

# Changes to Student Handbook

Pg. 50. Exemptions to final and semester exams are no longer allowed at MCISD. Language about exemptions were mistakenly included in the handbook from a prior year.

Pg. 70. Changed language regarding dietary supplements to meet Board Policy FFAC

# 2016–17 Student Handbook

# **Handbook and Student Code of Conduct Acknowledgment Form**

My child and I have received a copy of the McMullen County ISD Student Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct for 2016–2017. I understand that the handbook contains information that my child and I may need during the school year and that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. If I have any questions regarding this handbook, I should direct those questions to the principal at (361) 274-2000

Printed name of student:

Signature of student:

Signature of parent:

Date:

## **Acknowledgment of Electronic Distribution of Student Handbook**

My child and I have been offered the option to receive a paper copy of or to electronically access at [www.mcisd.us](http://www.mcisd.us) the McMullen County ISD Student Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct for 2016-2017.

I have chosen to:

- Receive a paper copy of the Student Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct.
- Accept responsibility for accessing the Student Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct by visiting the Web address listed above.

I understand that the handbook contains information that my child and I may need during the school year and that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. If I have any questions regarding this handbook or the Code of Conduct, I should direct those questions to the principal at (361)274-2000.

Printed name of student:

Signature of student:

Signature of parent:

Date:

## **Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information**

State law requires the district to give you the following information:

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows the procedures for requesting the information unless the parent or guardian objects to the release of the directory information about the student. If you do not want McMullen County I.S.D. to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the district in writing within ten school days of your child's first day of instruction for this school year.

This means that the district must give certain personal information (called "directory information") about your child to any person who requests it, unless you have told the district in writing not to do so. In addition, you have the right to tell the district that it may, or may not, use certain personal information about your child for specific school-sponsored purposes. The district is providing you this form so you can communicate your wishes about these issues. [See **Directory Information** on page 4 for more information.]

**Notice Regarding Directory Information and  
Parent’s Response Regarding Release of Student Information for Non-School Related  
Requests**

State law requires the district to give you the following information:

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows the procedures for requesting the information unless the parent or guardian objects to the release of the directory information about the student. If you do not want McMullen County ISD to disclose directory information from your child’s education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the district in writing using this form. Cross out information you do not want released from the list.

This means that the district must give certain personal information (called “directory information”) about your child to any person who requests it, unless you have told the district in writing not to do so.

McMullen County ISD has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student’s Name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- E-mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Most recent school previously attended
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height, if a member of an athletic team
- Enrollment status
- Student identification numbers or identifiers that cannot be used alone to gain access to electronic education records

Directory information identified only for limited school-sponsored purposes remains otherwise confidential and will not be released to the public without the consent of the parent or eligible student.

Parent: Please circle one of the choices below:

I, parent of \_\_\_\_\_ (do give) (do not give) the district permission to release the information in this list in response to a request **unrelated** to school sponsored purposes.

**Please note that if this form is not returned within the specified timeframe above, the district will assume that permission has been granted for the release of this information.**

## **Parent's Objection to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education**

Federal law requires that the district release to military recruiters and institutions of higher education, upon request, the name, address, and phone number of secondary school students enrolled in the district, unless the parent or eligible student directs the district not to release information to these types of requestors without prior written consent. [See **Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education** on page 5 of the Student Handbook for more information.]

**Parent:** Please complete the following only if you do not want your child's information released to a military recruiter or an institution of higher education without your prior consent.

I, parent of \_\_\_\_\_ (student's name), request that the district **not** release my child's name, address, and telephone number to a military recruiter or institution of higher education without my prior written consent.

Parent signature

Date

## Consent/Opt-Out Form

Dear Parent:

The district is required by federal law to notify you and obtain your consent for or denial of (opt-out) your child's participation in certain school activities. The activities include any student survey, analysis, or evaluation, known as a "protected information survey" that concerns one or more of the following eight areas:

Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parents;

Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;

Sexual behavior or attitudes;

Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;

Critical appraisals of others with whom the student has a close family relationship;

Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;

Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or

Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

This notice and consent/opt-out requirement also applies to the collection, disclosure, or use of student information for marketing purposes ("marketing surveys"), and to certain physical exams and screenings.

If you wish to review any survey instrument or instructional material used in connection with any protected information survey, please submit a request to McMullen County I.S.D., administration. The principal will notify you of the time and place where you may review these materials. You have the right to review a survey and/or instructional materials before the survey is administered to your child. Please note that this notice and authority to consent transfer from the parent to the student when the student reaches 18 or is an emancipated minor under state law.



## **Table of Contents**

[Handbook and Student Code of Conduct Acknowledgment Form](#)

[Acknowledgment of Electronic Distribution of Student Handbook](#)

[Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent’s Response Regarding Release of Student Information](#)

[Parent’s Objection to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education](#)

[Consent/Opt-Out Form](#)

### [PREFACE](#)

### [SECTION I: PARENTAL RIGHTS](#)

#### [CONSENT, OPT-OUT, AND REFUSAL RIGHTS](#)

[Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation](#)

[Consent to Display a Student’s Original Works and Personal Information](#)

[Consent to Receive Parenting and Paternity Awareness Instruction if Student is Under Age 14](#)

[Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student When Not Otherwise Permitted by Law](#)

[Prohibiting the Use of Corporal Punishment](#)

[Limiting Electronic Communications with Students by District Employees](#)

[Objecting to the Release of Directory Information](#)

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

[Participation in Third-Party Surveys](#)

[Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey, Analysis, or Evaluation](#)

[“Opting Out” of Participation in Other Types of Surveys or Screenings and the Disclosure of Personal Information](#)

#### [REMOVING A STUDENT FROM INSTRUCTION OR EXCUSING A STUDENT FROM A REQUIRED COMPONENT OF INSTRUCTION](#)

[Human Sexuality Instruction](#)

[Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence in Grades 3–12](#)

[Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags](#)

[Religious or Moral Beliefs](#)

[Tutoring or Test Preparation](#)

#### [RIGHT OF ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS, CURRICULUM MATERIALS, AND DISTRICT RECORDS/POLICIES](#)

[Instructional Materials](#)

[Notices of Certain Student Misconduct to Noncustodial Parent](#)

[Participation in Federally Required, State-Mandated, and District Assessments](#)

[Student Records](#)

[Accessing Student Records](#)

[Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records](#)

[Teacher and Staff Professional Qualifications](#)

## [STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES OR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES](#)

[Children of Military Families](#)

[Parental Role in Certain Classroom and School Assignments](#)

[Multiple Birth Siblings](#)

[Safety Transfers/Assignments](#)

[Service/Assistance Animal Use by Students](#)

[Students in the Conservatorship of the State \(Foster Care\)](#)

[Students Who Are Homeless](#)

[Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education Services](#)

[Students Who Receive Special Education Services with Other School-Aged Children in the Home](#)

[Students Who Speak a Primary Language Other than English](#)

[Students with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected Under Section 504](#)

## [SECTION II: OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS](#)

### [ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE](#)

[Compulsory Attendance](#)

[Age 19 and Older](#)

[Between Ages 6 and 19](#)

[Prekindergarten and Kindergarten](#)

[Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance](#)

[All Grade Levels](#)

[Secondary Grade Levels](#)

[Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance](#)

[All Grade Levels](#)

[Age 19 and Older](#)

[Between Ages 6 and 19](#)

[Attendance for Credit or Final Grade \(Kindergarten–Grade 12\)](#)  
[Official Attendance-Taking Time \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[Documentation After an Absence \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[Doctor’s Note After an Absence for Illness \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[Driver License Attendance Verification \(Secondary Grade Levels Only\)](#)  
[ACCOUNTABILITY UNDER STATE AND FEDERAL LAW \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[AWARDS AND HONORS \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[Awards \(Elementary\)](#)  
[Awards \(Secondary\)](#)  
[BULLYING \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION \(CTE\) PROGRAMS \(Secondary Grade Levels Only\)](#)  
[CELEBRATIONS \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND OTHER MALTREATMENT OF CHILDREN \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[CLASS RANK/HIGHEST-RANKING STUDENT \(Secondary Grade Levels Only\)](#)  
[JUNIOR HIGH HONORS](#)  
[CLASS SCHEDULES \(Secondary Grade Levels Only\)](#)  
[COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS \(Secondary Grade Levels Only\)](#)  
[COLLEGE CREDIT COURSES \(Secondary Grade Levels Only\)](#)  
[COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[CONDUCT \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[Applicability of School Rules](#)  
[Campus Behavior Coordinator](#)  
[Disruptions of School Operations](#)  
[Social Events](#)  
[COUNSELING](#)  
[Academic Counseling](#)  
[Elementary and Middle/Junior High School Grade Levels](#)  
[High School Grade Levels](#)  
[Personal Counseling \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[COURSE CREDIT \(Secondary Grade Levels Only\)](#)  
[CREDIT BY EXAMINATION—If a Student Has Taken the Course/Subject \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

CREDIT BY EXAMINATION FOR ADVANCEMENT/ACCELERATION—If a Student Has Not Taken the Course/Subject

Kindergarten Acceleration

Students in Grades 1–5

Students in Grades 6–12

DATING VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION (All Grade Levels)

Dating Violence

Discrimination

Harassment

Sexual Harassment and Gender-Based Harassment

Retaliation

Reporting Procedures

Investigation of Report

DISCRIMINATION

DISTANCE LEARNING

All Grade Levels

Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN) (Secondary Grade Levels)

DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE, PUBLISHED MATERIALS, OR OTHER DOCUMENTS (All Grade Levels)

School Materials

Non-school Materials

From Students

From Others

DRESS AND GROOMING (All Grade Levels)

ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES (All Grade Levels)

Possession and Use of Personal Telecommunications Devices, Including Mobile Telephones

Possession and Use of Other Personal Electronic Devices

Instructional Use of Personal Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices

Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources

**Acceptable Use of District iPad Resources**

Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources

END-OF-COURSE (EOC) ASSESSMENTS

[ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[Standards of Behavior](#)

[Offices and Elections](#)

[FEES \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

**[iPad Fees and Insurance](#)**

[FUNDRAISING \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[GANG-FREE ZONES \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[GENDER-BASED HARASSMENT](#)

[GRADE-LEVEL CLASSIFICATION \(Grades 9–12 Only\)](#)

[GRADING GUIDELINES \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[GRADUATION \(Secondary Grade Levels Only\)](#)

[Requirements for a Diploma for a Student Enrolled in High School Prior to the 2014–15 School Year](#)

[Requirements for a Diploma Beginning with the 2014–15 School Year](#)

[Testing Requirements for Graduation](#)

[Minimum, Recommended, and Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Graduation Programs](#)

[Foundation Graduation Program](#)

[Personal Graduation Plans for Students Under the Foundation Graduation Program](#)

[Available Course Options for All Graduation Programs](#)

[Certificates of Coursework Completion](#)

[Students with Disabilities](#)

[Graduation Activities](#)

**[Commencement](#)**

**[Scholarship Programs \(FG\)](#)**

[Graduation Speakers](#)

[Graduation Expenses](#)

[Scholarships and Grants](#)

[HARASSMENT](#)

[HAZING \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS](#)

[Student Illness \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[Bacterial Meningitis \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[Food Allergies \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[Head Lice \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[Physical Activity Requirements](#)

[Elementary School](#)

[Junior High/Middle School](#)

[School Health Advisory Council \(SHAC\) \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[Student Wellness Policy/Wellness Plan \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[Other Health-Related Matters](#)

[Physical Fitness Assessment \(Grades 3–12\)](#)

[Vending Machines \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

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

[Asbestos Management Plan \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[Pest Management Plan \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[HOMELESS STUDENTS \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[HOMEWORK \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[ILLNESS](#)

[IMMUNIZATION \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[Questioning of Students](#)

[Students Taken Into Custody](#)

[Notification of Law Violations](#)

[LEAVING CAMPUS \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[During Lunch](#)

[At Any Other Time During the School Day](#)

[LOST AND FOUND \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[MAKEUP WORK](#)

[Makeup Work Because of Absence \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[DAEP Makeup Work](#)

[Elementary and Middle/Junior High School Grade Levels](#)

[Elementary and Middle/Junior High School Grade Levels](#)

[Grades 9–12](#)

[In-School Suspension \(ISS\) Makeup Work \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[MEDICINE AT SCHOOL \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[Psychotropic Drugs](#)  
[NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[NONTRADITIONAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[Working Together](#)  
[PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS/HEALTH SCREENINGS](#)  
[Athletics' Participation \(Secondary Grade Levels Only\)](#)  
[Other Exams and Screenings \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[PRAYER \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[PROMOTION AND RETENTION](#)  
[Elementary and Middle/Junior High Grade Levels](#)  
[High School Grade Levels](#)  
[RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL](#)  
[REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[RETALIATION](#)  
[SAFETY \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[Accident Insurance](#)  
[Preparedness Drills: Evacuation, Severe Weather, and Other Emergencies](#)  
[Emergency Medical Treatment and Information](#)  
[Emergency School-Closing Information](#)  
[SAT, ACT, AND OTHER STANDARDIZED TESTS](#)  
[SCHEDULE CHANGES \(Middle/Junior High and High School Grade Levels\)](#)  
[SCHOOL FACILITIES](#)  
[Use by Students Before and After School \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[Conduct Before and After School \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[Use of Hallways During Class Time \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[Cafeteria Services \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[Library \(All Grade Levels\)](#)  
[Meetings of Noncurriculum-Related Groups \(Secondary Grade Levels Only\)](#)  
[SCHOOL SPONSORED TRIPS](#)

Transportation

Extracurricular Transportation for Out of Town Trips

Senior Trip

#### SEARCHES

Students' Desks and Lockers (All Grade Levels)

Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices (All Grade Levels)

Vehicles on Campus (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

Trained Dogs (All Grade Levels)

Metal Detectors (All Grade Levels)

Drug Testing (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

#### SEXUAL HARASSMENT

SPECIAL PROGRAMS (All Grade Levels)

#### STANDARDIZED TESTING

Secondary Grade Levels

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

TSI (Texas Success Initiative) Assessment

STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness)

Grades 3–8

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

STEROIDS (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE (All Grade Levels)

STUDENT SPEAKERS (All Grade Levels)

SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION (All Grade Levels)

SUICIDE AWARENESS (All Grade Levels)

SUMMER SCHOOL (All Grade Levels)

TARDIES (All Grade Levels)

TEXTBOOKS, ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS, TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT, AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS (All Grade Levels)

TRANSFERS (All Grade Levels)

TRANSPORTATION (All Grade Levels)

School-Sponsored Trips

Buses and Other School Vehicles

VANDALISM (All Grade Levels)



[VIDEO CAMERAS \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[General Visitors](#)

[Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students](#)

[VOLUNTEERS \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

[VOTER REGISTRATION \(Secondary Grade Levels Only\)](#)

[WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL \(All Grade Levels\)](#)

STUDENT CONDUCT CODE: [INTRODUCTION](#)

[CONDUCT and DRESS \(see DRESS AND GROOMING page 37\)](#)

[SECTION I: PROCEDURES](#)

[JURISDICTION](#)

[TEACHER REMOVAL OF A STUDENT](#)

[INFORMAL DISCRETIONARY REMOVAL](#)

[EMERGENCY IMMEDIATE REMOVAL](#)

[DETENTION](#)

[PLACEMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE](#)

[THE DAEP PLACEMENT PROCESS](#)

[THE EXPULSION PROCESS](#)

[SECTION II: GENERAL MISCONDUCT](#)

[SECTION III: DISCRETIONARY DAEP OFFENSES](#)

[SECTION IV: MANDATORY DAEP OFFENSES](#)

[SECTION V: DISCRETIONARY EXPULSION OFFENSES](#)

[SECTION VII: MISCELLANEOUS](#)

[ASSAULTS/ALTERCATIONS/INCIDENCE CONSIDERED PUBLIC DISTURBANCE](#)

[LAW ENFORCEMENT](#)

[Questioning of Students](#)

[Students Taken into Custody](#)

[Notification of Law Violations](#)

[Students' Desks and Lockers](#)

[Vehicles on Campus](#)

[DRUG DETECTION DOGS](#)

[TITLE 5 OFFENSES-TEXAS PENAL CODE](#)

[TRESPASSING](#)

<u>WEAPONS</u>	
<u>DRESS AND GROOMING</u>	
<u>ELECTONIC DEVICES AND IPAD DEVICES</u>	
<u>TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY</u>	
<u>APPENDIX I: FREEDOM FROM BULLYING POLICY</u>	
<u>BULLYING PROHIBITED</u>	
<u>Definition</u>	
<u>Examples</u>	
<u>RETALIATION</u>	
<u>Examples</u>	
<u>FALSE CLAIM</u>	
<u>TIMELY REPORTING</u>	
<u>REPORTING PROCEDURES</u>	
<u>Student Report</u>	
<u>Employee Report</u>	
<u>Report format</u>	
<u>PROHIBITED CONDUCT</u>	
<u>INVESTIGATION OF REPORT</u>	
<u>CONCLUDING THE INVESTIGATION</u>	
<u>NOTICE TO PARENTS</u>	
<u>DISTRICT ACTION</u>	
<u>Bullying</u>	
<u>Discipline</u>	
<u>Corrective Action</u>	
<u>Transfers</u>	
<u>Counseling</u>	
<u>Improper conduct</u>	
<u>CONFIDENTIALITY</u>	
<u>APPEAL</u>	
<u>RECORDS RETENTION</u>	
<u>ACCESS TO POLICY AND PROCEDURES</u>	
<u>APPENDIX II: Parent Statement Prohibiting Corporal Punishment</u>	122
<u>APPENDIX III: Release Form for Display of Students Work and Personal Information.....</u>	123

APPENDIX IV: Agreement of Acceptable Use of Campus Computers.....	124
<a href="#">APPENDIX V: iPad Acceptance Agreement</a>	125
<a href="#">APPENDIX VI: Acknowledgment Form—Amendment</a>	140
<a href="#">Glossary</a>	141

## PREFACE

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to school year 2016–17! Education is a team effort, and we know that students, parents, teachers, and other staff members all working together can make this a wonderfully successful year for our students.

The McMullen County I.S.D. Student Handbook is designed to provide basic information that you and your child will need during the school year. The handbook is divided into two sections:

**Section I—PARENTAL RIGHTS**—with information to assist you in responding to school-related issues. We encourage you to take some time to closely review this section of the handbook.

**Section II—OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS**—organized alphabetically by topic, and, where possible, further divided by applicability to ages and/or grade levels, for quick access when searching for information on a specific issue.

Please be aware that the term “parent,” unless otherwise noted, is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, any person granted some other type of lawful control of the student, or any other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

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

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

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

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

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

If you or your child has questions about any of the material in this handbook, please contact the counselor or the principal.

Your child's school will request that you provide contact information, such as your current phone number and e-mail address, in order for the school to communicate items specific to your child, your child's school, or the district. If you consent to receive such information through a landline or wireless phone, please ensure that you notify the school's administration office immediately upon a change in or disconnection of your phone number. The district or school may generate automated or pre-recorded messages, text messages, or real-time phone or e-mail communication, so prompt notification of any change in contact information will be crucial to maintain timely communication with you. Standard messaging rates of your phone carrier may apply. If you have specific requests or needs related to how the district contacts you, please contact your child's principal. Please see **Safety** on page 77 for information regarding contact with parents during an emergency situation.

Also, 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 the student's enrollment:

Acknowledgment Form OR Acknowledgment of Electronic Distribution of Student Handbook;

Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information;

Parent's Objection to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education, if you choose to restrict the release of information to these entities; and

Consent/Opt-Out Form.

[See **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 4 and **Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey, Analysis, or Evaluation** on page 6 for more information.]

Please note that references to policy codes are included so that parents can refer to current board policy. The district's official policy manual is available for review in the district administration office, and an unofficial electronic copy is available on the district website.

## **SECTION I: PARENTAL RIGHTS**

This section of the McMullen County I.S.D. Student Handbook includes information related to certain rights of parents as specified in state or federal law.

### **CONSENT, OPT-OUT, AND REFUSAL RIGHTS**

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

A district employee will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without obtaining prior written parental consent unless the examination, test, or treatment is required under state or federal law regarding requirements for special education or by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for child abuse investigations and reports.

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

Teachers may display students' work, which may include personally identifiable student information, in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement.

However, the district will seek parental consent before displaying students' artwork, special projects, photographs taken by students, original videos or voice recordings, and other original works on the district's website, a website affiliated or sponsored by the district, such as a campus or classroom website, and in district publications, which may include printed materials, videos, or other methods of mass communication.

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

A child under the age of 14 must have parental permission to receive instruction in the district's parenting and paternity awareness program; otherwise, the child will not be allowed to participate in the instruction. This program, developed by the Office of the Texas Attorney General and the State Board of Education (SBOE), is incorporated into the district's health and/or science education classes.

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

State law permits the school to make a video or voice recording without parental permission for the following circumstances:

When it is to be used for school safety;

When it relates to classroom instruction or a cocurricular or extracurricular activity;

When it relates to media coverage of the school; or

When it relates to the promotion of student safety as provided by law for a student receiving special education services in certain settings.

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

[See **Video Cameras** on page 88 for more information, including a parent’s right to request video and audio equipment be placed in certain special education settings.]

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

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

If you do not want corporal punishment to be administered to your child as a method of student discipline, please return the form included in the forms packet OR submit a written statement to the campus principal stating this decision. A signed statement must be provided each year if you do not want corporal punishment to be administered to your child.

You may choose to revoke this prohibition at any time during the year by providing a signed statement to the campus principal. However, district personnel may choose to use discipline methods other than corporal punishment even if the parent requests that this method be used on the student.

Please note that if the district is made aware that a student is in temporary or permanent conservatorship (custody) of the state, through foster care, kinship care, or other arrangements, corporal punishment will not be administered, even when a signed statement prohibiting its use has not been submitted by the student’s caregiver or caseworker.

### **Limiting Electronic Communications with Students by District Employees**

Teachers and other approved employees are permitted by the district to communicate with students through the use of electronic media within the scope of the individual’s professional responsibilities. For example, a teacher may set up a social networking page for his or her class that has information related to class work, homework, and tests. As a parent, you are welcome to join or become a member of such a page.

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

However, instant or text messages sent to an individual student are only allowed if a district employee with responsibility for an extracurricular activity needs to communicate with a student participating in the extracurricular activity. The employee is required to include the student’s parent as recipients on all text messages.

If you prefer that your child not receive any one-to-one electronic communications from a district employee or if you have questions related to the use of electronic media by district employees, please contact the campus principal.

### **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, permits the district to disclose appropriately designated “directory information” from a child’s education records without

written consent. “Directory information” is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. Examples include a student’s photograph for publication in the school yearbook; a student’s name and grade level for purposes of communicating class and teacher assignment; the name, weight, and height of an athlete for publication in a school athletic program; a list of student birthdays for generating school wide or classroom recognition; a student’s name and photograph posted on a district-approved and -managed social media platform; and the names and grade levels of students submitted by the district to a local newspaper or other community publication to recognize the A/B honor roll for a specific grading period. Directory information will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

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

The district has identified the following as directory information: student name; address; telephone listing; electronic mail address; photograph; date and place of birth; major field of study; degrees, honors, and awards received; dates of attendance; grade level; most recent educational institution attended; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; and weight and height of members of athletic teams.

Also review the information at **Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records** on page 9.

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

The district is required by federal law to comply with a request by a military recruiter or an institution of higher education for students’ names, addresses, and telephone listings, unless parents have advised the district not to release their child’s information without prior written consent. A form included in the forms packet is available if you do not want the district to provide this information to military recruiters or institutions of higher education.

### **Participation in Third-Party Surveys**

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

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

Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent.

Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family.

Sexual behavior or attitudes.

Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.

Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship.

Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.  
Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents.

Income, except when the information is required by law and will be used to determine the student's eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

You will be able to inspect the survey or other instrument and any instructional materials used in connection with such a survey, analysis, or evaluation. [For further information, see policy EF(LEGAL).]

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

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

Any survey concerning the private information listed above, regardless of funding.

School activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from your child for the purpose of marketing, selling, or otherwise disclosing that information. Note that this does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.

Any nonemergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered and scheduled by the school in advance and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student. Exceptions are hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law. [See policies EF and FFAA.]

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

## **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) is involved with the selection of course materials for such instruction.

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

Present abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice of behavior 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 is the only method that is 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity;

Direct adolescents to a standard of behavior in which abstinence from sexual activity before marriage is 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.

In accordance with state law, below is a summary of the district's curriculum regarding human sexuality instruction:

Human Sexuality instruction will happen in accordance with health and science standards established by the State of Texas. General health topics including human sexuality will be covered in science classes in sixth grade, seventh and eighth grade, as well as high school classes such as biology and human anatomy and physiology.

As a parent, you are entitled to review the curriculum materials. In addition, you may remove your child from any part of the human sexuality instruction with no academic, disciplinary, or other penalties. You may also choose to become more involved with the development of curriculum used for this purpose by becoming a member of the district's SHAC. Please see the campus principal for additional information.

