



AUSTIN
Independent School District

Student Handbook

2023-24 School Year

Austin ISD Student Handbook

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Austin ISD 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 Austin Independent School District 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 Success Guide, 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 Success Guide) and any Student Handbook provision, the district will follow board policy and the Student Success Guide.

Parents and students should become familiar with the district’s Student Code of Conduct, called the Student Success Guide in Austin ISD. To review the Code of Conduct, visit the [district’s website](#) or your campus’s website. 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 communications explaining changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook guidelines. 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 Success Guide or Student Handbook can be requested at the campus.

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 at the district Central Office, 4000 IHW 35 Frontage Rd., Austin, TX 78704.

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.

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- 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 the campus principal.

Please complete and return to your child's campus the following forms (provided in the forms packet distributed at the beginning of the year or upon enrollment):

- [Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information, and](#)
- [Parent's Objection to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education \(if you choose to restrict the release of information to these entities\).](#)

[See [Objecting to the Release of Directory Information](#) on page 13.]

Accessibility

If you have difficulty accessing this handbook because of a disability, please contact the district office at 512-414-1700.

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Section One: Parental Rights

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

Consent, Opt-Out, and Refusal Rights

Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation 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.

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

Note: An evaluation does not include screening all students or a test that is administered to all students.

Your school counselor 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](#) on page 73.

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
- Other original works.

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.

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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 co-curricular 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.

Opting Out of Advanced Mathematics in Grades 6-8

The district will automatically enroll a student in grade 6 in an advanced mathematics course if the student performed in the top 40 percent on the grade 5 mathematics STAAR or a local measure that demonstrates proficiency in the student's grade 5 mathematics course work.

Enrollment in an advanced mathematics course in grade 6 will enable students to enroll in Algebra I in grade 8 and advanced mathematics in grades 9-12.

The student's parent may opt the student out of automatic enrollment in an advanced mathematics course.

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.

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 their child to receive one-to-one electronic communications from a district employee should contact the campus principal.

Objecting to the Release of Directory Information

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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.

The District has designated the following categories of information as directory information:

- Student name;
- Address,
- Telephone listing,
- Photograph,
- Place of birth,
- Honors and awards received,
- Dates of attendance,
- Grade level,
- Enrollment status,
- Most recent educational institution attended,
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams.

“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 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.

A parent or eligible student may object to the release of directory 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.

If a parent objects to the release of the student’s information included on the directory information response form, this objection also applies to the use of that information for school-sponsored purposes, such as:

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

Note: Also see [Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records](#) on page 20.

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

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

- Name,
- Address, and
- Telephone listing.

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

Inspecting Materials and Opting-Out of Data Collection Opportunities (PPRA)

In addition to FERPA, the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) protects student privacy. It 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.]

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.

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- Activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of protected 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:

- 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

Human Sexuality Instruction

As a part of the district's curriculum, students receive instruction related to human sexuality. The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) makes recommendations for course materials to the Board of Trustees. The board is responsible for selecting the final materials to be used.

State law requires that the district provide written notice before each school year of the board's decision to provide human sexuality instruction.

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

- Present abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice in relationship to all sexual activity for unmarried persons of school age;
- Devote more attention to abstinence from sexual activity than to any other behavior;
- Emphasize that abstinence, if used consistently and correctly, is the only method that is 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity;
- Direct adolescents to abstain from sexual activity before marriage as the most effective way to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases; and
- If included in the content of the curriculum, teach contraception and condom use in terms of human use reality rates instead of theoretical laboratory rates.

Per state law, here is a summary of the district's curriculum regarding human sexuality instruction:

Content Summary

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The district's human sexuality and responsibility curriculum provides information and skill development for students in kindergarten through grade twelve so that they may reach their highest potential for physical, emotional, mental and social health. The unit addresses the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Health Education and is supplemented with the National Sexuality Education Standards including healthy and unhealthy dating/romantic relationships, personal safety (dating violence and sex trafficking), reproductive anatomy and physiology, puberty, reproduction and sexually transmitted infections. Topics are introduced and presented at age-appropriate grade levels. As required by state law and Austin ISD [Board Policy](#) EHAA (Local), abstinence will remain a focus of all appropriate grade level lessons, and where applicable, contraceptives and condom use will be taught in terms of human use reality rates instead of theoretical laboratory rates. The [Austin ISD Human Sexuality and Responsibility web page](#) provides all course materials by grade level, a copy of the Parent/Guardian Notification letter, copies of the opt-in/permission letters and other related resources.

A parent is entitled to review the curriculum materials. In addition, a parent may remove his or her child from any part of the human sexuality instruction without academic, disciplinary, or other penalties. A parent may also choose to become more involved with the development of this curriculum by becoming a member of the district's SHAC. (See the campus principal for details.)

Consent Before Human Sexuality Instruction

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

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

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

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 Texas public schools social studies classes provide the following:

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

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

- A parent provides a written statement requesting that his or her child be excused,
- The district determines that the student has a conscientious objection to the recitation, 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

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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 submitted to the principal 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 87 and policy [EC](#) (LEGAL) for more information.]

Religious or Moral Beliefs

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

The removal may not be used to avoid a test and may not extend for an entire semester. 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](#), districts must obtain parental permission before 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.

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

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

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

Parent Review of 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, whether instruction is delivered in-person, virtually, or remotely.

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

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

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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.

District Review of Instructional Materials

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

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

For more information about requesting an instructional material review, contact the campus principal.

Notices of Certain Student Misconduct to Noncustodial Parent

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

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

In accordance with 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,

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- 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 13, are the right to:

- Inspect and review student records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access;
- Request an amendment to a student record the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of FERPA;
- Provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information from the student’s records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent; and
- File a complaint 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.

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

- When school officials have what federal law refers to as a "legitimate educational interest" in a student's records.
- Legitimate educational interest may include:
 - Working with the student;
 - Considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities;
 - Compiling statistical data;
 - Reviewing an educational record to fulfill the official's professional responsibility; or
 - Investigating or evaluating programs.
- School officials may include:
 - Board members and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals;
 - Teachers, school counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff (including district health or medical staff);
 - A person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a specific institutional service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, third-party vendor that offers online programs or software, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, school resource officer, or volunteer);
 - A person appointed to serve on a team to support the district's safe and supportive school program;
 - A parent or student serving on a school committee; or
 - A parent or student assisting a school official in the performance of his or her duties.

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

- To authorized representatives of various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers, the U.S. Comptroller General's office, the U.S. Attorney General's office, the U.S. Secretary of Education, the Texas Education Agency, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture's office, and Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers or, in certain cases, other child welfare representatives.
- To individuals or entities granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- To another school, district/system, or postsecondary educational institution to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which the student already is enrolled.
- In connection with financial aid for which a student has applied or has received.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions.

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- 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 13.]

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

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

Records may be reviewed in person during regular school hours. The custodian of records 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 4000 S. I-H 35 Frontage Rd, Austin, TX 78704; email at openrecords@austinisd.org.

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 custodian of records. 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 90, [Complaints and Concerns](#) on page 46, and Finality of Grades at policy [FNG\(LEGAL\)](#).]

The district's student records policy is found at policy [FL\(LEGAL\)](#) and (LOCAL) and is available at the principal's or superintendent's office or at [this link](#).

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.

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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. [See [DBA](#) (LEGAL) and (LOCAL)]

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;
- Educational records and enrollment
- 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.]

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Safety Transfers/Assignments

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

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

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

[See [Bullying](#) on page 35, and policies [FDB](#) and [FFI](#) for more information.]

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

[See policy [FDE](#) for more information.]

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

Student Use of a Service/Assistance Animal

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

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

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).

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.

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

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

If you have questions, please contact the district's foster care liaison:

Carla Roberson
McKinney Vento Coordinator
512-414-3690
carla.roberson@austinisd.org

[See [Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration](#) on page 49 and [Course Credit](#) on page 49]

A Student Who Is Homeless

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.

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

- Providing proof of residency documents
- Enroll in the local school; or continue attending their school of origin if that is your preference.
- Enroll in school immediately, even if lacking documents normally required for enrollment.
- Enroll in school and attend classes while the school gathers needed documents
- Providing immunization requirements;
- Receive transportation to and from their school of origin, if requested. This provision applies even if a student moves outside of the school of origins' attendance zone or district boundaries. School of origin transportation must continue for the duration of the child's homelessness or until the end of the school year in which a child becomes permanently housed.
- Educational program placement (if the student is unable to provide previous academic records or misses an application deadline during a period of homelessness);

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- 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;
- Receive educational services comparable to those provided to other students, according to the student's needs.

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.

For more information on services for students who are homeless, contact the district's homeless education liaison:

Carla Roberson
McKinney Vento Coordinator
512-414-3690
carla.roberson@austinisd.org

[See [Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration](#) on page 49 and [Course Credit](#) on page 49]

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 Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). The implementation of MTSS has the potential to have a positive impact to meet the needs of all struggling students.

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

MTSS links students to a variety of support options, including 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. Of note, if the campus suspects a student has dyslexia or dysgraphia and needs services, the school must ask for parent consent to conduct a Full Individual Initial Evaluation (FIIIE) through special education. Evaluations through the special education process makes sure that students who are eligible for special education services are

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identified and provided the support they need. Students are not evaluated without written parental consent.

Special Education Referrals

If a parent makes a **written request** for an initial evaluation for special education services to the executive director of special education services, a district administrative employee of the school district, or the campus principal or classroom teacher, 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 parental request for a special education evaluation may be made verbally; it does not need to be made in writing. Campus may assist the parent with developing a written request for an evaluation. 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 written parental 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 the campus principal or Executive Director of Special Education.

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,

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- An impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parent or guardian and representation by counsel, and
- A review procedure.

Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals

If you suspect a child has a disability that requires services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, please contact your child's home campus. Parents of children attending private schools or home schools can also request a Section 504 evaluation by contacting their child's home campus. For more information, please see [Parent and Educator Resource Guide to Section 504 in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools](#).

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

- For concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability, see the Section 504 Coordinator: Kimberley Pollard, 4000 S. I-H 35 Frontage Rd, Austin, TX 78704; 512-414-9669, kimberley.pollard@austinisd.org.
- For all other concerns regarding discrimination, see the campus principal or program director.

[See [A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504](#) on page 29.]

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

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A student may be eligible to receive specialized support if his or her primary language is not English, and the student could benefit from support in performing grade level class work in English.

A student may be eligible to participate in Bilingual or ESL programs if their home language is a language other than English. If the student qualifies for these services, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will determine the types of services that will support the student, including accommodations and designated supports related to classroom instruction, local assessments, and state-mandated assessments.

[See [Emergent Bilingual Students \(All Grade Levels\)](#) on page 58 and [Special Programs](#) on page 99.]

A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504

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

Section 504 is a federal law designed to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities. When an evaluation is requested, a committee will be formed to determine whether the student needs services and 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.]

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Section Two: Other Important Information for Parents and Students

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

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

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

Absences/Attendance

Regular school attendance is essential. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's education. The student and family 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.

Age 19 and Older

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

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;

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- Required court appearances;
- Appearing at a governmental office to obtain U.S. citizenship;
- Taking part in a US naturalization oath ceremony;
- Serving as an election clerk;
- Health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences related to autism services
- For students in the conservatorship of the state:
 - An activity required under a court-ordered service plan; or
 - Any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the student's participation in the activity outside of school hours.

