, district web site and Facebook page, and school to home text message.

### **Leaving Campus**

Please remember that student attendance is crucial to learning. We ask that appointments be scheduled outside of school hours as much as reasonably possible. Also note that picking up a child early on a regular basis results in missed opportunities for learning. Unless the principal has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the school day.

State rules require that parental consent be obtained before any student is allowed to leave campus for any part of the school day. The district has put the following procedures in place in order to document parental consent:

For students in elementary school, a parent or otherwise authorized adult must come to the office and sign the student out. Please be prepared to show identification. Once an identity is verified, a campus representative will then call for the student or collect the student and bring him or her to the office. For safety purposes and stability of the learning environment, we cannot allow you to go to the classroom or other area unescorted to pick up the student. If the student returns to campus the same day, the parent or authorized adult must sign the student back in through the main office upon the student's return. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will also be required.

### **Official Attendance-Taking Time**

The district must submit attendance of its students to Texas Education Agency (TEA) reflecting attendance at a specific time each day.

Official attendance is taken every day at 10:00 am.

A student absent for any portion of the day, including at the official attendance-taking time, 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.)**

# 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 will be excused by the district. The district will permit no more than five excused absences per year for a student to visit with a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian who has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from certain deployments.

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 the required presence of school-aged children in school, e.g., compulsory attendance, the other with how a child's attendance affects the award of a student's final grade or 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 and is subject to the compulsory attendance requirements as long as they remain enrolled.

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

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 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/or 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; 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.)** Should the student develop a questionable pattern of absences, the principal or attendance committee may require a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's absence from school in order to determine whether the absence or absences will be 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 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. For a student younger than 12 years of age, the student's parent could be charged with an offense based on the student's failure to attend school.**

### **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance**

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences, if the student makes up all the work. These include the following activities and events:

- Religious holy days;
- Required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship;
- Documented health-care appointments, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders. A note from the health-care provider must be submitted upon the student's arrival or return to campus and
- For students in the conservatorship of the state: mental health or therapy appointments; or
- Court-ordered family visitations or any other court-ordered activity provided it is not practicable to schedule the student's participation in the activity outside of school hours.

As listed in Section I at **Accommodations for Children of Military Families**, absences of up to five days will be excused for a student to visit with a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian who has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from certain deployments. Please see page 8 for that section.

### **Documentation after an Absence**

When a student is absent from school, the student—upon arrival or return to school—must bring a note signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence. A note signed by the student, even with the parent's permission, will not be accepted unless the student is 18 or older or is an emancipated minor under state law. The campus will document in its attendance records for the student whether the absence is considered by the district to be excused or unexcused. Please note that, unless the absence is for a statutorily allowed reason under compulsory attendance laws, the district is not required to excuse any absence, even if the parent provides a note explaining the 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 or a final grade for their academic work. State law requires students in kindergarten- grade 12 must 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 or a final grade 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 or a final grade 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 or a final grade lost because of absences.

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 or a final grade,

the committee can award credit or a final grade or tell the student what additional work or time needs to be completed in order for the student to receive credit or a final grade 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, whether excused or unexcused, must 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.

A transfer or migrant student begins to accumulate absences only after he or she has enrolled in the district.

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 or a final grade.

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 or a final grade 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 or a final grade 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 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**

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; or from required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action. A court of law may also impose penalties against both the student and his or her parents if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. A complaint against the parent may be filed in court if the student:

1. 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. is absent from school 3 or more days or 3 or more partial days in a 4-week period.

For a student younger than 12 years of age, the student's parent could be charged with a criminal offense based on the student's failure to attend school.

If a student age 12 through age 17 violates the compulsory attendance law, both the parent and student could be charged with a criminal offense.

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 and the District will apply truancy prevention measures 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 or a final grade 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, expression through electronic methods, or physical conduct against another student on school property. At a school-sponsored or-related activity, or in a district operated vehicle 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. This conduct is considered bullying if it exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator(s) and the student victim and if it interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of the school. Bullying is prohibited by this district and could include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading, or ostracism. In some cases, bullying can occur through electronic methods, called "cyberbullying."

If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying, it is important for the student or parent to notify a teacher, school counselor, principal, or another district employee as soon as possible to obtain assistance and intervention. The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying or other related misconduct.