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

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

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

As a parent, you may request that your child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be in writing. State law does not allow your child to be excused from participation in the required minute of silence or silent activity that follows. [See **Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence** on page 73 and policy EC(LEGAL).]

### **Religious or Moral Beliefs**

You may remove your child temporarily from the classroom if an instructional activity in which your child is scheduled to participate conflicts with your religious or moral beliefs. The removal cannot be for the purpose of avoiding a test and may not extend for an entire semester. Further, your child must satisfy grade-level and graduation requirements as determined by the school and by state law.

## **Tutoring or Test Preparation**

Based on informal observations, evaluative data such as grades earned on assignments or tests, or results from diagnostic assessments, a teacher may determine that a student is in need of additional targeted assistance in order for the student to achieve mastery in state-developed essential knowledge and skills. The school will always attempt to provide tutoring and strategies for test-taking in ways that prevent removal from other instruction as much as possible. In accordance with state law and policy EC, the school will not remove a student from a regularly scheduled class for remedial tutoring or test preparation for more than ten percent of the school days on which the class is offered, unless the student's parent consents to this removal.

The school may also offer tutorial services, which students whose grades are below 70 will be required to attend.

[Also refer to policies EC and EHBC, and contact your student's teacher with questions about any tutoring programs provided by the school.]

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

### **Instructional Materials**

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

You are also entitled to request that the school allow your child to take home any instructional materials used by the student. If the school determines that sufficient availability exists to grant the request, the student must return the materials at the beginning of the next school day if requested to do so by the child's teacher.

### **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 policy FO(LEGAL) and the Student Code of Conduct.]

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

You may request information regarding any state or district policy related to your child's participation in assessments required by federal law, state law, or the district.

### **Student Records**

#### ***Accessing Student Records***

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

Attendance records,

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

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

A federal law, known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, affords parents and eligible students certain rights with respect to student education records. For purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is age 18 or older or who is attending an institution of postsecondary education. These rights, as discussed in this section as well as at **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 4, are:

The right to inspect and review student records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access.

The right to request an amendment to a student record the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of FERPA.

The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information from the student's records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning failures by the school to comply with FERPA requirements. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:

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

Both FERPA and state laws safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and eligible students certain rights of privacy. Before disclosing any personally identifiable information from a student's records, the district must verify the identity of the person, including a parent or the student, requesting the information.

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 primarily restricted to an eligible student or a student's parents—whether married, separated, or divorced—unless the school is given a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student's education records.

Federal law requires that, as soon as a student reaches the age of 18, is emancipated by a court, or enrolls in a postsecondary institution, control of the records goes to the student. The parents may continue to have access to the records, however, if the student is a dependent for tax purposes and under limited circumstances when there is a threat to the health and safety of the student or other individuals.

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

When district school officials have what federal law refers to as a "legitimate educational interest" in a student's records. School officials would include board members and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals; teachers, school counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff (including district health or district medical staff); a person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a particular 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 parent or student serving on a school committee; or a parent or student assisting a school official in the performance of his or her duties. "Legitimate educational interest" in a student's records includes working with the student; considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities; compiling statistical data; reviewing an educational record to fulfill the official's professional responsibility to the school and the student; or investigating or evaluating programs.

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, TEA, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture's office, and Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers or other child welfare representatives, in certain cases.

To individuals or entities granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.

To another school, school district/system, or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she is already enrolled.

In connection with financial aid for which a student has applied or which the student has received.

To accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions.

To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order 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 information it has designated as directory information [see **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 4 for opportunities to prohibit this disclosure].

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 wishes to inspect the student's records should submit a written request to the records custodian identifying the records he or she wishes to inspect. Records may be inspected by a parent or eligible student during regular school hours. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

A parent or eligible student who provides a written request and pays copying costs 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 these records.

The address of the superintendent's office is P.O. Box 359, Tilden, TX 78072.

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student's records and request a correction or amendment if the records are considered inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. A request to correct a student's record should be submitted to the appropriate records custodian. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected and include an explanation of how the information in the record is inaccurate. If the district denies the request to amend the records, the parent or eligible student has the right to request a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the parent or eligible student has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record.

Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student's grade in a course or on an examination is handled through the general complaint process found in policy FNG(LOCAL). A grade issued by a classroom teacher can be changed only if, as determined by the board of trustees, the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or inconsistent with the district's grading policy. [See FINALITY OF GRADES at FNG(LEGAL), **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 76, and **Complaints and Concerns** on page 28 for an overview of the process.]

The district's policy regarding student records found at policy FL is available from the principal's or superintendent's office or on the district's website at [www.mcisd.us](http://www.mcisd.us).

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

### **Teacher and Staff Professional Qualifications**

You may request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's teachers, including whether a teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels

and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; whether the teacher has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived; and whether the teacher is currently teaching in the field of discipline of his or her certification. You also have the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to your child.

## **STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES OR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

### **Children of Military Families**

Children of military families will be provided flexibility regarding certain district requirements, including:

Immunization requirements.

Grade level, course, or educational program placement.

Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities.

Graduation requirements.

In addition, absences related to a student visiting with his or her parent, including a stepparent or legal guardian, who has been called to active duty for, is on leave from, or is returning from a deployment of at least four months will be excused by the district. 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 <http://tea.texas.gov/index2.aspx?id=7995>.

### **Parental Role in Certain Classroom and School Assignments**

#### ***Multiple Birth Siblings***

As a parent, if your children are multiple birth siblings (e.g., twins, triplets, etc.) assigned to the same grade and campus, you may request that they be placed either in the same classroom or in separate classrooms unless the school district only has one option for the class. Your written request must be submitted no later than the 14th day after the enrollment of your children. [See policy FDB(LEGAL).]

#### ***Safety Transfers/Assignments***

As a parent, you may:

Request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the district to have been a victim of bullying as the term is defined by Education Code 37.0832. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. See the principal for information.

Consult with district administrators if your child has been determined by the district to have engaged in bullying and the board decides to transfer your child to another classroom or campus. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus.

[See **Bullying** on page 21, policy FDB, and policy FFI.]

Request the transfer of your child to attend a safe public school in the district if your child attends school at a campus identified by TEA as persistently dangerous or if your child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds. [See policy FDE.]

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

### **Service/Assistance Animal Use by Students**

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

### **Students in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care)**

A student who is currently in the conservatorship (custody) of the state and who enrolls in the district after the beginning of the school year will be allowed credit-by-examination opportunities outside the district's established testing windows, and the district will grant proportionate course credit by semester (partial credit) when a student only passes one semester of a two-semester course.

A student who is currently in the conservatorship of the state and who is moved outside of the district's or school's attendance boundaries, or who is initially placed in the conservatorship of the state and who is moved outside the district's or school's boundaries, is entitled to continue in enrollment at the school he or she was attending prior to the placement or move until the student reaches the highest grade level at the particular school. In addition, 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 to receive a diploma from the previous district if he or she meets the criteria to graduate from the previous district.

[See also **Credit by Examination For Advancement/Acceleration** on page 31, **Course Credit** on page 30, and **Students in Foster Care** on page 85 for more information.]

### **Students Who Are Homeless**

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

Proof of residency requirements;

Immunization requirements;

Educational program placement, if the student is unable to provide previous academic records, or misses an application deadline during a period of homelessness;

Credit-by-examination opportunities;

The award of partial credit (awarding credit proportionately when a student passes only one semester of a two-semester course);

Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities; and

Graduation requirements.

If a student in grade 11 or 12 is homeless and transfers to another school district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, the student can request to receive a diploma from the previous district if he or she meets the criteria to graduate from the previous district.

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

[See also **Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration** on page 31, **Course Credit** on page 30, and **Homeless Students** on page 65 for more information.]

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

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

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

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with prior written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parents of their rights, if they disagree with the district. The district is required to give parents the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards—Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities*. Additional information regarding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is available from the school district in a companion document, *A Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process*. Both documents may also be found at <http://framework.esc18.net/display/Webforms/LandingPage.aspx>.

The following websites provide information to those who are seeking information and resources specific to students with disabilities and their families:

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



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

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education services is the assistant principal at 361-274-2000.

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

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

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

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

### **Students with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected Under Section 504**

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

The designated person to contact regarding a referral for evaluation applicable to Section 504 is the assistant principal at 361-274-2000.

[Also see policy FB.]

## **SECTION II: OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS**

Topics in this section of the Student Handbook contain important information on academics, school activities, and school operations and requirements. Take a moment with your child to become familiar with the various issues addressed in this section. It is organized in alphabetical order to serve as a quick-reference when you or your child has a question about a specific school-related issue. Where possible, the topics are also organized to alert you to the applicability of each topic based on a student's age or grade level. Should you be unable to find the information on a particular topic, please contact the principal at (361) 274-2000.

### **ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE**

Regular school attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his or her education—to benefit from teacher-led and school activities, to build each day's learning on the previous day's, and to grow as an individual. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, the student and parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Two state laws—one dealing with the required presence of school-aged children in school, e.g., compulsory attendance, the other with how a child's attendance affects the award of a student's final grade or course credit—are of special interest to students and parents. They are discussed below.

#### **Compulsory Attendance**

##### ***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 a student age 19 or older has 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.]

##### ***Between Ages 6 and 19***

State law requires that a student between the ages of 6 and 19 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 attendance in an accelerated reading instruction program when kindergarten, first grade, or second grade students are assigned to such a program. Parents will be notified in writing if their child is assigned to an accelerated reading instruction program as a result of a diagnostic reading instrument.

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

## ***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.

## **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance**

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

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

Religious holy days;

Required court appearances;

Activities related to obtaining U.S. citizenship;

Documented health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders, if the student comes to school or returns to school on the same day as the appointment. A note from the health-care provider must be submitted upon the student's arrival or return to campus; and

For students in the conservatorship (custody) 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.

As listed in Section I at **Children of Military Families**, absences of up to five days will be excused for a student to visit with a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian who has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from certain deployments. Please see page 12 for that section.

### ***Secondary Grade Levels***

In addition, a junior or senior student's absence of up to two days related to visiting a college or university will be considered an exemption, provided this has been authorized by the board under policy FEA(LOCAL), the student receives approval from the campus principal, follows the campus procedures to verify such a visit, and makes up any work missed.

Absences of up to two days in a school year will also be considered an exemption for:

A student serving 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; and

A student serving as an election clerk, if the student makes up any work missed.

An absence of a student in grades 6–12 for the purpose of sounding "Taps" at a military honors funeral for a deceased veteran will also be excused by the district.

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

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

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent without permission from school; from any class; from required special programs, such as additional special instruction, termed “accelerated instruction” by the state; or from required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

### ***Age 19 and Older***

After a student age 19 or older incurs a third unexcused absence, the district will send the student a letter as required by law 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.

### ***Between Ages 6 and 19***

When a student between ages 6 and 19 incurs unexcused absences for three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period, the school will send a notice to the student’s parent, as required by law, to remind the parent that it is the parent’s duty to monitor his or her child’s attendance and to require the student to come to school. The notice will also inform the parent that the district will initiate truancy prevention measures and request a conference between school administrators and the parent. These measures will include a behavior improvement plan, school-based community service, or referrals to either in-school or out-of-school counseling or other social services. Any other measures considered appropriate by the district will also be initiated.

The truancy prevention facilitator for the district is the principal. If you have questions about your student and the effect of his or her absences from school, please contact the facilitator or any other campus administrator.

A court of law may also impose penalties against a student’s parent if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. A complaint against the parent may be filed in court if the student is absent without excuse from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year.

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

[See policy FEA(LEGAL).]

### **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade (Kindergarten–Grade 12)**

To receive credit or a final grade in a class, a student in kindergarten–grade 12 must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. A student who attends at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered may receive credit or a final grade for the

class if he or she completes a plan, approved by the principal, that allows the student to fulfill the instructional requirements for the class. If a student is involved in a criminal or juvenile court proceeding, the approval of the judge presiding over the case will also be required before the student receives credit or a final grade for the class.

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

All absences, whether excused or unexcused, must be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days. In determining whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences, the attendance committee will use the following guidelines:

If makeup work is completed, absences for the reasons listed above at **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance** will be considered extenuating circumstances for purposes of attendance for credit or the award of a final grade.

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

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

The committee will review absences incurred based on the student's participation in board-approved extracurricular activities. These absences will be considered by the attendance committee as extenuating circumstances in accordance with the absences allowed under FM(LOCAL) if the student made 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 absences were for reasons over which the student or the student's parent could exercise any control.

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

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

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

The actual number of days a student must be in attendance in order to receive credit or a final grade will depend on whether the class is for a full semester or for a full year.

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

The district must submit attendance of its students to the TEA reflecting attendance at a specific time each day.

Official attendance is taken every day at 9:30 a.m., which is during the second instructional hour as required by state rule.

A student absent for any portion of the day, including at the official attendance-taking time, should follow the procedures below to provide documentation of the absence.

### **Documentation After an Absence (All Grade Levels)**

When a student is absent from school, the student—upon arrival or return to school—must bring a note signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence. A note signed by the student, even with the parent’s permission, will not be accepted unless the student is age 18 or older or is an emancipated minor under state law. A phone call from the parent may be accepted, but the district reserves the right to require a written note.

The campus will document in its attendance records for the student whether the absence is considered by the district to be excused or unexcused. Please note that, unless the absence is for a statutorily allowed reason under compulsory attendance laws, the district is not required to excuse any absence, even if the parent provides a note explaining the absence.

### **Doctor’s Note After an Absence for Illness (All Grade Levels)**

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

Should the student develop a questionable pattern of absences, the principal or attendance committee may require a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student’s absence from school in order to determine whether the absence or absences will be excused or unexcused.

[See policy FEC(LOCAL).]

### **Driver License Attendance Verification (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

For a student between the ages of 16 and 18 to obtain a driver license, written parental permission must be provided for the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) to access the student’s attendance records and, in certain circumstances, for a school administrator to provide the student’s attendance information to DPS. A verification of enrollment (VOE) form may be obtained from the office, which the student will need to submit to DPS upon application for a driver license.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY UNDER STATE AND FEDERAL LAW (All Grade Levels)**

McMullen County I.S.D. is held to certain standards of accountability under state and federal law. A key component of the accountability requirements is the dissemination and publication of certain reports and information, which include:

The Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) for the district, compiled by TEA, the state agency that oversees public education, based on academic factors and ratings;

A School Report Card (SRC) for each campus in the district compiled by TEA based on academic factors and ratings;

The district's financial management report, which will include the financial accountability rating assigned to the district by TEA;

The performance ratings of the district's evaluation of community and student engagement using the indicators required by law; and

Information compiled by TEA for the submission of a federal report card that is required by federal law.

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

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

## **AWARDS AND HONORS (All Grade Levels)**

It is the policy of the McMullen County Independent School District Board of Trustees to recognize students who have excelled in any area.

### **Awards (Elementary)**

McMullen County Elementary recognizes students in a variety of ways for a multitude of skills. Students will be recognized at award ceremonies and through our school newspaper, "The Cowboy Chronicle" for perfect attendance, A honor role, A/B honor role, Demonstrations of character, sportsmanship, academic growth, academic effort, a parents involvement in our PALS program, and accomplishing a variety of academic goals including the amount of reading accomplished by the child. Some awards and celebrations happen inside the classroom. Most awards will be recognized once a six-weeks at the elementary Awards Program in the cafeteria. Parents are invited to attend the awards program in the school's cafeteria. Dates and times of these award programs will be put on the district calendar and also communicated to parents using tools developed by each teacher to communicate news and student progress with parents.

Students in 2<sup>nd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade will also have the ability to participate in academic UIL and may receive awards and recognition through their involvement in this activity.

The district newspaper, "The Cowboy Chronicle" will also do features on students and their accomplishments throughout the year.

## **Awards (Secondary)**

Students at high school are recognized for their achievements throughout the school year. Some recognition happens within the classroom. Other awards such as A Honor Role, A/B Honor Role, and Perfect Attendance are recognized through the district's news media, "The Cowboy Chronicle." Most awards are given to students through involvement in extracurricular activities. For questions about award opportunities for secondary students please speak to the student's individual teacher or extracurricular sponsor.

## **BULLYING (All Grade Levels)**

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic methods, or physical conduct against another student on school property, at a school-sponsored or -related activity, or in a district operated vehicle, and the behavior:

Results in harm to the student or the student's property;

Places a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or of damage to the student's property; or

Is so severe, persistent, and pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment.

This conduct is considered bullying if it exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator(s) and the student victim and if it interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of the school.

Bullying is prohibited by the district and could include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading, or ostracism. In some cases, bullying can occur through electronic methods, called "cyberbullying."

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

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

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

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



to be a victim of bullying may request that his or her child be transferred to another classroom or campus within the district. [Also see **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 12.]

A copy of the district's 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 in the form of an appendix. Procedures related to reporting allegations of bullying may also be found on the district's website.

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

[Also see **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 12, **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 32, **Hazing** on page 60, policy FFI, 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 Business, Agricultural Mechanics, and Information Technology. Admission to these programs is based on student interest, the number of credits and availability.

These programs will be offered without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, or disability. McMullen County I.S.D. will take steps to ensure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and CTE programs. [Also see **Nondiscrimination Statement** on page 71 for the name and contact information for the Title IX coordinator and Section 504 coordinator, who will address certain allegations of discrimination.]

## **CELEBRATIONS (All Grade Levels)**

Although a parent or grandparent is not prohibited from providing food for a school-designated function or for children in the child's or grandchild's classroom for his or her birthday, please be aware that children in the school may have severe allergies to certain food products. Therefore, it is imperative to discuss this with the child's teacher prior to bringing any food in this circumstance. Occasionally, the school or a class may host certain functions or celebrations tied to the curriculum that will involve food. The school or teacher will notify students and parents of any known food allergies when soliciting potential volunteers for bringing food products.

[Also see **Food Allergies** on page 62.]

## **CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND OTHER MALTREATMENT OF CHILDREN (All Grade Levels)**

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children, which may be accessed at the counselor's office. As a parent, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. A person who compels or encourages a child to engage in sexual conduct commits abuse. It is illegal to make or possess child pornography or to display such

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

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

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

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

The following websites might help you become more aware of child abuse and neglect:

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/whatiscan.pdf>

<http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/child-abuse.html>

<http://taasa.org/resources-2/>

<https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/cvs/what-we-can-do-about-child-abuse-1>

<https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/cvs/what-we-can-do-about-child-abuse-2>

Reports of abuse or neglect may be made to:

The CPS division of the TDFPS (1-800-252-5400 or on the web at <http://www.txabusehotline.org>).

### **CLASS RANK/HIGHEST-RANKING STUDENT (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

A student's final rank upon graduating from high school will be determined first by the student's level of achievement/graduation plan as ordered below and then by the student's final grade point average (GPA).

- McMullen High School Honor Graduate (see HONOR GRADUATES below)
- Distinguished Achievement Program Graduate
- Recommended High School Program Graduate or a Foundation Program with Endorsement

- Minimum Graduation Plan Graduate or a Foundation Program without Endorsement
- Recommended High School Program Graduate with modified course work
- Minimum Graduation Plan Graduate with modified course work

A student's final GPA will be determined by averaging all his/her grades while in high school (eight semesters) and any course(s) taken in 8<sup>th</sup> grade for which the student earned high school state graduation credit. Courses not included in the final GPA are: driver's education and teacher's aides. (See College Level/Dual Credit, Credit by Correspondence and Credit by Examination for additional information)

**This final rank is used by many colleges in determining how high a score a student must make on college entrance exams to gain admission.** For two school years following their graduation, district graduates who ranked in the top ten percent of their graduating class are eligible for admission into four-year public universities and colleges in Texas. Students and parents should contact the counselor for further information about how to apply and the deadline for application. [For further information, see policies at EIC.]

For two school years following his or her graduation, a district student who graduates 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 Recommended or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program; or

Satisfies the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks or earns at least a 1500 out of 2400 on the SAT.

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

[For further information, see policies at EIC.]

## HONOR GRADUATES

### McMullen High School Honor Graduates

To graduate as a "McMullen High School Honor Graduate", Valedictorian, or Salutatorian a student must possess a minimum of a 90 final GPA, and must satisfactorily complete the "Distinguished Achievement Program."

### Valedictorian and Salutatorian

The valedictory honor will be given to the student earning the highest rank as determined by the above stated "CLASS RANK" policy. The salutatory honor will be given to the student earning the second highest rank as determined by the above stated "CLASS RANK" policy.

Students who are transfers from other accredited schools or students who move into the district from other accredited schools, after beginning high school, are eligible for honors provided they

attend McMullen County High School during their entire junior and senior years. For the purpose of valedictory or salutatory honors these students will be ranked using the above stated “CLASS RANK” policy and in addition they must have a higher GPA based on their grades earned at McMullen County High School when compared to the GPA earned during the same school years or semesters by other students competing for honors.

#### Recognition of Honor Graduates

Honor Graduates will be recognized at the commencement exercises in one of the following ways:

- McMullen High School Honor Graduates will wear a gold honor cord.
- National Honor Society members will wear a white or gold pendant with the National Honor Society emblem.
- Valedictorian and Salutatorian will wear gold honor cords and white pendant.

Recognition of Honor Students shall be denoted on the graduation exercise program in the following manner:

- McMullen High School Honor Student—1 asterisk (\*)
- National Honor Society Member—2 asterisks (\*\*)
- Valedictorian and Salutatorian stated as so.

#### JUNIOR HIGH HONORS

Grades for junior high honors will be based upon both the seventh and eighth grade work at McMullen County Junior High.

[For further information, see policies at EIC.]

Beginning with students who entered grade 9 in the 2014–15 school year, a new graduation program is in effect. Therefore, class ranking procedures may be adjusted by the district based on the new graduation plan. As these decisions are made, the district will make the information available to the students affected by these changes.

[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 class/course schedule to fulfill each period of the day. 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’s schedule.

[See **Schedule Changes** on page 78 for information related to student requests to revise their course schedule.]

## **COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

For two school years following his or her graduation, a district student who graduates in the top ten percent and, in some cases, the top 25 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 Recommended or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program\*; or

Satisfies the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks or earns at least a 1500 out of 2400 on the SAT.

\*Beginning with ninth graders in the 2014–15 school year, to be eligible for automatic admission to a Texas four-year college or university, a student must be on track to graduate with the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation graduation program. This means that a student must graduate with at least one endorsement and must have taken Algebra II as one of the four required math courses.

In addition, the student must submit a completed application for admission in accordance with the deadline established by the college or university. The student is ultimately responsible for ensuring that he or she meets the admission requirements of the university or college to which the student submits an application.

The University of Texas at Austin may limit the number of students automatically admitted to 75 percent of the University's enrollment capacity for incoming resident freshmen. For students who are eligible to enroll in the University during the summer or fall 2017 term, the University will be admitting the top seven percent of the high school's graduating class who meet the above requirements. Additional applicants will be considered by the University through a holistic review process.

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.

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

[See also **Class Rank/Highest-Ranking Student** on page 24 for information specifically related to how the district calculates a student's rank in class, and requirements for **Graduation** on page 51 for information associated with the foundation graduation program].

## **COLLEGE CREDIT COURSES (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

Students in grades 9–12 have opportunities to earn college credit through the following methods:

Certain courses taught at the high school campus, which may include courses termed dual credit, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or college preparatory;

Enrollment in an AP or dual credit course through the Texas Virtual School Network;

Enrollment in courses taught in conjunction and in partnership with Coastal Bend College, which may be offered on or off campus;

Enrollment in courses taught at other colleges or universities; and  
Certain CTE courses.

All of 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.

It is important to keep in mind that 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.

Students wishing to enroll in a dual credit course through McMullen County I.S.D. must pay a onetime deductible of \$200. The onetime fee will be retained while the student attends McMullen County High School and is valid for all dual credit courses for which the student participates. The money will be collected before the student is enrolled in the first dual credit course and will not be returned to the student if any dual credit course is dropped beyond the accepted drop day. Should the student finish all dual credit courses successfully or with good intent, the \$200 fee will be returned to the student upon graduation from McMullen County I.S.D. or when the student withdraws from school.

Should a student drop a dual credit course beyond the approved drop day, the district will deposit the \$200 fee to recover a portion of the cost of the dual credit course and the student will be required to pay another \$200 fee before enrolling in an additional dual credit course.

Numerical grades earned in dual credit and AP courses will be weighted ten (10) points per semester for honor roll and for class ranking purposes. Where the actual numerical grade is not given, the following conversion will apply:

$$A = 90 + 10 = 100$$

$$D = 70 + 10 = 80$$

$$B = 80 + 10 = 90$$

$$F = 69$$

$$C = 75 + 10 = 85$$

(69 and lower will not be adjusted)

The college or institution that is partnering with MCISD will establish their own set of rules and expectations regarding the completion of work, timelines, and testing schedules. To receive local credit, students must also follow school expectations such as:

- Additional learning objectives as outlines by the district monitor, teacher, and/or proctor.
- A requirement that each assessment be completed on school grounds with a school designated proctor to administer the exam unless otherwise excused by campus administration.

