

Cushing Elementary  
**Student Handbook**  
*2019-2020*



**Cushing ISD**  
PO Box 337  
Cushing, Texas 75760  
[www.cushingisd.org](http://www.cushingisd.org) 936-326-4890

# CUSHING ISD

## School Board

*The CISD School Board meets every third Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m.*

Lynda Langham – President  
Lynn Moore – Vice President  
Bobby Brashears – Secretary  
Mike Evans - Member  
Dwayne Goldsberry – Member  
Mark Jackson – Member  
Jared LoStracco - Member

Superintendent	Michael Davis	936-326-4890 ext. 223
Elementary Principal	Stefani Jackson	936-326-4890 ext. 244
Elementary Secretary	Starla Ivy	936-326-4890 ext. 229
School Nurse	Charity Alvy	936-326-4890 ext. 243
Counselor	Gina Gresham	936-326-4890 ext. 224
Elementary Office FAX	936-326-4265	
Website	<a href="http://www.cushingisd.org">www.cushingisd.org</a>	

## Mission of Public Education in Cushing Independent School District

All students need to develop essential skills and acquire a knowledge base on which to build lifelong learning. All students will be taught a core curriculum of English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, fine arts, health, physical education, and technology literacy. All students will acquire knowledge of citizenship and economic responsibilities and an appreciation of our common American heritage including its multicultural richness. To the full extent of their abilities, students will be provided the opportunities to develop the ability to think logically, independently, and creatively and to communicate effectively.

Educating our children to be productive in a changing future necessitates an excellent educational system. A system that can accomplish this mission must be characterized by quality, fairness and accountability.

# Cushing Elementary

## School Motto

Preparing for Success- Every Student, Every Day

## School Song

Dear old Cushing High School  
That is her name.  
Never, oh, never  
Will she lose her fame.  
We love her,  
She'll go on forever,  
On to victory.  
For we are bound together  
Through eternity

## School Colors

Purple and White

## Mascot

B.K. the Bearkat

**Acknowledgment Form**  
**Paper Student Handbook/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.cushingisd.org](http://www.cushingisd.org) the Cushing Elementary Student Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct for 2019-2020

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 936-326-4890 or [sjackson@cushingisd.org](mailto:sjackson@cushingisd.org).

Printed name of student: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

## BASIC BUS RIDER RULES

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Transportation is a privilege. Transportation is not a right. Students are required to obey appropriate safety and conduct rules to remain eligible for transportation services.

1. Students will only be picked up and/or dropped off at their designated bus stop at or near their residence, grandparent residence within the school zone and licensed child care facility.
2. Bus route arrival and drop off times are contingent on the number of students riding the bus on any given day. Please plan to be at bus stops early. The driver cannot wait for students who are late.
3. Students are to sit in the seat assigned by the bus driver.
4. The Transportation Department follows District guidelines regarding use of cell phones and pagers. Use of these devices is not permitted on CISD buses. **See District Cell Phone Policy**
5. Once on the bus, remain seated facing forward. No standing while the bus is in motion.
6. Talk quietly with students close to you. Yelling across the bus will be a distraction to the driver.
7. Keep all body parts inside the bus. Do not lean out of or stick your head or arms out of the windows.
8. Keep your hands to yourself. No horseplay will be tolerated.
9. Do not throw anything!
10. Food, drinks and gum are not allowed on the bus! (water only)
11. ALWAYS OBEY THE DRIVER!
12. Misconduct Consequences: May included but not limited to the following:
  - a. **Minor (Persistent) Misconduct:**
    - i. 1<sup>st</sup> offense-One verbal warning from bus driver with documentation sent home for parent signature.
    - ii. 2<sup>nd</sup> offense-Written discipline notice to campus principal with 1-5 day(s) bus suspension.
    - iii. 3<sup>rd</sup> offense-Written discipline notice to campus principal with 10+ days bus suspension.
    - iv. 4<sup>th</sup> offense- Written discipline notice to campus principal with suspension of bus privileges for the remainder of the school year.
    - v. Principal shall have the final authority in disciplinary measures as well as the length of time.
  - b. **Serious Misconduct:**
    - i. 1<sup>st</sup> offense-Written discipline notice to campus principal with 5-10 day(s) bus suspension.
    - ii. 2<sup>nd</sup> offense-Written discipline notice to campus principal with suspension of bus privileges for the remainder of the school year.
    - iii. Principal shall have the final authority in disciplinary measures as well as the length of time.