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying has occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying. The district will also contact the parents of the victim and of the student who was found to have engaged in the bullying. Available counseling options will be provided to these individuals, as well as to any students who have been identified as witnesses to the bullying.

Any retaliation against a student who reports an incident of bullying is prohibited.

Upon the recommendation of the administration, the board may, in response to an identified case of bullying, decide to transfer a student found to have engaged in bullying to another classroom at the campus. In consultation with the student's parent, the student may also be transferred to another campus in the district. The parent of a student who has been determined by the district to be a victim of bullying may request that his or her child be transferred to another classroom or campus within the district.

A copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office, superintendent's office, and on the district's Web site. Procedures related to reporting allegations of bullying may also be found on the district's web site.

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

## 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. During any periods of instruction during the summer months, the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct in place for the year immediately preceding the summer period shall apply, unless the district amends either or both documents for the purposes of summer instruction.

### **Social Events**

School rules apply to all school social events. Guests attending these events are expected to observe the same rules as students, and a student inviting a guest will share responsibility for the conduct of his or her guest.

A student attending a social event will be asked to sign out when leaving before the end of the event; anyone leaving before the official end of the event will not be readmitted. Please contact the campus principal if you are interested in serving as a chaperone for any school social event.

### **Disruptions of School Operations**

Disruptions of school operations are not tolerated and may constitute a misdemeanor offense. As identified by law, disruptions include the following:

- Interference with the movement of people at an exit, entrance, or hallway of a district building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interference with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.
- Use of force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.
- Interference with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to district property.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving district property without authorization from an administrator.
- Disruption of classes or other school activities while on district property or on public property that is within 500 feet of district property. Class disruption includes making loud noises; trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity; and entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with loud or profane language or any misconduct.
- Interference with the transportation of students in vehicles owned or operated by the district.

### **Conduct Before and After School**

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at before- or after-school activities on district premises and at school-sponsored events off district premises, such as play rehearsals, club meetings, athletic practices, and special study groups or tutorials, as well as district vehicles. Students are subject to the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day and will be subject to consequences established by the Student Code of Conduct or any stricter standards of behavior established by the sponsor for extracurricular participants.

### **Prohibiting the Use of Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment—spanking or paddling the student—may be used as a discipline management technique in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and policy FO (LOCAL) in the district's policy manual.

If you do not want corporal punishment to be administered to your child as a method of student discipline, please return the form included in the forms packet or submit a written statement to the campus principal stating this decision. A signed statement must be provided each year. You may choose to revoke this prohibition at any time during the year by providing a signed statement to the campus principal. However, district personnel may choose to use discipline methods other than corporal punishment even if the parent requests that this method be used on the student. Please note that if the district is made aware that a student is in temporary or permanent conservatorship (custody) of the state, through foster care, kinship care, or other arrangements, corporal punishment shall not be administered, even when a signed statement prohibiting its use has not been submitted by the student's caregiver or caseworker.

### **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 judgment, 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

If your child comes to school wearing clothes that violate the dress code or violating any other dress and grooming standards, he/she may 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

School counselors are available to provide educational, vocational and personal counseling to students. These trained school 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 school 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.

## **Psychological Exams, Tests, or Treatment**

The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parent's written consent. Parental consent is not necessary when a psychological examination, test, or treatment is required by state or federal law for special education purposes or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports.

## Educational Technology and Acceptable Use

To prepare students for an increasingly technological society, the district has made an investment in the use of district-owned technology resources for instructional purposes; specific resources may be issued individually to students. Use of these technological resources, which include the district's network systems and use of district equipment, is restricted to approved uses only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement regarding use of these district resources. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action. 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, posting, accessing, or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition applies to conduct off school property, whether the equipment used to send such messages is district-owned or personally owned, if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

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, commonly referred to as "sexting," will be disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct and may be required to complete an educational program related to the dangers of this type of behavior, and, in certain circumstances, may be reported to law enforcement. Because engaging in this type of behavior can lead to bullying or harassment, as well as possibly impede future endeavors of a student, we encourage you to review with your child <http://beforeyoutext.com>, a state-developed program that

addresses the consequences of engaging in inappropriate behavior using technology. In addition, any student who engages in conduct that results in a breach of the district's computer security will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, and, in some cases, the consequence may rise to the level of expulsion. 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**

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, homeless students, bilingual students, migrant students, students with limited English proficiency or who are English language learners, students diagnosed with dyslexia, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact the campus principal.