## **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 handled so easily, the board has adopted a standard complaint policy at FNG(LOCAL) in the

district's policy manual. A copy of this policy may be obtained in the principal's or superintendent's office [www.mcisd.us](http://www.mcisd.us).

Should a parent or student feel a need to file a formal complaint, the parent or student should file a district complaint form within the timelines established in policy FNG(LOCAL). In general, the student or parent should submit the written complaint form to the campus principal. If the concern is not resolved, a request for a conference should be sent to the superintendent. If still unresolved, the district provides for the complaint to be presented to the board of trustees.

## **CONDUCT (All Grade Levels)**

### **Applicability of School Rules**

As required by law, the board has adopted a Student Code of Conduct that prohibits certain behaviors and defines standards of acceptable behavior—both on and off campus as well as on district vehicles—and consequences for violation of these standards. The district has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards set out in the Student Code of Conduct, as well as campus and classroom rules. During any periods of instruction during the summer months, the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct in place for the year immediately preceding the summer period shall apply, unless the district amends either or both documents for the purposes of summer instruction.

### **Campus Behavior Coordinator**

By law, each campus has a campus behavior coordinator to apply discipline management techniques and administer consequences for certain student misconduct, as well as provide a point of contact for student misconduct. The campus behavior coordinator at each district campus is listed below:

School Principal – Joe Timms

### **Disruptions of School Operations**

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

Interference with the movement of people at an exit, entrance, or hallway of a district building without authorization from an administrator.

Interference with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.

Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.

Use of force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.

Interference with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to district property.

Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving district property without authorization from an administrator.

Disruption of classes or other school activities while on district property or on public property that is within 500 feet of district property. Class disruption includes making loud noises; trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity; and entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with loud or profane language or any misconduct.

Interference with the transportation of students in vehicles owned or operated by the district.

## **Social Events**

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

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

Please contact the campus principal if you are interested in serving as a chaperone for any school social events.

## **COUNSELING**

### **Academic Counseling**

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

The school counselor is available to students and parents to talk about the importance of postsecondary education and how best to plan for postsecondary education, including appropriate courses to consider and financial aid availability and requirements.

In either grade 7 or 8, each student will receive instruction related to how the student can best 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 and other information that will help them make the most of academic and CTE opportunities, as well as information on the importance of postsecondary education.

The school counselor can also provide information about entrance exams and application deadlines, as well as information about automatic admission, financial aid, housing, and scholarships as these relate to state colleges and universities. The school counselor can also 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 concerns, including such areas as social, family, emotional or mental health issues, or substance abuse. A student who wishes to meet with the school counselor should come by the school office and schedule an appointment. 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.

[Also see **Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention** on page 86 and **Suicide Awareness** on page 86.]

## **COURSE CREDIT (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

A student in grades 9–12, or in a lower grade when a student is enrolled in a high school credit-bearing course, will earn credit for a course only if the final grade is 70 or above. For a two-semester (1 credit) course, the student's grades from both semesters will be averaged and credit will be awarded if the combined average is 70 or above. Should the student's combined average be less than 70, the student will be required to retake the semester in which he or she failed.

## **CREDIT BY EXAMINATION—If a Student Has Taken the Course/Subject (All Grade Levels)**

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 by passing an exam approved by the district's board of trustees on the essential knowledge and skills defined for that course or subject. Prior instruction may include, for example, incomplete coursework due to a failed course or excessive absences, homeschooling, or coursework by a student transferring from a nonaccredited school. The opportunity to take an examination to earn credit for a course or to be awarded a final grade in a subject after the student has had prior instruction is sometimes referred to as "credit recovery."

The school counselor or principal would determine if the student could take an exam for this purpose. If approval is granted, the student must score at least 70 on the exam 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 exam.

[For further information, see the school counselor and policy EHDB(LOCAL).]

## **CREDIT BY EXAMINATION FOR ADVANCEMENT/ACCELERATION—If a Student Has Not Taken the Course/Subject**

A student will be permitted to take an exam to earn credit for an academic course or subject area for which the student has had no prior instruction, i.e., for advancement or to accelerate to the next grade level. The exams offered by the district are approved by the district's board of trustees, and state law requires the use of certain exams, such as College Board Advanced

Placement (AP) and College Level Examination Program (CLEP) tests, when applicable. The dates on which exams are scheduled during the 2016–17 school year will be published in appropriate district publications and on the district’s website. The only exceptions to the published dates will be for any exams administered by another entity besides the district or if a request is made outside of these time frames by a student experiencing homelessness or by a student involved in the foster care system. When another entity administers an exam, a student and the district must comply with the testing schedule of the other entity. During each testing window provided by the district, a student may attempt a specific exam only once.

If a student plans to take an exam, the student (or parent) must register with the school counselor no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. [For further information, see policy EHDC.]

## **Kindergarten Acceleration**

### **Students in Grades 1–5**

A student in elementary school will be eligible to accelerate to the next grade level if the student scores at least 80 on each exam in the subject areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, a district administrator recommends that the student be accelerated, and the student’s parent gives written approval of the grade advancement.

### **Students in Grades 6–12**

A student in grade 6 or above will earn course credit with a passing score of at least 80 on the exam, a scaled score of 50 or higher on an exam administered through the CLEP, or a score of 3 or higher on an AP exam, as applicable. A student may take an exam 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)**

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, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law. A copy of the district’s policy is

available in the principal's office and in the superintendent's office or on the district's website at [www.mcisd.us](http://www.mcisd.us). [See policy FFH.]

## **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. Dating violence also occurs when a person commits these acts against a person in a marriage or dating relationship with the individual who is or was once in a marriage or dating relationship with the person committing the offense. This type of conduct is considered harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

Examples of dating violence against a student may include, but are not limited to, physical or sexual assaults; name-calling; put-downs; threats to hurt the student, the student's family members, or members of the student's household; destroying property belonging to the student; threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship; threats to harm a student's current dating partner; attempts to isolate the student from friends and family; stalking; or encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

## **Discrimination**

Discrimination is defined as any conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, 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 the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

Examples of 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.

In addition to dating violence as described above, two other types of prohibited harassment are described below.

## **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 not be 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 not reasonably construed as sexual in nature, such as comforting a child with a hug or taking the child's hand. However, romantic and other inappropriate social relationships, as well as all sexual relationships, between students and district employees are prohibited, even if consensual.

Gender-based harassment includes harassment based on a student's gender, expression by the student of stereotypical characteristics associated with the student's gender, or the student's failure to conform to stereotypical behavior related to gender.

Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a student, regardless of the student's or the harasser's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, may include, but not be limited to, offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; threatening or intimidating conduct; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

## **Retaliation**

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

Examples of retaliation may include 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 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.

The district will promptly notify the parents of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct involving an adult associated with the district. In the event alleged prohibited conduct involves another student, the district will notify the parents of the student alleged to have

experienced the prohibited conduct when the allegations, if proven, would constitute a violation as defined by policy FFH.

### **Investigation of Report**

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

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 the investigation at the conclusion of the agency's investigation.

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

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

All involved parties will be notified of the outcome of the district investigation within the parameters and limits allowed under the 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 32.]

### **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 Dual Credit Classes through Coastal Bend College, the Edmentum Platform Courseware, Texas Virtual Schools Network, and the Texas Tech Correspondence Courses.

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, in order 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.

Correspondence courses taken by a student will be counted as a “pass/fail” credit and will not be applied to student GPA if the course is offered by the district.

### **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. [Also see **Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations** on page 42.] In addition, for a student who enrolls in a TxVSN course for which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment is required, the student must still take the corresponding EOC assessment.

If you have questions or wish to make a request that your child be enrolled in a TxVSN course, please contact the school counselor. Unless an exception is made by the administration, a student will not be allowed to enroll in a TxVSN course if the school offers the same or a similar course.

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

### **DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE, PUBLISHED MATERIALS, OR OTHER DOCUMENTS (All Grade Levels)**

#### **School Materials**

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

The school newspaper, the Cowboy Chronicle, and the yearbook, The Roundup, are available to students.

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

#### **Non-school Materials**

##### ***From Students***

Students must obtain prior approval from the principal or superintendent before selling, posting, circulating, or distributing more than ten 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. The decision regarding approval will be made within two school days.

The principal has designated certain bulletin boards as the location for approved non-school materials to be placed for voluntary viewing or collection by students. [See policy FNAA.]

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 Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without approval will be removed.

### ***From Others***

Written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials not sponsored by the district or by a district-affiliated school-support organization will not be sold, circulated, distributed, or posted on any district premises by any district employee or by persons or groups not associated with the district, 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 principal or superintendent for prior review. The principal or superintendent 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 at DGBA or GF.]

The principal has designated certain bulletin boards as the location for approved non-school materials to be placed for voluntary viewing or collection.

Prior review will not be required for:

Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a school-sponsored meeting intended for adults and held after school hours.

Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a community group meeting held after school hours in accordance with policy GKD(LOCAL) or a noncurriculum-related student group meeting held in accordance with 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 is established to teach grooming and hygiene, prevent disruption, and minimize safety hazards. Students and parents may determine a student's personal dress and grooming standards, provided that they comply with the following:

THE ADMINISTRATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO  
DETERMINE ACCEPTABLE AND UNACCEPTABLE  
DRESS AND GROOMING

#### **Clothing**

Clothing must not be suggestive or indecent, and must be free from holes or tears.

Pants or shorts must be properly fitted and worn at the natural waistline (no sagging or bagging). A belt or braces (suspenders) must be worn if the pants or shorts have belt loops (belts cannot hang down). Cotton sweat pants, pajama pants (cotton or flannel), biker or spandex shorts, wind shorts, short shorts and cutoffs will not be allowed. Custom ripped jeans will not be allowed. Hems or slits of shorts, skorts, and split skirts (culottes) must be no shorter than four (4) inches above the knee while standing. Skirts or dresses will be no shorter than two (2) inches above the knee (while standing). Shorts must be hemmed and not rolled up. Pants must be hemmed and not rolled up and cannot touch the ground. Properly fitting overalls with the bib and both sides fastened are permissible. Chains and any other gang related paraphernalia may not be worn. Leggings must be worn with a dress or blouse that is no shorter than 4 inches above the knee.

No visible undergarments will be tolerated

Boys will wear shirts that are appropriately sized and have sleeves. Girls' blouses will also be appropriately sized, but may be sleeveless as long as the sleeve holes fit appropriately. All shirts and blouses are to be tucked in if the tails are longer than the student's wrist. If the shirt or blouse cannot be tucked in, then it does not meet the school dress code and may not be worn. Mesh or see-through tops and clothes that are either low cut, backless or expose mid-drifts are prohibited. Button type shirts may be worn with only the collar button left unbuttoned.

No inappropriate or immoral advertising will be permitted on any item of wearing apparel. This will include offensive emblems, symbols, or phrases that may be sexual innuendoes or promote drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or gang activities.

Students wearing shoes or sandals that do not fit over the toe and around the heel must bring an extra pair of athletic or sport shoes for recess and/or P.E. Roller shoes may not be worn.

### **Headgear**

Students (boys or girls) may not wear hats, caps or any other headgear while in the buildings on campus except while in the gymnasium. Bandannas will not be allowed.

### **Grooming**

**Girls:** Hair must be neatly groomed; extreme hairstyles will not be allowed. Abnormal colors or multicolored hair will not be allowed. However, highlights will be permissible provided they are a natural color blend without distinctive contrast.

**Boys:** Hair must be neatly groomed. Extreme hairstyles such as carvings, spikes, tails, Mohawks, ponytails, under-cuts, shaved or partially shaved heads will not be allowed. Abnormal colors or multicolored hair will not be permitted. However, highlights will be permissible provided they are a natural color blend without distinctive contrast. Boys' hair may be worn no lower than to the middle of the ear when combed down on the side, the top of the collar of a dress shirt in back or to the eyebrows in front when combed forward. Sides may be no shorter than a #1 blade cut and the top must be longer than the sides.

Shaved or "0" haircuts are unacceptable. A "0" cut or shaved hair is not acceptable if it is on the side, back or the top of the head.



Boys must be clean-shaven. Mustaches, beards or goatees will not be allowed. Sideburns will not extend past the bottom of the ear. Eyebrows will not be carved or notched.

### **Accessories**

Boys will not be allowed to wear earrings. Girls may wear a maximum of two earrings in each ear. No other visible body piercing or body piercing jewelry will be allowed. Accessories with spikes will not be allowed. No glued on jewelry or temporary tattoos will be allowed. Ear gauges will not be allowed.

No supported toe (steel toe) shoes or boots will be worn unless required by vocational shop.

### **Makeup and Tattoos**

Extreme makeup will not be allowed (example: black lipstick, black eye shadow, black nail polish, etc.) Boys will not be allowed to wear makeup. No visible tattoos or brands will be allowed. This includes while changing clothes in the locker room during gym class.

### **Compliance**

Students who violate any portion of the dress code:

If the student cannot comply or refuses to comply with the dress code, the student will be placed in ISS for the remainder of the school day.

A second consecutive occurrence of dress code violation for the student will result in the student being placed in ISS for 3 days. Parent will be contacted. If the student is still not in dress code the following day, the third occurrence will result in automatic suspension.

The principal, in cooperation with the sponsor, coach, or other person in charge of an extracurricular activity, may regulate the dress and grooming of students who participate in the activity. **Students who violate dress and grooming standards established for such an activity may be removed or excluded from the activity for a period determined by the Principal or Sponsor, and may be subject to other disciplinary action, as specified in the Student Code of Conduct.**

Pre-K -2<sup>nd</sup> grade will follow dress code rules regarding hair, ripped jeans and holes in pants as stated above.

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

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES (All Grade Levels)**

### **Possession and Use of Personal Telecommunications Devices, Including Mobile Telephones**

For safety purposes, the district permits students to possess personal mobile telephones; however, these devices must remain turned off during the instructional day, including during all testing, unless they are being used for approved instructional purposes. A student must have approval to possess other telecommunications devices such as netbooks, laptops, tablets, or other portable computers.

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

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

All rules concerning telecommunication devices are applicable on school grounds and during the school day. Extracurricular sponsors and teachers reserve the right to restrict telecommunication device use during school events or functions if the device poses a disruption to the environment.

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

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

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

### **Possession and Use of Other Personal Electronic Devices**

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

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal electronic device may be searched by authorized personnel. [See **Searches** on page 82 and policy FNF.]

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

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

In some cases, students may find it beneficial or might be encouraged to use personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional purposes while on

campus. Students must obtain prior approval before using personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional use. Students must also sign a user agreement that contains applicable rules for use (separate from this handbook). When students are not using the devices for approved instructional purposes, all devices must be turned off during the instructional day. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

### **Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources**

To prepare students for an increasingly technological society, the district has made an investment in the use of district-owned technology resources for instructional purposes; specific resources may be issued individually to students. Use of these technological resources, which include the district's network systems and use of district equipment, is restricted to approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement (separate from this handbook) regarding use of these district resources. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

### **Acceptable Use of District iPad Resources**

Beginning in the 2013-2014 school year, the district will utilize the iPad tablet to enhance instruction and curriculum opportunities for our students. Before a student can utilize the iPad tablet a student and their parent must sign the acceptable use policy found in appendix V of the student code of conduct and a certificate of completion must be on file for parent(s) or guardians of high school students indicating that the parent(s) or legal guardian have received training on the acceptable safe guards for student internet use. Elementary students will utilize the iPad tablets inside the classroom to reinforce instruction and to provide additional resources to engage students as they learn key concepts. Jr. High students will be issued iPad tablets that they will carry throughout the day. These tablets will be checked into the school at the end of each day and the student will not take the devices home. High school students will be issued iPad tablets and will be allowed to take these devices home. Risk to the iPad tablet increases the more the devices are allowed to travel with students, therefore the district has a fee associated with the use for these devices for students in Jr. High and High School. Parents will also have the option to purchase additional insurance through the school in the event an iPad is lost, stolen, or damaged. [See **iPad Fees** on page 46.]

### **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 the equipment used to send such messages is district-owned or personally owned, 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 according to the Student Code of Conduct, may be required to complete an educational program related to the dangers of this type of behavior, and, in certain circumstances, may be reported to law enforcement. Because engaging in this type of behavior

can lead to bullying or harassment, as well as possibly impede future endeavors of a student, we encourage you to review with your child <http://beforeyoutext.com>, a state-developed program that addresses the consequences of engaging in inappropriate behavior using technology.

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

## **END-OF-COURSE (EOC) ASSESSMENTS**

[See **Graduation** on page 51 and **Standardized Testing** on page 83.]

## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (All Grade Levels)**

A student who is an English language learner is entitled to receive specialized services from the district. To determine whether the student qualifies for services, a Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will be formed, which will consist of both district personnel and at least one parent representative. The student's parent must consent to any services recommended by the LPAC for an English language learner. 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.

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

The LPAC will also determine whether certain accommodations are necessary for any state-mandated assessments. The STAAR L, as mentioned at **Standardized Testing** on page \_\_\_\_, may be administered to an English language learner, or, for a student up to grade 5, a Spanish version of STAAR. In limited circumstances, 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 English language learners who qualify for services.

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

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS (All Grade Levels)**

Participation in school-sponsored activities is an excellent way for a student to develop talents, receive individual recognition, and build strong friendships with other students; participation, however, is a privilege, not a right.

Participation in some of these activities may result in events that occur off-campus. When the district arranges transportation for these events, students are required to use the transportation provided by the district to and from the events. Exceptions to this may only be made with the approval of the activity's coach or sponsor. [Also see **Transportation** on page 87.]

Eligibility for initial and continuing participation in many of these activities is governed by state law and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL)—a statewide association overseeing interdistrict competition. 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 involved in UIL athletic activities and their parents can access the UIL Parent Information Manual at <https://www.uil texas.org/athletics/manuals>; a hard copy can be provided by the coach or sponsor of the activity on request. To report a complaint of alleged noncompliance with required safety training or an alleged violation of safety rules required by law and the UIL, please contact the curriculum division of TEA at (512) 463-9581 or [curriculum@tea.texas.gov](mailto:curriculum@tea.texas.gov).

[See <http://www.uil texas.org> for additional information on all UIL-governed activities.]

In addition, the following provisions apply to all extracurricular activities:

A student who receives at the end of a grading period a grade below 70 in any academic class—other than an Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) course; or an honors or dual credit course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, or language other than English—may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.

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.

A student will not be restricted on absences related to post-district competition. All extracurricular activities and public performances, whether UIL activities or other activities approved by the board, are subject to these restrictions.

An absence for participation in an activity that has not been approved will receive an unexcused absence unless approved by campus administration before the absence had occurred.

## **Standards of Behavior**

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

## **Offices and Elections**

Certain clubs, organizations, and performing groups will hold elections for student officers. These groups include: FFA, National Honor Society, Spanish Club, Cheerleaders, as well as athletic teams and other campus approved organizations at their discretion.

### **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS / U.I.L & F.F.A.**

McMullen County Independent School District will adhere to the policies, procedures, and dates as prescribed for activities by the University Interscholastic League.

McMullen County I.S.D. will follow and enforce all University Interscholastic League (U.I.L.) and Texas Education Agency rules and guidelines for eligibility for participation. In addition the following eligibility requirements must be met for competition:

Student must be in attendance at school for the full day in order to participate in any activity. Exceptions to this requirement may be granted by the administration.

**A student cannot miss any one class in excess of ten times (10 days) during a school year for the purpose of participating in school-related (co-curricular or extra-curricular) activities.**

Post district competitions are not counted as part of these 10 days. The principal must approve exceptions to this rule.

### **AWARDS (FG)**

It is the policy of the McMullen County Independent School District Board of Trustees to recognize students who have excelled in any area. The following criteria will be used as a basis to earn a major award (jacket, etc.):

Only one major award will be given to any student throughout the duration of his/her high school career, as in accordance with U.I.L. rules.

Any or all of the following criteria may be waived upon recommendation of the coach(es) for any student who has participated at the district level for at least three years.

Students may be eligible to receive a letter jacket at the end of their freshman year provided they meet the following criteria in the area of Athletics, Academic (UIL), FFA.

### **ATHLETICS**

Team Sports - Athletes must:

- compete in at least half of the contests or be recommended by the head coach
- Individual Sports (Cross Country, Track, Tennis, and Golf) – Athletes must:
- advance out of district or be in the sport for 3 years
  - be recommended by the coach during their junior or senior year

All athletes must complete the season to receive their letter jacket. An athlete that quits or is removed from any team sport will not be eligible to receive a letter jacket that school year.

## **ACADEMIC**

Compete at the Regional U.I.L. meet and score points in any category other than athletics.

Compete on the district level at least three years or have gone to regionals for two years.

Medals or certificates will be awarded to students in grade 3 through 12 who have maintained a 90 semester average in all academic courses each year.

## **FFA**

Qualify for and participate in the State FFA Leadership Career Development Events in one or more events (team or individual), or

Qualify for and participate in the State FFA Career Development Events (team or individual), or

Qualify for and participate in the State FFA Speaking Development Event, or

Be a State Winner in the FFA Agricultural Proficiency Awards, or

Be a Division Champion or Reserve Division Champion in an Agricultural Mechanics Project Show at a major Texas stock show, or

Participate in Agricultural Mechanics Project Shows at six major Texas stock shows over two or more years.

Participate in a major livestock show and qualify for or make the sale with the student's animal project.

## **TRANSPORTATION FOR OUT OF TOWN TRIPS**

School transportation will be provided to all out of town school events. Students are expected to use the school provided transportation both to and from events. Students are not to leave out of town school events except by the school provided transportation.

Exceptions to this procedure must be cleared through the following channels:

A student may be granted the use of transportation other than that being provided by the school **to** an out of town event, under **unavoidable** circumstances, by a written request from the student's parent or guardian that has been confirmed and approved by a district administrator or the athletic director

A student **may leave** an out of town event with his/her own parent or guardian after the parent or guardian has provided written documentation to the school sponsor or coach.

A student **may leave** an out of town school event with an adult who is not his/her own parent or guardian if prior to leaving school for the event, a written request from the student's parent or guardian is confirmed and approved by the campus principal or the superintendent.

## **FFA (FMC)**

- I. Tilden FFA Chapter of the Gateway District. Area X Association. Texas Association. National FFA Organization.
- II. FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education.

To accomplish this mission, FFA:

- Develops competent and assertive agricultural leadership.
- Increases awareness of the global and technological importance of agricultural and its contribution to our well-being.
- Strengthens the confidence of agriculture students in themselves and their work.
- Promotes the intelligent choice and establishment of an agricultural career.
- Encourages achievements in supervised agricultural experience programs.
- Encourages wise management of economic, environmental and human resources of the community.
- Develops interpersonal skills in teamwork, communications, human relations and social interaction.
- Builds character and promotes citizenship, volunteerism and patriotism.
- Promotes cooperation and cooperative attitudes among all people.
- Promotes healthy lifestyles.
- Encourages excellence in scholarship.

To be eligible for active membership in a chartered FFA Chapter, a student must be enrolled in a secondary agricultural education program. To become an active member and retain membership, a student must:

1. While in school, be enrolled in a least one agricultural education course during the school year and follow a planned course of study; the course must include a supervised agricultural experience program, the objective of which is preparation for an agricultural career.
2. Show an interest in the affairs of the organization by attending meetings, striving for degrees of membership, and participating in other organized activities of the chapter.
3. Pay all current state, national, area, district, and local dues by the date determined by the chapter.
4. Display conduct consistent with the ideals and purposes of the National FFA Organization.

**Tilden Junior FFA**



To be eligible for membership in the Tilden Junior FFA, the parent/guardian should complete the registration form found under the department tab at the McMullen County ISD website at [www.mcisd.us](http://www.mcisd.us). This form must be submitted to the FFA sponsor(s)/agriculture teacher(s) no later than October 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year. The membership fee for joining the Tilden Junior FFA will be listed on the enrollment form and is due at the time the form is turned into the sponsors.

Tilden Junior FFA is for the purpose of stock show animal supervision.

## **NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY (FMC)**

### **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the National Honor Society chapter shall be to create an enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to encourage development of character, and to promote worthy leadership in all students.

### **REQUIREMENTS for MEMBERSHIP**

Election is based on scholarship, service, character, citizenship and leadership. New candidates and members are considered for membership at the end of the first semester each school year; sophomores, juniors and seniors are eligible. Seniors may not qualify after the first semester of their senior year. Sponsors shall distribute application forms and "Student Activity Information" forms to students who qualify. These forms must be completed by students and turned into the sponsors by the announced deadline.

Scholarship - Candidates must have a cumulative scholastic average of at least 88.0 based on all grades earned for high school credit through the semester on which nomination is being considered (no grade will be rounded up).

Leadership and Service - Students who have earned the required scholastic average shall be given a "Student Activity Information" form to submit for membership consideration. These forms will be returned to the NHS sponsor by a deadline date that will be announced.

Citizenship and Character - For each student the Faculty Honor Council will review a "McMullen H.S. NHS Membership Worksheet --- Candidate Review or Member Review" which includes a demerit system based on tardies, attendance and discipline referrals and information concerning other major school discipline or major community conduct issues for the current or previous years.

