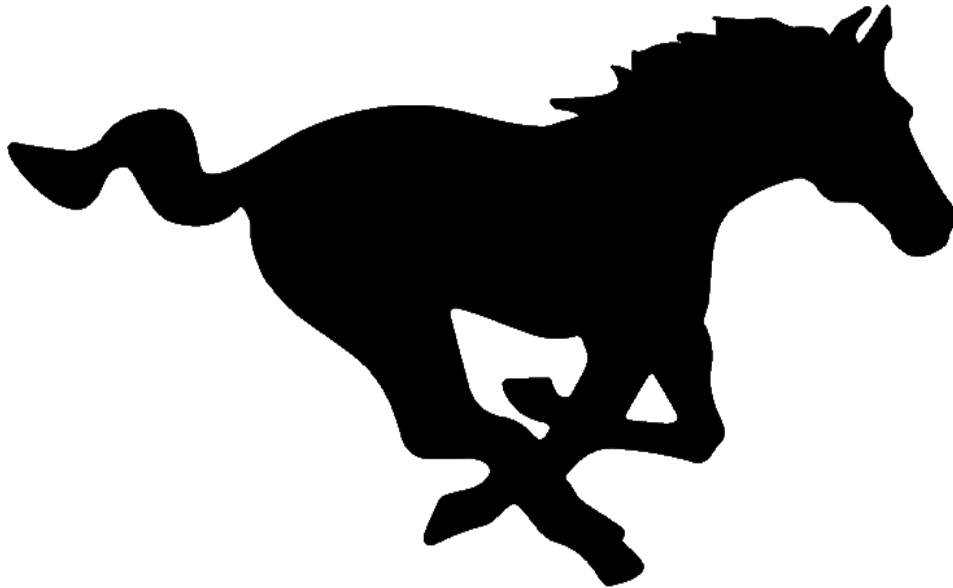


# **Hughes Springs Elementary Handbook 2021-2022**



If you have difficulty accessing the information in this document because of disability, please contact the district at [gardnerk@hsisd.net](mailto:gardnerk@hsisd.net).

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## Contents

<b>Hughes Springs Elementary Handbook 2021-2022</b> .....	0
<b>ELEMENTARY OFFICE STAFF</b> .....	9
<b>Preface Parents and Students:</b> .....	10
Accessibility .....	11
<b>School Schedule</b> .....	12
Student Drop Off and Pickup.....	12
Checking Out Your Child During the School Day.....	12
Visiting Your Child’s Classroom .....	12
Eating Lunch with Your Child .....	12
<b>Section One: Parental Rights</b> .....	12
Consent, Opt-Out, and Refusal Rights.....	13
Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation or Provide a Mental Health Care Service.....	13
Consent to Display a Student’s Original Works and Personal Information .....	13
Consent to Receive Parenting and Paternity Awareness Instruction if a Student is under Age.....	14
Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student when Not Already Permitted by Law .....	14
Prohibiting the Use of Corporal Punishment.....	14
Limiting Electronic Communications between Students and District Employees.....	15
Objecting to the Release of Directory Information.....	15
Participation in Third-Party Surveys .....	16
Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey, Analysis, or Evaluation .....	16
“Opting Out” of Participation in Other Types of Surveys or Screenings and the Disclosure of Personal Information.....	16
Removing a Student from Instruction or Excusing a Student from a Required Component of Instruction .....	17
Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence in Grades 3–12 .....	17
Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags.....	17
Religious or Moral Beliefs .....	18
Tutoring or Test Preparation .....	18
Right of Access to Student Records, Curriculum Materials, and District Records/Policies .....	18
Instructional Materials.....	18
Notices of Certain Student Misconduct to Noncustodial Parent.....	18
Participation in Federally Required, State-Mandated, and District Assessments.....	19
Student Records.....	19
Accessing Student Records .....	19

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records .....	19
Teacher and Staff Professional Qualifications .....	22
A Student with Exceptionalities or Special Circumstances .....	23
Children of Military Families .....	23
Parental Role in Certain Classroom and School Assignments .....	23
Multiple-Birth Siblings.....	23
Safety Transfers/Assignments .....	23
Student Use of a Service/Assistance Animal.....	24
A Student in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care) .....	24
A Student Who Is Homeless.....	25
A Student Who Has Learning Difficulties or Who Needs Special Education or Section 504 Services .....	25
Special Education Referrals.....	26
Contact Person for Special Education Referrals.....	26
Section 504 Referrals .....	26
Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals .....	27
Notification to Parents of Intervention Strategies for Learning Difficulties Provided to Students in General Education.....	27
A Student Who Receives Special Education Services with Other School-Aged Children in the Home .....	27
A Student Who Speaks a Primary Language Other than English.....	27
A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504.....	27
<b>Section Two: Other Important Information for Parents and Students.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Absences/Attendance.....</b>	<b>29</b>
Compulsory Attendance .....	29
Prekindergarten and Kindergarten.....	29
Ages 6–18.....	29
<b>Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>All Grade Levels .....</b>	<b>29</b>
Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance .....	30
All Grade Levels .....	30
Students with Disabilities.....	30
Ages 6–18.....	30
Attendance for Credit or Final Grade (All Grade Levels).....	31
<b>Official Attendance-Taking Time (All Grade Levels).....</b>	<b>31</b>

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

Documentation after an Absence (All Grade Levels)	31
Doctor's Note after an Absence for Illness (All Grade Levels)	32
Accountability under State and Federal Law (All Grade Levels)	32
Awards and Honors	32
Bullying	32
Celebrations (All Grade Levels)	34
Child Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children (All Grade Levels)	34
Warning Signs of Sexual Abuse	34
Warning Signs of Trafficking	35
Reporting and Responding to Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children	36
Further Resources on Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children	36
Communications—Automated (All Grade Levels)	37
Emergency	37
Nonemergency	37
Complaints and Concerns (All Grade Levels)	37
Conduct (All Grade Levels)	38
Applicability of School Rules	38
Campus Behavior Coordinator	38
Deliveries	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Disruption of School Operations	39
Social Events	40
Counseling	40
Academic Counseling	40
Elementary and Middle/Junior High School Grade Levels	40
Personal Counseling (All Grade Levels)	40
Kindergarten Acceleration	41
Students in Grades 1–5	41
Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (All Grade Levels)	41
Dating Violence	41
Discrimination	42
Harassment	42
Sexual Harassment and Gender-Based Harassment	42
Retaliation	43
Reporting Procedures	43
Investigation of Report	43
Discrimination	44

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

Distance Learning (All Grade Levels) .....	44
Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN) .....	44
Distribution of Literature, Published Materials, or Other Documents (All Grade Levels).....	44
School Materials.....	44
Nonschool Materials .....	45
From Students .....	45
From Others .....	45
Dress and Grooming (All Grade Levels) .....	46
Electronic Devices and Technology Resources (All Grade Levels) .....	47
Possession and Use of Personal Telecommunications Devices, Including Cell Phones, and Other Electronic Devices.....	47
Instructional Use of Personal Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices .....	47
Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources .....	48
Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources.....	48
English Learners (All Grade Levels).....	48
Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations (All Grade Levels).....	49
Standards of Behavior .....	49
Offices and Elections .....	50
Fees (All Grade Levels) .....	50
Fundraising (All Grade Levels).....	51
Gang-Free Zones (All Grade Levels).....	51
Gender-Based Harassment .....	51
Grading Guidelines (All Grade Levels) .....	51
Harassment .....	51
Grading Guidelines .....	52
Hazing (All Grade Levels) .....	53
Health—Physical and Mental.....	54
Illness (All Grade Levels).....	54
Immunization (All Grade Levels).....	54
Lice (All Grade Levels).....	55
Medicine at School (All Grade Levels) .....	56
Asthma and Severe Allergic Reactions .....	56
Steroids (Secondary Grade Levels Only).....	57
Mental Health Support (All Grade Levels) .....	57
Physical Activity Requirements.....	58
Elementary School.....	58

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

Physical Health Screenings / Examinations .....	58
Spinal Screening Program .....	58
Special Health Concerns (All Grade Levels) .....	58
Bacterial Meningitis (All Grade Levels) .....	58
Diabetes.....	58
Food Allergies (All Grade Levels).....	58
Seizures (All Grade Levels) .....	59
Tobacco and E-Cigarettes Prohibited (All Grade Levels and All Others on School Property)...	59
Health-Related Resources, Policies, and Procedures .....	59
Physical and Mental Health Resources (All Grade Levels) .....	59
Policies and Procedures that Promote Student Physical and Mental Health (All Grade Levels)	60
School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) (All Grade Levels).....	60
Student Wellness Policy/Wellness Plan (All Grade Levels) .....	60
<b>Homeless Students</b> .....	61
Law Enforcement Agencies (All Grade Levels).....	61
Questioning of Students.....	61
Students Taken into Custody .....	61
Notification of Law Violations.....	62
Leaving Campus (All Grade Levels).....	62
During Lunch.....	63
At Any Other Time during the School Day .....	63
Lost and Found (All Grade Levels).....	63
Makeup Work .....	63
Makeup Work Because of Absence (All Grade Levels).....	63
DAEP Makeup Work .....	64
Elementary and Middle/Junior High School Grade Levels .....	64
In-School Suspension (ISS) and Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) Makeup Work (All Grade Levels)	64
.....	64
Alternative Means to Receive Coursework .....	64
Opportunity to Complete Courses.....	64
Nondiscrimination Statement (All Grade Levels).....	64
Parent and Family Engagement (All Grade Levels) .....	65
Working Together.....	65
Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence (All Grade Levels).....	66
Prayer (All Grade Levels).....	66

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

Promotion and Retention .....	66
Elementary and Grade Levels.....	67
Release of Students from School .....	67
Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences (All Grade Levels).....	67
Retaliation.....	68
Safety (All Grade Levels).....	69
Accident Insurance .....	69
Preparedness Drills: Evacuation, Severe Weather, and Other Emergencies .....	69
Emergency Medical Treatment and Information .....	69
Emergency School Closing Information.....	69
Food and Nutrition Services (All Grade Levels).....	70
Vending Machines (All Grade Levels).....	70
Pest Management Plan (All Grade Levels) .....	70
Conduct Before and After School (All Grade Levels) .....	70
Library (All Grade Levels).....	71
Use of Hallways during Class Time (All Grade Levels).....	71
Use by Students Before and After School (All Grade Levels).....	71
Meetings of Noncurriculum-Related Groups (Secondary Grade Levels Only) .....	71
School-Sponsored Field Trips (All Grade Levels).....	71
Searches.....	72
Searches in General (All Grade Levels).....	72
District Property (All Grade Levels) .....	72
Metal Detectors (All Grade Levels).....	72
Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices (All Grade Levels).....	72
Trained Dogs (All Grade Levels).....	72
Sexual Harassment.....	73
Special Programs (All Grade Levels).....	73
Standardized Testing.....	73
STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness).....	73
Grades 3–8 .....	73
Students in Foster Care (All Grade Levels).....	73
Students Who are Homeless (All Grade Levels).....	73
Summer School (All Grade Levels) .....	74
Tardies (All Grade Levels) .....	74
Textbooks, Electronic Textbooks, Technological Equipment, and Other Instructional Materials (All Grade Levels).....	74

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

Transfers (All Grade Levels).....	74
Transportation (All Grade Levels).....	74
School-Sponsored Trips.....	74
Buses and Other School Vehicles .....	75
Vandalism (All Grade Levels).....	76
Video Cameras (All Grade Levels).....	76
Visitors to the School (All Grade Levels).....	76
General Visitors.....	76
Unauthorized Persons.....	77
Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students .....	77
Business, Civic, and Youth Groups .....	77
Volunteers (All Grade Levels) .....	77
Withdrawing from School (All Grade Levels) .....	77
<b>Glossary.....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Appendix: Freedom from Bullying Policy .....</b>	<b>81</b>
Student Welfare: Freedom from Bullying .....	81

**\*\*Some guidelines may change and be added at a later date as a supplement. These changes are the result of either a legislative, T.E.A., or a local district ruling. \*\***



# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## **Hughes Springs ISD Vision**

Our students respect themselves and others. They have very strong academic, social, and emotional skills allowing them to be happy and responsible citizens. These skills enable them to be productive and make a positive contribution to the District. Our students succeed because we care. We are a family where every person is important. Through open and honest communication, we unify the campus, classroom, and community to support students in their pursuit of success. As positive role models, we support learning through total participation in all areas of education. Our example leads to the success and achievement of this community.