### **Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education Services:**

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 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 the timeline prescribed by law once 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**. Additional information regarding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is available from the school district in a companion document, **A Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process**. The following Web sites provide information to those who are seeking information and resources specific to students with disabilities and their families:

Texas Project First, at <http://www.texasprojectfirst.org>

Partners Resource Network, at <http://www.partnerstx.org>

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education services is the principal at 903-639-3881.

**Special Education:** Hughes Springs ISD provides special education and related services for students with disabilities according to individualized plans developed by teachers, parents, school 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. The parent or guardian should speak with the principal of the school regarding any transportation prior to requesting for any other children in the home.

**Service/Assistance Animal Use by Students** A parent of a student who uses a service assistance animal because of the student's disability must submit a request in writing to the principal at least ten district business days before bringing the service assistance animal on campus.



## **Students Who Speak a Primary Language Other than English :**

A student may be eligible to receive specialized support if his or her primary language is not English, and the student has difficulty performing ordinary class work in English. If the student qualifies for these extra services, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will determine the types of services the student needs, including accommodations or modifications related to classroom instruction, local assessments, and state-mandated assessments.

**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 Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504:** A child determined to have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, as defined by law, and who does not otherwise qualify for special education services, may qualify for protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Section 504 is a federal law designed to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities. When an evaluation is requested, a committee will be formed to determine if the child is in need of services and supports under Section 504 to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE), as this is defined in federal law. The designated person to contact regarding a referral for evaluation applicable to Section 504 is the campus principal.

## **Parents of Students with Disabilities Who Receive Special Education Services with Other School-Aged Children in the Home**

If a student is receiving special education services at a campus outside his or her attendance zone, the parent or guardian may request that the household be transferred to the same campus, if the appropriate grade level for the transferring student is offered on that campus. The parent or guardian is not required to provide transportation to the other children in the household. The parent or guardian should speak with the principal regarding transportation needs prior to requesting a transfer for any other children in the home. [See policy FDB(LOCAL).]

**Parent Involvement Coordinator:** The Parent Involvement Coordinator, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs is Theresa Jennings 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, school 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, including juvenile service providers and Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers or other child welfare representatives, in certain cases.
- Individuals or entities 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

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### Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten

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

Pre-kindergarten parents shall receive a progress report each six weeks, either in the form of a parent conference or as a written report card. Kindergarten parents shall receive a progress report for the first six weeks. 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 kindergarten students. The following marking system shall be used:

Subject	Marking System
Mathematics Language Arts Science Social Studies Self Awareness (Pre-K only)	90-100 = A 80-89 = B 70-79 = C 0-69 = Failure
Social Development/Work Habits Fine Arts Music Physical Education Motor Skills	E = Excellent S = Satisfactory N = Needs Improvement U = Unsatisfactory
Recognition Skills	✓ = Mastery

## Grades K-5

In grade levels K-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 K	Marking System Grades 1-5
Language Arts Reading Mathematics Science/Health Social Studies	90-100 = A 80-89 = B 70-79 = C 0-69 = Failure	90-100 = A 80-89 = B 70-79 = C 0-69 = Failure
Fine Arts Music 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 reading, 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, including kindergarten, 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 yearly average of 70 or above in reading (1-5)
- A yearly average of 70 or above in language arts

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

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

\* 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.

For the 2014-2015 school year only, this requirement will be waived for the math portion of the STAAR test for grades 3-8 since the passing standards for STAAR mathematics examination will not be established for the 2014-15 school year due to the revision and implementation of the math TEKS for grades K-8.

However, failure in any other section of the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) for grades 3-5 besides mathematics 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**

For any class missed, the teacher may assign the student makeup work based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course and the needs of the individual student in mastering the essential knowledge and skills or in meeting subject or course requirements.

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

A student is encouraged to speak with his or her teacher if the student knows of an absence ahead of time, including absences for extracurricular activities, so that the teacher and student may plan any work that can be completed before or shortly after the absence. Please remember the importance of student attendance at school and that, even though absences may be excused or unexcused, all absences account for the 90 percent threshold in regards to the state laws surrounding "attendance for credit" or a final grade. [See also Attendance for Credit on page 9.]