The "Student Activity Information" forms and the "McMullen H.S. NHS Membership Worksheet --- Candidate Review or Member Review" forms will then be presented to a five-member voting committee (Faculty Honor Council) appointed annually by the principal. Acceptance and non-acceptance letters shall be sent to parents/students by the sponsor.

## **SPANISH CLUB**

All students enrolled in a Spanish class have the opportunity to become a member of the Spanish Club with permission from the club sponsor.

## **SCHOOL ELECTION PROCEDURES**

Individual organizations or classes may set up their own election procedures and candidate requirements, which must be approved by the administration.

## **FEES (All Grade Levels)**

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds at no charge to a student. A student, however, is expected to provide his or her own pencils, paper, erasers, and notebooks and may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including:

Costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep.

Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities.

Security deposits.

Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.

Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.

Voluntarily purchased student 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, if offered.

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 87\_.]

A fee is charged to Jr. High and high school students for the use of district iPads.

A fee is charged to students for lost, stolen, or damaged iPads or iPad accessories issued to a student.

A onetime fee of \$200 is charged to a student who wishes to participate in a dual credit course through McMullen County I.S.D. Upon completion of all dual credit courses in good standing, the fee will be refunded to the student upon graduation. Should a student drop the course beyond the approved drop day, the district will deposit the \$200 fee to recover a portion of the cost of the dual credit course and the student will be required to pay another \$200 fee before enrolling in an additional dual credit course.

A fee not to exceed \$50 for costs of providing 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 in order for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance

requirement. The fee will be charged only if the parent or guardian signs a district-provided request form.

In some cases, a fee for a course taken through the Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN).

Any required fee or deposit may be waived if the student and parent are unable to pay. Application for such a waiver may be made to the counselor. [For further information, see policy FP.]

### **iPad Fees and Insurance**

McMullen County ISD assess a \$40 non-refundable annual use fee per 32 GB iPad for students in grades 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>. This fee also provides an insurance policy that will cover the iPad against theft and breakage. If the iPad must be replaced, there is no deductible with this policy and is valid for one school year. In case of theft, students will be required to file a police report so that the insurance claim can be filed. Students who lose their iPad are still responsible for the full replacement cost of \$599.

McMullen County ISD assess a \$30 non-refundable annual use fee per 16 GB iPad for students in grades 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. Students who lose their iPad are responsible for the full replacement cost of \$499. Accidental damage of the device will cause students to be charged the actual cost of repair/replacement.

### **iPad Accessories Replacement Pricing**

<b>Replacement Costs</b>	
<b>Power Adapter</b>	<b>\$40.00</b>
<b>Griffin Survivor iPad Case</b>	<b>\$35.00</b>
<b>Griffin iPad Screen Replacement</b>	<b>\$15.00</b>
<b>Griffin iPad Stand</b>	<b>\$10.00</b>
<b>Griffin Speaker/Camera Covers</b>	<b>\$2.00 each</b>

### **iPad Repair Pricing**

	<b>Cost Repair to Student</b>
<b>Breakage</b>	<b>The actual cost of repair/replacement</b>

Elementary School: MCISD does not charge an iPad usage fee for elementary students, as the devices do not leave the classroom.

### **FUNDRAISING (All Grade Levels)**

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fundraising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the principal at least 5 days before the event. [For further information, see policies FJ and GE.]

### **GANG-FREE ZONES (All Grade Levels)**

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

### **GENDER-BASED HARASSMENT**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 32.]

### **GRADE-LEVEL CLASSIFICATION (Grades 9–12 Only)**

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

Credits Earned	Classification
6	Grade 10 (Sophomore)
12	Grade 11 (Junior)
18	Grade 12 (Senior)

### **GRADING GUIDELINES (All Grade Levels)**

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

[Also see **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 76 for additional information on grading guidelines.]

## **BASIC GRADING GUIDELINES**

- Major Grades - In grades 3-12 students will receive a minimum of 3 “Major Grades” (unit tests, major tests, major projects or reports, etc.) each six-weeks grading period. In grades 3-6, students will receive a minimum of two “Major Grades” per six weeks grading period in science and social studies classes.
- Daily Grades – In grades 3-12 students will receive “Daily Grades” (homework, class work, minor tests, quizzes, minor projects or reports, etc.)
- In grades 3-12 at least two grades per week will be recorded in each academic area. In grades 3-6 a minimum of six grades is required per six weeks in science and social studies with the expectation of grades being updated in these designated areas in a timely manner as material is being covered in class.
- In grades 3-12 in the academic areas of Science and Social Studies, at least 6 grades per six weeks
- In grades 3-6: Major Grades will count 50% of the six-weeks grade.  
Daily Grades will count 50% of the six-weeks grade.
- In grades 7-12: Major Grades will count 50% of the six-weeks grade.  
Daily Grades will count 50% of the six-weeks grade.
- Semester Exams must be given in grades 7-12 and will count 20% of the semester grade.

Testing - Teachers will provide opportunities for re-teaching/tutorials of material not mastered on unit tests and major tests (excluding six weeks and semester exams).

Re-teach/Retest – After re-teach/tutorials a Retest will be given, at a time selected by the teacher. The grade from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> test will be averaged together, the resulting grade not being counted higher than 70.

On-line courses and correspondence classes that cover material already covered by classes offered by MCISD can only be taken with principal approval and must be taken as a pass/fail class and the grade will not be counted toward the student GPA.

## **GRADING SCALE**

90-100 -	A	70-79 -	C
80-89 -	B	69-and below –	Failing

Also see **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 76 for additional information on grading guidelines. See **Graduation** on page 51 **Course Credit** on page 30, and **Standardized Testing** on page 83 for additional information regarding EOC assessments.

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

### **Requirements for a Diploma for a Student Enrolled in High School Prior to the 2014–15 School Year**

To receive a high school diploma from the district, a student who was enrolled in high school prior to the 2014–15 school year must successfully:

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; and

Achieve passing scores on certain end-of-course (EOC) assessments or approved substitute assessments, unless specifically waived as permitted by state law.

[Also see **Standardized Testing** on page 83 for more information.]

### **Requirements for a Diploma Beginning with the 2014–15 School Year**

Beginning with students who entered grade 9 in the 2014–15 school year, as well as any currently enrolled high school student who decides to graduate under the foundation graduation program, 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;

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 has not achieved sufficient scores on the EOC assessments to graduate will have opportunities to retake the assessments. State law and state rules also provide for certain scores on norm-referenced national standardized assessments or on the state-developed assessment used for entrance into Texas public universities to substitute for the requirement to meet satisfactory performance on an applicable EOC assessment, should a student choose this option. 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 to the student in the content area for which the performance standard was not met.

This may require participation of the student before or after normal school hours or at times of the year outside normal school operations.

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.

[Also see **Standardized Testing** on page 83 for more information.]

### **Minimum, Recommended, and Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Graduation Programs**

For students who were enrolled in high school prior to the 2014–15 school year, the district offers the graduation programs listed in this section. Students enrolled in high school prior to the 2014–15 school year also have the option to pursue the foundation graduation program as described below. Note that permission to enroll in the Minimum Program as described in this section will be granted only if a written agreement is reached among the student, the student’s parent or person standing in parental relation, and the school counselor or appropriate administrator. In order for a student to take courses under the Minimum Program, the student must be at least 16 years of age; have completed at least two credits each in English language arts, math, science, and social studies courses that are required for graduation; or have failed grade 9 one or more times. [See policy EIF(LEGAL).]

All students who were enrolled in high school prior to the 2014–15 school year must meet the following credit and course requirements for graduation under the programs listed or may choose to pursue the foundation graduation program as described on page 54\_:

<b>Courses</b>	<b>Number of Credits: Minimum Program</b>	<b>Number of Credits: Recommended Program</b>	<b>Number of Credits: Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program</b>
English/Language Arts	4	4	4
Mathematics	3	4	4
Science	3	4	4
Social Studies, including Economics	4	4	4
Physical Education*	1	1	1
Speech	0.5	0.5	0.5
Language other than English		2	3
Fine Arts	1	1	1

Locally required courses			
Electives**	6.5 credits	5.5 credits	4.5 credits
Miscellaneous			Completion of 4 Advanced Measures***
TOTAL	22 credits	26 credits	26 credits

\* 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, or social studies 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.

\*\* State rules prohibit a student from combining a half-credit of a course for which there is an EOC assessment with another half-credit of an elective credit course to satisfy an elective credit requirement. However, the district will allow a student to satisfy a graduation requirement for which there are multiple options with one-half credit of one allowable option and one-half credit of another allowable option, if neither course has an EOC assessment.

\*\*\* A student graduating under the Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program must also achieve a combination of four of the following advanced measures:

1. An original research project or other project that is related to the required curriculum. These projects must be judged by a panel of professionals or conducted under the direction of a mentor and reported to an appropriate audience. Please note that no more than two of the four advanced measures may be received from this option.

Test data where a student receives:

A score of 3 or above on an Advanced Placement (AP) exam;

A score of 4 or above on an International Baccalaureate (IB) exam; or

A score on the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) that qualifies the student for recognition as a commended scholar or higher by the College Board and National Merit Scholarship Corporation, as part of the National Hispanic Recognition Program (NHRP) of the College Board, or as part of the National Achievement Scholarship Program of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. The PSAT/NMSQT score will count as only one advanced measure regardless of the number of honors received by the student.

College academic courses, including those taken for dual credit, and advanced technical courses, including locally articulated courses, provided the student scores the equivalent of a 3.0 or higher.

### **Foundation Graduation Program**

Every student in a Texas public school who entered grade 9 in the 2014–15 school year and thereafter will graduate under the “foundation graduation program.” Within the foundation graduation program are “endorsements,” which are paths of interest that include Science,



Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM); Business and Industry; Public Services; Arts and Humanities; and Multidisciplinary Studies. Endorsements earned by a student will be noted on the student’s transcript. The foundation graduation program also involves the term “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 56.

State law and rules prohibit 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 anticipates graduating under the foundation graduation program without an endorsement and who wishes to attend a four-year university or college after graduation must carefully consider whether this will satisfy the admission requirements of the student’s desired college or university.

Graduating under the foundation graduation program will also provide opportunities to earn “performance acknowledgments” that will be acknowledged on a student’s transcript. Performance acknowledgments are available for outstanding performance in bilingualism and biliteracy, in a dual credit course, on an AP or IB exam, on certain national college preparatory and readiness or college entrance exams, or for earning a state recognized or nationally or internationally recognized license or certificate. The criteria for earning these performance acknowledgments are prescribed by state rules, and the school counselor can provide more information about these acknowledgments.

A student enrolled in high school prior to the 2014–15 school year has the option of graduating under the foundation graduation program rather than the programs identified above that would otherwise be applicable to that student. See the school counselor for additional information.

The foundation graduation program requires completion of the following credits:

<b>Course Area</b>	<b>Number of Credits: Foundation Graduation Program</b>	<b>Number of Credits: Foundation Graduation Program With an Endorsement</b>
English/Language Arts	4	4
Mathematics	3	4*
Science	3	4
Social Studies, including Economics	3	3
Physical Education**	1	1
Language other than English***	2	2
Fine Arts	1	1
Locally required courses		

Electives	5	7
Miscellaneous		Available Endorsements****: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Business and Industry Public Services Arts and Humanities Multidisciplinary Studies
TOTAL	22 credits	26 credits

\* In order to obtain the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation graduation program, which will be denoted on a student's transcript and is a requirement to be considered for automatic admission purposes to a Texas four-year college or university, a student must complete an endorsement and take Algebra II as one of the 4 mathematics credits.

\*\* 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.

\*\*\* Students are required to earn two credits in the same language other than English to graduate. Any student may substitute computer programming languages for these credits. 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.

\*\*\*\* A student must specify upon entering grade 9 the endorsement he or she wishes to pursue.

***Personal Graduation Plans for Students Under the Foundation Graduation Program***

A personal graduation plan will be developed for each high school student who is subject to the requirements of the foundation graduation program. 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 entitles 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 parent. Before the end of grade 9, a student and his or her parent will be required to sign off on a personal graduation plan that includes a course of study that promotes college and workforce readiness and career placement and advancement, as well as facilitates the transition from secondary to postsecondary education. The student's personal graduation plan will denote an appropriate course sequence based on the student's choice of endorsement.

Please also review TEA's Graduation Toolkit, available here:  
<http://tea.texas.gov/communications/brochures.aspx>.

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

### **Available Course Options for All Graduation Programs**

Information regarding specific courses required or offered in each curriculum area will be distributed to students each spring in order to enroll in courses for the upcoming school year. Note that the district may require the completion of certain courses for graduation even if these courses are not required by the state for graduation.

### **Certificates of Coursework Completion**

A certificate of coursework completion will 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**

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 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. Even if the student participates in graduation ceremonies to receive the certificate of attendance, he or she may remain enrolled to complete the IEP and earn his or her high school diploma; however, the student will only be allowed to participate in one graduation ceremony.

[See policy FMH(LEGAL).]

Please also be aware that if an ARD committee places a student with a disability on a modified curriculum in a subject area, the student will be automatically placed in the Minimum Program, if that program is applicable based on the school year in which the student entered high school, in accordance with state rules.

If a student receiving special education services is scheduled to graduate under the Minimum Program or in accordance with the provisions of his or her IEP, the student's ARD committee will determine whether the general EOC assessment is an accurate measure of the student's achievement and progress and, if so, whether successful performance is required for graduation, or whether an alternative assessment is more appropriate. STAAR Alternate 2 is the alternative assessment currently allowed by the state. [See **Standardized Testing** for additional information.]

ARD committees for students with disabilities who receive special education services and who are subject to the foundation graduation program will make instructional and assessment decisions for these students in accordance with state law and rules. In order to earn an endorsement under the foundation program, a student must perform satisfactorily on the EOC

assessments and receive no modified curriculum in the student's chosen endorsement area. A student may still be awarded an endorsement when the student fails to perform satisfactorily on no more than two EOC assessments but meets the other requirements for graduation under state law.

### **Graduation Activities**

Graduation activities will include: An invocation, a commencement speaker, an eighth grade graduation, an awards presentation, a senior graduation, and finally a benediction.

### **Commencement**

Final decision for selecting the commencement speaker (preferably someone associated with the field of education) will be made by the Superintendent. The Board shall not permit clergymen to deliver invocations or benedictions at promotional and graduation ceremonies for secondary schools; nor shall school officials direct the performance of a formal religious exercise at such ceremonies. The Board may permit the graduating senior class, with the advice and counsel of the senior class sponsor, to elect to choose student volunteers to deliver nonsectarian, non-proselytizing invocations and benedictions for the purpose of solemnizing their graduation ceremonies.

### **Scholarship Programs (FG)**

The following scholarships have been available to McMullen County graduating seniors in the past. However, any or all scholarships are subject to change without notice. Amounts and qualifications vary for each scholarship. Information about each scholarship as well as applications and qualification will be distributed to seniors by the middle of April.

- Atascosa/McMullen County Farm Bureau Scholarship
- Atascosa/McMullen County Retired Teacher's Scholarship
- McMullen County Soil Conservation District #353 Scholarship
- Energy Transfer, originally known as Transco, Scholarship
- Valley Telephone Scholarship
- Pastor Steve Briggs Memorial Scholarship/Tilden Baptist Church
- Tilden Lions Club Scholarship
- Wheeler's Mercantile Scholarship
- Melba G. Villarreal Memorial Scholarship
- Tereso Esquivel Memorial Scholarship
- Double Rafter H Construction Scholarship
- Earl Swift Scholarship
- Karnes Electric and Median electric Cooperative Scholarship
- Noemi Arisola and Frank Arisola Jr. Memorial Scholarship
- St. Joseph's Catholic Church Scholarship
- J.K. Wheeler Family Foundation Scholarship

- Benny Thomas Zavisch Memorial Scholarship
- Talisman Energy Scholarship
- James L. Rayes memorial Scholarship
- Loma Alto Lodge # 544
- Cenizo Study Club Scholarship
- Randy Dilworth Memorial Scholarship
- McMullen County State Bank Scholarship
- Top 2 Scholarship - After official confirmation of class rank, the two top-ranking students must submit letters of intent stating their plans to attend an institute of higher learning (can be 4-year, 2-year, vocational or technical college). Said letter must be co-signed by a parent or guardian.
- McMullen County Fair Board Scholarships
- Judge Claude Franklin Memorial Scholarship
- The Frank Franklin Honorary Educator's Scholarship
- Senior Class Scholarships
- Jaime D. Espinoza Scholarship

Students who have met coursework requirements for graduation but have not yet demonstrated satisfactory performance on exit-level tests or end-of-course assessments will be allowed to participate in graduation activities. However, please keep in mind that participating in the activities and ceremonies is not synonymous with graduating. Ultimately, the final awarding of a diploma will be contingent upon the student's completion of all applicable requirements for graduation.

The following students and student groups shall be recognized at graduation ceremonies:

The Outstanding Senior

The Valedictorian and Salutatorian

The Honor Graduates

Scholarship Recipients

### **Graduation Speakers**

Certain graduating students will be given an opportunity to have speaking roles 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 FNA(LOCAL) and the Student Code of Conduct. For student speakers at other school events, see **Student Speakers** on page 86.]

## **Graduation Expenses**

Because students and parents will incur expenses in order 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 **Student Fees** on page 47.]

## **Scholarships and Grants**

Students who have a financial need according to federal criteria and who complete the Recommended Program or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program, for as long as those programs are in place, or who complete the foundation graduation program, may be eligible under the TEXAS Grant Program for tuition and fees to Texas public universities, community colleges, and technical schools, as well as to private institutions.

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

## **HARASSMENT**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 32.]

## **HAZING (All Grade Levels)**

Hazing is defined as any intentional, knowing, or reckless act occurring on or off campus directed against a student that endangers the mental or physical health or the safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated to, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are or include other students.

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

[Also see **Bullying** on page 21 and policies FFI and FNCC.]

## **HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS**

### **Student Illness (All Grade Levels)**

When your child is ill, please contact the school to let us know he or she won't be attending that day. It is important to remember that schools are required to exclude students with certain illnesses from school for periods of time as identified in state rules. For example, if your child has a fever over 100 degrees, he or she must stay out of school until fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications. In addition, students with diarrheal illnesses must stay home until they are diarrhea free without diarrhea-suppressing medications for at least 24 hours.

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

If a student becomes ill during the school day, he or she must receive permission from the teacher before reporting to the school nurse. If the nurse determines that the child should go home, the nurse will contact the parent.

The district is also required to report certain contagious (communicable) diseases or illnesses to the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) or our local/regional health authority. The school nurse can provide information from TDSHS on these notifiable conditions.

Contact the school nurse if you have questions or if you are concerned about whether or not your child should stay home.

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

State law requires the district to provide information about bacterial meningitis:

What is meningitis?

Meningitis is an inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by viruses, parasites, fungi, and bacteria. Viral meningitis is common and most people recover fully. Parasitic and fungal meningitis are very rare. Bacterial meningitis is very serious and may involve complicated medical, surgical, pharmaceutical, and life support management.

What are the symptoms?

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

Children (over 2 years old) and adults with bacterial meningitis commonly have a severe headache, high fever, and neck stiffness. Other symptoms might include nausea, vomiting, discomfort looking into bright lights, confusion, and sleepiness. In both children and adults, there may be a rash of tiny, red-purple spots. These can occur anywhere on the body.

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

How serious is bacterial meningitis?

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

How is bacterial meningitis spread?

Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as diseases like the common cold or the flu, and they are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been. They are spread when people exchange respiratory or throat secretions (such as by kissing, coughing, or sneezing).

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

How can bacterial meningitis be prevented?

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

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

What should you do if you think you or a friend might have bacterial meningitis?

You should seek prompt medical attention.

Where can you get more information?

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

\* Please note that the TDSHS requires at least one meningococcal vaccination for a student ages 11 to 12 or for a student enrolling in grades 7–12, and state guidelines recommend this vaccination be administered between ages 11 and 12, with a booster dose at 16 years of age. 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.

[Also refer to **Immunization** on page 65 for more information.]

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

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

The district has developed and annually reviews a food allergy management plan, which addresses employee training, dealing with common food allergens, and specific strategies for



dealing with students diagnosed with severe food allergies. When the district receives information that a student has a food allergy that puts the student at risk for anaphylaxis, individual care plans will be developed to assist the student in safely accessing the school environment. The district's food allergy management plan can be accessed at the nurse's office.

[Also see policy FFAF and **Celebrations** on page 23.]

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

Head lice, although not an illness or a disease, is very common among children and is spread very easily through head-to-head contact during play, sports, or nap time and when children share things like brushes, combs, hats, and headphones. If careful observation indicates that a student has head lice, the school nurse will contact the student's parent to determine whether the child will need to be picked up from school and to discuss a plan for treatment with an FDA-approved medicated shampoo or cream rinse that may be purchased from any drug or grocery store. After the student has undergone one treatment, the parent should check in with the school nurse to discuss the treatment used. The nurse can also offer additional recommendations, including subsequent treatments and how best to get rid of lice and prevent their return.

More information on head lice can be obtained from the TDSHS website at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/lice.shtm>.

### **Physical Activity Requirements**

#### ***Elementary School***

In accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA, 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.

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

#### ***Junior High/Middle School***

In accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA, the district will ensure that students in middle or junior high school will engage in 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity per day for at least four semesters OR at least 225 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity within each two-week period for at least four semesters.

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

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

During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) held 3 meetings. Additional information regarding the district's SHAC is available from the superintendent's office.

The duties of the SHAC range from recommending curriculum to developing strategies for integrating curriculum into a coordinated school health program encompassing issues such as school health services, counseling services, a safe and healthy school environment, recess recommendations, improving student fitness, mental health concerns, and employee wellness.

[See policies at BDF and EHAA. See **Human Sexuality Instruction** on page 6 for additional information.]

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

McMullen County I.S.D. is committed to encouraging healthy students and therefore has developed a board-adopted wellness policy at FFA(LOCAL) and corresponding plans and procedures to implement the policy. You are encouraged to contact the principal with questions about the content or implementation of the district's wellness policy and plan.

### **Other Health-Related Matters**

#### ***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. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to the athletic director to obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.

#### ***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 cigarettes (e-cigarettes), or any other electronic vaporizing device, while on school property at any time or while attending an off-campus school-related activity.

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

#### ***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 superintendent's office. If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please contact, the district's designated asbestos coordinator, at 361-274-2000.

#### ***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, pesticide use is sometimes necessary to maintain adequate pest control and ensure a safe, pest-free school environment.

All pesticides used are registered for their intended use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and are applied only by certified pesticide applicators. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before indoor application. All outdoor applications will be posted at the time of treatment, and signs will remain until it is safe to enter the area. Parents who have further questions or who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact the maintenance director, the district's IPM coordinator, at 361-274-2000.

### **HOMELESS STUDENTS (All Grade Levels)**

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

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's homeless education liaison, the counselor, at 361-274-2000.

[See also **Students Who Are Homeless** on page 65 .]

### **HOMEWORK (All Grade Levels)**

Homework is a definite part of the instructional program and should be completed and turned into the teacher on the day that it is due. Late work will be accepted with a maximum grade deduction penalty of 20 points for the first day, an additional 10 points for the second day, and a "0" if it is three or more days late. An exemption to this rule will be made for math homework. Since homework is reviewed the following day, if a student does not have their math homework, they will receive an alternate assignment on the same skill which will be taken for a lower grade. Homework is used as an application of new learning skills and not simply busy work. It is to be used as a motivational tool and extension of the classroom and it is always graded or acknowledged. Teachers will be urged to assign academically challenging work while also being considerate about not assigning too much homework.

Homework that has not been returned to the teacher at the agreed upon time may lead to additional work or an assigned consequence at the teacher's or administration discretion.

Teachers will provide "timely and appropriate feedback" on assignments, be sensitive about the cost of materials for projects, and collaborate with other teachers so projects are not assigned at the same time.

### **ILLNESS**

[See **Student Illness** under **Health-Related Matters** on page 60.]

### **IMMUNIZATION (All Grade Levels)**

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

forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. This form may be obtained by writing the TDSHS Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347; or online at <https://corequest.dshs.texas.gov/>. 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; measles, mumps, and rubella; polio; hepatitis A; hepatitis B; varicella (chicken pox); and meningococcal. The school nurse can provide information on age-appropriate doses or on an acceptable physician-validated history of illness required by the TDSHS. 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**, 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.

[For further information, see policy FFAB(LEGAL) and the TDSHS website: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/default.shtm>.]

## **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, if the questioning or interview is part of a child abuse investigation. In other circumstances:

The principal will verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and ask for an explanation of the need to question or interview the student at school.

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

The principal ordinarily will be present unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.

### **Students Taken Into Custody**

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

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 probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.

By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.

To comply with a properly issued directive to take a student into custody.

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

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

### **Notification of Law Violations**

The district is required by state law to notify:

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

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

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

[For further information, see policies FL(LEGAL) and GRAA(LEGAL).]