For children of military families, absences of up to five days will be excused for a student to visit a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian going to, on leave from, or returning from certain deployments. [See [Children of Military Families](#) on page 23.]

who are physically on campus will not be allowed to participate in telehealth or other online appointments without specific authorization from an appropriate administrator. Students should not use district-issued technology, including wifi or internet, for telehealth appointments because use of district-owned equipment and its network systems is not private and may be monitored by the district. For more information, see [Telecommunication and Other Electronic Devices](#) on page 98.

Secondary Grade Levels

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

- Authorized by the board under policy [FEA](#)(LOCAL) and the student receives approval from the campus principal,
- Follows campus procedures to verify the visit, and
- Makes up any work missed.

The district will allow a student 17 years old or older to be absent for up to four days during the period the student is enrolled in high school to pursue enlistment in the U.S. armed services or Texas National Guard, provided the student verifies these activities to the district.

The district will allow a student to be absent for up to two days during the student's junior year and two days during the student's senior year for a career investigation day to visit a professional at that individual's workplace to determine the student's interest in pursuing a career in the professional's field, provided the student verifies these activities to the district.

The district will allow a student to be absent for up to two days per school year to serve as:

- An early voting clerk, provided the district's board has authorized this in policy [FEA](#)(LOCAL), the student notifies his or her teachers, and the student receives approval from the principal prior to the absences; or
- An election clerk, if the student makes up any work missed.

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The district will allow a student in grades 6–12 to be absent for the purpose of sounding “Taps” at a military honors funeral for a deceased veteran.

Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance

All Grade Levels

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

A student who is 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 ten or more unexcused absences (days or part of days) within a six-month period within the same school year, the law requires the school to send notice to the parent.

The notice will or may include:

- Warning for pending filing for Parent Contributing to Non-Attendance and/or notice of a Truant Conduct Referral
- 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 an attendance behavior improvement plan, school-based community service, referrals to counseling or other social services, or other appropriate measures.

For more detailed information and prevention of truancy visit the [website](#). For any questions about student absences, parents should contact their 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 may refer the student to truancy court.

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

Age 19 and Older

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After a student age 19 or older incurs a third unexcused absence, the district is required by law to send the student a letter explaining that the district may revoke the student's enrollment for the remainder of the school year if the student has more than five unexcused absences in a semester. As an alternative to revoking a student's enrollment, the district may implement a behavior improvement plan.

Attendance for Credit or Final Grade (All Grade Levels)

The District is exempt from provisions in state law denying credit or a final grade to a student in kindergarten-grade 12 who has not attended class 90 percent of the days the class is offered [See Policy [FEC](#)(Local) for more information]

However, attendance in all classes is essential for maximum educational opportunities. For a student on a secondary grade level campus to receive credit or a final grade in a class, the student must attend the class at least 90 percent of the days it is offered. A student who attends at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days may receive credit or a final grade if he or she completes a plan, approved by the principal, that allows the student to fulfill the class's instructional requirements. If a student is involved in a criminal or juvenile court proceeding, the judge presiding over the case must also approve the plan before the student receives credit or a final grade.

If a student attends fewer than 75 percent of the class days or does not complete the principal-approved plan, then the attendance review committee will determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit or a final grade. [See policy [FEC](#) for more information.]

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 30 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 family 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).

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Official Attendance-Taking Time (All Grade Levels)

Official attendance is taken every day at the official attendance time designated by the district, 10:30 a.m. Campuses offering a.m. and p.m. prekindergarten will have an additional time in the p.m. for those students. Campuses must submit an Official Attendance Period Override form for students who are not scheduled in an official attendance period or are scheduled into an official attendance period where attendance is not taken.

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 family 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. 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.

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.

Driver License Attendance Verification (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

A currently enrolled student seeking a driver's license shall submit the Texas Department of Public Safety Verification of Enrollment and Attendance Form (VOE), signed by the parent, to the home campus office at least 10 days before it is needed. The district will issue a VOE only if the student meets class credit or attendance requirements. The VOE form is available [here](#).

Further information may be found on the [Texas Department of Public Safety website](#).

Accountability under State and Federal Law (All Grade Levels)

Austin Independent School District 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](#). Hard copies of campus accountability reports are available from the campus administrators upon request.

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

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

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

Please connect with your high school campus college and career advisor to learn when the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test will be offered.

Bullying (All Grade Levels)

The district strives to prevent bullying, in accordance with the district's policies, by promoting a positive school culture; building healthy relationships between students and staff; encouraging reporting of bullying incidents, including anonymous reporting; and investigating and addressing reported bullying incidents.

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

- Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property;
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student;
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school; or
- Infringes on the rights of the victim at school.

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

- 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

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

The district will integrate into instruction research-based content designed to reduce bullying that is appropriate for students' age groups.

Students in elementary grades will participate in:

- Instruction designed so that students can recognize bullying behaviors and how to report them
- Age-appropriate discussions that encourage peers to intervene when they observe bullying occur
- Instruction that characterizes bullying as a behavior that results from the student's need to acquire more mature social or coping skills, not an unchangeable trait

Students in secondary grades will participate in:

- Instruction on the brain's ability to change and grow so the student recognizes bullying behavior can come from a developmental need to acquire more social skills, can change when the brain matures and learns better ways of coping, and is not an unchangeable trait
- Discussions that portray bullying as undesirable behavior and a means for attaining or maintaining social status at school, and that discourage students from using bullying as a tool for social status
- Instruction designed so that students recognize the role that reporting bullying behaviors plays in promoting a safe school community

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

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

If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying or witnesses the bullying of another student, the student or parent should notify a teacher, school counselor, principal, or another district employee as soon as possible. Any district employee aware of a report of a bullying incident will relay the report to an appropriate administrator. Procedures for reporting allegations of bullying may be found on the [district's website](#).

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A student may anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying by filling out the Austin ISD Student Complaint Form and filing a confidential complaint with the campus administrator.

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

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

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

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

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

Upon recommendation of the administration, the board may transfer a student found to have engaged in bullying to another classroom at the campus. In consultation with the student's 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 24.]

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 24, [Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#) on page 51, [Hazing](#) on page 69, policy [FFI](#), the district's Student Success Guide, and the district improvement plan, a copy of which can be viewed in the campus office.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

The district offers career and technical education programs in the following areas:

- Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources
- Architecture and Construction
- Arts, AV Technology and Communications
- Business Management, Finance and Marketing
- Education and Training
- Health Services
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Human Services
- Information Technology

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- Law and Public Service
- Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
- Transportation, Distribution and Logistics
- Other Career Courses:
 - Military Science Education
 - Additional Middle School Career Related Courses

Pathways in Technology (P-TECH) Programs (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

The Texas Education Agency's (TEA) Pathways in Technology Early College High Schools (P-TECH) initiative offers an open-enrollment program that creates workforce pathways aligned with high-demand, high-wage fields throughout the state. Students enrolled in the P-TECH program work toward an associate degree while gaining hands-on work experience.

Texas P-TECH programming is inspired by the national effort to refine career and technical education. Industry and IHE partnerships with P-TECH campuses ensure that students graduate college- and career-ready. Business and industry partners provide career mentoring, host site visits, offer paid internships to enrolled students, and serve on advisory councils to improve alignment of programming with workforce needs.

The district offers P-TECH programs in the following areas:

- Business Management
- Construction Management
- Computer Programming
- Cybersecurity
- Education
- Game Design Animation
- Hospitality Management and Meeting & Event Planning
- Pre-Health Science
- Radio, Television, and Film
- Real Estate
- User Experience Design

Participation in these programs is based on interest and aptitude, age appropriateness and class space availability. Austin ISD will take steps to ensure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to participation in all educational and CTE programs.

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

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

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

[See [Nondiscrimination Statement](#) on page 82 for the name and contact information for the Title IX coordinator and ADA/Section 504 coordinator, who will address certain allegations of discrimination.]

Celebrations (All Grade Levels)

Although a parent or grandparent may provide food to share for a school-designated function or for a student's birthday, please be aware that children in the school may have severe allergies to certain food products. Discuss any classroom allergies with the teacher before bringing food to share.

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

[See [Food Allergies](#) on page 77.]

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 initiated by contacting the Austin ISD Police Department at 512-414-1703. 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.

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.

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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 51.]

Warning Signs of Trafficking

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

Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, 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:

- 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;
- Being employed and having a work permit but clearly working outside the permitted hours for students;
- Owning 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.

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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 include resources to help increase awareness 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 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](#)

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

For students entering grade nine during the 2011–12 school year and thereafter, class rank shall be determined by descending order of students' weighted GPAs earned in courses that satisfy the students' graduation plans in the following curriculum categories:

- English/Language Arts;
- Mathematics;
- Science;
- Social Studies; and
- Languages Other Than English (LOTE).

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For Math and Science, if a student exceeds the required number of courses necessary to satisfy the graduation requirements in one or more of the disciplines listed above, then the courses that yield the highest-grade points within those disciplines that satisfy the graduation requirements will be included in calculating class rank. For English/Language Arts, the highest grades used to satisfy ELA 4 are used. For Social Studies, the highest whole grade between W. Geography and W. History are used. For LOTE, the language with the most courses is used and then, within that language, the highest grades are used. For example, if a student has four Spanish courses, all with 90s, and three French courses all with 100s, the Spanish will be used because the student took more of them. Computer science courses will be counted as a LOTE credit in rank calculations under the following conditions.

- The student is classified as a senior.
- The student does not have enough credits in a foreign language to satisfy the LOTE graduation requirement. For example, a student with Spanish 1 and 2 credit cannot use computer science courses as LOTE credit for the purpose of rank calculations.

Elective courses are not included in calculating class rank. The required number of credits/courses will vary according to the student's intended graduation.

Valedictorian/Salutatorian, Highest Ranking Senior

For purposes of identifying local honors positions of the valedictorian, the salutatorian and the highest-ranking graduate, class rank shall be calculated at the end of fourth nine weeks using the grades from courses that satisfy graduation requirements within the following disciplines: English/language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and LOTE.

The valedictorian and the salutatorian shall be the eligible students with the highest and second-highest class ranking as determined by this policy who have:

1. Completed the Recommended High School Program, the Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program, or the Foundation Program with the Distinguished Level of Achievement;
2. Met all course requirements or demonstrated subject mastery (course proficiency) through state-approved placement examinations; and
3. Been continuously enrolled in and attending classes at the same district high school for two regular school years immediately preceding the students' graduation.

In case of a tie for the position of valedictorian, the students who tie shall be recognized as co-valedictorians, and the position of salutatorian shall remain vacant.

In case of a tie for the position of salutatorian, the students who tie shall be recognized as co-salutatorians.

District honor graduates shall include students whose class rank is within the:

1. Top two percent of the graduating class. These students shall be designated "Graduates with Highest Honors."
2. Next three percent of the graduating class. These students shall be designated "Graduates with Higher Honors."
3. Next five percent of the graduating class. These students shall be designated "Graduates with High Honors."

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

An out-of-school tester shall be ranked with the respective graduating class in which he or she completes all coursework requirements, regardless of when he or she masters state-mandated end-of-course (EOC) assessments.

For purposes of awarding the state certificate entitling a student to receive a college tuition grant under Education Code 54.201, the highest-ranking graduate shall be the eligible student who graduates with the highest ranking in his or her graduating class.

Class Rank and Transcripts

Changes impacting a student's GPA between ranking periods will not impact a student's rank until the next ranking period. However, the transcript and/or other supplemental documentation, including college and scholarship applications, will always reflect a student's most current GPA. [See [EIC\(LEGAL\)](#)]

For the purpose of applications to institutions of higher education, the district shall also calculate class ranking as required by state law. The district's eligibility criteria for local graduation honors shall apply only for local recognitions and shall not restrict class ranking for the purpose of automatic admission under state law. [For further information, see policy [EIC.](#)]

Class Schedules (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

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

[See [Schedule Changes](#) on page 94 for information related to student requests to revise their course schedule.]