A student involved in an extracurricular activity must notify his or her teachers ahead of time about any absences.

A student will be permitted to make up tests and to turn in projects due in any class missed because of absence. Teachers may assign a late penalty to any long-term project in accordance with time lines approved by the principal and previously communicated to students.

### **DAEP Makeup Work**

A student removed to a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) during the school year will have an opportunity to complete, before the beginning of the next school year, a foundation curriculum course in which the student was enrolled at the time of removal. The district may provide the opportunity to complete the course through an alternative method, including a correspondence course, another distance learning option, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district.

### **In-school Suspension (ISS) Makeup Work**

A student removed from the regular classroom to in-school suspension or another setting, other than a DAEP, will have an opportunity to complete before the beginning of the next school year each course the student was enrolled in at the time of removal from the regular classroom. The district may provide the opportunity by any method available, including a correspondence course, another distance learning option, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district.

## **Students with Physical or Mental 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.

### **Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who 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. In addition, the following provisions apply to all extracurricular activities: (1) 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, (2) A student with disabilities who fails to meet the standards in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks, (3) An ineligible student may practice or rehearse but may not participate in any competitive activity, (4) The District shall permit unlimited absences for extracurricular activities, and (5) An absence for participation in an activity that has not been approved will receive an unexcused absence.

### **Standards of Behavior**

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

## **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 STAAR: the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) in the following subjects:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3-5
- Reading, annually in grades 3-5
- Writing, including spelling and grammar, in grade 4
- Science in grade 5
- Any other subject and grade required by federal law

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

Parents of a student in grades 3–5 who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her state-mandated exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. The student will be required to participate in this instruction before or after normal school hours or outside of the normal school year. Failure to successfully complete the required summer instructional program provided by Hughes Springs ISD will result in retention.

STAAR Alternate, for students receiving special education services who meet certain state-established criteria, will be available for eligible students, as determined by the student’s ARD committee.

STAAR-L is a linguistically accommodated assessment that is available for certain limited English proficient (LEP) students, as determined by the student’s Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC).

For the 2014-2015 school year only, this requirement will be waived for the math portion of the STAAR test for grades 3-8 since the passing standards for STAAR mathematics examination will not be established for the 2014-15 school year due to the revision and implementation of the math TEKS for grades K-8.

## 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. The district follows the federal and state guidelines regarding foods of minimal nutritional value being served or sold on school premises during the school day.

**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. A person who compels or encourages a child to engage in sexual conduct commits abuse. It is illegal to make or possess child pornography or to display such material to a child. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, 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 school 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:

[www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/signs.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/signs.cfm) <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.

Although a parent or grandparent is not prohibited from providing food for a school-designated function or for children in the child's or grandchild's classroom for his or her birthday, please be aware that children in the school may have severe



allergies to certain food products. Therefore, it is imperative to discuss this with the child's teacher prior to bringing any food in this circumstance. Occasionally, the school or a class may host certain functions or celebrations tied to the curriculum that will involve food. The school or teacher will notify students and parents of any known food allergies when soliciting potential volunteers for bringing food products.

## **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:**

**Food Allergies** - The district requests to be notified when a student has been diagnosed with a food allergy, especially those allergies that could result in dangerous or possibly life-threatening reactions either by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact with the particular food. It is important to disclose the food to which the student is allergic, as well as the nature of the allergic reaction. Please contact the school nurse or campus principal if your child has a known food allergy or as soon as possible after any diagnosis of a food allergy.

The district has developed and annually reviews a food allergy management plan, which addresses employee training, dealing with common food allergens, and specific strategies for dealing with students diagnosed with severe food allergies. When the district receives information that a student has a food allergy that puts the student at risk for anaphylaxis, individual care plans will be developed to assist the student in safely accessing the school environment. The district's food allergy management plan can be accessed at [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net).

**Head Lice** - Head lice, although not an illness or a disease, is very common among children and is spread very easily through head-to-head contact during play, sports, or nap time and when children share things like brushes, combs, hats, and headphones. Because lice spread so easily, the district will need to exclude any student found to have live lice until after one treatment of an FDA-approved shampoo or cream rinse, which can be purchased from a drug store or grocery store. If careful observation indicates that a student has head lice, the school nurse will contact the student's parent to determine whether the child will need to be picked up from school and will need to stay home until after an initial treatment is applied. After the student has undergone one treatment, the parent should check in with the school nurse to discuss the treatment used. The nurse can also offer additional recommendations, including subsequent treatments and how best to get rid of lice and prevent their return. More information on head lice can be obtained from the TDSHS Web site at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/lice.shtm>.