### **LEAVING CAMPUS (All Grade Levels)**

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

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

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

For students in high school, the same process will be followed. If the student's parent will authorize the student to leave campus unaccompanied, a note provided by the parent must be submitted to the main office in advance of the absence, no later than two hours prior to the student's need to leave campus. A phone call received from the parent may be accepted, but the school may ultimately require a note to be submitted for documentation purposes. Once the office has received information that the student's parent consents to the student leaving campus, a pass will be issued to the student to hand to his or her teacher with the necessary information. 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 is 18 years of age or is an emancipated minor, the student may produce a note on his or her own behalf. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will be required.

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 directed by the parent to release the student unaccompanied, the parent or other authorized adult must follow the sign-out procedures as listed above. If a student is allowed to leave campus by himself or herself, as permitted by the student's parent, or if the student is age 18 or is an emancipated minor, the nurse will document the time of day the student was released. Under no circumstances will a child in elementary or middle school be released unaccompanied by a parent or adult authorized by the parent.

### **During Lunch**

McMullen County I.S.D. has a closed campus for grades Pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. All students will attend lunch at the designated times and follow the campus expectations. Students in grades 9 through 12 have an open lunch and may leave campus. Open campus is a privilege and not a right. As such, campus administration reserves the right to close campus for the entire campus, a grade level, or a specific student(s) due to behavioral concerns, safety concerns, or campus programming, at administrative discretion.

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

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

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

## **LOST AND FOUND (All Grade Levels)**

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

## **MAKEUP WORK**

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

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

A student will be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work in a satisfactory manner and within the time specified by the teacher. Each teacher shall give at least one day to make up an assignment for each missed for excused absences including absences for school related functions. A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted by the teacher will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.

A student is encouraged to speak with his or her teacher if the student knows of an absence ahead of time, including absences for extracurricular activities, so that the teacher and student may plan any work that can be completed before or shortly after the absence. Please remember the importance of student attendance at school and that, even though absences may be excused or unexcused, all absences account for the 90 percent threshold in regards to the state laws surrounding “attendance for credit or final grade.” [See also **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade** on page 18.]

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

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

## **DAEP Makeup Work**

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

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

Students placed in a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) during the school year will have an opportunity to complete, before the beginning of the next school year, a foundation curriculum course at the appropriate grade level of the child. The school may also transport work from the general education classroom to the DAEP location in order to minimize

disruptions to the student's educational programming. The principal, in coordination with the grade level teachers, will have discretion to determine the type of instructional material best suited for the child to master grade level or course specific TEKS.

### **Grades 9–12**

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

### **In-School Suspension (ISS) Makeup Work (All Grade Levels)**

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

### **MEDICINE AT SCHOOL (All Grade Levels)**

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

The district will not purchase nonprescription medication to give to a student. MCISD does, however, have medication available for emergency purposes. These medications are listed on the Nurse's Emergency Contact List and permission to administer or refusal must be documented clearly on this form. District employees will not give a student prescription medication, nonprescription medication, herbal substances, anabolic steroids, or dietary supplements, with the following exceptions:

Only authorized employees, in accordance with policy FFAC, may administer:

Prescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent, along with a written request.

Prescription medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse or another qualified district employee from the original, properly labeled container.

Nonprescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request.



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.

Any medication not in the original, labeled container or not accompanied by a written request for administration will be returned home and not given to the student.

Any medications brought to school must be turned into the Nurse's office. No student is allowed to carry medications on campus except as described below.

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

For students at the elementary level, the student's teacher or other district personnel will apply sunscreen to a student's exposed skin if the student brings the sunscreen to school and requests assistance with the application of the sunscreen. Nothing prohibits a student at this level from applying his or her own sunscreen if the student is capable of doing so.

For students at the secondary level, a student may possess and apply sunscreen when necessary. If the student will need assistance with this application, please address the need for assistance 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.

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

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

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).]

## **Psychotropic Drugs**

A psychotropic drug is a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease or as a component of a medication. It is intended to have an altering effect on perception, emotion, or behavior and is commonly described as a mood- or behavior-altering substance.

Teachers and other district employees may discuss a student's academic progress or behavior with the student's parents or another employee as appropriate; however, they are not permitted to recommend use of psychotropic drugs. A district employee who is a registered nurse, an advanced nurse practitioner, a physician, or a certified or credentialed mental health professional

can recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner, if appropriate. [For further information, see policy FFAC.]

## **NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT (All Grade Levels)**

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, McMullen County I.S.D. does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law, in providing education services, activities, and programs, including CTE programs, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following district representatives have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements:

Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment or gender-based harassment: See the principal at 901 River Street, Tilden, TX (361-274-2000)

ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: See the assistant principal at 901 River Street, Tilden, TX (361-274-2000)

All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the superintendent at 901 River Street, Tilden, TX (361-274-2000)

[See policies FB, FFH, and GKD.]

## **NONTRADITIONAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS (All Grade Levels)**

### **PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT (All Grade Levels)**

#### **Working Together**

Both experience and research tell us that a child's education succeeds best when there is good communication and a strong partnership between home and school. Your involvement 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 of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.

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

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

Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed. [See **Academic Counseling** on page 30.]

Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, school counselor, or principal, please call the school office at 361-274-2000 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 76.]

Becoming a school volunteer. [For further information, see policy GKG and **Volunteers** on page 89.]

Participating in campus parent organizations. Parent organizations include: The PALS program.

Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees, assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. [For further information, see policies at BQA and BQB, and contact the principal at 361-274-2000.]

Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction and other wellness issues. [See policies at BDF, EHAA, FFA, and information in this handbook at **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)** on page 63.]

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

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

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

Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. [See policies at BE and BED for more information.]

## **PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS/HEALTH SCREENINGS**

### **Athletics' Participation (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

A student who wishes to participate in, or continue participation in, the district's athletics program governed by the UIL must submit certification from a health-care provider authorized under UIL rules that the student has been examined and is physically able to participate in the athletic program.

This examination is required in the first year of middle school competition and the first and third years of high school competition. During the alternate years, the student must complete a medical appraisal form, and the results of this appraisal may prompt the district to require a physical examination.

### **Other Exams and Screenings (All Grade Levels)**

Students are required to undergo a risk assessment for Type 2 diabetes at the same time the district screens students for hearing and vision issues, or for abnormal spinal curvatures.

[Also see policy FFAA.]

## **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 7.]

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

[See policy EC for more information.]

## **PRAYER (All Grade Levels)**

Each student has a right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt instructional or other activities of the school. The school will not encourage, require, or coerce a student to engage in or to 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 demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level, the recommendation of the student's teacher, the score received on any criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessment, and any other necessary academic information as determined by the district.

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

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

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level, the recommendation of the student's teacher, the score received on any criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessment, and any other necessary academic information as determined by the district. To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards.

**K-2--** A student will be promoted on the basis of academic achievement and/or demonstrated proficiency on grade level TEKS. The TPRI, standardized tests, Words Per Minute Fluency Test, Iowa test, and any other formal and informal data from the teacher and parent will be considered when determining whether to promote a K-2 student.

**3-6** -- A student shall attain an average of 70 or above in both language arts and math. To be promoted from one grade level to the next, a student shall attain for the year an overall average of 70 or above. In addition, the overall average shall be derived by averaging the final numerical grade for language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science.

**7-8** -- To be promoted from one grade level to the next, a student shall attain an overall average of 70 or above for the year in all courses taken. In addition, students shall attain an average of 70 or above in three of the following subjects: Language arts (including reading improvement, if required to be taken), math, social studies, and science.

For students in grade K-4, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade, who have been recommended for retention by their teacher, the principal shall evaluate the data and assessment instruments and will make the final decision related to the placement of the student. Should a parent disagree with the teacher and (or) principals decision, a grade placement committee shall be developed comprised of the principal or principal's designee, counselor, parent, and teacher to evaluate all the data and factors related to the student's academic placement. In order for the student to be promoted, the decision of the committee must be a majority and the student must complete additional, special instruction before beginning the next grade level. In case of a tie vote, the committee the student will be retained. The grade placement committee should consider:

- Performance on assessment instruments,
- Student grades (mastery of taught curriculum and concepts), and
- External factors related to the student's success

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

In order to be promoted to grade 9, students enrolled in grade 8 must perform satisfactorily on the mathematics and reading sections of the grade 8 assessment in English.

If a student in grade 5 or 8 is enrolled in a course that earns high school credit and for which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment will be administered, the student will not be subject to the promotion requirements described above for the relevant grade 5 or 8 assessment.

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.

[See **Standardized Testing** on page 83.]

A student in grade 5 or 8 will have two additional opportunities to take a failed assessment. If a student fails a second time, a grade placement committee, consisting of the principal or designee, the teacher, and the student's parent, will determine the additional special instruction the student will receive. After a third failed attempt, the student will be retained; however, the parent can appeal this decision to the committee. In order for the student to be promoted, based on standards previously established by the district, the decision of the committee must be unanimous and the student must complete additional special instruction before beginning the next grade level.

Whether the student is retained or promoted, an educational plan for the student will be designed

to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year. [See policy EIE.]

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

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

A Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) will be prepared for any student at the middle school or junior high level who did not perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated assessment or is determined by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year following enrollment in grade 9. The PGP will be designed and implemented by a school counselor, teacher, or other staff member designated by the principal. 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. [For additional information, see the school counselor and policy EIF (LEGAL).] 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.

[For information related to the development of personal graduation plans for high school students, see **Personal Graduation Plans for Students Under the Foundation Graduation Program** on page 53.]

### **High School Grade Levels**

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

A student in grades 9–12 will be advanced a grade level based on the number of course credits earned. [Also see **Grade Level Classification** on page 47.]

Students will also have multiple opportunities to retake EOC assessments. [See **Graduation** on page 48 and **Standardized Testing** on page 78 for more information about EOC assessments.]

### **RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL**

[See **Leaving Campus** on page 67.]

### **REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES (All Grade Levels)**

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

At the end of the first three weeks of a 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 the student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent will be requested to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject. [See **Working Together** on page 72 for how to schedule a conference.]

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the principal pursuant to the board-adopted policy and are designed to reflect each student's relative mastery of each assignment for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district's grading policy. [See policy EIA(LOCAL) and **Grading Guidelines** on page 50.]

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 in a class or subject.

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and returned to the school within 5 days. The district may use an electronic program to communicate academic information about your child, including for report card and progress reporting purposes. An electronic signature of the parent will be accepted by the district, but you are entitled to request the option to provide a handwritten signature of acknowledgment instead.

## **RETALIATION**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 32.]

## **SAFETY (All Grade Levels)**

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

Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or others at risk.

Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, campus behavior coordinator, teachers, or bus drivers.

Remain alert to and promptly report to a teacher or the principal any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student or staff member.

Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.

Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

## **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. Please be advised that the district's insurance will not cover injuries as a result of athletic, travel, or school related activities.

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

From time to time, students, teachers, and other district employees will participate in preparedness drills of emergency procedures. When the command is given or alarm is sounded, students need to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

## **Emergency Medical Treatment and Information**

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

## **Emergency School-Closing Information**

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

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 previously provided to the district has changed.

If the campus must close, delay opening, or restrict access to the building because of an emergency, the district will also alert the community in the following ways:

- School messenger system that includes automated phone calls, text messages and emails
- School marquee

## **SAT, ACT, AND OTHER STANDARDIZED TESTS**

[See **Standardized Testing** on page 83.]

## **SCHEDULE CHANGES (Middle/Junior High and High School Grade Levels)**

Students will have the opportunity to pick up their schedules before the beginning of the semester. Students will not be able to change their schedule the first two days of the semester. Students will be able to request a schedule change during the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> day of the semester.



After the fifth day of the semester, the schedule for the student is locked and no more schedule change requests will be accepted. Schedule changes after the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the semester must be approved by the principal.

## **SCHOOL FACILITIES**

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

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

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

#### **Cafeteria**

Please note: during the 2016-2017 school year there will be construction taking place on campus. The construction may require the need to move open areas for students before school, during lunch, and during dismissal throughout the year. Administration will update the students and parents as to changes in school facility usage via announcements that are sent home, updates on the school website, and messages on the school's marque throughout the year.

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.

After dismissal of school in the afternoon, unless a student is involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher or other authorized employee or adult, or unless students are granted permission to remain on campus in accordance with policy FNAB, students must leave campus immediately.

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

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

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

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

### **Cafeteria Services (All Grade Levels)**

The district offers students nutritionally balanced meals daily in accordance with standards set forth in state law.

Free and reduced-price meals are available based on financial need or household situation. Information about a student's participation is confidential; however, disclosure of a student's eligibility may be made without prior notice or consent to programs, activities, and individuals that are specifically authorized access under the National School Lunch Act (NSLA), which is the law that sets forth the disclosure limits for the district's child nutrition programs. A student's name, eligibility status, and other information may be disclosed to certain agencies as authorized under the NSLA to facilitate the enrollment of eligible children in Medicaid or the state children's health insurance program (CHIP) unless the student's parent notifies the district that a student's information should not be disclosed. A parent's decision will not affect the child's eligibility for free and reduced price meals or free milk. See the food service director to apply for free or reduced price meal services.

Parents are strongly encouraged to continually monitor their child's meal account balance. When a student's meal account is depleted, the district will notify the parent. The student will be allowed to continue purchasing meals for up to 5 days or up to \$20.00, whichever occurs first, and the district will present the parent with a schedule of repayment for any outstanding account balance. If the district is unable to work out an agreement with the student's parent on replenishment of the student's meal account and payment of any outstanding balance, the student will receive an alternate meal.

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

The library is a learning laboratory with books, computers, magazines, and other materials available for classroom assignments, projects, and reading or listening pleasure.

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

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

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

### **School Sponsored Trips**

#### **Transportation**

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation provided by the school to and from the event. As approved by the principal, a coach or sponsor of an extracurricular activity may establish procedures related to making an exception to this requirement when a parent requests that the student be released to the parent or to another adult designated by the parent.

#### **Extracurricular Transportation for Out of Town Trips**

School transportation will be provided to all out of town school events. Students are expected to use the school provided transportation both to and from events. Students are not to leave out of town school events except by the school provided transportation.

Exceptions to this procedure must be cleared through the following channels:

A student may be granted the use of transportation other than that being provided by the school **to** an out of town event, under **unavoidable** circumstances, by a written request from the student's parent or guardian that has been confirmed and approved by a district administrator or the athletic director

A student **may leave** an out of town event with his/her own parent or guardian after the parent or guardian has provided written documentation to the school sponsor or coach.

A student **may leave** an out of town school event with an adult who is not his/her own parent or guardian if prior to leaving school for the event, a written request from the student's parent or guardian is confirmed and approved by a campus administrator.

A student may not leave an out of town school event with another high school student under any circumstance Field Trips

Participation in school sponsored activities and events (including field trips) is a privilege and not a right. Students who have been expelled, suspended, or have time owed in an ISS placement may not participate in the event or be allowed admittance. Administration and teachers reserve the right to deny participation in a school sponsored event or activity for disciplinary reasons provided students and parents have been informed at least two weeks in advance of the behavioral expectations for participation.

## **Senior Trip**

The senior trip is a privilege extended to our graduating seniors. Each senior is eligible to attend the senior trip provided he or she has/is:

- Participated in school sponsored fund raisers that earn money toward the senior trip.
- In good academic standing as determined by the principal.
- Met all local requirements for graduation on the graduation plan established prior to the fall semester of their senior year.
- A satisfactory discipline record
- Completed all necessary legal and school expected paperwork/documentation needed to participate in the trip.
- Not missed more than 5 percent of the school days in any class excluding school sponsored events and excused absences.
- Has less than 10 tardies for the year.

Denial of the Senior Trip for Discipline:

For the safety of all students, campus administration may deny a student the privilege of attending the senior trip if during the student's senior year the student:

- Establishes a pattern of not following teacher and/or administrative expectations (more than 3 discipline referrals per semester).

- Has demonstrated unsafe behavior at school or any school function as determined by school administration.
- Has spent more than (3 days) in ISS or has been suspended, expelled, or placed in a DAEP setting.
- Has demonstrated a pattern of rude or disrespectful behavior (more than 3 referrals per semester) toward adults or other students.
- Is verbally or physically aggressive toward students or adults as reflected in at least one office referral for reasons to include (but not limited to): hitting another student or teacher, fighting, threatening another student or teacher, harassment, profane or threatening language directed at a student or adult, etc.
- Has demonstrated bullying type behavior toward other students during the school year as reflected in at least one office referral or bullying report.

## **SEARCHES**

In the interest of promoting student safety and attempting to ensure that schools are safe and drug free, district officials may from time to time conduct searches. Such searches are conducted without a warrant and as permitted by law.

### **Students' Desks and Lockers (All Grade Levels)**

Students' desks and lockers are school property and remain under the control and jurisdiction of the school even when assigned to an individual student.

Students are fully responsible for the security and contents of their assigned desks and lockers. Students must be certain that their lockers are locked, and that the combinations are not available to others.

Searches of desks or lockers may be conducted at any time there is reasonable suspicion to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by policy, whether or not a student is present.

The parent will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk or locker.

### **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 telecommunications or other personal electronic devices will be conducted in accordance with law, and the device may be confiscated in order to perform a lawful search. A confiscated device may be turned over to law enforcement to determine whether a crime has been committed.

[See policy FNF(LEGAL) and **Electronic Devices and Technology Resources** on page 39 for more information.]

### **Vehicles on Campus (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

A student has full responsibility for the security and content of his or her vehicle parked on district property and must make certain that it is locked and that the keys are not given to others. [See also the Student Code of Conduct.]

Vehicles parked on district property are under the jurisdiction of the district. School officials may search any vehicle any time there is reasonable suspicion to do so, with or without the permission of the student. If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the student will be asked to unlock the vehicle. If the student refuses, the student's parent will be contacted. If a search is also refused by the student's parent, the district will turn the matter over to law enforcement. The district may, in certain circumstances, contact law enforcement even if permission to search is granted.

Administration has the authorization to deny a student the right to drive or park on campus if the vehicle has profane or inappropriate messages and/or images displayed.

### **Trained Dogs (All Grade Levels)**

The district will use trained dogs to alert school officials to the presence of prohibited or illegal items, including drugs and alcohol. At any time, trained dogs may be used around lockers and the areas around vehicles parked on school property. Searches of classrooms, common areas, or student belongings may also be conducted by trained dogs when students are not present. An item in a classroom, a locker, or a vehicle to which a trained dog alerts may be searched by school officials.

### **Metal Detectors (All Grade Levels)**

[For further information, see policy FNF(LOCAL).]

### **Drug Testing (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

[For further information, see policy FNF(LOCAL). Also see **Steroids** on page 85.]

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 32.]

### **SPECIAL PROGRAMS (All Grade Levels)**

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

## **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

### **Secondary Grade Levels**

#### ***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. Students are encouraged to talk with the school counselor early during their junior year to determine the appropriate exam to take; these exams are usually taken at the end of the junior year. The Preliminary SAT (PSAT) and ACT-Aspire are the corresponding preparatory and readiness assessments for the SAT and ACT, and more information can be obtained on these assessments from the school counselor.

Note that participation in these assessments may qualify a student to receive a performance acknowledgment on his or her 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.

#### ***TSI (Texas Success Initiative) Assessment***

Prior to enrollment in a Texas public college or university, most students must take a standardized test called the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) assessment. The purpose of the TSI assessment is to assess the reading, mathematics, and writing skills that entering freshmen-level students should have if they are to perform effectively in undergraduate certificate or degree programs in Texas public colleges and universities. This assessment may be required before a student enrolls in a dual credit course offered through the district as well. Achieving certain benchmark scores on this assessment for college readiness may also waive certain end-of-course assessment requirements in limited circumstances.

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

##### ***Grades 3–8***

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

Mathematics, annually in grades 3–8

Reading, annually in grades 3–8

Writing, including spelling and grammar, in grades 4 and 7

Science in grades 5 and 8

Social Studies in grade 8

Successful performance on the reading and math assessments in grades 5 and 8 is required by law, unless the student is enrolled in a reading or math course intended for students above the student's current grade level, in order for the student to be promoted to the next grade level. [See **Promotion and Retention** on page 74 for additional information.]

STAAR A will be available for an eligible student with a Section 504 accommodation plan who has been identified with dyslexia or a related disorder, as well as for a student receiving special education services, if the student meets state-established criteria and requires certain instructional and assessment accommodations on a routine basis.

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

STAAR L is a linguistically accommodated assessment that is available for certain limited English proficient (LEP) students, as determined by the student's Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC). A Spanish version of STAAR is also available to students through grade 5 who need this accommodation.

### ***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 will be required for graduation, unless otherwise 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, which will occur during the fall, spring, and summer months. If a student does not meet satisfactory performance, the student will have additional opportunities to retake the assessment.

STAAR A will be available for an eligible student with a Section 504 accommodation plan who has been identified with dyslexia or a related disorder, as well as for a student receiving special education services, if the student meets state-established criteria and requires certain instructional and assessment accommodations on a routine basis.

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

An 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.

STAAR L, which is a linguistically accommodated assessment, will be available for English language learners who require this type of testing accommodation.

[Also see **Graduation** on page 51 for additional information.]

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

State law prohibits students from possessing, dispensing, delivering, or administering an anabolic steroid. Anabolic steroids are for medical use only, and only a physician can prescribe use.

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

Students participating in UIL athletic competition may be subject to random steroid testing. More information on the UIL testing program may be found on the UIL website at <http://www.uiltexas.org/health/steroid-information>.

## **STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE (All Grade Levels)**

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

Please contact the principal, who has been designated as the district's foster care liaison, at 361-274-2000 with any questions.

[See also **Students in the Conservatorship of the State** on page 13 for more information.]

## **STUDENT SPEAKERS (All Grade Levels)**

The district provides students the opportunity to introduce at some school events. If a student meets the eligibility criteria and wishes to introduce one of the school events listed above, the student should notify the principal of his/her interest.

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION (All Grade Levels)**

If you are worried that your child may be using or is in danger of experimenting, using, or abusing illegal drugs or other prohibited substances, please contact the school counselor. The school counselor can provide you with a list of community resources that may be of assistance to you. The Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) maintains information regarding children's mental health and substance abuse intervention services on its website:

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/mhsa-child-adolescent-services/>.

## **SUICIDE AWARENESS (All Grade Levels)**

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

## **SUMMER SCHOOL (All Grade Levels)**

Summer school will be provided as needed for at-risk students.



## **TARDIES (All Grade Levels)**

- 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade student who are tardy to class will have the following consequences:
- Students will be allowed one tardy per six weeks without penalty.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> tardy will result in a lunch d-hall
- 3<sup>rd</sup> tardy results in two lunch d-halls
- 4<sup>th</sup> tardy results a week of lunch or after school d-hall and loss of off campus lunch privileges for two weeks
- 5 or more tardies will results in an alternative form of punishment such as ISS, manual labor, corporal punishment and/or loss of privileges.
- Students will begin the next six weeks with a clean slate
- Repeated instances of tardiness will result in more severe disciplinary action, in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.
- For Pre-K through 6<sup>th</sup> grade, after the third (3) tardy, teacher will take age appropriate consequences

## **TEXTBOOKS, ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS, TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT, AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS (All Grade Levels)**

Textbooks and other district-approved instructional materials are provided to students free of charge for each subject or class. Any books must be covered by the student, as directed by the teacher, and treated with care. Electronic textbooks and technological equipment may also be provided to students, depending on the course and course objectives. A student who is issued a damaged item should report the damage to the teacher. Any student failing to return an item in acceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until the item is returned or the damage paid for by the parent; however, the student will be provided the necessary instructional resources and equipment for use at school during the school day.

## **TRANSFERS (All Grade Levels)**

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

[See **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 12, **Bullying** on page 21, and **Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education Services** on page 14, for other transfer options.]

## **TRANSPORTATION (All Grade Levels)**

### **School-Sponsored Trips**

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation provided by the school to and from the event. As approved by the principal, a coach or sponsor of an extracurricular activity may establish procedures related to making an exception to this

requirement when a parent requests that the student be released to the parent or to another adult designated by the parent.

## **Buses and Other School Vehicles**

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

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

Due to the increased amount of students being served by the transportation department over the last five years, student school bus route riders will only be picked up and taken to their primary place of residence and the school. Route bus riders are not allowed to have guests on the bus. Please make sure arrangements are made if other students are staying at your house for their transportation to and from school. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may cause, but our student population has increased on many routes. This is the best practice at this time to be fair and consistent for all student riders. If you have questions or an emergency arises concerning a school bus route rider, please contact the Director of Transportation at (361) 274-2000.

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

Students are expected to assist district staff in ensuring that buses and other district vehicles remain in good condition and that transportation is provided safely. When riding in district vehicles, including buses, students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct. Students must:

Follow the driver's directions at all times.

Enter and leave the vehicle in an orderly manner at the designated stop.

Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.

Not deface the vehicle or its equipment.

Not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the vehicle.

Not possess or use any form of tobacco on any district vehicle.

Observe all usual classroom rules.

Be seated while the vehicle is moving.

Fasten their seat belts, if available.

Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the vehicle and before crossing in front of the vehicle.

Follow any other rules established by the operator of the vehicle.

Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct; the privilege to ride in a district vehicle, including a school bus, may be suspended or revoked.

Students are not allowed to ride a school bus unless they are an approved rider for that route unless they receive prior administrative approval based on extenuating circumstances.