## ***At Hughes Springs ISD 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.

## Mission Statement

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.

## **HUGHES SPRINGS I.S.D. BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Van Hall – President**

**Billy Willis – Vice President**

**Robyn Shelton – Secretary**

**Phillip Chapman**

**Robert Johnson**

**Scott Nelson**

**Deanna Putman**

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

### SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Sarah Dildine

### CURRICULUM DIRECTOR

Kristina Gardner

### BUSINESS MANAGER

Jalyn Setser

### HUMAN RESOURCE/PAYROLL DIRECTOR

Mary Trevino

### ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Kathie Blackburn

### ADMINISTRATION SECRETARY

Nita Clark

### TRANSPORTATION/MAINTENANCE DIRECTOR

David Hinerman

### CAFETERIA SERVICES

Elizabeth Martinez

### TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Doug Stewart-Tech Director

### HUGHES SPRINGS I.S.D. POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Wayne Mosley-Sec. Resource Officer

Jeff Pilgrim-Elem. Resource Officer

## ELEMENTARY OFFICE STAFF

Brenda Fincher-Principal

Diane Montgomery-Office Secretary

Charles Thomasson- Assistant Principal

Leah Reaves-PEIMS

Vanessa Murphy-Counselor

Jeff Pilgrim-Resource Officer

Jan Lambert-GT Director

Brandi Pittman-Nurse

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## Preface Parents and Students:

Welcome to the new school year!

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

The Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook is a general reference guide that is divided into two sections:

**Section One: Parental Rights** describes certain parental rights as specified in state or federal law.

**Section Two: Other Important Information for Parents and Students** is organized alphabetically by topic. Where applicable, the topics are further organized by grade level.

**Note:** Unless otherwise noted, the term “parent” refers to the parent, legal guardian, any person granted some other type of lawful control of a student, or any other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

The Student Handbook is designed to align with law, board-adopted policy, and the Student Code of Conduct, a board-adopted document intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. The Student Handbook is not meant to be a complete statement of all policies, procedures, or rules in any given circumstance.

In case of conflicts between board policy (including the Student Code of Conduct) and any Student Handbook provision, the district will follow board policy and the Student Code of Conduct.

Therefore, parents and students should become familiar with the Hughes Springs I.S.D. Student Code of Conduct. To review the Code of Conduct, visit the district’s website at [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net). State law requires that the Code of Conduct be prominently displayed or made available for review at each campus.

The Student Handbook is updated annually; however, policy adoption and revisions may occur throughout the year. The district encourages parents to stay informed of proposed policy changes by attending board meetings and reviewing newsletter and other communications explaining changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions. The district reserves the right to modify the Student Handbook at any time. Notice of revisions will be provided as is reasonably practical.

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

A hard copy of either the Student Code of Conduct or Student Handbook can be requested at the elementary office.

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

**Note:** References to board policy codes are included for ease of reference. The hard copy of the district's official policy manual is available for review in Hughes Springs I.S.D. administration office, and an unofficial electronic copy is available at [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net).

The policy manual includes:

- Legally referenced (LEGAL) policies that contain provisions from federal and state laws and regulations, case law, and other legal authorities that provide the legal framework for school districts.
- Board-adopted (LOCAL) policies that articulate the board's choices and values regarding district practices.

For questions about the material in this handbook, please contact elementary principal Brenda Fincher at 903-639-3880.

Complete and return to the student's campus the following electronic forms (provided in the forms packet distributed at the beginning of the year or upon enrollment):

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

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

**Note:** References to board policy codes are included for ease of reference. The hard copy of the district's official policy manual is available for review in (the district administration office), and an unofficial electronic copy is available at [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net).

### Accessibility

If you have difficulty accessing this handbook because of a disability, please contact the Administration office, [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net), or 903-639-3802.

**\*\*Some guidelines may change throughout the summer and year and be added at a later date as a supplement. These changes are the result of either a legislative, T.E.A., or a local district ruling. \*\***

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## School Schedule

First Bell 7:45

Tardy Bell 7:50

Dismissal 3:30

If your child is tardy do not drop them off. You will need to remain in your car and call the number listed outside 903-639-3881. PLEASE NOTE: Due to limited staff available after classes start, you will have to wait until someone comes outside to get your child. Remain in your vehicle with your child.

## Student Drop Off and Pickup

Detailed maps are available that show drop off and pickup locations by grade. Please check carefully where your child needs to be dropped off and where your child needs to be picked up. Students eating breakfast need to be dropped off at 7:30 at a spot designated on the map in front of the cafeteria. PARENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO WALK UP TO PICKUP STUDENTS. Please remain in your vehicle and go through the proper line to help ensure student safety.

Students must not be dropped off before 7:30am. Please be sure you child is picked up in a timely manner upon dismissal.

## Checking Out Your Child During the School Day

We ask that you check your child out by 2:45pm, if you need them before the regular dismissal of the school day.

## Visiting Your Child's Classroom

Classroom visits will be limited to school designated days/events-class parties, etc.

## Eating Lunch with Your Child

Visitors to the cafeteria during breakfast or lunch will be limited to school designated special occasions-such as Grandparents Day Luncheon and Thanksgiving Luncheon.

## Section One: Parental Rights

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

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## Consent, Opt-Out, and Refusal Rights

### Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation or Provide a Mental Health Care Service

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

The district will not provide a mental health care service to a student except as permitted by law.

The district has established procedures for providing a parent with a recommendation for an intervention for a student with early warning signs of mental health concerns or substance abuse or who has been identified as at risk of attempting suicide. The district's mental health liaison will notify the student's parent within a reasonable amount of time after the liaison learns that a student has displayed early warning signs and a possible need for intervention and provide information about available counseling options.

- Referral by campus counselor
- Parent informed
- Parent/teacher information on student
- Collect academic/discipline data
- Special Ed Director approval
- Diagnostician will contact parent for written permission for evaluation
- Will proceed after written permission and contact psychologist.

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

The mental health liaison, Vanessa Murphy, can be reached at [murphyv@hsisd.net](mailto:murphyv@hsisd.net) or 903-639-3857 and can provide further information regarding these procedures as well as educational materials on identifying risk factors, accessing resources for treatment or support on- and off-campus, and accessing available student accommodations provided on campus.

For further information, see **Mental Health Support**.

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

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

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

- Artwork,
- Special projects
- Photographs,
- Original videos or voice recordings, and

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

- Other original works.

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

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

A student under age 14 must have parental permission to participate in the district's parenting and paternity awareness program. This program was developed by the Office of the Texas Attorney General and the State Board of Education (SBOE) to be incorporated into health education classes.

### **Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student when Not Already Permitted by Law**

State law permits the school to make a video or voice recording without parental permission when it:

- Is to be used for school safety,
- Relates to classroom instruction or a cocurricular or extracurricular activity,
- Relates to media coverage of the school, or
- Relates to the promotion of student safety as provided by law for a student receiving special education services in certain settings.

In other circumstances, the district will seek written parental consent before making a video or voice recording of a student.

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

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

However, in accordance with law, the district may not administer corporal punishment if a student's parent submits a signed, written statement prohibiting its use.

A parent who does not want corporal punishment administered to his or her child must fill out the electronic form located in family access online Or submit a written statement to the campus principal stating this decision. This signed statement must be submitted each school year. A parent may revoke this prohibition at any time during the school year by providing a signed statement to the campus principal.

#### **Note:**

- District personnel may use discipline methods other than corporal punishment if a parent requests that corporal punishment not be used.
- If the district knows that a student is in temporary or permanent custody of the state (through foster care, kinship care, or other arrangements), corporal punishment will not be administered, even when the student's caregiver or caseworker has not submitted a signed statement prohibiting its use.

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

### Limiting Electronic Communications between Students and District Employees

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

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

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

The employee is required to include the student's parent as a recipient on all text messages.

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

### Objecting to the Release of Directory Information

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

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

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

Directory information will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

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

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

As allowed by state law, the district has identified two directory information lists—one for school-sponsored purposes and a second for all other requests. For district publications and announcements, the district has designated the following as directory information: student



## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

name; address; telephone listing; electronic mail address; photograph; date and place of birth; major field of study; degrees, honors, and awards received; dates of attendance; grade level; most recent educational institution attended; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; enrollment status; and student identifiers that cannot be used alone to gain access to electronic education records

If a parent does not object to the use of his or her child's information for these school-sponsored purposes, the school will not ask permission each time the district wants to use the information for these purposes.

For all other purposes, the district has identified the following as directory information: child's name, address, telephone listing, email address, photograph, date and place of birth, degrees, honors, and awards received, dates of attendance, grade level, most recent school previously attended, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height, and enrollment status. If a parent does not object to the use of the student's information for these purposes, the school **must** release this information when requested by an outside entity or individual.

### Participation in Third-Party Surveys

#### ***Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey, Analysis, or Evaluation***

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) mandates that a student 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;
- Sex behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship;
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parent; or
- Income, except when the information is required by law and will be used to determine the student's eligibility for a program.

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

#### ***“Opting Out” of Participation in Other Types of Surveys or Screenings and the Disclosure of Personal Information***

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

- Any survey concerning protected information, regardless of funding.

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

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

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

A parent may inspect:

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

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

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

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

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

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

- A parent provides a written statement requesting that his or her child be excused,
- The district determines that the student has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or
- A parent is a representative of a foreign government to whom the U.S. government extends diplomatic immunity.

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

#### **Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags**

A parent may request that his or her child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be made in writing.

State law, however, requires that all students participate in one minute of silence following recitation of the pledges.

[See **Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence** on page 66 and policy EC(LEGAL) for more information.]

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

### Religious or Moral Beliefs

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

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

### Tutoring or Test Preparation

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

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

The 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, without parental permission, districts are prohibited from removing a student from a regularly scheduled class for remedial tutoring or test preparation for more than ten percent of the days the class is offered.

Under state law, students with grades below 70 for a reporting period are required to attend tutorial services—if the district offers these services.

[For questions about school-provided tutoring programs contact the student's teacher, and see policies EC and EHBC.]

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

#### Instructional Materials

A parent has the right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum, and to examine tests that have been administered.

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

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

#### Notices of Certain Student Misconduct to Noncustodial Parent

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

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

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

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

## Student Records

### *Accessing Student Records*

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

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

### *Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records*

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

For purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is anyone age 18 or older or who attends a postsecondary educational institution. These rights, as discussed here and at **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 15, are the right to:

- Inspect and review student records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access;
- Request an amendment to a student record the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of FERPA;

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

- Provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information from the student's records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent; and
- File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning failures by the school to comply with FERPA requirements. The office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20202

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

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

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

Inspection and release of student records is restricted to an eligible student or a student's parent—whether married, separated, or divorced—unless the school receives a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student's education records.

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

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

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

FERPA permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's education records without written consent of the parent or eligible student:

- When school officials have what federal law refers to as a "legitimate educational interest" in a student's records.
  - Legitimate educational interest may include:
    - Working with the student;
    - Considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities;
    - Compiling statistical data;
    - Reviewing an educational record to fulfill the official's professional responsibility; or
    - Investigating or evaluating programs.

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

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

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

- To authorized representatives of various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers, the U.S. Comptroller General's office, the U.S. Attorney General's office, the U.S. Secretary of Education, the Texas Education Agency, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture's office, and Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers or, in certain cases, other child welfare representatives.
- To individuals or entities granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- To another school, district/system, or postsecondary educational institution to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which the student already is enrolled.
- In connection with financial aid for which a student has applied or has received.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; administer student aid programs; or improve instruction.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- When the district discloses directory information-designated details. [To prohibit this disclosure, see **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 15.]