**Physical Activity for Students in Kindergarten through grade 5** – In accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA, the district will ensure that students in kindergarten through grade 5 engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous 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 five meetings. The duties of the SHAC range from recommending curriculum to developing strategies for integrating curriculum into a coordinated school health program encompassing issues such as school health services, counseling services, a safe and healthy school environment, recess recommendations, improving student fitness, mental health issues, and employee wellness. Additional information regarding the district's School Health Advisory Council is available from the school nurse.

#### **Suicide Awareness**

The district is committed to partnering with parents to support the healthy mental, emotional, and behavioral development of its students. If you are concerned about your child, please access the following Web sites or contact the school counselor for more information related to suicide prevention and to find mental health services available in your area: <http://www.texassuicideprevention.org>

#### **Tobacco Prohibited**

Students are prohibited from possessing or using any type of tobacco product, including electronic cigarettes, or any other electronic vaporizing device while on school property at any time or while attending an off campus school-related activity. The district and its staff strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of all tobacco products, including electronic cigarettes, or any other electronic vaporizing device by students and others on school property and at school-sponsored and school-related activities. [See the Student Code of Conduct and policies at FNCD and GKA.]

#### **Vending Machines**

The district has adopted and implemented the state and federal policies and guidelines for food service, including the guidelines to restrict 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.

**Student Illness** - When your child is ill, please contact the school to let us know he or she won't be attending that day. It is important to remember that schools are required to exclude students with certain illnesses from school for periods of time as identified in state rules. For example, if your child has a fever over 100 degrees, he or she must stay out of school until fever free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications. In addition, students with diarrheal illnesses must stay home until they are diarrhea free without diarrhea-suppressing medications for at least 24 hours. A full list of conditions for which the school must exclude children can be obtained from the school nurse. If a student becomes ill during the school day, he or she must receive permission from the teacher before reporting to the school nurse. If the nurse determines that the child should go home, the nurse will contact the parent. The district is also required to report certain contagious (communicable) diseases or illnesses to the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) or our local/regional health authority. The school nurse can provide information from TDSHS on these notifiable conditions. Contact the school nurse if you have questions or if you are concerned about whether or not your child should stay home.

**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, tetanus, and pertussis; measles, rubella, mumps; polio; 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 DSHS. 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 (TDSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. This form may be obtained by writing the TDSHS Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347; or online at <https://webds.dshs.state.tx.us/immco/default.aspx>. 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:** The district will not purchase medication to give to a student. Should students have to take prescription medication for a certain period of time as treatment for a medical condition, 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. District employees will not give a student prescription medication, nonprescription medication, anabolic steroids, or dietary supplements, with the following exceptions:

Only authorized employees, in accordance with policies at FFAC, may administer:

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

Students whose schedules provide for regular time spent outdoors, including for recess and physical education classes, should apply sunscreen before coming to school. For students at the elementary level, the student's teacher or other district personnel will apply sunscreen to a student's exposed skin if the student brings the sunscreen to school and requests assistance with the application of the sunscreen. Nothing prohibits a student at this level from applying his or her own sunscreen if the student is capable of doing so. If the sunscreen needs to be administered to treat any type of medical condition, this should be handled through communication with the school nurse so that the district is made aware of any safety and medical issues.

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 and to the school nurse the ability to use the prescribed medication, including any device required to administer the medication. If the student has been prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication for use during the school day, the student and parents should discuss this with the 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 common and most people recover fully. Parasitic and fungal meningitis are very rare. Bacterial meningitis is very serious and may involve complicated medical, surgical, pharmaceutical, and life support management.

**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 2 years old) and adults with bacterial meningitis commonly have a severe headache, high fever, and neck stiffness. Other symptoms might include nausea, vomiting, discomfort looking into bright lights, confusion, and sleepiness. 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. They are spread when people exchange respiratory or throat secretions (such as kissing, coughing, or sneezing).