### **VANDALISM (All Grade Levels)**

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

### **VIDEO CAMERAS (All Grade Levels)**

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

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

Upon request of a parent of a student who receives special education services, a staff member, or a board member, state law requires the district to place video and audio recording equipment in a classroom in which the student spends at least 50 percent of his or her instructional day, referred to in the law as a self-contained classroom. The majority of students in this type of classroom must also be students who receive special education services. Before the district places a video camera in a classroom or other setting in which your child receives special education services, the district will provide notice to you. Please speak directly with the principal for further information or to request the installation and operation of this equipment.

### **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 first report to the main office and must comply with all applicable district policies and procedures. When arriving on campus, all parents and other visitors should be prepared to show identification.

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher and only so long as their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment. Even if the visit is approved prior to the visitor's arrival, the individual must check in at the main office first.

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

## **Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students**

Throughout the school year 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)**

We appreciate so much the efforts of parent and grandparent volunteers that are willing to serve our district and students. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the administration at 361-274-2000 for more information and to complete an application.

## **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)**

A student under age 18 may be withdrawn from school only by a parent. The school requests notice from the parent at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. The parent may obtain a withdrawal form from the principal's office.

On the student's last day, the withdrawal form must be presented to each teacher for current grade averages and book and equipment clearance; to the librarian to ensure a clear library record; to the clinic for health records; to the school counselor for the last report card and course clearance; and finally, to the principal. A copy of the withdrawal form will be given to the student, and a copy will be placed in the student's permanent record.

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.

# McMULLEN COUNTY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

### INTRODUCTION

McMullen ISD is committed to providing a positive school climate where all students can successfully reach their maximum potential. To provide such a climate, it is essential that student's attitudes toward learning are positive and that their daily conduct includes high standards of behavior.

This is the District's response to the requirements of Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code, and is meant to define student misconduct that may — or must — result in a range of specific disciplinary consequences. This Code, adopted by the District's Board of Trustees provides information and direction to students, parents and guardians regarding standards of expected behavior as well as the consequences of misconduct in violation of this Code. The purpose of this Code is in part to help maintain the educational efficiency of the District's schools and assist students in achieving the maximum benefit from this community's investment in the future.

In case of conflict between the Student Code of Conduct and District policy or the student/parent handbooks, the Student Code of Conduct will prevail. In case of conflict between the Student Code of Conduct and State or Federal law, the State or Federal law will prevail.

It should also be noted that the discipline of students with disabilities who are eligible for services under the federal laws known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are subject to the provisions of those laws.

Parental questions or complaints regarding disciplinary measures taken should be addressed to the teacher or campus administration, as appropriate and in accordance with District policy.

### **CONDUCT and DRESS (see DRESS AND GROOMING page 31)**

The Board shall expect that the school shall maintain an environment that shall induce the student to behave so that he can learn and so that other students can learn. Furthermore, the Board shall expect that the school teach behavior and appropriate dress, good conduct, and self-control. For desirable behavior, a student shall be expected to exhibit the following:

- Self-control

- Achievement in accordance with ability

- Respect for authority of school personnel

- Appreciation of the rights and privileges of other students

- Appropriate dress and social behavior suitable to the occasion

- Respect for school property and property of other students

In the exercise of this responsibility, the Board shall encourage the early use of staff study and case conferences, parent involvement, advice from outside professionals and joint action by school and community agencies. When such measures fail to effect desired results, the Board

shall support all personnel acting within the framework of its policy in the withdrawal of school attendance privileges.

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS**

To achieve a positive learning environment at school or school-related activities, each student is expected to:

- Be aware of all rules and regulations for behavior and conduct himself or herself in accordance with them.
- Attend school daily, except when ill or otherwise lawfully excused, and to be on time to all classes.
- Pay required fees and fines, except as exempted by law.
- Pursue and attempt to master the curriculum prescribed by the district and the state.
- Express opinions and ideas in a respectful manner so as not to insult or slander others.
- Dress in accordance with the school's standards of propriety, safety, health and good grooming as stated in the Student/Parent Handbooks. The District's dress codes are established to encourage good grooming and hygiene, instill discipline, prevent disruption, avoid safety hazards and teach respect for authority.
- Cooperate with school staff in the investigation of disciplinary cases and volunteer information should he or she have knowledge relating to any offense under this Student Code of Conduct.
- Assist the school staff in operating a safe school.
- Be prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments.
- Exhibit an attitude of respect towards individuals and property, and conduct himself or herself in a responsible manner, even when others do not.
- Refrain from making profane, insulting, threatening or inflammatory remarks, and from cheating, lying or engaging in disruptive conduct.
- Seek changes in school policies and regulations in an orderly and responsible manner, through approved channels.
- Avoid violations of the Student Code of Conduct.

## **CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATION OF THE STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT AND NON-STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

In general, discipline will be designed to correct the misconduct and to encourage adherence by all students to comply with their responsibilities as citizens of the school community.

Disciplinary action will draw on the professional judgment of teachers and administrators and on a range of discipline management techniques. Disciplinary action will be based upon, among other things, the nature and seriousness of the offense, the student's age and grade level, the frequency of misbehavior, the student's attitude, the effect of the misconduct on the school environment, and the requirements of District policy as well as both state and federal law. Because of these factors, discipline for a particular offense (unless otherwise specified by law) may bring into consideration varying techniques and responses.

The District may impose campus or classroom rules in addition to those found in the Student Code of Conduct. These rules may be listed in the student/parent handbooks, given to students

or posted in classrooms, and may or may not constitute violations of the Student Code of Conduct. A student who violates campus or classroom rules that are not Student Code of Conduct violations may be disciplined by one or more of the discipline management techniques set out below or in the student/parent handbooks. For these violations, the teacher is not required to make a Student Code of Conduct violation report, and the campus administrator is not required to notify parents.

The following discipline management techniques may be used alone or in combination for misbehavior violating the Student Code of Conduct or campus/classroom rules.

- Verbal correction
- Cooling-off time or "time-out"
- Seating changes in the classroom
- Changing student's class/schedule
- Counseling by teachers, counselors, or administrators
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process
- Rewards
- Behavioral contracts
- Sending the student to the office or other assigned area
- Lunch Detention
- Assigned school duties other than classroom tasks
- Withdrawal of privileges, such as limiting participation in school sponsored activities, participation in extracurricular activities and eligibility for seeking and holding honorary offices
- Techniques or penalties identified in individual student organizations codes of conduct or standards of behavior
- Withdrawing or restricting bus privileges
- Grade reduction as permitted by policy
- Saturday School
- School assigned community service
- After School Detention
- Referral to outside agency and/or legal authority for criminal prosecution in addition to disciplinary measures imposed by the District
- Other strategies and consequences as specified by the Student Code of Conduct or set out in the student/parent handbooks

Additional consequences as approved by the campus administrator:

- Corporal Punishment
- Police notification
- Financial restitution for damage
- In School Suspension
- Suspension from school
- District Alternative Education Program (DAEP) placement.
- Expulsion

## **SECTION I: PROCEDURES**

### **JURISDICTION**

A student whose behavior shows disrespect for others or interferes with their access to a public education and a safe environment will be subject to disciplinary action.

School rules and the authority of the District to administer discipline apply whenever the interest of the school is involved on or off school grounds in conjunction with or independent of classes and school-sponsored activities. These rules will be enforced to the fullest extent permitted by the laws of Texas. The District has disciplinary authority over a student:

- During the regular school day and while the student is going to and from school on District transportation;
- While the student is participating in any activity during the school day on school grounds;
- While the student is in attendance at any school-related or school-sponsored activity, regardless of time or location;
- For any school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location;
- When retaliation against a school employee or volunteer is involved, regardless of time or location;
- When the student commits a felony, as provided by Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code;
- When criminal mischief is committed on or off school property or at a school-related event;
- Within 300 feet of school property.

### **TEACHER REMOVAL OF A STUDENT**

Section 37.002 of the Texas Education Code and District policy permit teachers to remove students from their classrooms, as set forth below.

#### **INFORMAL DISCRETIONARY REMOVAL**

A teacher may seek the help of the Campus Principal in an effort to maintain effective discipline. When a student is sent to the office of the Campus Principal or the Campus Principal's designee under this provision, the Campus Principal or the Campus Principal's designee shall employ appropriate discipline management techniques consistent with this. If the behavior is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, the teacher must file a written report with the Campus Principal or the Campus Principal's designee. A written report will be sent to the parent or guardian.

#### **FORMAL DISCRETIONARY REMOVAL**

A teacher may remove a student from class:

(1) if the student has been documented by the teacher to repeatedly interfere with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn; or



(2) if the teacher determines that the student's behavior is so unruly, disruptive or abusive that it seriously interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn.

When a teacher under this provision removes a student from class, the Campus Principal or the Campus Principal's designee shall schedule a conference within three (3) class days. The conference may include the Campus Principal or the Campus Principal's designee, the student, the student's parent or guardian and the teacher who removed the student, when appropriate. Even if all persons are not present, the Campus Principal or Campus Principal's designee may still order the appropriate disciplinary placement of the student and the duration of that placement. At the conference, the student shall be advised of the conduct with which he or she is charged and shall be given an opportunity to explain his or her version of the events. The Campus Principal or the Campus Principal's designee will notify the student of the consequences of the student's removal from the classroom.

When a teacher removes a student from class under this provision of the Student Code of Conduct, the Campus Principal or Campus Principal's designee may:

- place the student into another appropriate classroom;
- place the student into in/out of -school suspension; or
- place the student into a DAEP.

Terms of removal under this provision of the Student Code of Conduct may prohibit the student from attending or participating in school-sponsored or school-related activities.

#### **MANDATORY REMOVAL BY A TEACHER**

A teacher shall remove from the classroom a student who engages in conduct described as discretionary DAEP placement offenses, mandatory DAEP placement offenses, discretionary expulsion offenses and mandatory expulsion offenses. A written report will be sent to the parent or guardian by the Campus Principal or the Campus Principal's designee. The Campus Principal or the Campus Principal's designee shall either place a student removed under this provision of the Student Code of Conduct into an DAEP program or recommend expelling the student, as appropriate.

When a teacher removes a student from the class under this provision, the Campus Principal or the Campus Principal's designee shall schedule a conference within three (3) class days. The conference shall include the Campus Principal or the Campus Principal's designee, the student, the student's parent or guardian and the teacher who removed the student, when appropriate. Even if all persons are not present, the Campus Principal or the Campus Principal's designee may still order the appropriate disciplinary placement and the duration of that placement. At the conference, the student shall be advised of the conduct with which he or she is charged, and shall be given an opportunity to explain his or her version of the events. The Campus Principal or the Campus Principal's designee will notify the student of the consequences of his or her removal from the classroom under this provision of the Student Code of Conduct. Depending upon the type of behavior or conduct, the Campus Principal or the Campus Principal's designee the student will be suspended, placed into DAEP or expelled, with the duration of the disciplinary consequence to be set in accordance with this Student Code of Conduct.

Terms of removal under this provision of the Student Code of Conduct shall prohibit the student from attending or participating in school-sponsored or school-related activities. When a student has been formally removed from a classroom by a teacher, the Campus Principal or the Campus Principal's designee may not return the student to the teacher's classroom without the teacher's consent, unless the Placement Review Committee (established pursuant to the provisions of Section 37.003 of the Texas Education Code and described later on in this Student Code of Conduct) determines that the teacher's class is the best or only alternative available.

### **EMERGENCY IMMEDIATE REMOVAL**

In an emergency, the principal or the principal's designee may order the immediate removal of a student or immediate change of placement of a student for the following reasons:

- When a student is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that the student's presence seriously interferes with a teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in a class, with the ability of the student's classmates to learn, or with the operation of school or a school-sponsored activity.
- When people or properties are in imminent risk of harm.
- A student who exhibits certain conditions or behaviors may be removed from the regular classroom, campus, or Disciplinary Alternative Education Program. Such conditions may include:
  1. Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
  2. Being highly agitated.
  3. Suffering from any other condition that temporarily threatens the student's welfare, other individual's welfare, or the efficient operation of the school.

### **DISCIPLINE OF HANDICAPPED STUDENTS**

- Each handicapped student's IEP shall indicate which of the discipline programs can appropriately be used. If none of these options are appropriate, the IEP shall specify what disciplinary measures can be used for offenses that would normally warrant an assignment to an alternative education program or other discipline measures.
- Removal of a handicapped student for any of the reasons for which students may be temporarily removed from regular classes shall be used only in emergency situations and shall not exceed three consecutive school days, unless the ARD committee determines that the student poses an immediate threat to his or others' safety or disrupts the safety of the learning environment. If a handicapped student is removed from school premises for more than 10 days in a school year, the ARD committee must first determine that the behavior in question was not related to the handicapping condition.
- Handicapped students may not be removed to a campus In-School Suspension or other instructional arrangement for more than 10 days unless a discipline contingency plan is in effect. Removals for more than ten days require ARD committee action. If a handicapped student is removed from his/her current placement for any reason for a total of 10 days or more in the school year, the ARD committee shall review the student's IEP, unless the student's IEP specifies otherwise.
- Handicapped students may not be removed for more than 10 school days without ARD committee action, pending appeal. During an appeal to a special education hearing

officer, the student shall remain in his current classes, unless the district and parent agree otherwise or the officer grants an interim order to authorize the removal.

- A handicapped student may be expelled for engaging in conduct that would warrant such action for a non-handicapped student only if the ARD committee determines the misconduct is not related to the handicapping condition or inappropriate placement. In determining whether a student's disruptive behavior was related to a student's handicapping condition, the ARD committee shall base its decision on current evaluation and assessment data and on review of the current IEP documentation rather than on established eligibility or previous committee decisions. The ARD committee shall consider whether the student's behavior indicates the need for new assessment or evaluation data. The ARD committee shall determine the educational services to be provided during the time of expulsion. The student's IEP shall include goals and objectives designed to assist in returning the student to school and preventing significant regression. If the ARD committee determines that the disruptive behavior is related to the handicapping condition or inappropriate placement, the student shall not be expelled. If the disruptive behavior on the part of the student indicates an inappropriate placement, the ARD committee shall review the placement and recommend alternatives.
- A handicapped student shall not be excluded pending, appeal to the Board, for more than ten days without ARD committee action. During an appeal to a special education hearing officer, the student shall remain in his current classes or be placed in an alternative education program unless the district and parent agree otherwise or the officer grants an interim order to authorize the exclusion.

## **DETENTION**

For minor infractions of the Student Code of Conduct or other policies and regulations, teachers and administrators may detain students before, during and after school hours. The student's parent or guardian will be required to provide transportation when the student has been assigned to detention. Before assigning students to detention, the teacher or administrator shall inform the student of the conduct that allegedly constitutes the violation, and the student shall be given an opportunity to explain his version of the incident.

## **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

Corporal punishment is permitted as an alternative form of punishment. Corporal punishment shall be reasonable and moderate and may not be administered maliciously or for the purpose of revenge. Such factors as the size, age, physical, mental, and emotional condition of the student; the type of instrument to be used; the amount of force to be used; and the part of the body to be struck shall be considered before administering any corporal punishment.

A disciplinary record shall be maintained and shall contain the name of the student, the type of misconduct, any previous disciplinary actions, the type of corporal punishment administered, the name of the person administering the punishment, the names of witnesses present, and the date of punishment. Disciplinary records shall be made available to parents or the student whichever is appropriate. Corporal punishment shall be limited to spanking or paddling and shall be administered only in accordance with the following guidelines:

- (1) The student and parent will be told of the reason corporal punishment is being administered.
- (2) Corporal punishment may be administered by the school principal or a designee.
- (3) The instrument to be used in administering corporal punishment shall be approved by the principal or a designee.
- (4) When corporal punishment is administered, it shall be done in the presence of one other district professional adult employee and shall take place in a designated place out of view of other students.

### **IN SCHOOL SUSPENSION**

In School Suspension (ISS) can be assigned by campus administration for any violation of the Student Code of Conduct. When students are held in the ISS room or designated area for the entire day or part of a day, the student's regular teachers will send work assignments. The ISS teacher may provide additional work assignments. Written notification of assignment to ISS will be given to the student for delivery to the parent.

### **OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION**

State law allows a student to be suspended from school for up to three (3) school days per offense, with no limit on the number of times a student may be suspended in a semester or school year. A student who is to be suspended will be given an informal hearing by the campus administrator advising the student of the conduct with which he or she is charged and giving the student the opportunity to explain his or her version of the incident. The administrator will determine the duration of a student's suspension. The administrator will determine any restrictions on participation/attendance in school-sponsored or school-related extracurricular and non-curricular activities. Students may be suspended for any reason that also requires or permits placement in a District Alternative Education Program.

If a student is suspended, the student's absence shall be considered to be an excused absence for truancy purposes. However, the campus attendance committee will determine course credit.

It is the intent of the legislature that districts notify the parents or guardians of student suspensions and that, after such notification, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to provide adequate supervision for these students during that period of time.

### **PLACEMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Each campus shall establish a three-member committee to determine placement of a student when a teacher refuses the return of a student to the teacher's class and make recommendations to the district regarding readmission of expelled students. Members shall be appointed as follows:

- The campus faculty shall choose two teachers to serve as members and one teacher to serve as an alternate member; and
- The principal shall choose one member from the professional staff of a campus.
- The teacher refusing to readmit the student may not serve on the committee.

## **THE DAEP PLACEMENT PROCESS**

Not later than the third class day after:

- (1) a teacher has removed a student from class under Texas Education Code 37.002 or
- (2) a school administrator has removed the student from class under Texas Education Code 37.006 or under the provisions of this Student Code of Conduct, the Campus Principal or the Campus Principal's designee must within three class days schedule a conference among the Campus Principal or Campus Principal's designee, the student's parent/guardian, the teacher removing the student (if any, and as appropriate), and the student. The conference may proceed without the attendance of any of the required persons as long as valid attempts were made to require the absent person's attendance. At the conference the student is entitled to written or oral notice of the reasons for the removal, an explanation of the basis for the removal, and an opportunity to respond to the reasons for the removal. The student may not be returned to the regular classroom pending the conference. Following the conference, the Campus Principal or the Campus Principal's designee must order the placement, if any, of the student for a period consistent with the Student Code of Conduct. An elementary student may not be placed in DAEP with any other student who is not an elementary school student.

## **120-DAY REVIEW**

The Campus Principal or the Campus Principal's designee must review the status, including the academic status, of each student in a DAEP at least every 120 days. In the case of a high school student, the Campus Principal or the Campus Principal's designee and the student's parent/guardian must review the student's progress towards meeting high school graduation requirements and must establish a specific graduation plan for the student. At the review, the student or student's parent/guardian must be permitted to argue for the student's return to the regular classroom. A removed student may not be returned to the removing teacher's class without the teacher's consent, and the teacher may not be coerced to consent. There must be additional review of DAEP Placements for Felony Cases Dismissed/Not Prosecuted.

## **THE EXPULSION PROCESS**

Before a student may be expelled, the Board or its designee shall provide the student a hearing at which the student is afforded due process, which shall include the following:

- Prior written notice of the charges and the proposed sanctions so as to afford a reasonable opportunity for preparation, including a written invitation to the student's parent or guardian to attend the expulsion hearing;
- Right to a full and fair hearing before the Board or its designee;
- Opportunity to testify and to present evidence and witnesses in his or her defense; and
- Opportunity to examine the evidence presented by the school administration and to question the administration's witnesses.

At the hearing, the student is entitled to an adult representative or legal counsel, who can provide guidance to the student and who is not an employee of the District. If the District makes a

good-faith effort to inform the student and the student's parent or guardian of the time and place of the hearing, the District may hold the hearing regardless of whether the student, student's parent or guardian, or another adult representing the student attends.

The notice should include the date and time of the hearing, the names of witnesses against the student, and the nature of the evidence. In an expulsion hearing, the District may rely on the hearsay evidence of the school administrators who investigate disciplinary infractions. The decision shall be based exclusively on the evidence presented at the hearing and shall be communicated promptly to the student and parent.

A decision by the Board's designee to expel a student may be appealed to the Board. A student with a disability shall not be excluded from his or her current placement pending appeal to the Board for more than ten days without admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee action to determine appropriate services in the interim. Pending appeal to a special education hearing officer, unless the District and parents agree otherwise, a student with a disability shall remain in the present education setting.

## **SECTION II: GENERAL MISCONDUCT**

A student shall receive any of the discipline management techniques appropriate for the situation as determined by the teacher or administrator, for appropriate intervention for any of the following offenses if committed on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property. Offenses in this category may result in Detention, Corporal Punishment in accordance with District policies, the loss of privileges including open lunch or school sponsored activities, In School Suspension, Out of School Suspension, and/or placement into a DAEP. Under certain circumstances as set forth above, student's age 10 and older may be expelled.

General Misconduct Offenses Are:

- Use, possession, or distribution of tobacco products and/or tobacco paraphernalia.
- Disruption of school activities.
- Disrespect of a school employee.
- Throwing objects out of buses, on campus, or during school activities that could cause bodily harm or property damage.
- Profanity, vulgar language, obscene gestures, or drawing and/or displaying obscene illustrations or materials.
- Gambling.
- Tardiness or truancy.
- Littering school property.
- Trespassing.
- Possession or use of a paging device or laser pointer or pens.
- Use of a cell phones during the school day without faculty permission.
- Campus Dress Code violations.
- Loitering in unauthorized areas.
- Horseplay or scuffling.
- Inappropriate public display of affection (PDA).

- Cheating or copying the work of another student.
- Behavior symptomatic of, or associated with gangs, or cults.
- Writing, drawing or marking on school property.
- Parking illegally and/or driving recklessly or over posted speed limits.
- Failure to secure locker/sharing locker.
- Failure to return documents on time.
- Leaving school without giving proper notification.
- Being absent from scheduled detention.
- Disobeying school rules concerning conduct on school buses or other means of transportation.
- Possession of any instrument, device or object that can be used to injure or threaten another person.
- Using or possessing any instrument that might reasonably threaten or cause bodily harm, even if they have not been used to actually threaten or cause bodily harm. Such instruments include, but are not limited to: any weapon, knife or gun which does not meet the definition of those terms under the Texas Penal Code; fireworks; ammunition; and instruments of the martial arts.
- Lying or falsification of records, passes, notes or other school-related documents.
- Tampering with, changing or altering records or documents of the District by any method, including, but not limited to, computer access or other electronic means.
- Damaging and/or destroying and/or altering school computer hardware and/or software by any method including, but not limited to, the use of computer software viruses or other electronic means.
- Planning and/or organizing and/or instigating and/or participating in an activity that causes substantial disruption of the education program, including, but not limited to, gang/cult activity.
- Involvement in gang activity, including participating as a member or pledge, or soliciting another person to become a pledge or member of a gang.
- Involvement in a public school fraternity, sorority, or secret society, including participating as a member or pledge, or soliciting another person to become a pledge or member of public school fraternity, sorority, or secret society.
- Vandalizing property, including, but limited to, cutting, defacing, or in any way damaging property belonging to the District, its employees, its volunteers, visitors or other students.
- Inappropriately using instructional materials including computers, printers, and computer systems.
- Trespassing while truant.
- Insubordination.
- Engaging in a careless act causing harm or injury.
- Engaging in verbal abuse (i.e. name calling, using ethnic or racial slurs or making derogatory statements addressed publicly to others) that may disrupt the school program or incite violence.
- Directing profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures towards a teacher, another student, an employee, a volunteer or other individuals.
- Possession or distribution of pornographic materials.

- Leaving the classroom or school grounds without permission.
- Making or assisting in making threats, whether against individuals or groups.
- Committing extortion, coercion, or blackmail (obtaining money or another object of value from an unwilling person), or forcing an individual to act through the use of force or threat of force.
- Committing theft, robbery or burglary or attempting to commit such act.
- Committing sexual acts, which do not qualify as public lewdness or indecent exposure.
- Mooning and any other inappropriate exposure of body parts.
- Communicating a threat or false alarm of bomb, fire, explosion or other incendiary device, poison or toxic substance. This includes but is not limited to calling for emergency assistance (911) or setting of an alarm when no emergency exists. Making threats (whether real or false) regarding school safety are prohibited, and such conduct will result in placement into an Alternative Education Program.
- Hazing/Bullying- includes any willful act done by a student, either individual or with others, to another student for the purpose of subjecting the other student to indignity, humiliation, intimidation, physical abuse or threats of abuse, social or other ostracism, shame, or disgrace. No student shall engage in any form of hazing.
- Criminal mischief not punishable as a felony.
- Selling, distributing, possessing or using “look-alike” drugs or substances, or items portrayed as being drugs (without regard to amount), drug paraphernalia, alcohol, prescription or non-prescription medication, herbals, vitamins or any other type of contraband.
- Serious or persistent misbehavior that violates the Student Code of Conduct. Persistent misbehavior is defined as two or more violations of the Student Code of Conduct in general or repeated occurrences of the same violation while enrolled in McMullen County ISD, whether the conduct is occurring at school or at a school-related or school-sponsored event. As noted previously, serious or persistent misbehavior while the student is assigned to a DAEP may result in expulsion.
- Other behaviors as defined by the campus administrators.