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

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

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

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

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

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

The address of the superintendent's office is 871 Taylor Street, Hughes Springs, Texas.

The address of the principal's office is: 809 Russell Street, Hughes Springs, Texas.

A parent or eligible student may inspect the student's records and request a correction or amendment if the records are considered inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights.

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

Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student's grade in a course or on an examination is handled through the complaint process found in policy FNG(LOCAL). A grade issued by a teacher can be changed only if, as determined by the board of trustees, the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or inconsistent with the district's grading guidelines. [See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 67, **Complaints and Concerns** on page 37, and Finality of Grades at policy FNG(LEGAL).]

The district's student records policy is found at policy FL(LEGAL) and (LOCAL) and is available at the principal's or superintendent's office and the website, [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net).

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

### Teacher and Staff Professional Qualifications

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

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

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

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## A Student with Exceptionalities or Special Circumstances

### Children of Military Families

The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children entitles children of military families to flexibility regarding certain district and state requirements, including:

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

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

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

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

Additional information may be found at [Military Family Resources at the Texas Education Agency](#).

### Parental Role in Certain Classroom and School Assignments

#### *Multiple-Birth Siblings*

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

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

#### *Safety Transfers/Assignments*

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

The board may transfer a student who has engaged in bullying to another classroom.

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

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



## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

[See policy FDE for more information.]

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

### **Student Use of a Service/Assistance Animal**

A parent of a student who uses a service/assistance animal because of the student's disability must submit a written request to the principal before bringing the service/assistance animal on campus. The district will try to accommodate a request as soon as possible but will do so within ten district business days.

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

A student in the conservatorship (custody) of the state who enrolls in the district after the beginning of the school year will be allowed credit-by-examination opportunities at any point during the year.

The district will grant partial course credit by semester when the student only passes one semester of a two-semester course

A student in the conservatorship of the state who is moved outside the district's or school's attendance boundaries—or who is initially placed in the conservatorship of the state and moved outside the district's or school's boundaries—is entitled to remain at the school the student was attending prior to the placement or move until the student reaches the highest grade level at that particular school.

If a student in grade 11 or 12 transfers to another district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, the student can request a diploma from the previous district if the student meets its graduation criteria.

For a student in the conservatorship of the state who is eligible for a tuition and fee exemption under state law and likely to be in care on the day preceding the student's 18th birthday, the district will:

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

[See **A Student in Foster Care** on page 73.]

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## **A Student Who Is Homeless**

Children who are homeless will be provided flexibility regarding certain district provisions, including:

- Proof of residency requirements;
- Immunization requirements;
- Educational program placement (if the student is unable to provide previous academic records or misses an application deadline during a period of homelessness);
- Credit-by-examination opportunities at any point during the year (if the student enrolled in the district after the beginning of the school year), per State Board of Education (SBOE) rules;
- Awarding partial credit when a student passes only one semester of a two-semester course;
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities; and
- Graduation requirements.

Federal law allows a student who is homeless to remain enrolled in the “school of origin” or to enroll in a new school in the attendance area where the student is currently residing.

If a student who is homeless in grade 11 or 12 transfers to another district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, state law allows the student to request a diploma from the previous district if the student meets the criteria to graduate from the previous district.

A student or parent who is dissatisfied by the district’s eligibility, school selection, or enrollment decision may appeal through policy FNG(LOCAL). The district will expedite local timelines, when possible, for prompt dispute resolution.

[See **Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration, Course Credit, and Students who are Homeless** on page 73.]

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

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

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

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

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

### ***Special Education Referrals***

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

**Note:** A request for a special education evaluation may be made verbally; it does not need to be made in writing. Districts must still comply with all federal prior-written notices and procedural safeguard requirements as well as the requirements for identifying, locating, and evaluating children who are suspected of having a disability and in need of special education. However, a verbal request does not require the district to respond within the 15 school-day timeline.

If the district decides to evaluate the student, it must complete the student's initial evaluation and evaluation report no later than 45 school days from the day it receives a parent's written consent. However, if the student is absent from school during the evaluation period for three or more school days, the evaluation period will be extended by the number of school days equal to the number of school days that the student is absent.

There is an **exception** to the 45-school-day timeline. If the district receives a parent's consent for the initial evaluation at least 35 but less than 45 school days before the last instructional day of the school year, it must complete the written report and provide a copy of the report to the parent by June 30 of that year. However, if the student is absent from school for three or more days during the evaluation period, the June 30 due date no longer applies. Instead, the general timeline of 45 school days plus extensions for absences of three or more days will apply.

Upon completing the evaluation, the district must give the parent a copy of the evaluation report at no cost.

Additional information regarding special education is available from the school district in a companion document titled *Parent's Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process*.

### ***Contact Person for Special Education Referrals***

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for special education services is Brenda Fincher at 903-639-3880.

### ***Section 504 Referrals***

Each school district must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of students in the district's Section 504 program. Districts must also implement a system of procedural safeguards that includes:

- Notice,
- An opportunity for a parent or guardian to examine relevant records,
- An impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parent or guardian and representation by counsel, and
- A review procedure.

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

### **Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals**

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for Section 504 services is Vanessa Murphy at 903-639-3857.

[See **A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504** on page 27.]

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

- [Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process](#)
- [Partners Resource Network](#)
- [Special Education Information Center](#)
- [Texas Project First](#)

### **Notification to Parents of Intervention Strategies for Learning Difficulties Provided to Students in General Education**

In accordance with state law, the district will annually notify parents if their child receives assistance for learning difficulties. Details of such assistance can include intervention strategies. This notice is not intended for those students already enrolled in a special education program.

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

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

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

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

### **A Student Who Speaks a Primary Language Other than English**

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

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

[See **English Learners** on page 48 and **Special Programs** on page 73.]

### **A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504**

A student with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, as defined by law—and who does not otherwise qualify for special education services—may qualify for protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

Section 504 is a federal law designed to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

When an evaluation is requested, a committee will be formed to determine whether the student needs services and supports under Section 504 in order to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE), as defined in federal law.

[See **A Student Who Has Learning Difficulties or Who Needs Special Education or Section 504 Services** on page 25 and policy FB for more information.]

## Section Two: Other Important Information for Parents and Students

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

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

Parents and children should take a moment together to become familiar with the issues addressed in this section. For guidance on a particular topic, please contact Brenda Fincher at 903-639-3880.

### Absences/Attendance

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

Two important state laws—one dealing with compulsory attendance and the other with how attendance affects the award of a student's final grade or course credit—are discussed below.

### Compulsory Attendance

#### *Prekindergarten and Kindergarten*

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

#### *Ages 6–18*

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

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

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

### Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance

#### *All Grade Levels*

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for the following activities and events, as long as the student makes up all work:

- Religious holy days;
- Required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining U.S. citizenship;
- Documented health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences related to autism services, if the student returns to school on the same day of the appointment and brings a note from the health-care provider;

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

- For students in the conservatorship of the state,
  - An activity required under a court-ordered service plan; or
  - Any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the student's participation in the activity outside of school hours.

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

### **Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance**

#### ***All Grade Levels***

School employees must investigate and report violations of the compulsory attendance law.

A student absent without permission from school, any class, any required special program, or any required tutorial will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

#### ***Students with Disabilities***

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

#### ***Ages 6–18***

When a student ages 6–18 incurs three or more unexcused absences within a four-week period, the law requires the school to send notice to the parent.

The notice will:

- Remind the parent of his or her duty to monitor the student's attendance and require the student to attend school;
- Request a conference between school administrators and the parent; and
- Inform the parent that the district will initiate truancy prevention measures, including a behavior improvement plan, school-based community service, referrals to counseling or other social services, or other appropriate measures.

The truancy prevention facilitator for the elementary is Jeff Pilgrim. For any questions about student absences, parents should contact the facilitator or any other campus administrator.

A court of law may impose penalties against the parent if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. The district may file a complaint against the parent if the student incurs ten or more unexcused absences within a six-month period in the same school year.

If a student age 12–18 incurs ten or more unexcused absences within a six-month period in the same school year, the district, in most circumstances, will refer the student to truancy court.

[See policies FEA(LEGAL) and FED(LEGAL) for more information.]

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

### Attendance for Credit or Final Grade (All Grade Levels)

To receive credit or a final grade in a class, a student must attend the class at least 90 percent of the days it is offered. A student who attends fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered will be referred to the attendance review committee. The committee will determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit or a final grade. [See policy FEC for more information.]

All absences, excused or unexcused, may be held against a student's attendance requirement. To determine whether there were extenuating circumstances for any absences, the attendance committee will use the following guidelines:

- If makeup work is completed, absences listed under **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance** on page 29 will be considered extenuating circumstances.
- A transfer or migrant student incurs absences only after he or she has enrolled in the district.
- Absences incurred due to the student's participation in board-approved extracurricular activities will be considered by the attendance committee as extenuating circumstances if the student makes up the work missed in each class.
- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student's absences
- The committee will consider whether the student or student's parent had any control over the absences.
- The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.
- The student or parent will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and discuss ways to earn or regain credit or a final grade.

The student or parent may appeal the committee's decision to the board by following policy FNG(LOCAL).

### Official Attendance-Taking Time (All Grade Levels)

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

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

### Documentation after an Absence (All Grade Levels)

A parent must provide an explanation for any absence upon the student's arrival or return to school. The student must submit a note signed by the parent. The campus may accept a phone call from the parent but reserves the right to require a written note.

A note signed by the student will not be accepted unless the student is age 18 or older or is an emancipated minor under state law.

The campus will document in its attendance records whether the absence is excused or unexcused.



## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

**Note:** The district is not required to excuse any absence, even if the parent provides a note explaining the absence, unless the absence is an exemption under compulsory attendance laws.

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

Within 2 days of returning to school, a student absent for more than 3 consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the absence. Otherwise, the absence may be considered unexcused and in violation of compulsory attendance laws.

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 absence to determine whether an absence will be excused or unexcused.

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

### Accountability under State and Federal Law (All Grade Levels)

Hughes Springs I.S.D. and each of its campuses are held to certain standards of accountability under state and federal law. A key component of accountability is the dissemination and publication of certain reports and information, including:

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

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

TEA maintains additional accountability and accreditation information at [TEA Performance Reporting Division](#) and the [TEA homepage](#).

### Awards and Honors

Students with perfect attendance, Model Mustangs and A, AB honor roll will be recognized each 9 weeks. Model Mustangs are selected by classroom teacher/teachers. Model Mustangs demonstrate citizenship, leadership, awesome attitudes, self-respect and success.

### Bullying

Bullying is defined in state law as a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that:

- Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property;

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student;
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school; or
- Infringes on the rights of the victim at school.

Bullying includes cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is defined in state law as bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device, including through the use of:

- A cellular or other type of telephone
- A computer
- A camera
- Electronic mail
- Instant messaging
- Text messaging
- A social media application
- An internet website
- Any other internet-based communication tool.

Bullying is prohibited by the district and could include:

- Hazing
- Threats
- Taunting
- Teasing
- Confinement
- Assault
- Demands for money
- Destruction of property
- Theft of valued possessions
- Name-calling
- Rumor-spreading
- Ostracism.

If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying or witnesses the bullying of another student, the student or parent should notify a teacher, school counselor, principal, or another district employee as soon as possible. Procedures for reporting allegations of bullying may be found on the district's website.

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

A student may anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying by going to the website, [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net), click students, and then click Bullying Report Form.

The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying and related misconduct. The district will also provide notice to the parent of the alleged victim and the parent of the student alleged to have engaged in bullying.

If an investigation determines that bullying occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action and may, in certain circumstances, notify law enforcement. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying.

Available counseling options will be provided to the affected individuals, including any student who witnessed the bullying.

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

Upon recommendation of the administration, the board may transfer a student found to have engaged in bullying to another classroom at the campus. In consultation with the student's parent, the student may also be transferred to another campus in the district.