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?** Maintaining healthy habits, like getting plenty of rest, can help prevent infection. Using good health practices such as covering your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing and washing your hands frequently with soap and water can also help stop the spread of the bacteria. It's a good idea not to share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes. Limit the number of persons you kiss.

There are vaccines available to offer protection from some of the bacteria that can cause bacterial meningitis.\* The vaccines are safe and effective (85–90 percent). They can cause mild side effects, such as redness and pain at the injection site lasting up to two days. Immunity develops within seven to ten days after the vaccine is given and lasts for up to five 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 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 taken into custody, arrested, or referred to the juvenile court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors.

All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a student who is thought to have committed certain offenses or who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors.

All appropriate district personnel in regards to a student who is required to register as a sex offender.

**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 suspicion 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.**

A “lost and found” collection box is located in the campus office. If your child has lost an item, please encourage him or her to check the lost and found box. The district discourages students from bringing to school personal items of high monetary value, as the district is not responsible for lost or stolen items. The campus will dispose of lost and found items at the end of each semester.

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

Except as described below, students are not permitted to possess or use personal electronic devices such items as MP3 players, video, or audio recorders, DVD players, cameras, games, e-readers or other electronic devices at school, unless prior permission has been obtained. 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 personal mobile telephones; however, these devices must remain turned off during the instructional day, including during all testing, unless they are being used for approved instructional purposes. A student must have approval to possess other telecommunications devices such as netbooks, laptops, tablets, or other portable computers. The use of mobile telephones or any device capable of capturing images is strictly prohibited in locker rooms or restroom areas while at school or at a school-related or school-sponsored event.

If a student uses a telecommunications device without authorization during the school day the device will be 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’s parents will be disposed of after the notice required by law.

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student’s personal telecommunications device may be searched by authorized personnel. Any searches of personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices will be conducted in accordance with law, and the device may be confiscated in order to perform a lawful search. A confiscated device may be turned over to law enforcement to determine whether a crime has been committed.

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

**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, sells, circulates, or distributes non-school material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the ***Student Code of Conduct***. Materials displayed without approval will be removed.

## 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.

State law requires that one minute of silence follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that minute so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others. In addition, state law requires that each campus provide for the observance of one minute of silence at the beginning of the first class period when September 11 falls on a regular school day in remembrance of those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001.

## 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.

## Safety

Student safety on campus, at school-related events, and on district vehicles is a high priority of the district. Although the district has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensuring school safety. A student is expected to:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or others at risk.
- Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, teachers, or bus drivers.
- Remain alert to and promptly report to a teacher or the principal any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student or staff member.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

## 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. Please refer to district bus policy concerning transportation issues.

## Students in Foster Care:

In an effort to provide educational stability, the district strives to assist any student who is currently placed or newly placed in foster care (temporary or permanent custody of the state) with the enrollment and registration process, as well as other educational services throughout the student's enrollment in the district.

A student who is placed in foster care and who is moved outside of the district's attendance boundaries is entitled to continue in enrollment at the school he or she was attending prior to the placement until the student reaches the highest grade level at the particular school. Please contact the campus principal as the district's foster care liaison with any questions.

## Summer School:

Failure in any section of the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) 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.

### **Video Cameras:**

For safety purposes, video/audio equipment is used to monitor student behavior, including on buses and in common areas on campus. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used. The principal will review the video/audio recordings routinely and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **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.

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## **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).

### **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.

### **Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence in grades 3-12:**

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 school counselor evaluations, reports of behavioral patterns, state assessment instruments that have been administered to your child, and teaching materials and tests used in your child's classroom.

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 or on an exam 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 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, The law permits the district to disclose appropriately designated certain personal information about students as “directory information.” from a child’s education records without written consent. “Directory information” is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. This “directory information” will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

However, a parent or eligible student may object to the release of 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.

You may review your child’s student records. These records include:

- Attendance records,
- Test scores,
- Grades,
- Disciplinary records,
- Counseling records,
- Psychological records,
- Applications for admission,
- Health and immunization information,
- Other medical records,
- Teacher and school counselor evaluations,
- Reports of behavioral patterns,
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child, and
- Teaching materials and tests used in your child’s classroom.