Other misconduct not specified in this handbook may be dealt with by any appropriate discipline management technique(s) or assignment to a District Alternative Education Program, depending upon the nature of the misconduct. Special consideration will be given in every District Alternative Education Program assignment or expulsion decision to: self-defense; intent or lack of intent at the time the student engaged in the conduct; a student’s disciplinary history; and/or a disability that substantially impairs the student’s capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of the student’s conduct.

### **SECTION III: DISCRETIONARY DAEP OFFENSES**

Students guilty of any of the following offenses may be suspended for up to three days and placed in the DAEP. The District’s DAEP Placement Policy will be followed.

Discretionary DAEP Offenses Are:

- Disruptive behavior. TEC 37.002



- Based on conduct occurring off campus and while the student is not in attendance at a school sponsored or school related activity for felony offenses not in Title 5, Penal Code, TEC 37.006(d)
- Violation of the Student Code of Conduct not included under TEC 37.006 or 37.007
- Emergency Placement/Expulsion. TEC 37.0019
- Possessed, purchased, used or accepted a cigarette or tobacco product as defined in the Health and Safety Code, Section 3.01, Chapter 161.252.
- School Related Gang Violence

#### **SECTION IV: MANDATORY DAEP OFFENSES**

A student shall be removed from class and placed in an District Alternative Education Program, as provided by Section 37.006, Texas Education Code, if the student commits or engages in any of the following behaviors on or within 300 feet of school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property.

- Conduct punishable as a felony; TEC 37.006(a)(1)
- Possessed, sold, or used marijuana or other controlled substance – TEC 37.006(a)(3) and 37.007(b)
- Possessed, sold, used or under the influence of an alcoholic beverage – TEC 37.006(a)(4) and 37.007(b)
- Abuse of glue or aerosol paint – TEC 37.006(a)(5)
- Public lewdness or indecent exposure – TEC 37.006(a)(6)
- Retaliation, as defined by Section 36.06 of the Texas Penal Code, against a school employee or volunteer except that, if the student commits a mandatory expellable offense against any employee in retaliation for or as a result of the employee’s employment or association with the McMullen County Independent School District, the student must be expelled under Texas Education Code Section 37.007(d).
- Based on conduct occurring off campus and while the student is not in attendance at a school-sponsored or school-related activity for felony offenses in Title 5, Penal Code – TEC 37.006(c)
- Conduct that contains the elements of terroristic threat as defined by TEC 37.006(a)(2)
- Assault under Penal Code Section 22.01 (a)(1); against a school district employee or volunteer – TEC 37.007(b)(3) and assault under Penal Code Section 22.01 (a)(1); against someone other than a school district employee or volunteer – TEC 37.006(a)(2).
- If the student is between six (6) and ten (10) years of age, engaging in expellable conduct.

In addition, a student shall be placed in an Alternative Education Program under Texas Education Code, Section 37.008, based on conduct occurring off school grounds and while the student is not in attendance at a school-sponsored or school-related activity if:

- The student receives deferred prosecution under Section 53.03, Texas Family Code, for conduct defined as a felony offense in Title 5, Texas Penal Code or
- A court or jury finds that the student has engaged in delinquent conduct under Section 54.03, Texas Family Code, for conduct defined as a felony offense in Title 5, Texas Penal Code or

- The superintendent or the superintendent’s designee has a reasonable belief that a student has engaged in a conduct defined as a felony offense in Title 5, Texas Penal Code.

In determining whether there is a reasonable belief that a student has engaged in conduct defined as a felony offense by the Texas Penal Code, the superintendent or the superintendent’s designee may consider all available information, including the information furnished under Article 15.27 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure.

McMullen County ISD upholds all other school districts' DAEP orders for the term of the placement. All discipline placements will remain in effect pending the results of any appeal

## **SECTION V: DISCRETIONARY EXPULSION OFFENSES**

A student may be expelled for any of the following offenses if committed on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property.

- Possessed, sold or used marijuana or other controlled substance. TEC 37.006(a)(3) and 37.007(b)
- Possessed, sold, used or under the influence of an alcoholic beverage. TEC 37.006(a)(4) and 37.007(b)
- Abuse of glue or aerosol paint. TEC 37.006(a)(5)
- Retaliation against a school employee. TEC 37.006(b) and 37.007(d)
- Serious or persistent misconduct violating the Student Code of Conduct while placed in the district alternative education program (DAEP). TEC 37.007(c)
- Criminal mischief. TEC 37.007(f)
- Emergency Placement/Expulsion. TEC 37.019
- Assault under Penal Code Section 22.01(a) against a school district employee or volunteer. TEC 37.007(b)(3)

## **SECTION VI: MANDATORY EXPULSION OFFENSES (AGE 10 AND OLDER)**

A student shall be expelled for any of the following offenses if committed on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property. (A student age 9 years and younger who commits these offenses cannot be expelled, but shall be placed in District Alternative Education Placement.)

- Possessed, sold or used marijuana or other controlled substance – TEC 37.006(a)(3) and 37.007(b) if the conduct is punishable as a felony.
- Possessed, sold, used or under the influence of an alcoholic beverage – TEC 37.006(a)(4) and 37.007(b) if the conduct is punishable as a felony.
- Retaliation against a school employee TEC 37.006(b) and 37.007(d) if the retaliation against school employee or volunteer is coupled with an offense in TEC 37.007(a) or (d).
- Used exhibited or possessed a firearm TEC 37.007(a)(1) (A) and 37.007(e).
- Used exhibited or possessed an illegal knife TEC 37.007(a)(1)(B).
- Used exhibited or possessed an illegal club TEC 37.007(a)(1)(C).

- Used exhibited or possessed a prohibited weapon under Penal Code Section 46.05 TEC 37.007(a)(1)(D).
- Arson TEC 37.007(a)(2)(B)
- Murder, capital murder, criminal attempt to commit murder, or capital murder TEC 37.007(a)(2)(C).
- Indecency with a child TEC 37.007(a)(2)(D)
- Aggravated kidnapping TEC 37.007(a)(2)(E)
- Aggravated assault under Penal Code Section 22.02 against a school district employee or volunteer TEC 37.007(d).
- Aggravated assault under Penal Code Section 22.02 against someone other than a school district employee or volunteer. TEC 37.007(a)(2)(A)
- Sexual assault under Penal Code Section 22.011 or aggravated sexual assault under 22.021 against a school district employee or volunteer. TEC 37.007(d)
- Sexual assault under Penal Code Section 22.011 or aggravated sexual assault under 22.021 against someone other than a school district employee or volunteer. TEC 37.007(a)(2)(A)

A student who violates the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct and who is expelled as a consequence for the violation shall also be reported to the Juvenile Court system. "Expulsion" means removal of a student from school and the end of educational services for a period of time not to exceed one (1) year. The Board delegates to the Superintendent, or the Superintendent's designee the authority to expel students. There are numerous reasons for expulsion from school. Most are required by law, but a few are at the Districts' discretion. McMullen County ISD upholds all other school districts' expulsion orders for the term of the expulsion. All discipline placements will remain in effect pending the results of any appeal of the placement.

## **SECTION VII: MISCELLANEOUS**

### **ASSAULTS/ALTERCATIONS/INCIDENCE CONSIDERED PUBLIC DISTURBANCE**

Assaults Defined: (Students are prohibited from assaulting anyone on school property or at any school-related event.)

- (1) Intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing bodily injury to another person.
- (2) Intentionally or knowingly threatening another with imminent bodily injury.
- (3) Intentionally or knowingly causing physical contact with another when the student knows or should reasonably believe that the other will regard the contact as offensive or provocative.

#### **Fights/Assaults Against Students:**

When a student is involved in an assault or a fight against another student, a discipline hearing will be held to determine under which of the above definitions the assault falls. In cases in which an assault falls under definition #1 above, the student will be suspended off-campus for three days, charges will be filed for student's age 10 or older, and the student will be placed in a District Alternative Education Program. A second offense of assault, which falls under definition #1 above, may result in the student being expelled.

#### **Assaults by Threat or Physical Contact Against Students:**

When a student is involved in an assault against another student as defined by #2 and or #3 above, a discipline hearing may be held to determine the extent of the infraction and the discipline action to be taken. Repeated offenses of these types of assaults may result in suspension, charges may be filed and the student may be placed in the District Alternative Education Program.

Altercations/Incidence Considered a Public Disturbance Which Are Not Considered an Assault:  
(The interpretive authority of what is considered a public disturbance is vested in the principal or his designee.)

- For the first case involving an altercation or incident considered a public disturbance, the student will be suspended off campus for three days and may be placed in ISS for five days. Charges may be filed.
- In the case of additional offenses involving an altercation or incident considered a public disturbance, the student will be suspended off campus for three days, charges will be filed, and the student may be placed in a District Alternative Education Program.

**Assaults Against School Officials:**

When a student is involved in an assault against a school official, a discipline hearing will be held to determine under which of the above definitions the assault falls. In cases in which the assault falls under definition #1 above, the student will be suspended off-campus for three days, charges will be filed, and the student will be expelled.

**Assaults by Threat or Physical Contact Against School Officials:**

When a student is involved in an assault against a school official as defined by #2 and or #3 above, a discipline hearing will be held to determine the extent of the infraction and the discipline action to be taken. The student may be suspended off campus for three days, charges may be filed and the student may be placed in the District Alternative Education. Repeated offenses of these types of assaults may result in the student being expelled.

**Bullying By or Against Other Students:**

Bullying is defined as engaging in written or verbal expression or physical conduct that:

- Will have the effect of physically harming a student, their property, or placing that student in reasonable fear of harm; and/or
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.

Bullying of other students shall not be tolerated under any circumstances and any student guilty of bullying another student may be suspended off-campus for three days, charges may be filed, and/or the student may be expelled.

**Harassment By or Against Other Students:**

Harassment is defined as threatening to cause harm or bodily injury to another student, engaging in sexually intimidating conduct, causing physical damage to the property of another student, subjecting another student to physical confinement or restraint, or maliciously taking any action that substantially harms another student's physical or emotional health or safety.

Harassment of other students shall not be tolerated under any circumstances and any student guilty of harassing another student may be suspended off-campus for three days, charges may be filed, and/or the student may be expelled.

### **Creation of a Hit List:**

A ‘hit list’ is defined as a list of people targeted to be harmed, using a firearm, as defined by Section 46.01 (3), a knife, as defined by Section 46.01(7), or any other object to be used with the intent to cause bodily harm.

The creation of such “hit lists” shall not be tolerated under any circumstances and any student guilty of creating such lists may be suspended off-campus for three days, charges may be filed, and/or the student may be expelled.

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

### **Questioning of Students**

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school:

The principal will verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and ask for an explanation of the need to question or interview the student.

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

The principal ordinarily will be present unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.

The principal will cooperate fully regarding the conditions of the interview, if the questioning or interview is part of a child abuse investigation.

### **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 probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.

By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student’s physical health or safety.

To comply with a properly issued directive to take a student into custody.

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

The principal will immediately notify the Superintendent and will ordinarily attempt to notify the parent unless the officer or other authorized person raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection to notifying the parents. Because the principal does not have the authority to prevent or delay a custody action, notification will most likely be after the fact.

### **Notification of Law Violations**

The district is also required by state law to notify:

All instructional and support personnel who have responsibility for supervising a student who has been arrested or referred to the juvenile court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors.

All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a student who has been convicted or adjudicated of delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors.

### **SEARCHES**

In the interest of promoting student safety and attempting to ensure that schools are safe and drug free, district officials may from time to time conduct searches. Such searches are conducted without a warrant and as permitted by law.

### **Students' Desks and Lockers**

Students' desks and lockers are school property and remain under the control and jurisdiction of the school even when assigned to an individual student. Students are fully responsible for the security and contents of the assigned desks and lockers. Students must be certain that the locker is locked, and that the combination is not available to others.

Searches of desks or lockers may be conducted at any time there is reasonable suspicion to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by District policy, whether or not a student is present. The parent will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk or locker.

### **Vehicles on Campus**

Vehicles parked on school property are under the jurisdiction of the school. School officials may search any vehicle any time there is reasonable cause to do so, with or without the presence of the student. A student has full responsibility for the security of his or her vehicle and must make certain that it is locked and that the keys are not given to others. [See also the Student Code of Conduct.]

Administration has the authorization to deny a student the right to drive or park on campus if the vehicle has profane or inappropriate messages and/or images displayed.

## **BICYCLE/AUTOMOBILE USE (FFFA)**

Students are permitted to drive automobiles to school provided they can show proof of license and proof of liability insurance and park only in the areas designated. Once students arrive at school, they are to depart from their vehicles. Students are not allowed to sit in vehicles or to arrive on campus, pick other students up, and leave.

Students and teachers are required to park their cars in areas designated. Observe all speed and safety regulations. Each student who drives a car to school must possess a valid driver's license and file the number in the principal's office. Students may be restricted from driving on the school grounds if they do not observe the above regulations. Students who need to return to their cars need permission from the office.

## **DRUG DETECTION DOGS**

A Drug Education and Detection Company, which include dogs, that can detect drugs, alcohol, ammunition, and firearms, will be contracted by the board on a yearly basis. Visits are not announced to be more effective.

## **PHYSICAL RESTRAINT**

Any school employee may, within the scope of the employee's duties, use and apply physical restraint to a student that the employee reasonably believes is necessary in order to:

- Protect a person, or the person using physical restraint from injury.
- Obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object.
- Protect property from serious damage.
- Remove from a specific location a student refusing a command of a school employee, including from a classroom or other school property, in order to restore order or impose disciplinary measures.
- Restrain an irrational student.

## **SCHOLASTIC PENALTIES**

A student removed from regular classes by a school official for any reason other than expulsion will receive an excused absence and will be expected to complete any course work assigned within a time designated by the teacher.

Pending an appeal to the Board of Education for an expulsion, students will be allowed to remain current on all course work. However, if the appeal is denied, the student will not receive credit for work missed during expulsion. Special education students will receive educational services during expulsion as determined by an ARD meeting.

## **CHEATING and PLAGIARISM**

Any student who is caught cheating on tests or homework will be given a zero (0) on that work. The second time a student is caught cheating, a zero (0) will be given plus a parent conference will be required. Student Code of Conduct disciplinary consequences will apply.

## **VANDALISM and DAMAGE to SCHOOL PROPERTY**

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

Students shall not vandalize or otherwise damage or deface any property, including furniture and equipment, belonging to or used by McMullen County ISD. Parents or guardians of students guilty of damaging school property shall be liable for damages in accordance with the law. Damaged school property must be replaced or returned to its original condition. Students shall be responsible for the care and return of state-owned textbooks and will be charged for replacement of damaged or lost textbooks.

## **TITLE 5 OFFENSES-TEXAS PENAL CODE**

Conduct defined as a felony offense in Title 5 of the Texas Penal Code includes: murder; capital murder; manslaughter; criminally negligent homicide; false imprisonment; kidnapping; aggravated kidnapping; indecency with a child; assault (when directed towards certain individuals); sexual assault; aggravated assault; aggravated sexual assault; injury to a child, elderly individual or a disabled individual; abandoning or endangering a child; deadly conduct; terrorist threat; aiding suicide; tampering with consumer product and harassment by persons in certain correctional facilities.

## **TRESPASSING**

Trespassing is defined as being on other than home campuses, or being on any campus if expelled or suspended or placed in the District Alternative Education Program. Students placed in the District Alternative Education Program will be considered trespassing if they are outside the designated waiting area for their bus. A citation may be issued for trespassing by the Police Department.

## **WEAPONS**

A student shall not go onto the school premises with a firearm, explosive weapon, or a knife, unless pursuant to written regulations or written authorization of the district. The student shall not interfere with normal activities, occupancy, or use of any building or portion of the campus exhibiting, using or threatening to exhibit or use the firearm, explosive weapon, or knife.

Students are also prohibited from bringing to school or a school-related activity any other weapons. This prohibition will not normally apply to school supplies such as pencil, compasses, and the like, unless they are used in a menacing or threatening manner. Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code outlines weapons and their description.



## **TOBACCO**

Students shall not possess or use tobacco products, including but not limited to cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, pipes, snuff, or chewing tobacco, on school premises or school-related functions. The police will be called and the student cited.

## **DRUGS/ALCOHOL/INHALANTS**

No student shall possess or attempt to possess, use or transmit, or be under the influence of alcohol (legal intoxication not required) or alcoholic beverages or any of the following substances on school premises during any school term or off school premises at a school-related activity, function, or event:

1. Any controlled substance or dangerous drug as defined by law, without regard to amount, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, or barbiturate.
2. Alcohol or any alcoholic beverage.
3. Any abusable glue, aerosol paint, or any other chemical substance for inhalation.
4. Any other intoxicant, or mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior-altering drugs.

"Use" means a student smoked, ingested, injected, imbibed, inhaled, drank, or otherwise taken internally a prohibited substance recently enough that it is detectable by the student's physical appearance, actions, breath or speech. "Under the influence" means a student's faculties are noticeably impaired, but the student need not be legally intoxicated. The transmittal, sale, or attempted sale of what is represented to be any of the above-listed substances is also prohibited under this rule.

A student who uses a drug authorized by a licensed physician through a prescription specifically for that student's use shall not be considered to have violated this rule unless he sells, gives, or attempts to sell, or uses in an un-prescribed manner, the prescribed medications.

Once an administrator and one other professional determine there is a violation, the police will be summoned. Every effort will be made to inform parents that their child has been in violation of the alcohol policy and that police have been summoned. Disciplinary action will be taken as indicated in the Student Code of Conduct and other discipline policies. Counseling from the school counselors will be required.

Please note: If the infraction occurs out of town while on a school trip, the student will be turned over to law enforcement officers in that town. Parents will be notified as soon as possible. School officials will not arrange for a student's release.

Note: Section 21.302 of the Education Code removes liability of civil damages for a teacher, administrator or school employee who reports to a school administrator or governmental authority a student suspected of using, passing, or selling on school property, marijuana or a controlled substance, a dangerous drug, an abusable glue or aerosol paint, a volatile chemical, or an alcoholic beverage.

## **DISRUPTION of LAWFUL ASSEMBLY**

No student or group of students acting together may willfully engage in disruptive activity or disrupt a lawful assembly on the campus or property of any school in the district. A lawful assembly is disrupted when any person in attendance is unable to participate in the assembly due to the use of force or violence or due to a reasonable fear that force or violence is likely to occur.

Conduct, either in or out of class that for any reason, whether because of time, place, or manner of behavior, materially disrupts classrooms or involves substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of other students or employees at school or school-related activities is prohibited.

Student demonstrations and similar activities shall be prohibited when there is evidence that may reasonably lead school authorities to forecast substantial disruption of, or material interference with normal school operations or approved school activities.

## **DRESS AND GROOMING**

### **Dress Code (FNCA)**

The McMullen County Independent School District recognizes a direct correlation between student appearance, attitude, and behavior. The appearance of students at school, at any school - sponsored or school - related activity, or on any school property is an educational responsibility when the total appearance of the student body, or of individuals within the student body, affect directly the attitude, safety, health, behavior, and learning environment within the school. The District's dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, instill discipline, prevent disruption, avoid safety hazards, and teach respect for authority. The administration and staff are delegated the authority to administer the standards for proper dress.

## **ELECTONIC DEVICES AND IPAD DEVICES**

The discipline procedures in the McMullen County I.S.D. Student Handbook address serious and major offenses such as stealing and destruction of school or personal property; possession of improper images on any electronic device; or any other violation of the school discipline policy will apply to the iPad device. Depending on the seriousness of the offense students may lose iPad and/or network privileges as well as being held for detention, suspension or even in extreme cases expulsion.

# TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

## McMullen County ISD

The Superintendent or designee shall implement, monitor, and evaluate electronic media resources for instructional and administrative purposes and shall develop and implement administrative regulations, guidelines, and user agreements, consistent with the purposes and mission of the District, District policy, and law.

**Availability of Access:** Access to the District's technology resources, meaning electronic communications and computer systems and equipment, is a privilege, not a right. Access shall be made available to students and employees primarily for instructional and administrative purposes and in accordance with administrative regulations, district policy and law.

### RULES FOR APPROPRIATE USE

- If you are assigned an individual account for hardware and Internet access, you are responsible for not sharing the password for that account with others.
- You will be held responsible at all times for the proper use of District technology resources, and the District may suspend or revoke your access if you violate the rules.
- The account is to be used primarily for educational purposes, but some limited personal use is permitted.

### INAPPROPRIATE USES

- Using technology resources for any illegal purpose or in violation of district policy.
- Damaging electronic communication systems or electronic equipment including: a) knowingly or intentionally introducing a virus to a device or network, or not taking proper security steps to prevent a device or network from becoming vulnerable; b) disfiguring or altering equipment, or displaying lack of reasonable care in its use.
- Disabling or attempting to disable any Internet filtering device. Requests to disable a filtering device should be made to the District's technology coordinator.
- Accessing sites not authorized under the District's filtering policies. Encrypting communications to avoid security review.
- Using someone's account without permission.

- Pretending to be someone else when posting, transmitting, or receiving messages.
- Attempting to read, delete, copy, modify, or interfere with another user's posting, transmittal, or receipt of electronic media.
- Using resources to engage in conduct that harasses or bullies others.
- Posting, transmitting, or accessing materials that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal.
- Using inappropriate language such as swear words, vulgarity, ethnic or racial slurs, and any other inflammatory language.
- Posting or transmitting pictures of students without obtaining prior permission from all individuals depicted or from parents of depicted students who are under the age of 18.
- Violating others' intellectual property rights, including downloading or using copyrighted information without permission from the copyright holder.
- Use of unlicensed software, or altering district installed software.
- Wasting school resources through improper use of the District's technology resources, including creating and distributing chain letters, sending spam, or setting up equipment so that it can act as an "open relay" for third-party spammers, or providing products or services for pay, i.e., outside employment.
- Sending unauthorized broadcasts to official or private distribution lists, regardless of content or recipients.
- Gaining unauthorized access to restricted information or resources.
- **If you are a student:**
  - Posting or transmitting personal information about yourself or others, such as addresses and phone numbers.
  - Responding to requests for personally identifying information or contact from unknown individuals.
  - Making appointments to meet in person people met online. If a request for such a meeting is received, it should be reported to a teacher or administrator immediately.

**CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE USE:**

Noncompliance with applicable regulations will result in a) suspension of access to District technology resources; b) revocation of account; c) disciplinary action consistent with District policies and regulations. (See MCISD Student Code of Conduct. Violations of law may result in criminal prosecutions as well as disciplinary action by the District.)

### **REPORTING VIOLATIONS:**

Immediately report any known violation of the district's applicable policies or acceptable use guidelines to an administrator or, to a supervising teacher. You must report requests for personally identifying information or contact from unknown individuals as well as any content or communication that is abusive, obscene, pornographic, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal

### **MONITORED USE AND FILTERING**

Electronic mail transmissions and other use of the electronic communications shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated staff to ensure appropriate use for educational or administrative purposes. Each District computer with Internet access shall have a filtering device or software that blocks access to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, inappropriate for students, or harmful to minors, as defined by the federal Children's Internet Protection Act and as determined by the administration.

### **INTERNET SAFETY**

McMullen County I.S.D. controls students' access to inappropriate materials, as well as materials that are harmful to minors. MCISD also makes every effort to ensure student safety and security when using District electronic communications including a) preventing unauthorized access, hacking and other unlawful activities, b) restricting unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personally identifiable information regarding students, and c) educating students about cyber bullying awareness and response, as well as appropriate online behavior.

### **EDUCATION**

Education in the proper use of technology resources will be provided for employees and students with emphasis on safe and ethical use. Education is designed to promote district standards and acceptable use of technology resources as set forth by Board Policy, and Acceptable Use Guidelines. Education promotes student safety in electronic communications, including the internet, appropriate online behavior, and cyber bullying awareness and response. Users will be provided copies of the District's acceptable use guidelines.

### **VANDALISM PROHIBITED**

Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy District equipment or materials, data of another user of the District's system(s), or any of the agencies or other networks that are connected to the

Internet is prohibited. Deliberate attempts to compromise, degrade, or disrupt system performance may be viewed as violations of District policies and administrative regulations and, possibly, as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws.

### **FORGERY PROHIBITED**

Forgery or attempted forgery of electronic mail messages is prohibited. Attempts to read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic mail of other system users or deliberate interference with the ability of other system users to send/receive electronic mail is prohibited

### **WARNING**

System users and parents of students with access to the District's electronic communication system(s) should be aware that use of the system may provide access to other electronic communications systems in the global electronic network that may contain inaccurate or objectionable material.

### **DISCLAIMER**

The District's system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The District does not make any warranties, whether expressed or implied, with respect to any services provided by the system(s) and any information or software contained therein. The District does not warrant that the functions or services performed by, or that the information or software contained on the system will meet the system user's requirements, or that the system will be uninterrupted or error-free, or that defects will be corrected. Opinions, advice, services, and all other information expressed by system users, information providers, service providers, or other third party individuals in the system are those of the providers and not the District. The District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the District's electronic communication system(s).