**Parents of students in PK-3<sup>rd</sup>** grade need to be present at the stop in the afternoons. If no parent/guardian is present to receive the student, the student will be returned to the school. The parent/guardian will be contacted and will be required to pick up his/her child at a designated area on campus. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the matter could be referred to law enforcement.

- a. 1st offense- Of parent/guardian not present for PM drop off-Verbal warning from bus driver with documentation sent home for parent signature and copy sent to campus principal.
- b. 2<sup>nd</sup> offense- Of parent/guardian not present for PM drop off-All transportation will be discontinued for a period up to five (5) days. Should additional incidents occur, bus privileges, up to and including the remainder of the year may be lost.
- c. Note: Drop off times are contingent on the number of students riding the bus on any given day. On special days only a handful of students may ride the bus therefore bus arrival times in the afternoon can be at least 15 minutes early. Please plan accordingly.

**I have read and understand the BASIC BUS RIDER RULES.**

Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_

## Late Pick-Up Policy

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Student safety is the highest priority of Cushing elementary. Therefore, we make every effort to ensure all students are under appropriate supervision until they return to you at the end of their school day. For that reason, we are concerned about students who are left after dismissal time or who are brought back to school because no one is there to meet the bus. Any child that is not picked up in a timely manner can feel confused and apprehensive. Staff members are as supportive as possible, but it is a situation we all want to avoid. Children must be picked according to school release hours. The clock in the office is the official time. Parents who know that they will be late because of an emergency will need to call the school. Notification does not excuse the late pick-up.

### Late Pick-Up Policy

The following policy will be in effect when you are late to pick up your child at school closing time, if bus must return to school with child, detention, tutorials, and/or returning from a school function:

1. Any student not picked up in a timely manner will have a written warning issued.
2. Consistent failure to follow pick-up policy may result in the student being placed in Out of School Suspension (OSS) for a period of three (3) days. (Please see attendance policy in student handbook as related to truancy issues.)
3. Late pick-ups are accumulated for the school year and are not "reset" at semester. ☒ Principal and/or School Resource Officer shall have the final authority in late pick-up.

### **When a child is left or returned to school beyond the school day we will do the following:**

1. Attempt to contact the parent/guardian by phone
2. Attempt to contact the person(s) listed as emergency contact
3. If the child has not been picked up and/or staff is unable to contact anyone, Child Protective Services and/or the Sheriff's Department will be contacted to pick up abandoned child.

I have read and understand the Late Pick-Up Policy.

Parents Name (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## Cushing Independent School District

### 2019-2020 Title I Parent-Student-Teacher-School Compact

Learning can take place only when there is a combination of effort, interest, and motivation. Because we are committed to your child's progress in school, we are going to do our best to promote his or her achievement. Compacts make sure that everyone owns the responsibility of helping children achieve high academic standards. This compact is a promise to work together. We believe that this compact can be fulfilled by a team effort. Together we can improve teaching and learning.

#### As a Parent/Guardian, I will:

- Encourage my child to be independently responsible;
- Encourage, listen or read to my child every night;
- Communicate regularly with my child's teacher;
- Provide a home environment that encourages my child to learn;
- Recognize that I am my child's first teacher;
- Review my child's progress report;
- Strive to develop the skills needed to help my child;
- If possible, volunteer in my child's school;
- Seek educational opportunities for my child;
- Show respect for teachers and school staff members;

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

#### As a Student, I will:

- Be an active participant in school and community services;
- Obey school and bus rules;
- Show respect for teacher(s) and peers;
- Be respectful, responsible, and ready to learn each day;
- Come to school prepared with homework and supplies;
- Do my best in my work and in my behavior;
- Read aloud or silently every day;
- Assume responsibility for my actions;
- Report bullying;