The parent of a student who has been determined to be a victim of bullying may request that the student be transferred to another classroom or campus within the district. [See **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 23.]

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

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

[See **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 23, **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 41, **Hazing** on page 53, policy FFI, the district's Student Code of Conduct, and the district improvement plan, a copy of which can be viewed in the campus office.

### **Celebrations (All Grade Levels)**

The school will communicate information about class parties & food at the appropriate time.

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

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse, trafficking, and other maltreatment of children, which may be accessed at [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net). Trafficking includes both sex and labor trafficking.

### **Warning Signs of Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. A person who compels or encourages a child to engage in sexual conduct commits abuse. It is illegal to make or possess child pornography or to display such material to a child.

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, to report the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

A child who has been or is being sexually abused may exhibit physical, behavioral, or emotional warning signs, including:

- Difficulty sitting or walking, pain in the genital areas, and claims of stomachaches and headaches;
- Verbal references or pretend games of sexual activity between adults and children, fear of being alone with adults of a particular gender, or sexually suggestive behavior; or
- Withdrawal, depression, sleeping and eating disorders, and problems in school.

Be aware that children and adolescents who have experienced dating violence may show similar physical, behavioral, and emotional warning signs. [See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 41.]

### Warning Signs of Trafficking

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

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

Possible warning signs of sexual trafficking in children include:

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

Additional warning signs of labor trafficking in children include:

- Being unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips;
- Being employed but not having a school-authorized work permit;

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

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

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

Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused, trafficked, or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, to report the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

A child who has experienced sexual abuse or any other type of abuse or neglect should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Children may be more reluctant to disclose sexual abuse than physical abuse and neglect and may only disclose sexual abuse indirectly. As a parent or trusted adult, it is important to be calm and comforting if your child or another child confides in you. Reassure the child that he or she did the right thing by telling you.

If your child is a victim of sexual abuse, trafficking, or other maltreatment, the school counselor or principal will provide information on counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs.

To find out what services may be available in your county, see [Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Programs Available in Your County](#).

Reports of abuse, trafficking, or neglect may be made to the CPS division of the DFPS at 1-800-252-5400 or on the web at [Texas Abuse Hotline Website](#).

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

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

- [Child Welfare Information Gateway Factsheet](#)
- [KidsHealth, For Parents, Child Abuse](#)
- [Office of the Texas Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Team](#)
- [Human Trafficking of School-aged Children](#)
- [Child Sexual Abuse: A Parental Guide from the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault](#)
- [National Center of Safe Supportive Learning Environments: Child Labor Trafficking](#)

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## Communications—Automated (All Grade Levels)

### Emergency

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

[See **Safety** on page 69 for information regarding contact with parents during an emergency situation.]

### Nonemergency

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

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

Standard messaging rates of your wireless phone carrier may apply.

If you have specific requests or needs related to how the district contacts you, please contact your child's principal. [See **Safety** on page 69 for information regarding contact with parents during an emergency.]

## Complaints and Concerns (All Grade Levels)

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed informally by a phone call or a conference with the teacher or principal.

Student or parent concerns should be addressed in the following order:

1. Conference with the teacher.
2. Conference with the principal.
3. Conference with the superintendent.
4. Conference with the Board of Trustees.

For those complaints and concerns that cannot be resolved informally, the board has adopted a Student and Parent Complaints/Grievances policy FNG(LOCAL). This policy can be viewed in the district's policy manual, available online at [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net). The complaint forms can be accessed online at [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net) or at the principal's or superintendent's office.

- To file a formal complaint a parent or student should complete and submit the complaint form.
- In general, the written complaint form should be completed and submitted to the campus principal in a timely manner.
- If the concern is not resolved, a parent or student may request a conference with the superintendent.

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

- If the concern is still unresolved, the district provides a process for parents and students to appeal to the board of trustees.

### **Setting Up a Conference with a Principal, Counselor, Teacher or Other School Employee**

If you need to have a conference or speak with an HSISD employee, we ask that you please call ahead of time and schedule an appointment. You can also email the employee or campus principal to schedule an appointment.

We do understand at times there are emergency situations, and an appointment is not possible. However, those situations are few and far between.

### **Conduct (All Grade Levels)**

#### **Applicability of School Rules**

The board has adopted a Student Code of Conduct that defines standards of acceptable behavior—both on and off campus, as well as on district vehicles—and outlines consequences for violation of these standards. The district has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards set out in the Student Code of Conduct, as well as campus and classroom rules.

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

#### **Campus Behavior Coordinator**

Each campus has a campus behavior coordinator to apply discipline management techniques and administer consequences for certain student misconduct, as well as provide a point of contact for student misconduct. The contact information for the campus behavior coordinator is listed below:

*Charles Thomasson*

*ThomassonC@hsisd.net*

*903-639-3896*

#### **Forgotten Items and Deliveries**

Apart from glasses and medication, we can provide students with any item they may have left at home or provide accommodations to help them get through the day without that item.

**Therefore, we will not accept forgotten items, as these are not “essential to school operations,” and we are trying to limit visitors to our buildings to decrease the disruptions to student’s instructional time.**

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

If your child forgets his/her lunch, just call the office, and let us know. We will make sure he/she has something to eat. We will not accept food deliveries. See the "Cafeteria" section for more information.

We can make it work for one day without the item your child forgot!

If your child forgets glasses or medication, just call the office.

The office will not accept deliveries of food or gift items.

### Disruption of School Operations

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

- Interference with the movement of people at an exit, entrance, or hallway of a district building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interference with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.
- Use of force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.
- Interference with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to district property.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving district property without authorization from an administrator.

Disruption of classes or other school activities while on or within 500 feet of district property includes:

- Making loud noises;
- Trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity; and
- Entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with loud or profane language or any misconduct.

Interference with the transportation of students in vehicles owned or operated by the district is also considered a disruption.



# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## Social Events

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

A student attending a social event will be asked to sign out when leaving before the end of the event and will not be readmitted.

A parent interested in serving as a chaperone for any school social events should contact the campus principal.

## Counseling

The district has a comprehensive school counseling program that includes:

- A guidance curriculum to help students develop their full educational potential, including the student's interests and career objectives;
- A responsive services component to intervene on behalf of any student whose immediate personal concerns or problems put the student's continued educational, career, personal, or social development at risk;
- An individual planning system to guide a student as the student plans, monitors, and manages the student's own educational, career, personal, and social development; and
- Systems to support the efforts of teachers, staff, parents, and other members of the community in promoting the educational, career, personal, and social development of students.

The district will make a preview of the program, including all materials and curriculum, available to parents to review during school hours.

## Academic Counseling

### *Elementary and Middle/Junior High School Grade Levels*

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

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

### **Personal Counseling (All Grade Levels)**

The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal, social, and family concerns, including emotional or mental health issues and substance abuse. A student who wishes to meet with the school counselor should contact Vanessa Murphy at 903-639-3857. As a parent, if you are concerned about your child's mental or emotional health, please speak with the school counselor for a list of resources that may be of assistance.

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

[See **Mental Health Support** on page 57, and **Child Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children and Dating Violence** on page 34.]

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## Kindergarten Acceleration

### Students in Grades 1–5

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Dating Violence

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

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

- Physical or sexual assaults;
- Name-calling;
- Put-downs;
- Threats to hurt the student, the student's family members, or members of the student's household;
- Destroying property belonging to the student;
- Threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship;
- Threats to harm a student's past or current dating partner;
- Attempts to isolate the student from friends and family;
- Stalking; or

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

- Encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

### **Discrimination**

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

### **Harassment**

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

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

- Offensive or derogatory language directed at a person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation;
- Threatening, intimidating, or humiliating conduct;
- Offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors;
- Physical aggression or assault;
- Graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or
- Other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

### **Sexual Harassment and Gender-Based Harassment**

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

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

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

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

Gender-based harassment includes physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on a student's gender, the student's expression of characteristics perceived as stereotypical for the student's gender, or the student's failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity.

Gender-based harassment can occur regardless of the student's or the harasser's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a student may include, but are not limited to:

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

- Offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors;
- Physical aggression or assault;
- Threatening or intimidating conduct; or
- Other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

### Retaliation

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

Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.

### Reporting Procedures

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

Upon receiving a report, the district will determine whether the allegations, if proven, constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH. If not, the district will refer to policy FFI to determine whether the allegations, if proven, constitute bullying, as defined by law and policy FFI. If the alleged prohibited conduct also meets the statutory and policy definitions for bullying, an investigation of bullying will also be conducted. [See **Bullying**]

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

### Investigation of Report

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

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

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

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

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

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

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

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

### **Discrimination**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 41.]

### **Distance Learning (All Grade Levels)**

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

If a student wishes to enroll in a correspondence course or a distance learning course that is not provided through the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN), as described below, to earn credit in a course or subject, the student must receive permission from the principal prior to enrolling in the course or subject. If the student does not receive prior approval, the district may not recognize and apply the course or subject toward graduation requirements or subject mastery.

### **Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN)**

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

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

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

A copy of policy EHDE will be distributed to parents of middle and high school students at least once each year. If you do not receive a copy or have questions about this policy, please contact the counselor.

### **Distribution of Literature, Published Materials, or Other Documents (All Grade Levels)**

#### **School Materials**

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

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

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## **Nonschool Materials**

### ***From Students***

Students must obtain prior approval from the campus principal before selling, posting, circulating, or distributing copies of written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school. To be considered, any nonschool material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization. Approval will be granted or denied within two school days.

The campus principal will designate the location for approved nonschool materials to be placed for voluntary viewing or collection by students. [See policy FNAA for more information.]

A student may appeal a decision in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL). Any student who sells, posts, circulates, or distributes nonschool material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without approval will be removed.

[See policy FNG(LOCAL) for student complaint procedures.]

### ***From Others***

No person or group will sell, circulate, distribute, or post on any district premises written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials that is not sponsored by the district or by a district-affiliated school-support organization, except as permitted by policy GKDA.

To be considered for distribution, any nonschool material must meet the limitations on content established in the policy, include the name of the sponsoring person or organization, and be submitted to the superintendent at Hughes Springs I.S.D. administrative office of nonschool literature from community members for prior review. The superintendent listed at GKDA(LOCAL) as responsible for prior review of nonschool literature from community members will approve or reject the materials within two school days of the time the materials are received. The requestor may appeal a rejection in accordance with the appropriate district complaint policy. [See policies DGBA or GF for more information.]

The campus principal shall designate times, locations, and means by which nonschool literature that is appropriate for distribution, as provided in this policy, may be made available or distributed to students or others at the principal's campus.

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

Prior review will not be required for:

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

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

All nonschool materials distributed under these circumstances must be removed from district property immediately following the event at which the materials are distributed.

### Dress and Grooming (All Grade Levels)

The district's dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, prevent disruption, and minimize safety hazards. Students and parents may determine a student's personal dress and grooming standards, if they comply with the following:

#### Overall Appearance

- Students should reflect good taste and judgment in the selection of their school wardrobe. Clothing should be neat, simple, not distracting, and fit appropriately.

#### PLEASE NOTE:

- Clothing, jewelry, and personal items (such as backpacks, bags, or purses) that are offensive or disruptive with vulgar, suggestive words or pictures, sexual innuendos, drugs, alcohol, gangs, specific race or power, violence, weapons, tobacco, or any illegal activities, whether expressed or implied, is not acceptable.

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
- 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

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

If the principal determines that a student's grooming or clothing violates the school's dress code, the student will be given an opportunity to correct the problem at school. If not corrected, the student may be assigned to in-school suspension for the remainder of the day, until the problem is corrected, or until a parent or designee brings an acceptable change of clothing to the school. Repeated offenses may result in more serious disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Electronic Devices and Technology Resources (All Grade Levels)**

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

The district permits students to possess personal cell phones for safety purposes; however, these devices must remain turned off and in their backpack during the instructional day, including during all testing, unless they are being used for approved instructional purposes. [For graphing calculator applications on computing devices, see **Textbooks, Electronic Textbooks, Technological Equipment, and Other Instructional Materials** on page 74.]