College and University Admissions and Financial Aid (All Grade Levels)

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

- Completes the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation graduation program (a student must graduate with at least one endorsement and must have taken Algebra II as one of the four required math courses); or
- Satisfies the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks or earns at least a 1500 out of 2400 on the SAT.

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

Should a college or university adopt an admissions policy that automatically accepts the top 25 percent of a graduating class, the provisions above will also apply to a student ranked in the top 25 percent of his or her class.

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The University of Texas at Austin may limit the number of automatically admitted students to 75 percent of the University's enrollment capacity for incoming resident freshmen. From the summer 2023 term through the spring 2025 term, the University will admit the top six percent of a high school's graduating class who meet the above requirements. Additional applicants will be considered by the University through a holistic review process.

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

- Automatic college admission
- Curriculum requirements for financial aid
- Benefits of completing the requirements for automatic admission and financial aid
- The Texas First Early High School Completion Program, which requires a student to provide an official copy of assessment results and transcripts, as applicable, to receive credit for the assessments and credits required for early graduation under the program
- The Texas First Scholarship Program
- The Future Texas Teachers Scholarship Program

Parents and students will be asked to sign an acknowledgment that they received this information.

Students and parents should contact the school counselor for further information about automatic admissions, the application process, and deadlines.

[See [Class Rank/Highest-Ranking Student](#) on page 41 for information specifically related to how the district calculates a student's rank in class, and requirements for [Graduation](#) on page 63 for information associated with the foundation graduation program.]

[See [A Student in the Conservatorship of the State \(Foster Care\)](#) on page 24 for information on assistance in transitioning to higher education for students in foster care.]

College Credit Courses (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

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

- Certain courses taught at the high school campus, which may include courses termed dual credit, dual enrollment, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or college preparatory;
- Enrollment in AP or dual credit courses through the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN);
- Enrollment in courses taught in conjunction and in partnership with institutions of higher learning, which may be offered on or off campus;
- Enrollment in courses taught at other colleges or universities; and
- Certain Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses.

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

All these methods have eligibility requirements and must be approved prior to enrollment in the course. Please see the school counselor for more information. Depending on the student's grade level and the course, a state-mandated end-of-course assessment may be required for graduation.

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

Early College High School Program (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

The Texas Education Agency's (TEA) Early College High School (ECHS) initiative is an open-enrollment program that blends college and high school coursework, enabling students to earn up to two years of college credit (60 hours) tuition-free while enrolled in high school. This program aims to support historically underserved and at-risk students, providing an access ramp to postsecondary education for those most in need.

Students enrolled in the ECHS program receive highly personalized attention and follow personalized graduation plans. Dedicated staff mentor and guide these students, helping them develop critical soft skills needed for college and career success.

According to research done by the American Institutes for Research, ECHS students are nearly three times as likely to earn an associate degree or bachelor's degree than their non-ECHS peers.

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 situation, which may include real-time or automated messages. An emergency situation may include early dismissal, delayed opening, or restricted access to the campus due to severe weather, another emergency, or a security threat. It is crucial to notify your child's school when the phone number has changed.

[See [Safety](#) on page 92 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.

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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 92 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.

For those complaints and concerns that cannot be resolved informally, the board has adopted a Student and Parent Complaints/Grievances policy [FNG\(LOCAL\)](#). A copy of this policy and complaint forms may be obtained in the principal's or on the district's website using this [link](#).

- 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 with the principal, a parent or student may request a conference with the principal's direct supervisor.
- If the concern is not resolved with the principal's direct supervisor, a parent or student may request a conference with the Associate Superintendent for Elementary or Secondary Schools
- If the concern is not resolved, a parent or student may request a conference with the Chief of Schools.
- If the concern is not resolved, a parent or student may request a conference with the Superintendent.
- If the concern is still unresolved, the district provides a process for parents and students to appeal to the Board of Trustees.

Conduct (All Grade Levels)

Applicability of School Rules

The board has adopted a Student Success Guide 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 Success Guide. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards set out in the Student Success Guide, as well as campus and classroom rules.

During summer instruction, the Student Handbook and Student Success Guide 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.

Deliveries

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

Disruption of School Operations

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

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

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

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

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

Social Events

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

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

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

Counseling

The district has a comprehensive school counseling program that includes:

- A guidance curriculum to help students develop their full educational potential, including the student's interests and career objectives;

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- 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.

High School Grade Levels

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

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

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

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

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

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. 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 69, and [Child Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children](#) on page 39, and [Dating Violence](#) on page 51.]

Course Credit (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

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

Credit by Examination—If a Student Has Taken the Course/Subject (Grades 6–12)

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

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

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

The attendance review committee may also offer a student with excessive absences an opportunity to earn credit for a course by passing an examination.

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

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

A student will be permitted to earn credit by examination for an academic course or subject area for which the student had no prior instruction for advancement or to accelerate to the next grade level.

The examinations offered by the district are approved by the district's board of trustees. Testing windows for these examinations will be published in district publications and on the district's calendar of events at [Austin ISD Calendar](#) [See [Testing Calendar](#)]. A student may take a specific examination only once per testing window.

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

When another entity administers an examination, the student and the district must comply with the testing schedule of the other entity.

If a student plans to take an examination, the student or parent must register with the school counselor by the registration date listed on the Austin ISD calendar. [See policy [EHDC](#) for more information.]

Kindergarten Acceleration

Students considered for acceleration into first grade must score at or above the 90th percentile on a District-approved, nationally recognized norm-referenced test. Procedures will be as follows:

- The principal will set up a conference prior to the first day of instruction. Included in the conference will be the parent or guardian, the principal, and the child's kindergarten teacher and other staff deemed appropriate by the principal.
- The conference will be used to gather background information about the child, to share kindergarten and first-grade curricula with parents, and to determine if additional steps are necessary.
- The parents or guardian will be given the opportunity to present evidence that suggests the child is likely to meet success in the first grade, such as former teacher reports, student work, and the like.
- A decision to keep the child in kindergarten may be made at this time, or if there is evidence that suggests the child may be successful in first grade, additional information may be collected.
- A plan of action for accommodating the child in first grade or kindergarten will be presented to the parents or guardian. Careful consideration will be given to the child's performance expectations and the impact of this decision on the child's entire school career.

The final decision will rest with the principal. If the decision is to administer credit by examination for acceleration, the following will apply:

- These examinations will be ordered through Systemwide Testing and administered at the campus by the principals' designee.
- Based on the test results, chronological age, observed social and emotional development of the student, and other criteria deemed appropriate by the principal, the principal will decide if the student may accelerate to the next grade level.
- A written statement of the principal's approval and documentation justifying the approval for acceleration will be placed in the student's cumulative folder.

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;

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- A district representative recommends that the student be accelerated; and
- The student's parent gives written approval of the grade advancement.

Students in Grades 6–12

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

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

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

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

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

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

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly address inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are based on a person's race, color, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, age, immigration status, 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. You may also view this policy [online](#). [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;

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- Threats to harm a student's past or current dating partner;
- Attempts to isolate the student from friends and family;
- Stalking; or
- Encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

Discrimination

Discrimination is defined as any conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, immigration status, 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.

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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:

- 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](#) on page 35.]

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 and illegal conduct, which includes dating violence, prohibited harassment as defined by Texas Penal Code, and retaliation, will be promptly investigated and referred to law enforcement once notified of the incident.

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

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

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

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

Discrimination

[See [Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#) on page 51.]

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.

The distance learning opportunities that the district makes available to district students are DELTA, Twilight, and Garza Online.

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) (Secondary Grade Levels)

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

Depending on the TXVSN course in which a student enrolls, the course may be subject to the "no pass, no play" rules. [See [Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations](#) on page 59.] In addition, a student who enrolls in a TXVSN course for which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment is required must still take the corresponding EOC assessment.

A parent may ask questions or request that their child be enrolled in a TXVSN course by contacting the school counselor. Unless an exception is made by the 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](#) addressing distance learning will be distributed to parents of middle and high school students at least once each year.

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.

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Non-school Materials

From Students

Students must obtain prior approval from the principal before selling, posting, circulating, or distributing more than 10 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 non-school material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization. Approval will be granted or denied within two school days.

The campus will designate the location for approved non-school 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 non-school material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Success Guide. Materials displayed without approval will be removed.

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

From Others

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

To be considered for distribution, any non-school material must meet the limitations on content established in the policy, include the name of the sponsoring person or organization, and be submitted to the chief of school leadership for prior review. The superintendent's designee will approve or reject the materials within two school days of the time the materials are received.

The requestor may appeal a rejection in accordance with the appropriate district complaint policy. [See policies [DGBA](#) or [GF](#) for more information.]

Prior review will not be required for:

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

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

Dress and Grooming (All Grade Levels)

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

1. Basic Principle:

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- Certain body parts must be covered for all students at all times.
 - Clothes must be worn in a way such that the abdomen, genitals, buttocks, breasts, and nipples are fully covered with opaque fabric.
 - All items listed in the “must wear” and “may wear” categories below must meet this basic principle.
2. Students Must Wear*, while following the basic principle of Section 1 above:
- Shirt (with fabric that touches the waistband in the front, back, and on the sides under the arms), AND
 - Pants/jeans or the equivalent (for example, a skirt, sweatpants, leggings, a dress or shorts), AND
 - Shoes.
3. Students May Wear, as long as these items do not violate Section 1 above:
- Religious headwear;
 - Hats facing straight forward or straight back that must allow the face and ears to be visible to staff and not interfere with the line of sight;
 - Hoodie sweatshirts (wearing the hood over the head is allowed, but the face and ears must be visible to school staff);
 - Fitted pants, including opaque leggings, yoga pants, and “skinny jeans”;
 - Ripped jeans, as long as underwear and buttocks are not exposed;
 - Tank tops, including spaghetti straps and halter tops;
 - Athletic attire; and
 - Hairstyles of any length and style.
4. Students Cannot Wear:
- Violent language or images.
 - Images or language depicting drugs or alcohol (or any illegal item or activity), or any other substance prohibited under [FNCF\(LEGAL\)](#).
 - Hate speech, profanity, pornography.
 - Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class or consistently marginalized groups.
 - Any clothing that reveals visible undergarments (waistbands and straps excluded).
 - Swimsuits (except as required in class, field trips, or athletic practice see “Extracurricular Activities”).
 - Accessories that could be considered dangerous or could be used as a weapon.
 - Any item that obscures the face or ears (except as a religious observance).

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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 Success Guide.

Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices (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 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 100.]

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 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. See campus policy pertaining to who may pick up the confiscated telecommunications device from the principal's office.

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 97 and policy [FNF](#) for more information.]

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Success Guide. 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 follow the Austin ISD [user agreement](#) that contains applicable rules for use (separate from this handbook).

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

Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources

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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 can find the Acceptable Use Policy [here](#). 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 Success Guide, 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.

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

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

End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments

[See [Graduation](#) on page 63 and [Standardized Testing](#) on page 99.]

Emergent Bilingual Students (All Grade Levels)

Note that the term “Emergent Bilingual” has replaced the term “English Learners” in Austin ISD Board Policy ([EHBE](#) Local, revised 5/29/2020) and in the Texas Education Code (effective 9/1/2021).

A student classified as Emergent Bilingual 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.