A federal law, known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, affords parents and eligible students certain rights with respect to the student's education records. For purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is 18 or older or who is attending an institution of postsecondary education. These rights, as discussed in this section as well as at **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page \_\_\_\_, are:

- The right to inspect and review student records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access.
- The right to request an amendment to a student record the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of FERPA.
- The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information from the student's records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning failures by the school to comply with FERPA requirements. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-5901

Both federal FERPA and state laws safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and eligible students the right to inspect and review their student's records. In disclosing any personally identifiable information from a student's records, the district must verify the identity of the person, including contact information.

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, school 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 and superintendent's office, and online at [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net). 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, or humiliating conduct; offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property. Sexual harassment and gender-based harassment of a student by an employee or volunteer does not include necessary or permissible physical contact not reasonably construed as sexual in nature, such

as comforting a child with a hug or taking a child's hand. 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 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.

Gender-based harassment includes harassment based on a student's gender, expression by the student of stereotypical characteristics associated with the student's gender, or the student's failure to conform to stereotypical behavior related to gender. Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a student, regardless of the student's or the harasser's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, may include, but not be limited to, offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; threatening or intimidating conduct; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

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, the student's family members or members of the student's household; destroying property belonging to the student; threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship; threats to harm a student's current dating partner; 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.

Examples of retaliation may include rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights and annoyances. Any student who believes that he or she has experienced dating violence, discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should immediately report the problem to a teacher, school counselor, principal, or other district employee. The report may be made by the student's parent. See policy FFH (LOCAL) for the appropriate districts officials to whom to make a report. Upon receiving a report of prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH, the district will determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by that policy. If not, the district will refer to policy FFI to determine if the allegations, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct and would also be considered bullying as defined by law and policy FFI, an investigation of bullying will also be conducted. The district will promptly notify the parents of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct involving an adult associated with the district. In the event alleged prohibited conduct involves another student, the district will notify the parents of the student alleged to have experienced the prohibited conduct when the allegations, if proven, would constitute a violation as defined by policy FFH.

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

During the course of an investigation and when appropriate, the district will take interim action to address the alleged prohibited conduct. If the district's investigation indicates that prohibited conduct occurred, appropriate disciplinary action, and in some cases, corrective action, will be taken to address the conduct. The district may take disciplinary and corrective action even if the conduct that is the subject of the complaint was not unlawful. All involved parties will be notified of the outcome of the district investigation within the parameters and limits allowed under the Federal Educational Records and Privacy Act (FERPA). A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal in accordance with policy FNG (LOCAL).

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 may 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, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law in providing education services, activities, and programs, including CTE 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, including sexual harassment or gender-based harassment: Theresa Jennings, 903-639-3810
- ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Theresa Jennings, 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 school counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.

Reviewing the requirements and options for graduation with your child in middle school and again while your child is enrolled in high school courses that earn high school credit.

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, school counselor, or principal, please call the school office at **903-639-3881** for an appointment. The teacher will 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 (SHAC), assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction.

Serving on a committee to determine criteria to be used to evaluate the overall performance of the district and each campus in community and student engagement. For further information, please contact the campus principal.

Being aware of the school's ongoing bullying and harassment prevention efforts.

Contacting school officials if you are concerned with your child's emotional or mental well-being.

Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. 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. No changes will be made until after the first six weeks.

**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. As determined by the school and by state law.

**Displaying a Student's Artwork and Projects:** Teachers may display students' work, which may include personally identifiable student information, in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement. However, the district will seek parental consent before displaying students' artwork, special projects, photographs taken by students, original videos or voice recordings, and other original works on the district's website, a website affiliated or sponsored by the district, such as a campus or classroom website, and in district publications, which may include printed materials, videos, or other methods 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.

### **Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation**

A district employee will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without obtaining prior written parental consent. If a psychological examination, test, or treatment is required under state or federal law regarding requirements for special education or by the Texas Education Agency, the district will obtain the required reports.

### **Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student When Not Otherwise Permitted by Law**

As a parent, you may grant or deny any written request from the district to make a video or voice recording of your child. State law prohibits a video or voice recording without parental permission for the following circumstances:

- When it is to be used for school safety;
- When it relates to classroom instruction or a cocurricular or extracurricular activity; or
- When it relates to media coverage of the school.

The district will seek parental consent through a written request before making any video or voice recording of your child not otherwise permitted by law.

**“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, selling, or otherwise disclosing that information. Note that this does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.

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.

As a parent, you may inspect a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to your child.