A student must have approval to possess other personal telecommunications devices such as laptops, tablets, or other portable computers.

Students are not permitted to possess or use personal electronic devices including smart watches with data 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.

The use of cell phones or any device capable of capturing images is strictly prohibited in locker rooms or restroom areas while at school or at a school-related or school-sponsored event.

If a student uses a telecommunications device without authorization during the school day, the device will be confiscated. The student or parent may pick up the confiscated telecommunications device from the principal's office for a fee of \$15.

Confiscated telecommunications devices that are not retrieved by the student or the student's parent will be disposed of after the notice required by law. [See policy FNCE for more information.]

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal telecommunications device may be searched by authorized personnel. [See **Searches** on page 72 and policy FNF for more information.]

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

#### **Instructional Use of Personal Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices**

Students must obtain prior approval to use personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional purposes while on campus. Students must also sign a user agreement that contains applicable rules for use (separate from this handbook).



## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

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

### Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources

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

### Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources

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

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

This type of behavior may constitute bullying or harassment, as well as impede future endeavors of a student. We encourage parents to review with their child the ["Before You Text" Sexting Prevention Course](#), a state-developed program that addresses the consequences of sexting.

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

### English Learners (All Grade Levels)

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

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

The LPAC will also determine whether certain accommodations are necessary for any state-mandated assessments. The STAAR Spanish, as mentioned at **Standardized Testing** on page 73, may be administered to an English learner up to grade 5. In limited circumstances, a student's LPAC may exempt the student from an otherwise required state-mandated

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

assessment or may waive certain graduation requirements related to the English I end-of-course (EOC) assessment. The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) will also be administered to English learners who qualify for services.

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

### **Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations (All Grade Levels)**

Participation in school-sponsored activities is an excellent way for a student to develop talents, receive individual recognition, and build strong friendships.

Some extracurricular activities may include off-campus events. Students are required to use transportation provided by the district to and from the events. Exceptions may only be made with the approval of the activity's coach or sponsor. [See **Transportation** on page 74.]

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

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

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

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

In addition, the following applies to all extracurricular activities:

- A student who receives special education services and who fails to meet the standards in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks.
- An ineligible student may practice or rehearse but may not participate in any competitive activity.
- UIL activities or other activities approved by the board, are subject to these restrictions.
- An absence for participation in an activity that has not been approved will be considered an unexcused absence.

### **Standards of Behavior**

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

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## Offices and Elections

Certain clubs, organizations, and performing groups will hold elections for student officers. These groups include: Hughes Springs Elementary STUCO

## Fees (All Grade Levels)

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

- Materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations.
- Admission fees to extracurricular activities.
- Security deposits.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.
- Voluntarily purchased student health and accident insurance.
- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance, when uniforms are provided by the district.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Parking fees and student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Fees for driver training courses.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that require use of facilities not available on district premises.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A reasonable fee for providing transportation to a student who lives within two miles of the school. [See **Buses and Other School Vehicles** on page 75.]
- A fee not to exceed \$50 for an educational program outside of regular school hours for a student who has lost credit or has not been awarded a final grade because of absences and whose parent chooses the program for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance requirement. The fee will be charged only if the parent or guardian signs a district-provided request form.
- In some cases, a fee for a course taken through the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN).

Any required fee or deposit may be waived if the student and parent are unable to pay. Application for such a waiver may be made to the principal. [See policy FP for more information.]

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

### Fundraising (All Grade Levels)

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

### Gang-Free Zones (All Grade Levels)

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

### Gender-Based Harassment

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 41.]

### Grading Guidelines (All Grade Levels)

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

[See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 67 for additional information on grading guidelines.]

### Harassment

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 41.]

## Grading and Responsibilities

### Students

1. To complete assigned work on time and return it to the teacher
2. To plan to carefully schedule work on long-term assignments so that assignments will be completed on time
3. To communicate with the teacher when he/she does not understand the assignment or is experiencing difficulty prior to due date
4. To initiate communication with the teacher when absent to arrange an opportunity to make up missed assignments/learning

### Parents / Guardians

1. To establish a specific time, place, and manner for homework to be completed
2. To provide the supplies and materials necessary to complete homework
3. To monitor as needed, but not do homework for the student
4. To assist the student in planning a time schedule for long-term assignments
5. To initiate communication with the teacher when concerns arise
6. To monitor student's grades in Skyward Family Access

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## Teachers

1. To provide meaningful tasks that enrich and supplement work introduced in class
2. To communicate assignment expectations, both regular and long-term
3. To provide effective instruction prior to assigning homework that adequately prepares the child to do the task independently and successfully
4. To provide course requirements and expectations at the beginning of each course to students and parents
5. To consider student access to available resources and materials when assigning a task
6. Provide opportunity for feedback and access to completed homework

## Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes cheating or copying the work of another student (whether the student knowingly provides or receives the work), plagiarism and unauthorized communication between students during an assignment/examination. The determination that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty shall be based on the judgment of the classroom teacher or other supervising professional employee and consideration of written materials, observation, or information from students. Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty shall be subject to disciplinary or academic consequences determined jointly by the teacher and campus administrator. Also, students found guilty of academic dishonesty on a major assignment are NOT eligible for retest/retake on that assignment.

## Grading Guidelines

### For Language Arts, Reading & Math -

All teachers shall record a minimum of fifteen (15) grades each nine weeks grading period. At least one (1) grade must be a major assignment.

### For Science & Social Studies –

All teachers shall record a minimum of ten (10) grades each nine weeks grading period. At least one (1) grade must be a major assignment.

In grades Kindergarten – 2nd, Science & Social Studies will be combined into one grade with a minimum of 10 grades per 9 weeks in accordance with our focus on Early Literacy Skills.

All assignments, whether major or minor, will be weighted equally when figuring the 9 weeks average.

### Major Assignments may include:

- Major tests (including nine (9) weeks tests)
- Research/Term papers
- Projects
- Extended assessments
- Any major assessment deemed so by the educator

### Minor Assignments may include:

- Daily Work
- Homework
- Notebooks/Folders
- Oral reports
- Class work
- Quizzes

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

- Participation\*
  - Any minor assessment deemed so by the educator
- \*Any participation grades given must be based on an academic rubric.

### Missing Assignments

As the educator is recording grades, a minor or major assignment will be recorded as a one (1) in the gradebook. The student will have the opportunity to replace this grade upon returning to class with an excused reason. All missing assignments must be turned in by the end of the grading period to receive credit.

### Re-test / Retake Policy

Teachers will offer corrections to test grades. Corrections must be completed in five days. The educator may require the student to attend tutorials during activity period or recess to allow for reteaching before the correction occurs.

The educator will average the two grades and take the average of the two for the grade or if both grades are failing, the educator may choose to take the higher of the two grades. **The re-test grade cannot exceed a 70% in the gradebook.**

A student who walks into class and refuses to attempt an assessment is **not** eligible for re-testing.

Students found guilty of academic dishonesty are **not** eligible for retest/retake on that assignment.

### Late Work

When students are in attendance and fail to turn in assignments at the prescribed time, teachers may assess grade penalties for work turned in late. (Examples of acceptable penalties: reduction of maximum grade allowed, no late work accepted, a zero given for the assignment). Acceptance of late work does not extend past the last day of a nine weeks grading period.

### Skyward Gradebook

Teachers will use Skyward gradebook for recording grades. Grades will be submitted weekly. Parents can access their student's grades through Skyward Family Access. If you do not have a Skyward Family Access password, please contact the campus office.

Progress reports will be open for viewing at three and six weeks, and report cards will be viewed at the end of the nine-weeks period. **Accelerated Reader (AR)**

Grade levels 2nd-5th will have a mandatory Accelerated Reader (AR) grade based on a 9 weeks AR point goal as determined by the student's reading level.

### Hazing (All Grade Levels)

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

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

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

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

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

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

### Health—Physical and Mental

#### Illness (All Grade Levels)

When your child is ill, please contact the school to let us know he or she will not be attending that day.

**Students that are sick, must come to the office and/or see the nurse for the parents to be notified. If not contacted by the school, but by the student without permission, the absence will be unexcused.**

State rules require schools to exclude students with certain illnesses from school for certain periods of time. For example, if a child has a fever over 100 degrees, he or she must stay out of school until fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medications. Students with diarrheal illnesses must stay home until they are diarrhea-free without use of diarrhea-suppressing medications for 24 hours.

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

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

The district is required to report certain contagious (communicable) diseases or illnesses to the 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.

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

#### Immunization (All Grade Levels)

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

For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. This form may be obtained by writing the DSHS Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347; or online at [Affidavit Request for Exemption from Immunization](#). The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or school nurse within

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

90 days of notarization. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required are:

- Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis;
- Rubeola (measles), mumps, and rubella;
- Polio;
- Hepatitis A;
- Hepatitis B;
- Varicella (chicken pox); and
- Meningococcal.

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

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

As noted at **Bacterial Meningitis** on page 58, entering college students must also, with limited exception, furnish evidence of having received a bacterial meningitis vaccination within the five years prior to enrolling in and attending classes at an institution of higher education. A student wanting to enroll in a dual credit course taken off campus may be subject to this requirement.

[See the DSHS website: [Texas School & Child Care Facility Immunization Requirements](#) and policy FFAB(LEGAL) for more information.]

### **Lice (All Grade Levels)**

Head lice is very common among children. Although not an illness or a disease, it spreads easily through head-to-head contact during play, sports, nap time, and when children share things like brushes, combs, hats, and headphones.

If careful observation indicates that a student has head lice, the school nurse will contact the student's parent to determine whether the student needs to be picked up from school and to discuss a treatment plan using an FDA-approved medicated shampoo or cream rinse that may be purchased from any drug or grocery store. After the student undergoes one treatment, the parent should contact the school nurse to discuss the treatment used. The nurse can also offer additional recommendations, including subsequent treatments, how best to get rid of lice, and how to prevent their return.

The district will provide notice to parents of elementary school students in the affected classroom without identifying the student with lice.

More information on head lice can be obtained from the DSHS website [Managing Head Lice in School Settings and at Home](#).



## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

[See policy FFAA for more information.]

### Medicine at School (All Grade Levels)

If a student must take medication during school hours, the student's parent must provide the medication. All medication, whether prescription or nonprescription, must be kept in the nurse's office and be administered by the nurse or another authorized district employee. A student may be authorized to possess his or her own medication because of asthma or a severe allergy as described below or as otherwise allowed by law.

The district will not purchase nonprescription medication to give to a student. District employees will not give a student prescription medication, nonprescription medication, herbal substances, anabolic steroids, or dietary supplements, except that authorized employees, in accordance with policy 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. **Note:** Insect repellent is considered a nonprescription medication.
- Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.

Students whose schedules provide for regular time spent outdoors, including for recess and physical education classes, should apply sunscreen before coming to school.

At the elementary level, a student's teacher or other district personnel will apply sunscreen to the student's exposed skin if the student brings the sunscreen to school and asks for help applying it. A student at this level may apply his or her own sunscreen if the student is able to do so.

At the secondary level, a student may possess and apply sunscreen when necessary. If the student needs assistance with sunscreen application, please address the need with the school nurse.

Whether a student is at the elementary or secondary level, if sunscreen needs to be administered to treat any type of medical condition, this should be handled through communication with the school nurse so that the district is made aware of any safety and medical issues.

### Asthma and Severe Allergic Reactions

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

If the student has been prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication for use during the school day, the student and parents should discuss this with the school nurse or principal.

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

See also **Food Allergies** on page 58.

### **Steroids (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

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

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

### **Mental Health Support (All Grade Levels)**

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

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

If a student has been hospitalized or placed in residential treatment for a mental health condition or substance abuse, the district has procedures to support the student's return to school. Please contact the district's mental health liaison for further information.

Teachers and other district employees may discuss a student's academic progress or behavior with the student's parents or another employee as appropriate; however, they are not permitted to recommend use of psychotropic drugs. A psychotropic drug is a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease or as a component of a medication that is intended to alter perception, emotion, mood, or behavior.