Austin ISD's Bilingual/ESL programs include:

- Elementary Dual Language (Spanish/English, Mandarin/English, and Vietnamese/English). If the student's elementary home campus does not have dual language programming, the campus and district will facilitate a "bilingual transfer" to a nearby campus that offers dual language programming.
- Secondary Dual Language (Spanish/English)

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- English as a Second Language (ESL) Content-Based and ESL Pull-Out

For more information about Dual Language programs and where they are offered, please visit the [Austin ISD Dual Language Program website](#). All Austin ISD Middle School and High School campuses provide ESL services.

To determine a student's level of proficiency in English, the LPAC will use information from the state-wide language assessment as determined by TEA. If the student is identified as an Emergent Bilingual learner based on the state-wide language assessment data, the LPAC will designate instructional accommodations and program placement in Dual Language or ESL. State assessment data determines a student's continued eligibility for services as an Emergent Bilingual learner each year.

The LPAC will also determine whether linguistic designated supports are necessary for any state-mandated assessments. The STAAR Spanish, on page 92, may be administered to an Emergent Bilingual student up to grade 5. In limited circumstances per TEA guidelines, a student's LPAC may exempt the student from an otherwise required state-mandated assessment or may waive certain graduation requirements related to the English I end-of-course (EOC) assessment. The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) will also be administered to Emergent Bilingual students who qualify for services including students that have denied services.

If a student is considered an Emergent Bilingual 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 103.]

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.

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

Student safety in extracurricular activities is a priority of the district. Parents are entitled to review the district's records regarding the age of each football helmet used by the campus, including when a helmet has been reconditioned.

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

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However, if a student receives a grade below 70 at the end of a grading period in an Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) course, or an honors or dual credit course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, or languages other than English, the student remains eligible with a grade of 60 and above in the class described for participation in all extracurricular activities.

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

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

In addition, the following applies to all extracurricular activities:

- A student who receives special education services and who fails to meet the standards in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks.
- An ineligible student may practice or rehearse but may not participate in any competitive activity.
- 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 Success Guide or by board policy will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization's standards of behavior.

Offices and Elections

Certain clubs, organizations, and performing groups will hold elections for student officers. Contact campus for these activity options.

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.

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- 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 103.]
- A maximum fee of \$50 for an educational program outside of regular school hours for a student who has lost credit or has not been awarded a final grade because of absences and whose parent chooses the program for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance requirements. The fee will be charged only if the parent or guardian signs a district-provided request form.
- In some cases, a fee for a course taken through the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN).

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

Fundraising (All Grade Levels)

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

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 51.]

Grade-Level Classification (Grades 9–12 Only)

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

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Credits Earned	Classification
5 – 9.5	Grade 10 (Sophomore)
10 – 14.5	Grade 11 (Junior)
15	Grade 12 (Senior)

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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:

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

[See [Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences](#) on page 90 for additional information on grading guidelines.]

Graduation (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

Requirements for a Diploma

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

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

Testing Requirements for Graduation

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

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

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

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

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

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

[See [Standardized Testing](#) on page 99.]

Foundation Graduation Program

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

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

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

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

A [Personal Graduation Plan](#) will be completed for each high school student, as described on page 67.

State law prohibits a student from graduating solely under the foundation graduation program without an endorsement unless, after the student's sophomore year, the student and student's parent are advised of the specific benefits of graduating with an endorsement and submit written permission to the school counselor for the student to graduate without an endorsement. A student who wishes to attend a four-year university or college after graduation must carefully consider whether graduation under the foundation program without an endorsement will satisfy the admission requirements of the student's desired college or university.

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

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

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

Credits Required

The foundation graduation program requires completion of the following credits:

Course Area	Number of Credits: Foundation Graduation Program	Number of Credits: Foundation Graduation Program with an Endorsement
English/Language Arts	4	4
Mathematics	3	4
Science	3	4
Social Studies, including Economics	3	3
Physical Education	1	1
Languages other than English	2	2
Fine Arts	1	1
Electives	4.5	6.5
Total	22 credits	26 credits

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Additional considerations apply in some course areas, including:

- **Mathematics.** To obtain the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation graduation program, a student must complete an endorsement and take Algebra II as one of the 4 mathematics credits. A student's completion of the distinguished level of achievement is a requirement to be considered for automatic admission to a Texas four-year college or university and will be included on a student's transcript.
- **Physical education.** A student who is unable to participate in physical activity due to a disability or illness may be able to substitute a course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, or another locally determined credit-bearing course for the required credit of physical education. This determination will be made by the student's ARD committee, Section 504 committee, or other campus committee, as applicable.
- **Languages other than English.** Students are required to earn 2 credits in the same language other than English to graduate.
- A student may satisfy one of the two required credits by successfully completing in elementary school a dual language immersion program or a course in American Sign Language.
- In limited circumstances, a student may be able to substitute this requirement with other courses, as determined by a district committee authorized by law to make these decisions for the student.

Available Endorsements

A student must specify an endorsement he or she wishes to pursue by the end of the 10th grade year.

Financial Aid Application Requirement

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

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

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

Please contact the school counselor for more information.

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

- A screenshot that includes the processed date field of the FAFSA ApplyTexas Counselor Suite
- Notification, such as a copy of an email, from the United States Department of Education verifying completion of the FAFSA

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- A copy or screenshot of the FAFSA acknowledgment page
- A screenshot of the TASFA submission acknowledgment page (from those institutions that offer an electronic form)
- An acknowledgment receipt from an institution of higher education (IHE)
- A copy of a financial aid award letter from an IHE

Personal Graduation Plans

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

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

The school will review personal graduation plan options with each student entering grade 9 and his or her parents/caregivers. Before the end of grade 9, a student and his or her parents/caregivers will be required to sign off on a personal graduation plan that promotes college and workforce readiness, promotes career placement and advancement, and facilitates the transition from secondary to postsecondary education.

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

Please review the [TEA Graduation Toolkit](#).

A student may, with parental permission, amend his or her personal graduation plan after the initial confirmation.

Available Course Options for All Graduation Programs

Each spring, the district will update students on the courses required or offered in each curriculum area so students can enroll for the upcoming school year.

Note: The district may require the completion of certain courses for graduation even if these courses are not required by the state for graduation.

Not all courses are offered at every secondary campus in the district. A student who wants to take a course not offered at his or her regular campus should contact the school counselor about student sharing, a transfer or other alternatives. If the parents of at least 22 students request a transfer for a course in the required curriculum other than fine arts or career and technical education (CTE), the district will offer the course the following year either by teleconference or at the school from which the transfers were requested.

Certificates of Coursework Completion

A certificate of coursework completion will not be issued to a student who has successfully completed state and local credit requirements for graduation but has not yet demonstrated satisfactory performance on the state-mandated tests required for graduation.

Students with Disabilities

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Upon the recommendation of the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee, a student with a disability who receives special education services may be permitted to graduate under the provisions of his or her individualized education program (IEP) and in accordance with state rules.

A student who receives special education services and has completed four years of high school but has not met the requirements of his or her IEP may participate in graduation ceremonies and receive a certificate of attendance. The student may then remain enrolled to complete the IEP and earn his or her high school diploma but will only be allowed to participate in one graduation ceremony.

[See policy [FMH](#)(LEGAL) for more information.]

ARD committees will make instructional and assessment decisions for students with disabilities who receive special education services in accordance with state law. A student who receives special education services may earn an endorsement under the foundation program. If the student's curriculum requirements for the endorsement were modified, the student's ARD committee will determine whether the modified curriculum is sufficiently rigorous to earn the endorsement. The ARD committee must also determine whether the student must perform satisfactorily on any end-of-course assessment to earn an endorsement.

Participation in Commencement Ceremonies

Students must meet all state and local graduation requirements, including passing all exit-level exams, to be eligible to participate in commencement ceremonies. Special Education students who have completed academic requirements, but not their IEP can participate in the ceremony, but will receive an attendance certificate instead of a diploma. A student who is subject to mandatory removal for disciplinary reasons during the final three weeks of the school year immediately preceding graduation shall not be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony and related graduation activities.

Graduation Speakers

Certain graduating students will be given an opportunity to speak at graduation ceremonies.

A student must meet local eligibility criteria, which may include requirements related to student conduct, to have a speaking role. Students eligible for speaking roles will be notified by the principal and given an opportunity to volunteer.

[See the Student Success Guide and policy [FNA](#) (LOCAL) for more information.] [For student speakers at other school events, see [Student Speakers](#) on page 100.]

Graduation Expenses

Because students and parents will incur expenses to participate in the traditions of graduation—such as the purchase of invitations, senior ring, cap and gown, and senior picture—both the student and parent should monitor progress toward completion of all requirements for graduation. The expenses often are incurred in the junior year or first semester of the senior year. [See [Fees](#) on page 60.]

Scholarships and Grants

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

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

Harassment and Bullying

[See [Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#) on page 51.]

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

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly respond to inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are based on a person's race, color, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, age, immigration status or any other basis prohibited by law. [See policy [FFH](#).]

Upon receiving a report of prohibited conduct as defined by policy [FFH](#), the district will determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by that policy. If not, the district will refer to policy [FFI](#) to determine if the allegations, if proven, would constitute bullying, as defined by law and that policy. If the alleged prohibited conduct, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct and would also be considered bullying as defined by law and policy [FFI](#), an investigation of bullying will also be conducted.

To the extent possible, the district will respect the privacy of the student; however, limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct a thorough investigation and to comply with the law. Allegations of prohibited conduct, which includes dating violence, discrimination, harassment and retaliation, will be promptly investigated.

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

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

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;

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- An activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the student's mental or physical health, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement to small spaces, calisthenics, or consumption of food, liquids, drugs, or other substances;
- An activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to perform a duty or task that violates the Penal Code; and
- Coercing a student to consume a drug or alcoholic beverage in an amount that would lead a reasonable person to believe the student is intoxicated.

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

[See [Bullying](#) on page 35 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.

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 using diarrhea-vomiting 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.

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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. The form cannot be copied, the original document must be presented to the school nurse, before admission to school. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to order the maximum amount of forms, as different entities may request an original. 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 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 76, 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.]

If immunizations are presented from a country outside the U.S, written in another language, they must be transcribed by the public health or medical provider to show compliance with DSHS state immunization laws to include dates with month/day/year and provider signature or stamp.

Lice (All Grade Levels)

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

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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. 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](#).

[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 must be accompanied by a medical practitioner's written order and written parent permission and be administered by the nurse or another authorized district employee. A student may only self carry an asthma inhaler, EpiPen, or diabetic supplies/medications. All other medications must be in the nurse's office and accompanied by written medical practitioners orders and parental consent. End of year medication return policy is to notify parents to pick up any unused medications by the last day of school or they will be disposed of.

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 those 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. All medications must have a valid medical practitioner's signed and dated medical order accompanying the medication.
- Nonprescription medication in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request. All medications must be accompanied by a U.S. Medical Provider's written order. **Note:** Insect repellent is considered a nonprescription medication. All medications must have a valid medical practitioner's signed and dated medical order accompanying the medication.
- Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.

An elementary or secondary student may possess and self-apply sunscreen to avoid overexposure to the sun. An elementary student's teacher or other district personnel will apply sunscreen to the student's exposed skin if the student brings the sunscreen to school and asks for help applying it. If a secondary student needs assistance with sunscreen application, please address the need with the school nurse.

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

Asthma and Severe Allergic Reactions

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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.

See also [Food Allergies](#) on page 77.

Unassigned Epinephrine Auto-injectors and Narcan

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

An “unassigned epinephrine auto-injector” is an epinephrine auto-injector prescribed by an authorized health-care provider in the name of the school issued with a non-patient-specific standing delegation order for the administration of an epinephrine auto-injector.