**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.

**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 Limited or No Contact with a Student through Electronic Media:** Teachers and other approved employees are permitted by the district to communicate with students through the use of electronic media within the scope of the individual’s professional responsibilities. For example, a teacher may set up a social networking page for his or her class that has information related to class work, homework, and tests. As a parent, you are welcome to join or become a member of such a page.

An employee described above may also contact a student individually through electronic media to communicate about items such as homework or upcoming tests.

However, instant or text messages sent to an individual student are only allowed if a district employee with responsibility for an extracurricular activity needs to communicate with a student participating in the extracurricular activity.

If you prefer that your child not receive any one-to-one electronic communications from a district employee, please contact the principal.

**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.

#### **RIGHT OF ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS, CURRICULUM MATERIALS, AND DISTRICT RECORDS**

As a parent, you have a right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum, and to examine tests that have been administered to your child.

#### **Removing a Student from Class for Tutoring or Test Preparation Purposes:**

Based on informal observations, evaluative data such as grades earned on assignments or tests, or results from diagnostic assessments, a teacher may determine that a student is in need of additional targeted assistance in order for



the student to achieve mastery in state-developed essential knowledge and skills. The school will always attempt to provide tutoring and strategies for test taking in ways that prevent removal from other instruction as much as possible. In accordance with state law and policy EC, the school will not remove a student from a regularly scheduled class for remedial tutoring or test preparation for more than ten percent of the school days on which the class is offered, unless the student's parent consents to this removal. The school may also offer tutorial services, which students whose grades are below 70 will be required to attend.

**School Safety Transfers:** As a parent, you may:

- Request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the district to have been a victim of bullying as the term is defined by Education Code 37.0832. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. See the [superintendent OR principal] for information.
- Consult with district administrators if your child has been determined by the district to have engaged in bullying and the board decides to transfer your child to another classroom or campus. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus.

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. [See policy FDE.]

Request the transfer of your child to neighboring district if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether the assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault. If the victim does not wish to transfer, the district will transfer the assailant in accordance with policy FDE.

[See **Bullying** on page 12, policy FDB, and policy FFI.]

**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.

**Textbooks:** Textbooks, electronic textbooks, technological equipment, and other instructional materials 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 and loses the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until item is returned or damages paid for by the parent.

Any books must be covered by the student. 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.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY UNDER STATE AND FEDERAL LAW**

Hughes Springs ISD and each of its campuses are held to certain standards of accountability under state and federal law. A key component of the accountability requirements is the dissemination and publication of certain reports and information, which include:

- The Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) for the district, compiled by TEA, the state agency that oversees public education, based on academic factors and ratings;
- A School Report Card (SRC) for each campus in the district compiled by TEA based on academic factors and ratings;
- The district's financial management report, which will include the financial accountability rating assigned to the district by TEA;
- The performance ratings of the district's evaluation of community and student engagement using the indicators required by law; and
- Information compiled by TEA for the submission of a federal report card that is required by the No Child Left Behind Act.

Information about all of these can be found on the district's website at [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net). Hard copies of any reports are available upon request to the district's administration office.

TEA also maintains additional accountability and accreditation information at <http://www.texaschoolaccountabilitydashboard.org> and <http://www.tea.texas.gov>.

# Hughes Springs ISD

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## 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.

**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 and his or her parents are members of the committee.

**Attendance review committee** is sometimes responsible for reviewing a student's absences when the student's attendance drops below 90 percent, or in some cases 75 percent, of the days the class is offered. Under guidelines adopted by the board, the committee will determine whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences and whether the student needs to complete certain conditions to master the course and regain credit or a final grade lost because of absences.

**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 district wide 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.

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

**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.

**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.

**STAAR** is the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, the state's standardized achievement test, effective beginning with certain students for the 2011-2012 school year.

**STAAR Alternate** is an alternative state-mandated assessment designed for students with severe cognitive disabilities receiving special education services who meet the participation requirements, as determined by the student's ARD committee.

**STAAR Linguistically Accommodated (STAAR L)** is an alternative state-mandated assessment with linguistic accommodations designed for certain recent immigrant English language learners.

**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.

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

**APPENDIX II: Acknowledgment Form—Amendment**

My child and I have received a copy of the [school name] Student Handbook Amendment dated 08/01/2015.

Print name of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_