A district employee who is a registered nurse, an advanced nurse practitioner, a physician, or a certified or credentialed mental health professional can recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner, if appropriate. [See policy FFEB for more information.]

For related information, see:

- **Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation or Provide a Mental Health Care Service** on page 13 for the district's procedures for recommending a mental health intervention and the mental health liaison's contact information;
- **Counseling** on page 40 for the district's comprehensive school counseling program;

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

- **Physical and Mental Health Resources** on page 59 for campus and community mental and physical health resources; and
- **Policies and Procedures that Promote Student Physical and Mental Health** on page 60 for board-adopted policies and administrative procedures that promote student health.

### Physical Activity Requirements

#### *Elementary School*

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

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

### Physical Health Screenings / Examinations

#### *Spinal Screening Program*

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

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

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

### Special Health Concerns (All Grade Levels)

#### *Bacterial Meningitis (All Grade Levels)*

Please see the district's website at [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net) for information regarding meningitis.

**Note:** DSHS requires at least one meningococcal vaccination on or after a student's 11th birthday, unless the student received the vaccine at age 10.

[See **Immunization** on page 54.]

#### *Diabetes*

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

#### *Food Allergies (All Grade Levels)*

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

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

The district has developed and annually reviews a food allergy management plan, based on the Texas Department of State Health Services' (DSHS) "Guidelines for the Care of Students with Food Allergies At-Risk for Anaphylaxis" found on the DSHS website at [Allergies and Anaphylaxis](#).

When the district receives information that a student has a food allergy that puts the student at risk for anaphylaxis, 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).

[See **Celebrations** on page 34 and policy FFAF for more information.]

### **Seizures (All Grade Levels)**

To address the care of a student with a seizure disorder while at school or participating in a school activity, a parent may submit a seizure management and treatment plan to the district before the beginning of the school year, upon enrollment of the student, or as soon as practicable following diagnosis of a seizure disorder.

[See **A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504** on page 27 and contact the school nurse for more information.]

### **Tobacco and E-Cigarettes Prohibited (All Grade Levels and All Others on School Property)**

Students are prohibited from possessing or using any type of tobacco product, electronic cigarette (e-cigarette), or any other electronic vaporizing device while on school property or while attending an off-campus school-related activity.

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

## **Health-Related Resources, Policies, and Procedures**

### **Physical and Mental Health Resources (All Grade Levels)**

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

- The Hughes Springs Elementary full-time nurse, Brandi Pittman, at 903-639-3838.
- The Hughes Springs Elementary full-time school counselor, Vanessa Murphy at 903-639-3857.
- The local public health authority, Community Health Core, which may be contacted at 903-639-4403
- The local mental health authority, Community Health Core, which may be contacted at 903-639-4403.

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

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

The district has adopted board policies that promote student physical and mental health. (LOCAL) policies on the topics below can be found in the district's policy manual, available at [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net).

- Food and nutrition management: CO, COA, COB
- Wellness and Health Services: FFA
- Physical Examinations: FFAA
- Immunizations: FFAB
- Medical Treatment: FFAC
- Communicable Diseases: FFAD
- School-Based Health Centers: FFAE
- Care Plans: FFAF
- Crisis Intervention: FFB
- Trauma-informed Care: FFBA
- Student Support Services: FFC
- Student Safety: FFF
- Child Abuse and Neglect: FFG
- Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation: FFH
- Freedom from Bullying: FFI

In addition, the District Improvement Plan details the district's strategies to improve student performance through evidence-based practices that address physical and mental health.

The district has developed administrative procedures as necessary to implement the above policies and plans.

Please contact Brenda Fincher at 903-639-3880 or [fincherb@hsisd.net](mailto:fincherb@hsisd.net) for further information regarding these procedures and access to the District Improvement Plan.

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

During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) held 5 meetings. Additional information regarding the district's SHAC is available from the Brandi Pittman, campus nurse.

[See **Human Sexuality Instruction** policies BDF and EHAA. for more information.]

### **Student Wellness Policy/Wellness Plan (All Grade Levels)**

To encourage healthy habits in our students, the district has developed a board-adopted wellness policy at FFA(LOCAL) and corresponding plans and procedures to implement it. You

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

are encouraged to contact the superintendent with questions about the content or implementation of the district's wellness policy and plan.

### Homeless Students

You are encouraged to inform the district if you or your child are experiencing homelessness. District staff can share resources with you that may be able to assist you and your family.

Please also check the campus website for information related to services available in the area that can help families who are homeless.

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's homeless education liaison, Kristina Gardner, at 903-639-3810.

## Law Enforcement Agencies (All Grade Levels)

### Questioning of Students

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school, the principal will cooperate fully regarding the conditions of the interview, including without parental consent, if necessary, if it is part of a child abuse investigation. In other circumstances, the principal will:

- Verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and ask for an explanation of the need to question the student at school.
- Ordinarily make reasonable efforts to notify the parents, unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.
- Ordinarily be present for the questioning or interview, unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.

### Students Taken into Custody

State law requires the district to permit a student to be taken into legal custody:

- To comply with an order of the juvenile court.
- To comply with the laws of arrest.
- By a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision.
- By a law enforcement officer to obtain fingerprints or photographs for comparison in an investigation.
- By a law enforcement officer to obtain fingerprints or photographs to establish a student's identity where the child may have engaged in conduct indicating a need for supervision, such as running away.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services (CPS), Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.

- To comply with a properly issued directive from a juvenile court to take a student into custody.

Before a student is released to a legally authorized person, the principal will verify the person's identity and, to the best of his or her ability, will verify the person's authority to take custody of the student.

The principal will immediately notify the superintendent and will attempt to notify the parent, unless the legally authorized person raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection to notifying the parents. Because the principal does not have the authority to prevent or delay a student's release to a legally authorized person, any notification will most likely be after the fact.

### Notification of Law Violations

The district is required by state law to notify:

- All instructional and support personnel who have responsibility for supervising a student who has been taken into custody, arrested, or referred to the juvenile court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors.
- All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a student who 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 regarding a student who is required to register as a sex offender.

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

### Leaving Campus (All Grade Levels)

Remember that student attendance is crucial. Appointments should be scheduled outside of school hours if possible. Absent extenuating circumstances, students will not regularly be released before the end of the school day.

State rules require parental consent before any student leaves campus for any part of the school day.

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

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

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

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

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

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

### **During Lunch**

Hughes Springs Elementary is a closed campus.

### **At Any Other Time during the School Day**

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

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

### **Lost and Found (All Grade Levels)**

A lost and found collection box is located in the satellite cafeteria. A student who loses an item should check the lost and found box. The district discourages bringing personal items of high monetary value to school, as the district is not responsible for lost or stolen items. The campus will dispose of lost and found items at the end of each semester.

### **Makeup Work**

#### **Makeup Work Because of Absence (All Grade Levels)**

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

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

The student is encouraged to speak with his or her teacher if the student knows of an absence ahead of time so that the teacher and student may plan any makeup work. Please remember the importance of student attendance at school and that, even though absences may be excused or unexcused, all absences account for the 90 percent threshold regarding the state laws surrounding "attendance for credit or final grade." [See **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade** on page 31.]

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

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



# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## DAEP Makeup Work

### *Elementary and Middle/Junior High School Grade Levels*

An elementary school 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. [See policy FOCA(LEGAL).]

**\*\*Any student assigned to DAEP will not be allowed to come on campus, attend any school functions or extracurricular events associated with the school, during their placement in DAEP.\*\***

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

### *Alternative Means to Receive Coursework*

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

### *Opportunity to Complete Courses*

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

## Nondiscrimination Statement (All Grade Levels)

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

In accordance with Title IX, the district does not and is required not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. The requirement not to discriminate extends to admission and employment. Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the district's Title IX Coordinator (see below), to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both.

Other federal laws that prohibit discrimination include Title VI, Section 504, the Age Discrimination Act, the Boy Scouts Act, and Title II.

The district has designated and authorized the following employee as the Title IX Coordinator to address concerns or inquiries regarding discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, or gender-based harassment: Sarah Dildine, Superintendent of Schools, 871 Taylor Street, Hughes Springs, TX 903-639-3802. Reports can be made at any time and by any person, including during non-business hours, by mail, phone, or email. During district business hours, reports may also be made in person. Upon the district receiving notice or an allegation of sex-based harassment, the

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

Title IX Coordinator will promptly respond in accordance with the process described at FFH(LOCAL).

The following district representatives have been designated to address concerns or inquiries about other kinds of discrimination:

- For concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability, see the ADA/Section 504 Coordinator: Vanessa Murphy, 504 Coordinator, 809 Russell Street, Hughes Springs, TX, 903-639-3857.
- For all other concerns regarding discrimination, see the superintendent: Sarah Dildine, 871 Taylor Street, Hughes Springs, TX, 903-639-3802.

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

### Parent and Family Engagement (All Grade Levels)

#### Working Together

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

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child 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 your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the school counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Reviewing the requirements and options for graduation with your child in middle school and again while your child is enrolled in high school.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed. [See **Academic Counseling** on page 40.]
- 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 usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school. [See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 67.]
- Becoming a school volunteer. [See **Volunteers** on page 77 and policy GKG for more information.]
- Participating in campus parent organizations. Parent organizations include: PTO – Parent Teacher Organization.
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees that develop educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. Contact Kristina

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

Gardner at [gardnerk@hsisd.net](mailto:gardnerk@hsisd.net) or call 903-639-3810 and see policies BQA and BQB, for more information.]

- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and assisting the district in aligning local community values with health education instruction and other wellness issues. [See **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)** on page 59 and policies BDF, EHAA, FFA for more information.]
- Being aware of the school's ongoing bullying and harassment prevention efforts.
- Contacting school officials if you are concerned with your child's emotional or mental well-being.
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. Regular board meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at 6:00 p. m. at the Hughes Springs Administration Building, 871 Taylor Street, Hughes Springs, TX. An agenda for a regular or special meeting is posted no later than 72 hours before each meeting at the administration office and on all campuses and online at [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net). [See policies BE and BED for more information.]

### **Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence (All Grade Levels)**

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge. [See **Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags** on page 17.]

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

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

[See policy EC for more information.]

### **Prayer (All Grade Levels)**

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

### **Promotion and Retention**

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

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

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

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

### Elementary and Grade Levels

In grades 1-5, promotion is based on

1. An overall average of 70 or above (computed by averaging yearly grades for reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science);
2. A yearly average of 70 or above in mathematics;
3. A yearly average of 70 or above in reading; and
4. A yearly average of 70 or above in language arts.

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

### Release of Students from School

[See **Leaving Campus** on page 62.]

### Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences (All Grade Levels)

The district will use an electronic program to communicate academic information about your child, including for report card and progress reporting purposes. Parents will get an email notification to check your student's grades on Skyward. An electronic signature of the parent will be accepted by the district, but you are entitled to request the option to provide a mailed progress report or report card of acknowledgment instead.

<u>GRADING REPORT</u>	<u>PERIOD ENDS</u>		<u>VIEW DATE</u>	<u>EFFECTIVE DATE FOR UIL ELIGIBILITY</u>
START FIRST DAY	THURSDAY, AUGUST 12			
PROGRESS REPORT	FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 3		SEPT. 7	
PROGRESS REPORT	FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24		SEPT. 28	FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1
REPORT CARD	FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8		OCT. 14	FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15
PROGRESS REPORT	FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29		NOV. 2	FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5
PROGRESS REPORT	FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19		NOV. 30	FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

REPORT CARD	TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17		JAN. 6	FRIDAY, JANUARY 7
<b>CHRISTMAS BREAK DECEMBER 17 - JANUARY 4 - ALL STUDENTS ARE ACADEMICALLY ELIGIBLE</b>				
PROGRESS REPORT	FRIDAY, JANUARY 28		FEB. 1	FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4
PROGRESS REPORT	FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18		FEB. 22	FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25
REPORT CARD	FRIDAY, MARCH 10		MAR. 24	FRIDAY, MARCH 25
<b>SPRING BREAK MARCH 14-18 - ALL STUDENTS ARE ACADEMICALLY ELIGIBLE</b>				
PROGRESS REPORT	FRIDAY, APRIL 8		APR. 12	FRIDAY, APRIL 15
PROGRESS REPORT	FRIDAY, APRIL 29		MAY. 3	FRIDAY, MAY 6
REPORT CARD	FRIDAY, MAY 19		MAY. 26	LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

At the end of the end of the third week and the sixth week of the grading period, parents will receive a progress report if their child's performance in any course/subject is near or below 70 or is below the expected level of performance. If a student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent will be asked to schedule a conference with the teacher. [See **Working Together** on page 65 for how to schedule a conference.]