Epinephrine auto-injectors include brand-name devices such as EpiPens®.

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

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

For additional information, see [FFAC\(LOCAL\)](#).

Unassigned Opioid Antagonists

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

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

Steroids (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

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

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

Mental Health Support (All Grade Levels)

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

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- 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 post intervention (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 you have questions or concerns about your child's mental health, contact your child's school counselor and ask for information about District and community resources; or dial 211 (United Way Capital Area, available 24/7).

State-wide and national informational resources include the following:

- [National Institute of Mental Health](#) (NIMH).
- [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#) (NAMI), 512-693-2000; 1-800-633-3760.
- [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#); crisis line: 1-800-273-TALK (8255); crisis text line: Text "TALK" to 741741; information line: 1-888-333-AFSP (2377).

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 your child's school counselor 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 45 for the district's comprehensive school counseling program.
- **Physical and Mental Health Resources** on page 73 for campus and community mental and physical health resources; and
- **Policies and Procedures that Promote Student Physical and Mental Health** on page 73 for board-adopted policies and administrative procedures that promote student health.

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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 addition, students receive 30 minutes of unstructured time (Recess) daily with their classroom teacher. Prekindergarten students will receive 30 minutes of daily physical education and 30 minutes of recess which will be provided by their classroom teachers or PreK TAs. These physical activity requirements are 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 or visit the Health and Physical Education Website at [Austin ISD PE Health](#).

Middle School

The district will ensure that students in middle or junior high school will engage in at least 225 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity within each two-week period for four semesters. Students may substitute general physical education with Athletics, Dance, JROTC, or Off-Campus PE. Students must enroll in one of these courses for two semesters in 6th grade and at least one semester in 7th and 8th grade. These requirements are in accordance with policies at [EHAB](#), [EHAC](#), [EHBG](#), and [FFA](#).

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

Temporary Restriction from Participation in Physical Education

Students who are temporarily restricted from participation in physical education will not actively participate in skill demonstration but must remain in class to learn the concepts of the lessons. In addition, The Restricted Physical Activity Student Report Form must be completed by a member of the healing arts licensed to practice in Texas. The form is located on the Health and Physical Education website at [Austin ISD PE Health](#).

Physical Fitness Assessment (Grades 3–12)

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3–12 who are enrolled in a physical education course or a course for which physical education credit is awarded. Students complete this assessment one time per year or semester test.

Please contact your child's Physical Education teacher if you have any additional questions. Students may be exempted from one or all of the assessments. To be exempted, a member of the healing arts licensed to practice in Texas must complete the Restricted Physical Active Student Report. The form is located at [Austin ISD PE Health](#).

Physical Health Screenings / Examinations

Athletics Participation (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

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

- A district athletics program.
- District marching band.
- District dance team and/or drill team

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- Any district extracurricular program identified by the superintendent. This examination is required to be submitted annually to the district.

Students should be aware of the rare possibility of sudden cardiac arrest, which in athletes is usually caused by a previously unsuspected heart disease or disorder. A student may request an electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG) to screen for such disorders, in addition to his or her required physical examination.

See the UIL's explanation of [sudden cardiac arrest](#) for more information.

Spinal Screening Program

School-based spinal screening helps identify adolescents with abnormal spinal curvature at an early stage, when the curve is mild and may go unnoticed. Early detection is key to controlling spinal deformities. Spinal screening is non-invasive and conducted in accordance with the most recent, nationally accepted and peer-reviewed standards. By signing acceptance of the Austin ISD Student Handbook, the parent/guardian consents to these screening(s). Parents have the right to refuse any health screening, and are required to notify the school nurse, and must provide the results of the vision/hearing/spinal or acanthosis results from a medical practitioner.

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

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

Other Examinations and Screenings (All Grade Levels)

Students are required to undergo a risk assessment of Acanthosis Nigricans (hyperinsulinemia) at the same time the district screens students for hearing and vision issues or for abnormal spinal curvatures. By signing acceptance of the Austin ISD Student Handbook, the parent/guardian consents to these screening(s). Parents have the right to refuse any health screening, and are required to notify the school nurse, and must provide the results of the vision/hearing/spinal or acanthosis results from a medical practitioner.

[See policy [FFAA](#) for more information.]

Special Health Concerns (All Grade Levels)

Bacterial Meningitis (All Grade Levels)

Please see the [district's website](#) for information regarding meningitis.

Note: The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) requires at least one meningococcal vaccination on or after a student's 11th birthday, unless the student received the vaccine at age 10. Also note that entering college students must show, with limited exception, evidence of receiving a bacterial meningitis vaccination within the five-year period prior to enrolling in and taking courses at an institution of higher education. Please see the school nurse for more information, as this may affect a student who wishes to enroll in a dual credit course taken off campus.

[See [Immunization](#) on page 70.]

Diabetes

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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.

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 using this [link](#).

[See [Celebrations](#) on page 39 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 29 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 Success Guide 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 district or campus nurse,
- Each campus professional school counselor,

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- The district or campus police 512-414-1703,
- The campus administration.

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 by searching the policies below using this [link](#).

- 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 Austin ISD Strategic Plan details the district's strategies to improve student performance through evidence-based practices that address physical and mental health.

Please visit our website at [Austin ISD Strategic Plan](#) for further information regarding these procedures and access to the Austin ISD Strategic Plan.

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

During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) holds meetings. Additional information regarding the district's SHAC is available from the SHAC [website](#).

[See [Human Sexuality Instruction](#) on page 16 and policies [BDF](#) and [EHAA](#) for more information.]

Student Wellness Policy/Wellness Plan (All Grade Levels)

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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 are encouraged to contact the [Austin ISD Department of Health Services](#) at health@austinisd.org with questions about the content or implementation of the district's wellness policy and plan.

Homework (All Grade Levels)

Teachers may assign homework for students to complete as part of their coursework and may grade the work to include it in the calculation of the grade for the class. Homework is typically assigned after a standard is taught to reinforce or extend learning, provide extra practice or as a form of assessment. However, homework may also be assigned before a standard is taught to generate interest in the topic for the student. Concerns about the length, content or purpose of a homework assignment should be directed to the teacher. After consultation with the teacher, additional concerns about homework assignments should be addressed with the principal.

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.

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- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services (CPS), Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.
- To comply with a properly issued directive from a juvenile court to take a student into custody.

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

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

Notification of Law Violations

The district is required by state law to notify:

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

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.

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

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

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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.

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.

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 Success Guide.

Lost and Found (All Grade Levels)

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

Makeup Work

Makeup Work Because of Absence (All Grade Levels)

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

The student will be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work within the time specified by the teacher. [See Policy [FEC\(LOCAL\)](#).]

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 33.]

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

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

DAEP Makeup Work

Elementary and Middle/Junior High School Grade Levels Grades 9–12

If a high school student is enrolled in a foundation curriculum course at the time of removal to a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP), he or she will have an opportunity to complete the course before the beginning of the next school year. The district may provide the opportunity to complete the course through an alternative method, including a correspondence course, another distance learning option, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. [See policy [FOCA](#)(LEGAL) for more information.]

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

Alternative Means to Receive Coursework

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

Opportunity to Complete Courses

A student removed from the regular classroom to ISS or another setting, other than a DAEP, will have an opportunity to complete before the beginning of the next school year each course the student was enrolled in at the time of removal from the regular classroom. The district may provide the opportunity by any method available, including a correspondence course, another 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, color, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, immigration status, 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.

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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: *Julianne Gula, 4000 S. I-H 35 Frontage Rd., Austin, TX 78704; 512-414-5216*. Reports can be made at any time and by any person, including during non-business hours, by mail, phone, or email (Complaint Form can be found [here](#)). During district business hours, reports may also be made in person. Upon the district receiving notice or an allegation of sex-based harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly respond in accordance with the process described at [FFH\(LOCAL\)](#).

The following district representative has 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: *Cherry Lee, 4000 S. I-H 35 Frontage Rd., Austin, TX 78704. 512-414-6620*.
- For all other concerns regarding discrimination, see the campus principal or program director.

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

Non-traditional Academic Programs (All Grade Levels)

Diversified Education through Leadership, Technology and Academics (DELTA)

DELTA is an academic program available to students enrolled in each Austin ISD high school. DELTA is an open-entry, open-exit program available at all traditional and alternative high schools in the district. It employs individualized and self-paced instruction through the use of an online web-based curriculum program. Its goal is to help students accrue or recover academic credits and graduate from high school. Students are scheduled into a DELTA class by their campus counselor. Contact the school counselor for additional information on the program.

Homebound Program

Homebound Program provides home-based instructional services for students confined to home or a hospital for medical reasons. A student qualifies if he/she is expected to be confined at home or hospital bedside for four weeks and has a medical condition documented by a physician licensed to practice in the U.S.

Pregnancy Related Services (PRS)

PRS provides a student, during pregnancy and after delivery, instructional support in order to stay on track in their academic courses. Services are provided when a student is: (1) pregnant and attending classes on a campus; (2) confined to home due to medical complications; and (3) confined during the six weeks postpartum period.

Twilight Credit Recovery Program

Twilight provides all Austin ISD secondary students, grades 6 through 12, options for regaining lost credits/grades/attendance. This program assists students who are at risk of dropping out, not meeting grade promotion standards, and/or graduation requirements. Through Twilight, students have the option to participate in a range of academic offerings either

virtually or on their home campus. Students may attend before school or after school on Monday through Thursday or on Saturdays. For more information, contact the student's home school counselor.

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Nutrition

District Nutrition Policy

All district campuses participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP). Federal law requires that the district establish nutrition guidelines for foods and beverages sold to students during the school day on each campus that promote student health and reduce childhood obesity.

The district's nutrition guidelines are to ensure all foods and beverages sold or marketed to students during the school day adhere to all federal regulations and guidance and are designed to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity.

Foods and Beverages Sold

The district will comply with federal requirements for reimbursable meals. For other foods and beverages sold to students during the school day, the district will comply with the federal requirements for competitive foods. Competitive foods and beverages are not part of the regular meal programs and occur through sales such as a la carte options or vending machines. For purposes of this plan, these requirements will be referred to as "Smart Snacks" standards or requirements. The following websites have information regarding meals and Smart Snacks requirements:

- [Nutrition Standards](#)
- [Smart Snacks](#)
- [Square Meals](#)

No sale of competitive foods from any organization or vendor other than the district food service department or approved vending machine contracts is permitted during the school day.

The district has also incorporated the following stricter standards that are not prohibited by federal or state law:

- The sale of sodas or other caffeinated beverages to students is prohibited, with the exception of coffee or tea provided at meal services on high school campuses.
- No preparation of food by deep-fat frying.

Exception

All campuses, prekindergarten–grade 12, will not be involved in the sale of food or beverages for any fundraising activity during the school day. Fundraising activities that involve the sale of food and/or beverages will take place outside the school day, which is defined as 30 minutes before the first bell and after the last bell.

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Foods and Beverages

There are no federal or state restrictions for foods or beverages provided, but not sold, to students during the school day. However, each school district must set its own standards.

The district will comply with state law, which allows a parent or grandparent to provide a food product of his or her choice to classmates of the person's child or grandchild on the occasion of the student's birthday or to children at a school-designated function. [See CO(LEGAL)]. Birthday and/or school celebrations will not occur in the cafeteria during meal serving time. Such events may take place at the end of the school day after the last scheduled class or after school. A campus may develop additional guidelines concerning birthday celebrations, such as the number of celebrations per month and certain time to celebrate, so as not to interfere with instructional time.