### **DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY**

The District shall not be liable for the users' inappropriate use of the District's electronic communication resources or violations of copyright restrictions, users' mistakes or negligence, or costs incurred by users. The District shall not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy or usability of any information found on the Internet. The Superintendent or designee will oversee the District's electronic communication system(s). Oversight of the posting of official district, campus, or division/department materials on the District's electronic communication system(s) will be the responsibility of the superintendent, principal, or division/department supervisor or designee. The District's system(s) will be used only for administrative and instructional purposes consistent with the District's mission and goals.

## **APPENDIX I: Freedom From Bullying Policy**

Note that school board policies may be revised at any time. For legal context and the most current copy of the local policy, visit <http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/878?filter=FFI>. Below is the text of McMullen County I.S.D.'s policy FFI(LOCAL) as of the date that this Handbook was finalized for this school year.

STUDENT WELFARE: FREEDOM FROM BULLYING

FFI(LOCAL)

Adopted on 2/20/2012

### BULLYING PROHIBITED

The District prohibits bullying as defined by this policy. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of District policy and is prohibited.

#### DEFINITION

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by the District and that:

1. Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; or
2. Is sufficiently severe, persistent, and pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.

This conduct is considered bullying if it:

3. Exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and
4. Interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school.

#### EXAMPLES

Bullying of a student may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, or ostracism.

#### 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.

#### 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, counselor, principal, or other District employee.

##### 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.

#### 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, gender, national origin, or disability. If so, the District shall proceed under policy FFH. If the allegations could constitute



both prohibited conduct and bullying, the investigation under FFH shall include a determination on each type of conduct.

#### 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.

#### 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 Code of Conduct 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 Code of Conduct.

##### 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 if any new incidents or any instances of retaliation have occurred, involving parents and students in efforts to identify problems and improve the school climate, increasing staff monitoring of areas where bullying has occurred, and reaffirming the District's policy against bullying.

##### 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 Code of Conduct 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).

#### 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 Web site, to the extent practicable, and shall be readily available at each campus and the District's administrative offices.

## **APPENDIX II: Parent Statement Prohibiting Corporal Punishment**

A parent has the responsibility of submitting a signed statement to the principal each year if he or she chooses to prohibit the use of corporal punishment with his or her child. A parent may reinstate permission to use corporal punishment at any time during the school year by submitting a signed statement to the principal. Corporal punishment will be administered in accordance with the law, district policy, and the Student Code of Conduct (SCOC). [See FO and the SCOC]

Corporal punishment will be administered as soon as possible after an offense and will not be administered in anger. The principal or a designee may choose not to use corporal punishment even if the parent has requested its use. Any use of corporal punishment will be documented on a district form. The principal or a designee will inform the parent when corporal punishment is used. Paddles used for administering corporal punishment will not be generally displayed and will be under the control of the principal or designee. Corporal punishment will be limited to spanking or paddling and will consist of an appropriate number of strikes based upon the size, age, and the physical, mental, and emotional condition of the student. Before corporal

punishment is used, the district may give the student a choice between other disciplinary measures and corporal punishment.

**Parent Statement Prohibiting Corporal Punishment:**

I have read the information on the use of corporal punishment in McMullen County I.S.D., and I prohibit the use of corporal punishment with my child.

This form must be submitted annually and can be revoked by the parent at any time.

Name of parent or guardian:

Signature of parent or guardian:

Date:

Name of student:

Campus:

Grade:

**APPENDIX III:**

**PARENT RELEASE FORM FOR VIDEOTAPING, PHOTOGRAPHING  
AND/OR INTERVIEWING STUDENTS FOR SCHOOL RELATED USE**

Students who attend school in the McMullen County Independent School District are occasionally asked to be a part of school and/or district publicity, publications and/or public relations activities. In order to guarantee student privacy and ensure your agreement for your student to participate, the district asks that you sign and return a "McMullen County ISD Authorization Form" to the school for **EACH** of your children.

The form indicates approval for the student's name, picture, artwork, voice, or verbal statement to appear in school publicity or district publications, videos, art displays, or on the district's website. For example, pictures and articles about school activities may appear in local newspapers or district publications. These pictures and articles may or may not personally

identify the student. The pictures, videos, and artwork may be used by the district in subsequent years.

McMullen County ISD agrees that the student's name, voice, verbal statements, portrait, or artwork shall only be used for public relations, public information, school or district promotion, publicity and instruction.

The student and parent/guardian understand and agree that:

- No monetary consideration shall be paid;
- Consent and release have been given without coercion or duress;
- The photo, video, artwork or student statements may be used in subsequent years.

Do Give	Do Not Give	Permission for my student
		To be published in the school Newsletter (Print & Online)
		To be published in the school Yearbook (Print)
		To be published on the school Website (Online) – Excluding Newsletter
		To be published in surrounding community newspapers as submitted by the school (Print or Online) – Academic Achievement/Honor Roll, Extracurricular Results, Community Involvement, Field Trips, etc.
		To have original artwork/classwork displayed in the school building, Newsletter, Website
		To be videotaped during school performances & recordings be viewable (Online, TV, On Campus, or Distributed DVD) – Plays, Graduation, Concerts, Athletic Events, etc.

I, parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ understand that my responses above will be the overriding factor with regards to said student being published by the school. Any changes to these responses must be made in writing.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX IV:

### MCMULLEN COUNTY ISD AGREEMENT FOR ACCEPTABLE USE OF ON CAMPUS COMPUTERS, IPADS, LAPTOPS AND THE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

#### STUDENT AGREEMENT:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

**I understand that my use of the district electronic communication system, on campus computers and laptops is not private and that McMullen County ISD will monitor my activity on this computer system.**

I have read the DISTRICT AGREEMENT FOR ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE ON CAMPUS COMPUTERS, LAPTOPS AND THE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM and agree to abide by its provisions. I understand that violation of these provisions may result in suspension or revocation of the use of this computer system. (This student agreement must be renewed each academic year).

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

**PARENT/GUARDIAN AGREEMENT**

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the DISTRICT AGREEMENT FOR ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE ON CAMPUS COMPUTERS, LAPTOPS AND THE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM and agree to abide by its provisions. In consideration for the privilege of my child's use of these systems and in consideration for having access to the public networks, I hereby release the District, its operators and any institutions with which they are affiliated from any all claims and damages of any nature arising from my child's use of, or inability to use, the system including, without limitations, the type of damage identified in the District's policy and administrative regulations.

\_\_\_\_\_ I give permission for my child to participate in the use of the District's on campus computers, laptops and the electronic communications system.

\_\_\_\_\_ I DO NOT give permission for my child to participate in the use of the District's on campus computers, laptops and the electronic communications system.

I certify that the information contained on this form is correct.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX V:  
iPAD Acceptance Agreement**

This appendix is comprised of the acceptable use agreements for the students' use of iPads at McMullen County I.S.D. Students in grades 9-12 will have the option of having an iPad issued to the student for the 2015-2016 school year. Students in high school will be allowed to take the iPads home and carry them from class to class. Student in grades 7 and 8 will check out an iPad from their first period class and carry the iPad throughout the day, taking the device from class to

class. Jr. High students will check in their iPad at the end of each day and will not be allowed to take the iPad home. Students in grades Pre-K through 6<sup>th</sup> grade will have use of an iPad in their classroom but will not check out an iPad. The agreement will be divided into three sections:

- High School iPad acceptance agreement,
- Jr. High School iPad acceptance agreement, and
- Elementary iPad acceptance agreement.

Each campus agreement has been arranged to notify parents of costs associated with the use of the iPads as well as appropriate safety precautions to protect the student and the equipment from harm. Costs associated with the student use of the iPads include a usage fee for high school and jr. high students as well as the cost of repairs for all students should a student either willfully or through neglect damage an iPad or the associated equipment.

## **Student/Parent Elementary iPad Acceptance Agreement**

By signing the attached forms, you acknowledge the selection of the following security and use agreement as detailed in the Student/Parent iPad Acceptance Agreement:

**FEES ASSESSED:** There are no fees assessed for iPads and iPad accessories for elementary students.

## **Student iPad Usage Rules**

1. The iPad, an educational tool, is the property of the McMullen County ISD. It may be confiscated and inspected at any time. The student should have NO expectation of privacy of any materials found on an iPad.
2. McMullen County ISD iPads are provided as an educational tool for school work. Students are encouraged to think of the school-issued iPad like they would any other school owned instructional device or material and take care accordingly.
3. The iPad comes equipped with both a front and rear-facing camera and video capacities. Student must request permission before recording an individual or group. Recording must be used appropriately in an educational manner. McMullen County ISD reserves all rights concerning any recording and/or publishing of any student or staff member's work or image. Students must obtain school permission to publish a photograph or video of any school related activity.
4. iPads must remain free of any writing, drawing, stickers, or labels that are not property of the McMullen County ISD. District affixed labels and tags shall not be removed from iPads.
5. Inappropriate images including but not limited to: guns, weapons, inappropriate language, threatening language, drug, alcohol, or gang related images are not permitted and subject to classroom/school consequences.
6. The adding or deleting of an iPad "app" is by staff permission only. Failure to comply may result in restricted access to the iPad and/or a reimaging cost to the student.
7. All students should recognize and guard their personal and private information. While on the Internet, students shall not reveal personal information, including a home address or phone number, or the address or phone numbers of other students.
8. Social Media Apps such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, etc. are not allowed.

# Student/Parent iPad Acceptance Agreement

After reading the McMullen County ISD Acceptable Use Policy, please complete this form to indicate that you agree with the terms and conditions as stated.

The signatures of both the student and parent/guardian are mandatory before access may be granted to McMullen County ISD Network Internet services. This document, which includes the McMullen County ISD Acceptable Use Policy, reflects the entire agreement and understanding of all parties.

## STUDENT

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_

## PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ DAYTIME TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Student Media Release Form is part of your *Student Information Packet*

As a user of the McMullen County ISD iPad network and Internet access services, I have read and hereby agree to comply with the McMullen County ISD Network Acceptable Use Policy and the Student Pledge for iPad Use.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

As parent/legal guardian of the student signing above, I grant permission for my child to access networked iPad services such as network file storage and Internet. I have read and agree to the McMullen County ISD Acceptable Use Policy, and the Student Pledge for iPad Use. I understand that I may be held responsible for violations by my child. I understand that some materials on the Internet may be objectionable; therefore I agree to accept responsibility for guiding my child and conveying to her/him appropriate standards for selecting, exploring, and/or sharing information and media.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**OR**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

**I DO NOT want** my student to receive an iPad for the school year.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# Student/Parent

## JH iPad Acceptance Agreement

By signing the attached forms, you acknowledge the selection of the following security and use agreement as detailed in the Student/Parent iPad Acceptance Agreement:

*McMullen County ISD will assess a \$30 non-refundable annual use fee per iPad.*

**FEES ASSESSED:** Pricing below is for replacement cost or **accidental** damages and what the student/parent responsibility will be for each event. Payment is due in full within a month of incident. All items will be inspected when iPads are checked in.

### iPad Accessories Replacement Pricing

Replacement Costs	
Griffin Survivor iPad Case	<b>\$35.00</b>
Griffin iPad Screen Replacement	<b>\$15.00</b>
Griffin iPad Stand	<b>\$10.00</b>
Griffin iPad Speaker or Camera Covers	<b>\$2.00</b>

### iPad Repair Pricing

	Cost Repair to Student
Any Breakage	The actual cost of repair/replacement
Lost iPad	The full replacement cost of \$499

**Terms of Agreement:** Students will receive their iPad during the third week of school and will attend training sessions as scheduled. Student's right to the use and possession of the iPad terminates

prior to the last calendar day of the school year, unless terminated earlier by the District. iPads and accessories will also be returned to the school if/when students transfer to another district, are expelled, or terminate enrollment.

## Student iPad Usage Rules

1. The iPad, an educational tool, is the property of the McMullen County ISD. It may be confiscated and inspected at any time. The student should have NO expectation of privacy of any materials found on an iPad.
2. McMullen County ISD iPads are provided as an educational tool for school work. While iPads may be used for personal purposes, it is first and foremost for use with school-related activities and assignments. Students are encouraged to think of the school-issued iPad like they would any other school owned instructional device or material and take care accordingly.
3. Failure to bring an iPad or any other class material(s) does not release the student from their responsibility for class work. If a student repeatedly fails to bring materials to class, including an iPad, the student will be subject to classroom/school consequences.
4. Students need a fully charged iPad every day. Junior high students should plug their iPad into the charging cart daily for overnight charging.
5. McMullen County ISD makes no guarantee, written or implied, that materials on the iPad, including student work, will be safe from deletion or corruption, accidental or otherwise. It is good practice to back up, duplicate, e-mail, or archive files to an independent storage space.
6. The iPad comes equipped with both a front and rear-facing camera and video capacities. Student must request permission before recording an individual or group. Recording must be used appropriately in an educational manner. McMullen County ISD reserves all rights concerning any recording and/or publishing of any student or staff member's work or image. Students must obtain school permission to publish a photograph or video of any school related activity.
7. iPads must remain free of any writing, drawing, stickers, or labels that are not property of the McMullen County ISD. District affixed labels and tags shall not be removed from iPads.
8. Inappropriate or provocative images including but not limited to: pornographic images, guns, weapons, inappropriate language, threatening language, drug, alcohol, or gang related images are not permitted and subject to classroom/school consequences.
9. The deleting of an iPad "app" provided/paid for by the school is not allowable. Failure to comply may result in restricted access to the iPad and/or a reimage cost to the student.
10. Students may not overwrite school provided apps and electronic books with personal iTunes account music, videos, books, games, or podcasts. Games, music, videos, and sound use will be at the discretion of the classroom teacher and school administrators.

11. All students should recognize and guard their personal and private information. While on the Internet, students shall not reveal personal information, including a home address or phone number, or the address or phone numbers of other students.

12. Social Media Apps such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, iFunny, etc. are not allowed.

13. Setting up VPNs (Virtual Private Networks) on the iPad are not allowed.

# Parent iPad Guide to Student Use

McMullen County ISD recognizes that with new technologies come new challenges to both teachers and parents. Below is a series of suggestions drawn from a wide variety of professional sources that may aid you, the parent, in effectively guiding your child's use of the iPad.

1. **Take extra steps to protect your child.** Use the Internet with your child to help develop safe browsing habits. Children often model adult behavior.
2. **Go where your child goes online.** Monitor the places that your child visits. Let your child know that you're there, and help teach her/him how to act as s/he works and socializes online.
3. **Review your child's friends list.** You may want to limit your child's online "friends" to people your child actually knows and is working with in real life.
4. **Understand sites' privacy policies.** Internet sites should spell out your rights to review and delete your child's information.
5. **Report unwelcome or malicious online threats.** Report in a timely fashion to the school any online interactions that can be considered threatening.
6. **Help your child develop a routine.** Many parents have found success by helping create a routine for their child's computer use. Define a routine as to how technology use is appropriate.
7. **Read and share with your child the MCISD care and use policies.** By reading and discussing the care and use policies, you can create a clear set of expectations and limitations for your child.
8. **Please explain to your child that his/her iPad may be selected at random for inspection.** Your child should have NO expectation of privacy of any materials found on an iPad.

# Student/Parent iPad Acceptance Agreement

After reading the McMullen County ISD Acceptable Use Policy, please complete this form to indicate that you agree with the terms and conditions as stated.

The signatures of both the student and parent/guardian are mandatory before access may be granted to McMullen County ISD Network Internet services. This document, which includes the McMullen County ISD Acceptable Use Policy, reflects the entire agreement and understanding of all parties.

## STUDENT

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_

## PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ DAYTIME TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## Student Media Release Form is part of your *Student Information Packet*

As a user of the McMullen County ISD iPad network and Internet access services, I have read and hereby agree to comply with the McMullen County ISD Network Acceptable Use Policy and the Student Pledge for iPad Use.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

As parent/legal guardian of the student signing above, I grant permission for my child to access networked iPad services such as network file storage and Internet. I have read and agree to the McMullen County ISD Acceptable Use Policy, and the Student Pledge for iPad Use. I understand that I may be held responsible for violations by my child. I understand that some materials on the Internet may be objectionable; therefore I agree to accept responsibility for guiding my child and conveying to her/him appropriate standards for selecting, exploring, and/or sharing information and media.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**OR**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

**I DO NOT want** to pay the \$30 usage fee and **I DO NOT want** my student to receive an iPad for the school year.

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

## Student/Parent HS iPad Acceptance Agreement

By signing the attached forms, you acknowledge the selection of the following security and use agreement as detailed in the Student/Parent iPad Acceptance Agreement:

***McMullen County ISD will assess a \$40 non-refundable annual use fee per 32GB iPad.***

- The usage fee now covers an insurance policy that covers theft and accidental damage. There is no deductible that has to be paid if an incident occurs. If an iPad is stolen, the student must file a police report for an insurance claim to be processed, and return that paperwork to the school immediately.
- Insurance does not cover lost iPads. If a student loses their iPad, they are responsible for the full cost of \$599.

**FEES ASSESSED:** Pricing below is for replacement cost or **accidental** damages and what the student/parent responsibility will be for each event. Payment is due in full within a month of incident. All items will be inspected when iPads are checked in.

### iPad Accessories Replacement Pricing

Replacement Costs	
<b>Power Adapter (\$20 for Brick and/or \$20 Cord)</b>	<b>\$40.00</b>
<b>Griffin Survivor iPad Case</b>	<b>\$35.00</b>
<b>Griffin iPad Screen Replacement</b>	<b>\$15.00</b>
<b>Griffin iPad Stand</b>	<b>\$10.00</b>
<b>Griffin iPad Speaker or Camera Covers</b>	<b>\$2.00</b>

**Terms of Agreement:** Students will receive their iPad during the third week of school and will attend training sessions as scheduled. Students will be required to open an e-mail account, and this will be accomplished during the training. Students will also be required to open an iTunes account. iTunes accounts can be set up without a credit card, limiting downloads to free apps or downloads funded by gift cards. If your child does not already have an iTunes account, one will be set up during the training. The school may give students codes to download apps that teachers will expect them to have and to use. Please be aware that once downloaded, the apps will belong to the student and will be associated with their iTunes account.

Students will be allowed to take their iPad home during school holidays.

The student's right to the use and possession of the iPad terminates two weeks prior to the last calendar day of the school year, unless terminated earlier by the District. iPads and accessories will also be returned to the school

if/when students transfer to another district, are expelled, or terminate enrollment.

McMullen County ISD will provide each student with an iPad and a charging cable. The charger should be kept at home, and students are expected to bring their iPad to school fully charged each day. If the school issued charger is lost, the student must purchase a replacement.

In class, teachers will be monitoring and managing students' use of the iPad. At home, families will need to arrive at workable solutions to do the same.



# Student iPad Usage Rules

1. The iPad, an educational tool, is the property of the McMullen County ISD. It may be confiscated and inspected at any time. The student should have NO expectation of privacy of any materials found on an iPad.
2. McMullen County ISD iPads are provided as an educational tool for school work. While iPads may be used for personal purposes, it is first and foremost for use with school-related activities and assignments. Students are encouraged to think of the school-issued iPad like they would any other school owned instructional device or material and take care accordingly.
3. McMullen County ISD encourages students to take their iPad home daily for class work and to recharge the battery. All iPad rules and regulations apply at all times, both during the school day and at home.
4. Students must bring a fully charged iPad to school every day. Failure to bring an iPad or any other class material(s) does not release the student from their responsibility for class work. If a student repeatedly fails to bring materials to class, including an iPad, the student will be subject to classroom/school consequences.
5. McMullen County ISD makes no guarantee, written or implied, that materials on the iPad, including student work, will be safe from deletion or corruption, accidental or otherwise. It is good practice to back up, duplicate, e-mail, or archive files to an independent storage space.
6. The iPad comes equipped with both a front and rear-facing camera and video capacities. Student must request permission before recording an individual or group. Recording must be used appropriately in an educational manner. McMullen County ISD reserves all rights concerning any recording and/or publishing of any student or staff member's work or image. Students must obtain school permission to publish a photograph or video of any school related activity.
7. iPads must remain free of any writing, drawing, stickers, or labels that are not property of the McMullen County ISD. District affixed labels and tags shall not be removed from iPads.
8. Inappropriate or provocative images including but not limited to: pornographic images, guns, weapons, inappropriate language, threatening language, drug, alcohol, or gang related images are not permitted and subject to classroom/school consequences.
9. The deleting of an iPad "app" provided/paid for by the school is not allowable. Failure to comply may result in restricted access to the iPad and/or a reimage cost to the student.
10. Students may not overwrite school provided apps and electronic books with personal iTunes account music, videos, books, games, or podcasts. Games, music, videos, and sound use will be at the discretion of the classroom teacher and school administrators.

11. All students should recognize and guard their personal and private information. While on the Internet, students shall not reveal personal information, including a home address or phone number, or the address or phone numbers of other students.

12. Social Media Apps such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, iFunny, etc. are not allowed.

13. Setting up VPNs (Virtual Private Networks) on the iPad are not allowed.

# Parent iPad Guide to Student Use

McMullen County ISD recognizes that with new technologies come new challenges to both teachers and parents. Below is a series of suggestions drawn from a wide variety of professional sources that may aid you, the parent, in effectively guiding your child's use of the iPad.

1. **Take extra steps to protect your child.** Encourage your child to use and store the iPad in an open area of your home, such as the kitchen or family room, so you can monitor what your child is doing online. Use the Internet with your child to help develop safe browsing habits. Children often model adult behavior.
2. **Go where your child goes online.** Monitor the places that your child visits. Let your child know that you're there, and help teach her/him how to act as s/he works and socializes online.
3. **Review your child's friends list.** You may want to limit your child's online "friends" to people your child actually knows and is working with in real life.
4. **Understand sites' privacy policies.** Internet sites should spell out your rights to review and delete your child's information.
5. **Limit the time your student is on the iPad.** While the iPad is a very engaging device, it is a school work device. Care and constant monitoring will reduce your child's exposure to excessive use.
6. **Report unwelcome or malicious online threats.** Report in a timely fashion to the school any online interactions that can be considered threatening.
7. **Help your child develop a routine.** Many parents have found success by helping create a routine for their child's computer use. Define a routine as to how the iPad is cared for and when and where its use is appropriate.
8. **Take a look at the apps or programs.** It is to the advantage of the students, parents, and school that the parents have a working understanding of the programs and student work found on the iPad.
9. **Read and share with your child the MCISD care and use policies.** By reading and discussing the care and use policies, you can create a clear set of expectations and limitations for your child.
10. **Please explain to your child that his/her iPad may be selected at random for inspection.** Your child should have NO expectation of privacy of any materials found on an iPad.
11. **Remind your child to bring his/her iPad to school daily.** If your child leaves his/her iPad at home, he/she is responsible for getting the course work completed as if he/she had an iPad present.

# Student/Parent iPad Acceptance Agreement

After reading the McMullen County ISD Acceptable Use Policy, please complete this form to indicate that you agree with the terms and conditions as stated.

The signatures of both the student and parent/guardian are mandatory before access may be granted to McMullen County ISD Network Internet services. This document, which includes the McMullen County ISD Acceptable Use Policy, reflects the entire agreement and understanding of all parties.

## STUDENT

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_

## PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ DAYTIME TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## Student Media Release Form is part of your *Student Information Packet*

As a user of the McMullen County ISD iPad network and Internet access services, I have read and hereby agree to comply with the McMullen County ISD Network Acceptable Use Policy and the Student Pledge for iPad Use.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

As parent/legal guardian of the student signing above, I grant permission for my child to access networked iPad services such as network file storage and Internet. I have read and agree to the McMullen County ISD Acceptable Use Policy, and the Student Pledge for iPad Use. I understand that I may be held responsible for violations by my child. I understand that some materials on the Internet may be objectionable; therefore I agree to accept responsibility for guiding my child and conveying to her/him appropriate standards for selecting, exploring, and/or sharing information and media.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**OR**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

**I DO NOT want** to pay the \$40 usage fee and **I DO NOT want** my student to receive an iPad for the school year.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**APPENDIX VI:  
Acknowledgment Form—Amendment**

My child and I have received a copy of the McMullen County ISD Student Handbook Amendment # \_\_\_\_\_ dated \_\_\_\_\_.

Print name of student:

Signature of student:

Signature of parent:

Date:

## Glossary

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

**ACT-Aspire** refers to an assessment that took the place of ACT-Plan and is designed as a preparatory and readiness assessment for the ACT. This is usually taken by students in grade 10.

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

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

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

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

**ESSA** is the Every Student Succeeds Act passed by the federal government in December 2015.

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

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

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

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

**PGP** stands for Personal Graduation Plan, which is required for high school students beginning with ninth graders in the 2014–15 school year, 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.

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

**SHAC** stands for School Health Advisory Council, a group of at least five members, a majority of whom must be parents, appointed by the school board to assist the district in ensuring that local community values and health issues are reflected in the district's health education instruction, along with providing assistance 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, effective beginning with certain students for the 2011–2012 school year.

**STAAR A** is an accommodated version of the STAAR that is available for certain students who receive special education services or students who have been identified as dyslexic.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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