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the principal pursuant to the board-adopted policy. Grading guidelines are designed to reflect each student's relative mastery of each assignment. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district's grading policy. [See **Grading Guidelines** on page 51 and policy EIA(LOCAL) for more information.]

Questions about grade calculation should first be discussed with the teacher. If the question is not resolved, the student or parent may request a conference with the principal in accordance with FNG(LOCAL).

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

The elementary will use an electronic program to communicate academic information about your child, including for report card and progress reporting purposes. Parents will get an email notification to check your student's grades on Skyward. An electronic signature of the parent will be accepted by the district, but you are entitled to request the option to provide a mailed progress report or report card of acknowledgment instead.

### Retaliation

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 41.]

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## Safety (All Grade Levels)

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

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or others at risk.
- Follow all behavioral standards in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct or set by district employees.
- Remain alert to any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student or staff member, and promptly report any incidents to a district employee. A student may make anonymous reports about safety concerns by going to the website [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net), click the student link and then click bullying report.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

## Accident Insurance

Soon after the school year begins, parents will have the opportunity to purchase low-cost accident insurance that would help meet medical expenses in the event of injury to their child.

## Preparedness Drills: Evacuation, Severe Weather, and Other Emergencies

Periodically, the school will conduct preparedness drills of emergency procedures. When the command is given or alarm is sounded, students need to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

## Emergency Medical Treatment and Information

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school may have to rely on previously provided written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment, and information about allergies to medications, foods, insect bites, etc. Therefore, all parents are asked each year to complete an emergency care consent form. Parents should contact the school nurse to update emergency care information (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.).

## Emergency School Closing Information

Each year, parents are asked to complete an emergency release form to provide contact information in the event that the district needs to notify parents of early dismissal, delayed opening, or restricted access to a campus because of severe weather, a security threat, or another emergency cause.

The district will rely on contact information on file with the district to communicate with parents in an emergency situation, which may include real-time or automated messages. It is crucial to notify your child's school when a phone number changes.

If the campus must close, delay opening, or restrict access to the building because of an emergency, the district will also alert the community in the following ways: Sky-Alert messages, school website, and local television/radio and the school Facebook page.

[See **Communications-Automated, Emergency** on page 37.]

## **Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook**

### **Food and Nutrition Services (All Grade Levels)**

The district participates in the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced meals daily in accordance with standards set forth in state and federal law.

Some students are eligible for free and reduced-price meals based on financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential. The district may share information such as a student's name and eligibility status to help enroll eligible children in Medicaid or the state children's health insurance program (CHIP) unless the student's parent requests the student's information not be disclosed.

Participating students will be offered the same meal options as their peers and will not be treated differently from their peers.

See [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net) to apply for free or reduced-price meal services.

[See policy CO for more information.]

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

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

### **Vending Machines (All Grade Levels)**

The district has adopted and implemented the state and federal policies for food service, including guidelines to restrict student access to vending machines. For more information regarding these policies and guidelines, see campus principal Brenda Fincher. [See policy FFA for more information.]

### **Pest Management Plan (All Grade Levels)**

The district is required to follow integrated pest management (IPM) procedures to control pests on school grounds. Although the district strives to use the safest and most effective methods to manage pests, including a variety of non-chemical control measures, periodic indoor and outdoor pesticide use is sometimes necessary to ensure a safe, pest-free school environment.

All pesticides used are registered for their intended use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and are applied only by certified pesticide applicators. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before indoor application. All outdoor applications will be posted at the time of treatment, and signs will remain until it is safe to enter the area.

Parents who have questions or who want to be notified of the times and types of applications prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact David Hinerman, the district's IPM coordinator, at 903-639-3808.

### **Conduct Before and After School (All Grade Levels)**

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at before- or after-school activities. Whether a school activity is on or off district premises, students are subject to the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day. Misbehavior will be subject to

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

consequences established by the Student Code of Conduct or any stricter standards of behavior established by the sponsor for extracurricular participants.

### **Library (All Grade Levels)**

The library is open for independent student use during the following times with a teacher permit:

- Monday-Friday 7:30 a.m. -3:15 p.m.

### **Use of Hallways during Class Time (All Grade Levels)**

During class times, loitering or standing in the halls is not permitted, and a student must have a hall pass to be outside the classroom for any purpose. Failure to obtain a pass will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Use by Students Before and After School (All Grade Levels)**

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are required to remain in the area where their activity is scheduled to take place.

The following areas are open to students before school, beginning at 7:30 a.m.

- Main Cafeteria
- Satellite Cafeteria
- Designated Area in Hallways

Unless the teacher or sponsor overseeing an activity gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the building or campus.

Students must leave campus immediately after dismissal of school in the afternoon, unless the student is involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher or other authorized employee or adult.

### **Meetings of Noncurriculum-Related Groups (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

Student-organized, student-led noncurriculum-related groups are permitted to meet during the hours designated by the principal before and after school. These groups must comply with the requirements of policy FNAB(LOCAL).

A list of these groups is available in the principal's office.

### **School-Sponsored Field Trips (All Grade Levels)**

The district periodically takes students on field trips for educational purposes. The field trip permission form is in Skyward Family Access in the online registration section.

A parent must provide permission for a student to participate in a field trip.

The district may ask the parent to provide information about a student's medical provider and insurance coverage and may also ask the parent to sign a waiver allowing for emergency medical treatment in the case of a student accident or illness during the field trip.

The district may require a fee for student participation in a field trip to cover expenses such as transportation, admission, and meals; however, a student will not be denied participation because of financial need.



# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## Searches

### Searches in General (All Grade Levels)

In the interest of promoting student safety and drug-free schools, district officials may occasionally conduct searches.

District officials may search students, their belongings, and their vehicles in accordance with law and district policy. Searches of students will be conducted without discrimination, based on, for example, reasonable suspicion or voluntary consent or pursuant to district policy providing for suspicionless security procedures, including the use of metal detectors.

In accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, students are responsible for prohibited items found in their possession, including items in their personal belongings or in vehicles parked on district property.

If there is reasonable suspicion to believe that searching a student's person, belongings, or vehicle will reveal evidence of a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, a district official may conduct a search in accordance with law and district regulations.

### District Property (All Grade Levels)

Desks, lockers, district-provided technology, and similar items are the property of the district and are provided for student use as a matter of convenience. District property is subject to search or inspection at any time without notice. Students have no expectation of privacy in district property.

Students are responsible for any item found in district property provided to the student that is prohibited by law, district policy, or the Student Code of Conduct.

### Metal Detectors (All Grade Levels)

To maintain a safe and disciplined learning environment, the district reserves the right to subject students to metal detector searches when entering a district campus and at off-campus, school-sponsored activities.

### Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices (All Grade Levels)

Use of district-owned equipment and its network systems is not private and will be monitored by the district. [See policy CQ for more information.]

Any searches of personal electronic devices will be conducted in accordance with law, and the device may be confiscated to perform a lawful search. A confiscated device may be turned over to law enforcement to determine whether a crime has been committed.

[See **Electronic Devices and Technology Resources** on page 47 and policy FNF(LEGAL) for more information.]

### Trained Dogs (All Grade Levels)

The district may use trained dogs to screen for concealed, prohibited items, including drugs and alcohol. Screenings conducted by trained dogs will not be announced in advance. The dogs will not be used with students, but students may be asked to leave personal belongings in an area that is going to be screened, such as a classroom, a locker, or a vehicle. If a dog alerts to an item or an area, it may be searched by district officials.

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

### Sexual Harassment

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 41.]

### Special Programs (All Grade Levels)

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, students who are homeless, students in foster care, bilingual students, migrant students, English learners, students diagnosed with dyslexia, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact counselor Vanessa Murphy, 903-639-3857.

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

### Standardized Testing

#### STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness)

##### Grades 3–8

In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels are required to take the state assessment, called STAAR, in the following subjects:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3–8
- Reading, annually in grades 3–8
- Writing, including spelling and grammar, in grades 4 and 7
- Science in grades 5 and 8
- Social Studies in grade 8

STAAR Alternate 2 is available for eligible students receiving special education services who meet certain state-established criteria as determined by the student's ARD committee.

STAAR Spanish is available for eligible students for whom a Spanish version of STAAR is the most appropriate measure of their academic progress.

#### Students in Foster Care (All Grade Levels)

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

Please contact Kristina Gardner, who has been designated as the district's foster care liaison, at 903-639-3810 with any questions.

[See **Students in the Conservatorship of the State** on page 24.]

#### Students Who are Homeless (All Grade Levels)

A parent is encouraged to inform the district if his or her child is experiencing homelessness. District staff can share resources that may be able to assist families.

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

For more information on services for students who are homeless, contact the district's homeless education liaison, Vanessa Murphy, at 903-639-3857.

[See **A Student Who is Homeless** on page 25.]

### **Summer School (All Grade Levels)**

Students with a final grade less than 70 but 67 or greater will attend summer school. Students with a grade lower than 67 will not be allowed to attend summer school for promotion purposes.

Students with excessive absences maybe required to attend summer school.

If a student has been retained once and is failing math or reading, they will be required to attend summer school before being promoted/placed.

Students that did not pass STAAR reading or math may be required to attend summer school.

### **Tardies (All Grade Levels)**

A student who is more than 2 minutes tardy to class may be assigned to detention hall or given another appropriate consequence. Please help your student get to school on time.

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

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

If a student needs a graphing calculator for a course and the district does not provide one, the student may use a calculator application with graphing capabilities on a phone, laptop, tablet, or other computing device.

A student who is issued a damaged item should report the damage to the teacher.

Any student who does not return an item or returns an item in an unacceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until the item is returned or the damage is paid for by the parent. However, the student will be provided the necessary instructional resources and equipment for use at school during the school day.

### **Transfers (All Grade Levels)**

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

[See **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 23, **Bullying**, and **Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education or Section 504 Services** on page 25, for other transfer options.]

### **Transportation (All Grade Levels)**

#### **School-Sponsored Trips**

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use school-provided transportation to and from the event. However, in accordance with campus procedures, a parent may provide written consent for his or her child to ride with or be released after the event to the parent or another adult designated by the parent. [See **School-sponsored Field Trips** on page 71.]

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## Buses and Other School Vehicles

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living two or more miles from school and to any students who are experiencing homelessness. This service is provided at no cost to students.

Bus routes and stops will be designated annually. Any subsequent changes will be posted at the school and on the district's website. For the safety of the driver and all passengers, students must board district vehicles only at authorized stops and drivers must unload passengers only at authorized stops.

A parent may designate a child-care facility or grandparent's residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated location must be an approved stop on an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off location, contact Jeff Pilgrim at 903-639-3883.

Students are expected to assist district staff in ensuring that buses and other district vehicles are clean and safe. When riding in district vehicles, students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct. Students must:

- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Enter and leave the vehicle in an orderly manner at the designated stop.
- Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- Not deface the vehicle or its equipment.
- Not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the vehicle.
- Not possess or use any form of tobacco or e-cigarettes in any district vehicle.
- Observe all usual classroom rules.
- Be seated while the vehicle is moving.
- Fasten their seat belts, if available.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the vehicle and before crossing in front of the vehicle.
- Follow any other rules established by the operator of the vehicle.

Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, including loss of the privilege to ride in a district vehicle.