In addition, the district has established the following local standards for foods and beverages made available to students:

- All food and beverages provided to students will meet Smart Snack standards. Healthy options—fruits, vegetables and water, for example—are preferred and should be offered.
- Elementary school campuses may not allow food or beverages to be provided to students at any time during the school day with the exception of a healthy snack and water.
- Middle school campuses may not allow food or beverages to be provided to students anywhere on campus 30 minutes before to 30 minutes after meal serving times.
- High school campuses may not allow food or beverages to be provided to students during mealtimes where meals are served or consumed.
- Foods and/or beverages will not be used as rewards for academic performance, except when provided in a specific student's individualized education program (IEP) or behavior intervention plan (BIP).
- Food should not be used for instructional purposes, unless the food is required for teaching students about nutrition, gardening, the food system, or foods of different cultures. If foods are used for instructional purposes, the foods may not be foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) or candy at any time (including chocolate). Food given during a classroom lesson is to be for a taste only, and not be in the place of a meal provided during the student's breakfast or lunch period.
- Students may consume any food or beverage item that is provided by his/her parent/guardian. [See policies [CO](#), [FFA\(LOCAL\)](#), and [FFA\(EXHIBIT\)](#).]

Vending Machines (All Grade Levels)

Capps Vending machines are provided by Healthy Vending by Helping Unite Mankind and Nutrition (HUMAN). Healthy foods are provided in all vending machines district-wide for student and staff access. There are no student accessible vending machines in elementary schools; however, campuses may request a vending machine for the staff lounge by contacting the vendor. In middle school, vending machines must be turned off during mealtimes. In high school, vending machines located in areas where reimbursable meals are served and/or consumed must be turned off during meal periods. [See policies at [CO](#) and [FFA](#).]

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Questions Related to Austin ISD's Nutrition Policy

Can we have pizza parties and/or parties in which food is served during the school day?

Elementary schools may not allow food or beverages to be provided to students at any time during the school day, with the exception of a healthy snack and water. Middle schools may not allow food or beverages to be provided to students anywhere on campus 30 minutes before to 30 minutes after meal serving times. High schools may not allow food or beverages to be provided to students during mealtimes where meals are served or consumed.

Are campuses required to adhere to the Wellness Policy for fundraising?

Yes. All campuses must adhere to the Wellness Policy as it relates to fundraising. No food or beverages can be sold during the school day to raise funds. Campuses may have a non-food fundraiser during the school day.

Can parents bring food to celebrate their child's birthday?

Parents may bring items to celebrate their child's birthday; however, they cannot be provided to students in the cafeteria during meal service times. Birthday food items may only be shared after the last scheduled class of the day. Parents are encouraged to provide healthy snacks for birthday celebrations.

Can a parent bring food for other students to consume during the school day?

No. A parent can only bring food and/or beverages for consumption by their child. A parent cannot bring any food item to another child even with parent permission. A parent can only provide food and/or beverage for their child.

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 family'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 48.]

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- 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 contact the school 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 90.]
- Becoming a school volunteer. [See [Volunteers](#) on page 105 and policy [GKG](#) for more information.]
- Participating in campus parent organizations.
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees that develop educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For further information, see policies [BQA](#) and [BQB](#), and contact your school principal.
- 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 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. [See policies [BE](#) and [BED](#) for more information.]

Parking and Parking Permits (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

A student must present a valid driver's license and proof of insurance to be eligible for a parking permit. Students must request a parking permit from the school to park in a school parking lot. So long as space is available, parking permits may be issued throughout the year.

Students will not be permitted to:

- Speed.
- Double-park.
- Park across a white or yellow line.
- Park in a fire lane.
- Sit in parked cars during school hours.

Students may be subject to disciplinary action for violation of these rules. The district may tow cars that are parked in violation of these rules.

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

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

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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.]

Participation in Surveys

District Surveys

District surveys support planning and the ongoing needs of students and families. The district administers several district-wide surveys throughout the year. Special considerations are provided for the two surveys below.

The Student Climate Survey is administered each spring to students in grades 3-12. The survey is confidential and voluntary. Parents will be provided with an opportunity to review the contents of the Student Climate Survey prior to administration and, if desired, opt their student out of participation. Additional notification, survey previews, and opt out instructions will be made available at least two weeks prior to administration. The district will continue to provide principals with notification to be shared with parents, including a survey preview and opt out instructions.

The Students Substance Use and School Safety Survey is administered to middle and high school students in grades 6-12 in the spring of alternating school years. The survey is anonymous and voluntary. Parents will be emailed a survey preview and an opportunity to opt their student out of participation in the survey at least two weeks prior to administration.

If you have questions regarding district surveys, please contact the Office of Intergovernmental Relations & Board Services at 512-414-2462.

Non-District Surveys and Research

The district monitors external research and evaluation activities that make use of district resources including data, facilities, time, and access to students. As a parent, you have a right to deny permission for your student's participation in any research or evaluation activities that are conducted by parties external to the school district and that request student participation or disclosure of identifiable student data. Student participation or disclosure of identifiable student data require active permission from the parent and assent from the student. Consent forms will provide information about what the student will be asked to do, a description of the data that will be shared, and a place for the parent to sign agreement for participation. A student may only participate if the parent has first agreed to participation.

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 the following:

- Teacher recommendation,
- Grades,
- Scores on criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessments, and

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- Any other necessary academic information as determined by the district.

Elementary and Middle/Junior High Grade Levels

In kindergarten, promotion to grade one shall be based on a comprehensive assessment of academic indicators, as well as other areas of development.

In grades one and two, promotion is based on the level of reading in the language of instruction and mastery of sufficient mathematics to be successful at the next grade level.

In grades three through five, promotion is based on an overall average of 70 (C-) on a scale of 100 for language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. In addition, the student shall be required to maintain an average of 70 (C-) in language arts and mathematics.

If a student in grades 3–8 is enrolled in a class or course intended for students above his or her current grade level in which the student will be administered a state-mandated assessment, the student will be required to take an applicable state-mandated assessment only for the course in which he or she is enrolled, unless otherwise required to do so by federal law.

A student in grades 3-8 shall be assessed at least once in high school with the ACT or the SAT if the student completes the high school end-of-course assessments in mathematics, reading/language arts, or science prior to high school.

[See [Standardized Testing](#) on page 99.]

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 school attendance as well as the student not being promoted to the next grade level.

For a middle-school student who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her state-mandated examinations, a school official will prepare a personal graduation plan (PGP). School officials will also develop a PGP for a middle-school student who is determined by the district to be unlikely to earn a high school diploma within five years of high school enrollment. The plan will, among other items, identify the student's educational goals, address the parent's educational expectations for the student, and outline an intensive instruction program for the student. [See the school counselor and policy [EIF](#)(LEGAL) for more information.] For a student receiving special education services, the student's IEP may serve as the student's PGP and would therefore be developed by the student's ARD committee.

[See [Personal Graduation Plans](#) on page 67 for information related to the development of personal graduation plans for high school students.]

High School Grade Levels

To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level standards.

A student in grades 9–12 will be advanced a grade level based on the number of course credits earned. [See [Grade-Level Classification](#) on page 61.]

Students will also have multiple opportunities to retake EOC assessments. [See [Graduation](#) on page 63 and [Standardized Testing](#) on page 99.]

Repeating a High-School Credit Course

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A parent may request in writing that a student repeat a high-school credit course in which the student was enrolled during the previous school year unless the district determines that the student has met all requirements for graduation.

Before granting the request, the district may convene a retention committee to meet and discuss the request and will invite the parent to participate.

Release of Students from School

[See [Leaving Campus](#) on page 80.]

Remote Instruction

The district may offer remote instruction in accordance with TEA guidelines.

All district policies, procedures, guidelines, rules, and other expectations of student behavior will be enforced as applicable in a remote or virtual learning environment.

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

Report cards with each student's performance and absences in each class or subject are issued at least once every nine weeks in secondary schools and once every nine weeks in elementary schools.

During the fourth week of a nine-week grading period, parents will receive a progress report if their child's performance in any course/subject area 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 86 for how to schedule a conference.]

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the superintendent pursuant to the board-adopted policy. Grading guidelines are designed to reflect each student's relative mastery of each assignment. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district's grading policy. [See [Grading Guidelines](#) on page 63 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 district may communicate academic information about a student electronically, including for progress reporting purposes.

Retaliation

[See [Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#) on page 51.]

Required State Assessments

STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) for Grades 3-8

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

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3-8

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- Reading, annually in grades 3-8
- Science in grades 5 and 8
- Social Studies in grade 8

Standardized Testing for a Student Enrolled Above Grade Level

If a student in grades 3-8 is enrolled in a class or course intended for students above his or her current grade level in which the student will be administered a state-mandated assessment, the student will be required to take an applicable state-mandated assessment only for the course in which he or she is enrolled, unless otherwise required to do so by federal law.

A student in grades 3-8 shall be assessed at least once in high school with the ACT or the SAT if the student completes the high school end-of-course assessments in mathematics, reading/language arts, or science prior to high school.

High School Courses End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments

STAAR end-of-course (EOC) assessments are administered for the following courses:

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

Satisfactory performance on the applicable assessments is required for graduation, unless waived or substituted as allowed by state law and rules.

There are three testing windows during the year in which a student may take an EOC assessment. The windows occur in the fall, spring, and summer months. If a student does not meet satisfactory performance, the student will have opportunities to retake the assessment.

Requesting Administration of STAAR/EOC in Paper Format (All Grade Levels)

STAAR and EOC assessments are administered electronically.

A parent or teacher may request that a STAAR or EOC be administered to a student in paper format. The district may grant this request for any single administration for up to three percent of the number of students enrolled in the district. Requests will be granted in the order in which they are received.

Requests for paper format for a fall administration of a STAAR or EOC must be submitted no later than September 15 each school year.

Requests for paper format for a spring administration of a STAAR or EOC must be submitted no later than December 1 each school year.

Standardized Testing for a Student in Special Programs

Certain students — some with disabilities and some classified as emergent bilingual students — may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing. For more information, see the principal, school counselor, or special education director.

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

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An admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee for a student receiving special education services will determine whether successful performance on the EOC assessments will be required for graduation within the parameters identified in state rules and the student's personal graduation plan (PGP). [See [Graduation](#) on page 63.]

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

For more information, see the principal, school counselor, or special education director

Failure to Perform Satisfactorily on STAAR or EOC

If a student does not perform satisfactorily on a required state assessment in any subject, the district will provide accelerated instruction for the student in the subsequent school year by:

- Assigning the student to a teacher who is certified as a master, exemplary, or recognized teacher if one is available in the grade and subject matter of the state assessment on which the student did not perform satisfactorily, or
- Providing supplemental instruction.

A student may be required to attend any assigned supplemental instruction program before or after school or during the summer.

When a student fails to perform satisfactorily on a required state assessment in the same subject area for two or more years, the district shall develop an accelerated education plan. Parents are encouraged to participate in developing this plan.

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 Success Guide or set by district employees.
- Help secure the campus by keeping all exterior doors closed, latched, and locked unless the door is actively monitored by a district employee.
- Follow instructions from teachers and other district employees regarding classroom doors.
- Remain alert to any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student or staff member, and promptly report any incidents to a district employee. A student may make anonymous reports about safety concerns by visiting the [Anonymous Reporting page](#) on the Austin ISD website.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals. Participate in Standard Response Protocol drills. 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.

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Insurance for Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs

If the board purchases accident, liability, or automobile insurance coverage for students or businesses involved in the district's CTE programs, the district will notify the affected students and parents.

Preparedness Drills: Evacuation, Severe Weather, and Other Emergencies

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

Preparedness Training: CPR and Stop the Bleed

The district will offer instruction in CPR and the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED) at least once to students enrolled in grades 7-12. The instruction can be provided as part of any course and is not required to result in CPR or AED certification.

The district will annually offer students in grades 7–12 instruction on the use of bleeding control stations to respond to traumatic injury. For more information, see [Homeland Security's Stop the Bleed](#) and [Stop the Bleed Texas](#).

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 treatment will not be delayed due to the inability to reach the parent/guardian. Austin ISD is not responsible for any costs associated with emergency medical treatment.

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 attempt to contact parents through SchoolMessenger (for this reason, it is important to maintain current phone numbers with your child's school). In addition, please listen to announcements from the local media (television, radio, etc.), via social media and watch Austin ISD Cable Channel 22. If public safety officials require that a school building be evacuated, students and staff members will be safely transported to a designated parent-student reunification center. Parents will be informed of the reunification location via the local media. At the reunification center, students will be released to their parents upon presentation of proper identification. Children will not be released to individuals who are not authorized on the student's emergency care/contact card or who do not have written parent authorization. The district will make every effort to ensure the safety of students and assist them in returning to their homes.

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[See [Automated Communications](#) on page 45.]

SAT, ACT, and Other Standardized Tests

[See [Standardized Testing](#) on page 99.]

Schedule Changes (Middle High and High School Grade Levels)

If you need to change a course—transfer from one course to another—read the following guidelines carefully and make an appointment with your counselor to discuss your needs. It is strongly recommended that students and parents carefully select courses to be taken the following year in order to minimize the need for schedule changes. Seek the advice of current teachers and the counselor to best determine the appropriate courses that are aligned with post-secondary plans.

- Students may not withdraw from a semester course after the fourth week of the semester. For a yearlong course, a student may not withdraw from a course after the fourth week of the first nine weeks of the fall semester. However, to meet individual student needs, the principal may use his or her discretion to approve a course change.
- Students who withdraw from a course before the deadlines stated above will have the grade from the dropped course applied to the grade average for the new course. It is highly recommended that students transfer from one course to another in the same discipline.
- For UIL eligibility, a student can withdraw with no penalty regardless of grade in a course before the end of the fourth week of the semester and remain eligible. A student who withdraws with a passing grade at any time and maintains the minimum number of required course enrollments remains eligible. Dropping an honors (weighted) class that is exempted for no pass no play does not cause loss of eligibility at any time if the student has a grade of 60 or above. Please see a counselor for a list of exempted courses.
- Receiving teachers will describe the knowledge and skills essential for success in the course and suggest ways to learn them. Students who request and receive a course change assume responsibility for the content of the entire course on the final exam.
- A middle school student may withdraw from a high school credit course for which a state EOC exam is required by the end of the fourth week of the third nine weeks of the course. A middle school student may withdraw from any other high school credit course by the end of the fifth week of the last nine weeks of the course. The final semester report card must reflect the new course to which the student transferred.

School Facilities

Asbestos Management Plan (All Grade Levels)

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. A copy of the district's asbestos management plan is available in the library. If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please contact the district's designated person, Louis Zachary, at 512-414-2209.

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.

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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 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.

The following information is published as required by the USDA for participation in the National School Lunch Program:

"In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

"Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

"To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

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3. email:

Program.Intake@usda.gov

“This institution is an equal opportunity provider.”

The responsible state agency that administers the program is the [Texas Department of Agriculture \(https://www.texasagriculture.gov/Home/Contact-Us\)](https://www.texasagriculture.gov/Home/Contact-Us), which can be reached at (800) TELL-TDA (835-5832) or (800) 735-2989 (TTY).

The local agency that administers the program is the district. See [Nondiscrimination Statement](#) on page 82 for the name and contact information for the Title IX coordinator, ADA/Section 504 coordinator, and superintendent for other concerns about discrimination.

Contracted Service 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 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. Pest control signs shall be posted at least 48 hours prior to pesticide applications inside school buildings. Pesticide applications will not be made within a school building or grounds if such an application will expose students to unnecessary physical drift within a 4-hour period. All outdoor applications will be posted at the time of treatment, and signs will remain until it is safe to enter the area. There are no scheduled regular pest control treatments.

Parents who have questions or who want to be notified of the times and types of applications prior to pesticide application inside their child’s school assignment area may contact the district’s IPM Coordinator, Jason Hawkins, at 512-414-4405.

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 consequences established by the Student Success Guide, or any stricter standards of behavior established by the sponsor for extracurricular participants.

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 Success Guide.

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.

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

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

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

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

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

School-Sponsored Field Trips (All Grade Levels)

The district periodically takes students on field trips for educational purposes. A parent must provide permission for a student to participate in a field trip.

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

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

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 suspicion less security procedures, including the use of metal detectors.

In accordance with the Student Success Guide, 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 Success Guide, a district official may conduct a search in accordance with law and district regulations.

District police will be notified and assist in matters of criminal allegations such as where a weapon is alleged or assistance from District Police will be utilized when the safety of students and faculty are in question.

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 on district property.

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Students are responsible for any item found on district property provided to the student that is prohibited by law, district policy, or the Student Success Guide.

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 57 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.

Drug Testing (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

[For further information, see policy [FNF\(LOCAL\)](#). Also see [Steroids](#) on page 73.]

Vehicles on Campus (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the student will be asked to unlock the vehicle. If the student refuses, the district will contact the student's parents. If the parents also refuse to permit the vehicle to be searched, the district may turn the matter over to law enforcement. The district may contact law enforcement even if permission to search is granted.

Sexual Harassment

[See [Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#) on page 51.]

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, Emergent Bilingual, 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. Additional information is offered below. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact the campus counselor.

Austin ISD follows all guidelines related to identification, evaluation, and services for students suspected of or identified with dyslexia in accordance with state and federal laws. Families can review The Dyslexia Handbook [2021 Update: IMPORTANT CHANGES FOR FAMILIES TO UNDERSTAND](#) to learn more.

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Austin ISD partners with Learning Ally to offer free access to audible books for eligible students who have access to the Learning Ally account through the Learning Ally tile in the portal. Families can contact their child's home campus for more information.

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.

Austin ISD strives to meet the needs of all students. Section 504 services are designed to provide a system of identifying eligible children with disabilities as defined under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (2009), enabling Austin ISD to ensure that all of the rights of these children are protected and receive appropriate services to ensure access to a Free and Appropriate Public Education. Families can contact their campus to request a 504 evaluation for their child and can review the [Section 504 Resource Guide](#) to learn more.

Gifted/Talented and Talent Explores

Austin ISD offers Gifted and Talented program services on all campuses, including identification and placement. GT Advocates on each campus support teachers, students, and families with resources and information. Students may be identified in one or more areas: GT STEM, GT Humanities, Talent Explore STEM, or Talent Explore Humanities. Talent Explore is a unique Austin ISD program that supports high-quality students who did not qualify for GT services.

Standardized Testing

SAT/ACT (Scholastic Aptitude Test and American College Test)

Many colleges require either the American College Test (ACT) or the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for admission. These assessments are usually taken at the end of the junior year.

Students are encouraged to talk with the school counselor early during their junior year to learn about these assessments and determine the appropriate examination to take. The Preliminary SAT (PSAT) and ACT-Aspire are the corresponding preparatory and readiness assessments for the SAT and ACT. Students are encouraged to start reviewing practice assessment questions as early as ninth grade. Online preparation materials are available via the ACT/SAT websites, Khan Academy (<https://www.khanacademy.org>), and March2Success (<https://www.march2success.com/main/index>).

Note: These assessments may qualify a student to receive a performance acknowledgment on the student's transcript under the foundation graduation program and may qualify as a substitute for an end-of-course testing requirement in certain circumstances. A student's performance at a certain level on the SAT or ACT also makes the student eligible for automatic admission to a Texas public institution of higher education. Families of children with disabilities who wish to [request accommodations for testing on the SAT or ACT](#) should contact their child's campus testing coordinator to coordinate this request.

Texas Success Initiative Assessment 2.0 (TSIA2)

The Texas Success Initiative Assessment 2.0 (TSIA2) is a series of placement tests for students enrolling in public colleges and universities in Texas. The tests help Texas schools determine whether you're ready for college-level courses in the areas of reading, writing, and math.

If you're not ready for college-level courses, the tests help determine what types of courses or intervention will best prepare you for college-level work. You take TSIA2 tests on a computer and, depending on school policy, may get your results immediately after you finish the test.

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Not all Texas college students have to take TSIA2. If you've met college readiness standards on a standardized test like the SAT or successfully completed a high school college preparatory course, you may be exempt. Contact the college you'll be attending to see if you need to take TSIA2.

Before you take TSIA, you'll need to complete a pre-assessment activity. The institution or school district where you test will provide the activity and document your participation.

Student Speakers (All Grade Levels)

The district provides students with the opportunity to introduce school events. If a student meets the eligibility criteria and wishes to introduce one of the school events, the student should submit his or her name in accordance with policy [FNA](#)(LOCAL).

[See [Graduation Speakers](#) on page 68 for information related to student speakers at graduation ceremonies and policy [FNA](#)(LOCAL) regarding other speaking opportunities.]

Summer School (All Grade Levels)

Please contact the Department of Student Support Services at 512-414-0112 regarding Austin ISD summer school and summer programs.

Tardies (All Grade Levels)

A student who is tardy to class may be assigned to detention hall or given another appropriate consequence.

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 may lose the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until the item is returned or the damage is paid for by the parent/caretaker. 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 general rule in Austin ISD is that students will attend the school in the attendance zone in which the student resides.

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

Transfers Under Local Transfer Policy FDB (LOCAL)

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Local District Policy [FDB](#)(LOCAL) allows any student to request a transfer to another school based on available space. The three board-approved transfer priorities are: sibling, tracking and majority to minority transfers. Transfer requests must be received by the established deadline stated in the policy. More details on these transfer options are below. Students entering magnet programs (LASA, Kealing and Lively) and application programs (Ann Richards, Fine Arts Academies at McCallum and Lamar, IB at Anderson, Dual Language, etc.) are accepted on an application basis and coded in the transfer file as curriculum transfers or dual language transfers. Schools frozen to transfers are announced at the last Board meeting in December. A frozen school may still accept applications for a magnet, application, or dual language program. Please contact the program directly for more information.

Continuation Transfer

Once a K-12 transfer is approved, it is good through the highest grade at that level. For example, an elementary transfer is good through the fifth grade or sixth grade (for those schools with sixth grade); a middle school transfer is good through the eighth grade; and a high school transfer is good through the 12th grade. Austin ISD students/parents do not need to reapply for a transfer each year that their children remain in the same school. In-district transfers can be revoked at the end of a semester if expectations for behavior, grades, or attendance are not met. Out-of-district transfers can be revoked during a semester. Prekindergarten transfers are valid through the highest grade at the school unless the kindergarten is frozen.

Sibling Transfer

The board has designated through District Policy [FDB](#) that students with a sibling at the same school will be given priority “sibling” transfer approval. One of the students must be on a transfer for the sibling to receive priority. The students must be attending the school at the same time, and one must be at the school at the time of the transfer request. For example, a sibling priority is not given if a parent applies for two students to attend an elementary school at first and third grades. The third grader is approved because there is available third grade transfer space, but the first grader is not approved, because there is no transfer space. The parent cannot appeal to receive sibling consideration, as one child was not in attendance at the school when the parent applied for the transfer. A sibling transfer will not be approved to a frozen school.