## Consequences for Misbehavior on the School Bus

**1<sup>st</sup> Offense:** A documented referral, verbal warning with copy of referral and bus policy mailed home or parent called and copy of verbal warning sent home.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Offense:** A phone call to parent/guardian and a disciplinary action to be given at school or a 3-day suspension of riding privileges.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Offense:** A phone call to parent/guardian and a 10-day suspension of riding privileges.

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

4<sup>th</sup> Offense: A phone call to parent/guardian and a 20-day suspension of riding privileges.

5<sup>th</sup> Offense: A phone call to parent/guardian and a 35-day suspension of riding privileges.

6<sup>th</sup> Offense: Suspension for the remaining days left in the school year.

**\*\*Some behaviors may be so severe that they skip steps or results in other punishments\*\***

[See the Student Code of Conduct for provisions regarding transportation to the DAEP.]

### **Vandalism (All Grade Levels)**

Littering, defacing, or damaging school property is not tolerated. Students will be required to pay for damages they cause and will be subject to criminal proceedings as well as disciplinary consequences in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Video Cameras (All Grade Levels)**

For safety purposes, the district uses video and audio recording equipment to monitor student behavior, including on buses and in common areas on campus. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used.

The principal will review the video and audio recordings as needed and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

In accordance with state law, a parent of a student who receives special education services, a staff member (as this term is defined by law), a principal or assistant principal, or the board may make a written request for the district to place video and audio recording equipment in certain self-contained special education classrooms. The district will provide notice before placing a video camera in a classroom or other setting in which a child receives special education services. For more information or to request the installation and operation of this equipment, speak with the principal Brenda Fincher to coordinate the implementation of and compliance with this law.

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

### **Visitors to the School (All Grade Levels)**

#### **General Visitors**

**Hughes Springs Elementary will follow all COVID safety protocols the district has in place. COVID safety protocol may restrict onsite campus visitors. Please call the elementary office before making a visit to see what safety measures are in place.**

Parents and others are welcome to visit district schools for instructional purposes or special programs. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must first report to the main office and comply with all applicable district policies and procedures. All visitors should be prepared to show identification.

Individuals may visit classrooms during instructional time only with approval of the principal and teacher. Visitors may not interfere with instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct. Disruptive behavior will not be permitted.

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

### Unauthorized Persons

In accordance with Education Code 37.105, a school administrator, school resource officer (SRO), or district police officer has the authority to refuse entry to or eject a person from district property if the person refuses to leave peaceably on request and:

- The person poses a substantial risk of harm to any person; or
- The person behaves in a manner that is inappropriate for a school setting and persists in the behavior after being given a verbal warning that the behavior is inappropriate and may result in refusal of entry or ejection.

Appeals regarding refusal of entry or ejection from district property may be filed in accordance with policies FNG(LOCAL) or GF(LOCAL).

[See the Student Code of Conduct.]

### Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students

#### *Business, Civic, and Youth Groups*

The district may invite representatives from patriotic societies listed in Title 36 of the United States Code to present information to interested students about membership in the society.

### Volunteers (All Grade Levels)

The district invites and appreciates the efforts of volunteers who are willing to serve our district and students.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Nita Clark @ 903-639-3802 for more information and to complete an application.

### Withdrawing from School (All Grade Levels)

To withdraw a student under age 18 from school, the parent or guardian must submit a written request to the principal specifying the reasons for withdrawal and the final day the student will be in attendance. Withdrawal forms are available from the principal's office.

A student who is age 18 or older, who is married, or who has been declared by a court to be an emancipated minor may withdraw without parental signature.

Please provide the school at least three days' notice of withdrawal so that records and documents may be prepared.

**\*\*Some guidelines may change throughout the summer and year and be added at a later date as a supplement. These changes are the result of either a legislative, T.E.A., or a local district ruling. \*\***

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## Glossary

**Accelerated instruction** is an intensive supplemental program designed to help an individual student acquire the knowledge and skills required at his or her grade level. It is required when a student does not meet the passing standard on a state-mandated assessment.

**ACT**, or the American College Test, is one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions examinations. The test may be required for admission to certain colleges or universities.

**ACT-Aspire** is designed as a preparatory and readiness assessment for the ACT. This is usually taken by students in grade 10.

**ARD** stands for admission, review, and dismissal. The ARD committee convenes for each student who is identified as needing a full and individual evaluation for special education services. The eligible student and his or her parents are members of the committee.

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

**CPS** stands for Child Protective Services.

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

**DFPS** stands for the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

**DPS** stands for the Texas Department of Public Safety.

**EOC** (end-of-course) assessments are state-mandated and are part of the STAAR program. Successful performance on EOC assessments are required for graduation. These examinations will be given in English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and U.S. History.

**ESSA** is the federal Every Student Succeeds Act.

**FERPA** refers to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, which grants specific privacy protections to student records. The law contains certain exceptions, such as for directory information, unless a student's parent or a student 18 years of age or older directs the school not to release directory information.

**IEP** stands for individualized education program and is the written record prepared by the ARD committee for a student with disabilities who is eligible for special education services. .

**IGC** is the individual graduation committee, formed in accordance with state law, to determine a student's eligibility to graduate when the student has failed to demonstrate satisfactory performance on no more than two of the required state assessments.

**ISS** refers to in-school suspension, a disciplinary technique for misconduct found in the Student Code of Conduct. Although different from out-of-school suspension and placement in a DAEP, ISS removes the student from the regular classroom.

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

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

**PSAT** is the preparatory and readiness assessment for the SAT. It also serves as the basis for the awarding of National Merit Scholarships.

**SAT** refers to the Scholastic Aptitude Test, one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions examinations. The test may be required for admissions to certain colleges or universities.

**SHAC** stands for School Health Advisory Council, a group of at least five members, a majority of whom must be parents, appointed by the school board to help ensure that local community values and health issues are reflected in the district's health education instruction, as well as assist with other student and employee wellness issues.

**Section 504** is the federal law that prohibits discrimination against a student with a disability, requiring schools to provide opportunities for equal services, programs, and participation in activities. Unless the student is determined to be eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), general education with appropriate instructional accommodations will be provided.

**STAAR** is the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, the state's system of standardized academic achievement assessments.

**STAAR Alternate 2** is an alternative state-mandated assessment designed for students with severe cognitive disabilities receiving special education services who meet the participation requirements, as determined by the student's ARD committee.

**STAAR Spanish** is an alternative state-mandated assessment administered to eligible students for whom a Spanish version of STAAR is the most appropriate measure of their academic progress.

**State-mandated assessments** are required of students at certain grade levels and in specified subjects. Except under limited circumstances, students must perform successfully on some state-mandated assessments to be promoted and students must pass the STAAR EOC assessments to graduate. Students have multiple opportunities to take the tests, if necessary, for promotion or graduation.

**Student Code of Conduct** is developed with the advice of the district-level committee and adopted by the board and identifies the circumstances, consistent with law, when a student may be removed from a classroom, campus, or district vehicle; sets out the conditions that authorize or require the principal or another administrator to place the student in a DAEP; and outlines conditions for out-of-school suspension and for expulsion. The Student Code of Conduct also addresses notice to the parent regarding a student's violation of one of its provisions.

**TAC** stands for the Texas Administrative Code.

**TEA** stands for the Texas Education Agency, which oversees primary and secondary public education in Texas.

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



## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

**TSI** stands for the Texas Success Initiative, an assessment designed to measure the reading, mathematics, and writing skills that entering college-level freshmen students should have if they are to be successful in undergraduate programs in Texas public colleges and universities.

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

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

# Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

## Appendix: Freedom from Bullying Policy

**Note:** School board policies may be revised at any time. For legal context and the most current copy of the local policy, visit [www.hsisd.net](http://www.hsisd.net). Below is the text of Hughes Springs ISD's policy FFI(LOCAL) as of the date this handbook was finalized for this school year.

### Student Welfare: Freedom from Bullying

Policy FFI(LOCAL) adopted on 3/2/2012

**Note:** This policy addresses bullying of District students. For provisions regarding discrimination and harassment involving District students, see FFH. Note that FFI shall be used in conjunction with FFH for certain prohibited conduct. For reporting requirements related to child abuse and neglect, see FFG. The District prohibits bullying as defined by this policy. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of District policy and is prohibited. Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by the District and that: 1. Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; or 2. Is sufficiently severe, persistent, and pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student. This conduct is considered bullying if it: 1. Exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and 2. Interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school. Bullying of a student may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, or ostracism. The District prohibits retaliation by a student or District employee against any person who in good faith makes a report of bullying, serves as a witness, or participates in an investigation. Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances. BULLYING PROHIBITED DEFINITION EXAMPLES RETALIATION EXAMPLES Hughes Springs ISD 034903 STUDENT WELFARE FFI FREEDOM FROM BULLYING (LOCAL) DATE ISSUED: 3/2/2012 2 of 3 UPDATE 93 FFI(LOCAL)- A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a District investigation regarding bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Reports of bullying shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. A failure to immediately report may impair the District's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct. To obtain assistance and intervention, any student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, counselor, principal, or other District employee. Any District employee who suspects or receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the principal or designee. A report may be made orally or in writing. The principal or designee shall reduce any oral reports to written form. The principal or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH, including dating violence and harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, or disability. If so, the District shall proceed under policy FFH. If the allegations could constitute both prohibited conduct and bullying, the investigation under FFH shall include a determination on each type of conduct. The principal or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the

## Hughes Springs Elementary Student Handbook

report. The principal or designee shall promptly take interim action calculated to prevent bullying during an investigation, if appropriate. Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within ten District business days from the date of the initial report alleging bullying; however, the principal or designee shall take additional time if necessary, to complete a thorough investigation. The principal or designee shall prepare a final, written report of the investigation. The report shall include a determination of whether bullying occurred, and if so, whether the victim used reasonable self-defense. A copy of the report shall be sent to the Superintendent or designee. If an incident of bullying is confirmed, the principal or designee shall promptly notify the parents of the victim and of the student who engaged in bullying.

FALSE CLAIM TIMELY REPORTING PROCEDURES STUDENT REPORT EMPLOYEE REPORT FORMAT PROHIBITED CONDUCT INVESTIGATION OF REPORT CONCLUDING THE INVESTIGATION NOTICE TO PARENTS Hughes Springs ISD 034903 STUDENT WELFARE FFI FREEDOM FROM BULLYING (LOCAL) DATE ISSUED: 3/2/2012 ADOPTED: 3 of 3 UPDATE 93 FFI(LOCAL)-A

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, the District shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the District's Student Code of Conduct and may take corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct. A student who is a victim of bullying and who used reasonable self-defense in response to the bullying shall not be subject to disciplinary action. The discipline of a student with a disability is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Code of Conduct. Examples of corrective action may include a training program for the individuals involved in the complaint, a comprehensive education program for the school community, follow-up inquiries to determine if any new incidents or any instances of retaliation have occurred, involving parents and students in efforts to identify problems and improve the school climate, increasing staff monitoring of areas where bullying has occurred, and reaffirming the District's policy against bullying. The principal or designee shall refer to FDB for transfer provisions. The principal or designee shall notify the victim, the student who engaged in bullying, and any students who witnessed the bullying of available counseling options. If the investigation reveals improper conduct that did not rise to the level of prohibited conduct or bullying, the District may act in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct or any other appropriate corrective action. To the greatest extent possible, the District shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct a thorough investigation. A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through FNG (LOCAL), beginning at the appropriate level. Retention of records shall be in accordance with CPC (LOCAL). This policy and any accompanying procedures shall be distributed annually in the employee and student handbooks. Copies of the policy and procedures shall be posted on the District's Web site, to the extent practicable, and shall be readily available at each campus and the District's administrative offices.

DISTRICT ACTION BULLYING DISCIPLINE CORRECTIVE ACTION TRANSFERS COUNSELING IMPROPER CONDUCT CONFIDENTIALITY APPEAL RECORDS RETENTION ACCESS TO POLICY AND PROCEDURES