Tracking Transfer

The board has designated through District Policy [FDB](#) that students who have a history of at least two unbroken years of attendance in the two highest grades offered at the school, may request a tracking transfer to the next grade level (i.e., to middle school from an elementary or to a high school from a middle school) in order to remain with their peers. Tracking transfers shall not apply to requests made so that a student may attend an application-based program, including a magnet program. Students attending a magnet or application based program shall attend their home school upon completion of the program or submit a transfer to another school. A tracking transfer will not be approved to a frozen school.

Majority-to-Minority Transfer

The board has designated through District Policy [FDB](#) that Black (not of Hispanic origin) or Hispanic students who are coming from a school with more than 50 percent Black (not of Hispanic origin) and Hispanic students and requesting a transfer to a school with less than 50 percent Black (not of Hispanic origin) and Hispanic students will be given priority majority-to-minority transfer approval or vice versa. A Majority-to-minority transfer will not be approved to a frozen school.

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Curriculum Transfers

Students wishing to attend a magnet program (Kealing, Lively, LASA); the Ann Richards School for Young Women Leaders; application programs (e.g. Anderson IB, Early College Programs, Fine Arts Programs, PTECH Programs, Bedichek Advanced Academics, Innovation Academy at Martin); or a Dual Language program must apply directly to the program through the Common Application in the Parent Portal. If approved, the student shall enroll and maintain participation in the program. If the student withdraws from that program, he or she shall return to the home campus at the end of that semester or submit a general transfer for the school's comprehensive program, to be processed on a first-come, first-served basis with other requests.

General Transfers

A general transfer may be requested when the student does not qualify for one of the other types of transfers and shall be approved if space is available. A general transfer will not be approved to a frozen school. Please see [FDA](#) for more information about out of district transfers.

Diversity Choice School Option

District policy [FC\(LOCAL\)](#) allows students residing in specified elementary attendance areas to choose to attend the secondary schools designated in the policy with transportation provided by the district. Eligible students and parents are notified of this diversity choice option through letters sent home by the Office of Student Services/Records. Once the diversity choice is made, the chosen school becomes the student's home school through the highest grade in the school. A student who has attended a selected campus through diversity choice and who has a history of at least two unbroken years of attendance in the two highest grades offered at the school may request a tracking transfer to the next level as specified in [FDB\(LOCAL\)](#) if the campus is not frozen.

[See [Safety Transfers/Assignments](#) on page 24, [Bullying](#) on page 35, [A Student Who Has Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education or Section 504 Services](#) on page 26, 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 97.]

Buses and Other School Vehicles

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living two or more miles from their campus of regular attendance -home school, magnet school, or academy-measured along the shortest route to school and to any students who are experiencing homelessness. District also provides transportation for the Special Education students per their Individual Education Plan (IEP). 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.

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School bus service is provided to students based upon eligibility criteria as set forth by district policy. Students are eligible for transportation if the following criteria are met:

1. Students reside two or more miles from their campus of regular attendance (i.e., home school, Magnet school or Austin ISD Academy) measured along the shortest route to school. The “home school” campus is determined by the student’s residential address and the assignment boundary of each school.
2. Students living within two miles of their home school, Magnet school or Austin ISD Academy who would be subject to hazardous traffic conditions if they were to walk to school. The district also makes school bus transportation available to any students who are homeless.

A parent may designate a child-care facility or grandparent’s residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated location must be an approved stop on an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off location, contact the transportation main line at 512-414-0238.

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 Success Guide. 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. No Skateboards.
- 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.
- 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 Success Guide, including loss of the privilege to ride in a district vehicle.

[See the Student Success Guide for provisions regarding transportation to the DAEP.]

Vandalism (All Grade Levels)

Littering, defacing, or damaging school property is not tolerated. Students may 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 Success Guide.

Video Cameras (All Grade Levels)

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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 Success Guide.

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.

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

Visitors to the School (All Grade Levels)

General Visitors

Parents and others are welcome to visit district schools. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must:

- Request entry to the school at the primary entrance unless otherwise directed by a district employee.
- Report to the main office.
- Be prepared to show identification.
- Exit the school at the primary entrance and leave all exterior doors closed, latched, and locked unless actively monitored by a district employee.
- Comply with all applicable district policies and procedures.

If requested by a district employee, a visitor must provide identification such as a driver's license, other picture identification issued by a government entity, or employee or student identification issued by the district. A person who refuses to provide identification and who reasonably appears to have no legitimate reason to be on district property may be ejected from district property.

Individuals may visit classrooms 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.

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

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- 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 [GE\(LOCAL\)](#).

[See the Student Success Guide.]

Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students

Business, Civic, and Youth Groups

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

Career Day

On Career Day the district invites representatives from colleges and universities and other higher education institutions, prospective employers, and military recruiters to present information to interested students.

Volunteers (All Grade Levels)

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

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the campus for more information and to complete an application.

The district does not require state criminal history background checks for volunteers who are parents, guardians, or grandparents of a child enrolled in the district.

Subject to exceptions in accordance with state law and district procedures, other volunteers will be subject to a state criminal history background check, and the volunteer must pay all costs for the background check.

Voter Registration (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

A student who is eligible to vote in any local, state, or federal election may obtain a voter registration application at the main campus office.

Withdrawing from School (All Grade Levels)

To withdraw a student under age 18 from school, the parent or guardian must submit a written request to the principal specifying the reasons for withdrawal and the final day the student will be in attendance. Verbal requests may also be accepted with principal approval. 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 with at least three days' notice of withdrawal so that records and documents may be prepared.

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Glossary

Accelerated instruction, including supplemental instruction, is an intensive educational 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. Accelerated instruction may be provided by assigning a student to a classroom teacher who is certified as a master, exemplary, or recognized teacher or by providing supplemental instruction in addition to regular instruction.

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

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

ARD stands for admission, review, and dismissal. The ARD committee convenes for each student who is identified as needing a full and individual evaluation for special education services. The eligible student and 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 Success Guide.

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 Success Guide. Although different from out-of-school suspension and placement in a DAEP, ISS removes the student from the regular classroom.

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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 Success Guide 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 Success Guide also addresses notice to the parent regarding a student's violation of one of its provisions.

TAC stands for the Texas Administrative Code.

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

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

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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.

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Appendix II: 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 this [webpage](#). Below is the text of Austin 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 May 4, 2018

Note: This policy addresses bullying of District students. For purposes of this policy, the term bullying includes cyberbullying. For provisions regarding discrimination and harassment involving District students, see [FFH](#). Note that [FFI](#) shall be used in conjunction with [FFH](#) for certain prohibited conduct. For reporting requirements related to child abuse and neglect, see [FFG](#).

Bullying Prohibited

The District prohibits bullying, including cyberbullying, as defined by state law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of District policy and is prohibited.

Examples

Bullying of a student could occur by physical contact or through electronic means and may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, or ostracism.

Retaliation

The District prohibits retaliation by a student or District employee against any person who in good faith makes a report of bullying, serves as a witness, or participates in an investigation.

Examples

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

False Claim

A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a District investigation regarding bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Timely Reporting

Reports of bullying shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. A failure to immediately report may impair the District's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.

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Reporting Procedures

Student Report

To obtain assistance and intervention, any student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, school counselor, principal, or other District employee. The Superintendent shall develop procedures allowing a student to anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying. <https://www.austinisd.org/respect-for-all/reporting>

Employee Report

Any District employee who suspects or receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the principal or designee.

Report Format

A report may be made orally or in writing. The principal or designee shall reduce any oral reports to written form.

Notice of Report

When an allegation of bullying is reported, the principal or designee shall notify the parent of the alleged victim on or before the third business day after the incident is reported. The principal or designee shall also notify the parent of the student alleged to have engaged in the conduct within a reasonable amount of time after the incident is reported.

Prohibited Conduct

The principal or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy [FFH](#), including dating violence and harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, immigration status, or any other basis prohibited by law, that adversely affects the student. If so, the District shall proceed under policy [FFH](#). If the allegations could constitute both prohibited conduct and bullying, the investigation under [FFH](#) shall include a determination on each type of conduct.

Investigation of Report

The principal or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report. The principal or designee shall promptly take interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate.

Concluding the Investigation

Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within ten District business days from the date of the initial report alleging bullying; however, the principal or designee shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

The principal or designee shall prepare a final, written report of the investigation. The report shall include a determination of whether bullying occurred, and if so, whether the victim used reasonable self-defense. A copy of the report shall be sent to the Superintendent or designee.

Notice to Parents

If an incident of bullying is confirmed, the principal or designee shall promptly notify the parents of the victim and of the student who engaged in bullying.

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District Action

Bullying

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, the District shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the District's Student Success Guide and may take corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct.

Discipline

A student who is a victim of bullying and who used reasonable self-defense in response to the bullying shall not be subject to disciplinary action.

The discipline of a student with a disability is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Success Guide.

Corrective Action

Examples of corrective action may include a training program for the individuals involved in the complaint, a comprehensive education program for the school community, follow-up inquiries to determine whether any new incidents or any instances of retaliation have occurred, involving parents and students in efforts to identify problems and improve the school climate, increasing staff monitoring of areas where bullying has occurred, and reaffirming the District's policy against bullying.

Transfers

The principal or designee shall refer to [FDB](#) for transfer provisions.

Counseling

The principal or designee shall notify the victim, the student who engaged in bullying, and any students who witnessed the bullying of available counseling options.

Improper Conduct

If the investigation reveals improper conduct that did not rise to the level of prohibited conduct or bullying, the District may take action in accordance with the Student Success Guide or any other appropriate corrective action.

Confidentiality

To the greatest extent possible, the District shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

Appeal

A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through [FNG\(LOCAL\)](#), beginning at the appropriate level.

Records Retention

Retention of records shall be in accordance with [CPC\(LOCAL\)](#).

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Access to Policy and Procedures

This policy and any accompanying procedures shall be distributed annually in the employee and student handbooks. Copies of the policy and procedures shall be posted on the District's website, to the extent practicable, and shall be readily available at each campus and the District's administrative offices.

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Appendix III: Student Threat Assessment

Austin Independent School District is committed to creating and maintaining school environments in which the emotional and physical safety of students, staff, parents and others is a priority. Schools cannot ignore any threat of harm. When threats to others or to self- occur, schools initiate a process called Threat Assessment.

Each school has a Safe and Supportive School Program Team that is multidisciplinary. The teams will include school administrators, classroom instruction, law enforcement, emergency management, school safety/security, special education, mental health/substance abuse, behavior management, and counseling. Further, the District has a centralized reporting system, Let's Talk-Report a Student Safety Concern that can be anonymous.

What is a Threat?

Threatening or harmful behaviors include:

- Self-harm
- Bullying
- Cyberbullying
- Fighting
- Use or possession of a weapon
- Title IX offenses
- Expressed or communicated verbally, behaviorally, visually, in writing, electronically, or through other means.
- Expressed directly or indirectly.
- Issued by someone known or unknown to the target.

Safe and Supportive School Program Teams are designed to address any behavior or communication that raises concern that a person or situation may pose a danger to the safety of the school and campus.

If your child comes home and reports a perceived threat, please notify the school administration immediately.

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The Threat Assessment Process

The primary goal of the process is to intervene in situations with concerning and prohibited behaviors in schools. The Safe and Supportive Schools Program provides a proactive, evidence-based approach for objectively reviewing information to indicate that a student needs to receive interventions **BEFORE** an incident occurs. The benefit of this process is that our schools cannot ignore any threat of violence.

Should you have further questions about the threat assessment process, please contact your school's principal.