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

#### As a Teacher, I will:

- Believe that each student can learn;
- Show respect for each child and his or her family;
- Help each child grow to his or her fullest potential;
- Provide a safe and productive learning environment;
- Provide a flexible scheduling of parent-teacher conferences and review the parent-student-school compact as necessary;
- Come to class prepared to teach and learn;
- Model professional behavior and a positive attitude;
- Ensure fairness and equity in adherence to school, district, and classroom rules;



- Send frequent reports to parents and maintain open lines of communication with students and parents;
- Provide meaningful and appropriate homework;
- Recognize and celebrate the cultural diversity of the students;
- Consult and coordinate with other teachers about the specific needs of each child;

**Teacher's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**As a school, we will:**

- Provide high quality instruction and research-based curriculum in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables all students to meet the State's academic achievement standards;
- Allow parents/guardians reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and opportunities to observe classroom activities;
- Provide parents with appropriate academic resources.

**Principal's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**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 Cushing ISD to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the district in writing September 4, 2019.

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 for more information.]

**For the following school-sponsored purposes: Cushing ISD has designated the following information as directory information:**

Student's name	Grade level
Address	Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
Telephone listing	Weight and height, if a member of an athletic team
Photograph	Enrollment status
Degrees, honors, and awards received	

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 \_\_\_\_\_ (student's name), (do give) (do not give) the district permission to use the information in the above list for the specified school-sponsored purposes.

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*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.*

**For all other purposes, Cushing ISD has designated the following information as directory information:**

- Student's name
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height, if a member of an athletic team
- Enrollment status

**Parent: Please circle one of the choices below:**

I, parent of \_\_\_\_\_ (student's name), (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.

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*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.*

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# GENERAL INFORMATION

## To Students and Parents:

Welcome to school year 2019-2020! 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.

## Early Mornings

The elementary school campus will open at 7:30 a.m. Faculty and staff members are not on campus to supervise students prior to 7:30 a.m. Car Riders will be dropped off at the front entrance. Parents should not block the drive with their vehicles. Bus Riders will be dropped off at the rear entrance of the gymnasium. Car Rider and Bus Rider students will go directly to the cafeteria for breakfast which begins promptly at 7:30 a.m. for all students PK-5<sup>th</sup> grade. They are not to go to their classrooms first. Student must have finished breakfast and be in classroom before 8 a.m. in order to be considered on time.

## School Hours

The school day will begin at 7:40 a.m. and end at 3:10 p.m. Car Riders will be released at 3:00 p.m. Bus Riders will be released at 3:05. Our teachers are teaching from the beginning of school until the very end of the school day. Parents, who bring students late and/or pick them up before the end of the day, disrupt not only their own child's education, but the education of others. Students who arrive late or leave early will be subject to attendance policy guidelines and consequences. Students absent during these attendance times are subject to grade-level failure if they do not meet state mandatory attendance policies.

## Building Entrance

Parents must check in at the office and should only enter the school by the doors at the front of the building. All other doors will be locked at all times.

## Transportation Changes

If it is necessary to change afternoon transportation for your child, **the parent or guardian shall notify the school before 12:00 p.m. (Noon)** After 12:00 p.m., changes cannot be made except for emergency. This will be strictly enforced.

## Classroom Disruptions

Classroom disruptions, no matter how brief, are disruptions therefore, scheduling conferences with your child's teacher imperative. Do not expect your child's teacher to be able to conference with you without an appointment. Do not go into halls or classrooms without permission from the administration at any time during the school day.

## Toys

Fidget Spinners WILL NOT BE ALLOWED at Cushing Elementary. All toys that are brought to school without a teacher's approval will be taken from the student and the parent must pick the item up from the teacher or office.

## Visitors

All visitors must check in with the office upon arriving at the elementary school. Visitors are not allowed to enter classrooms, playground area, or loiter in the hallways while visiting campus. All visitors must have a pass at all times and will have to show a valid Driver's License to get a pass, unless escorted by an

administrator or for special occasion such as class party. Persons who are not campus employees and who do not have a visitor's pass must, by law, be treated as security threats.

### **Elementary Lunch Procedures( New 2019-2020)**

Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, Fridays will be designated as "Family Day" during lunch periods. Cushing Elementary will provide an opportunity for any parent or relative that would like to join their child during lunch each Friday or the last day of the school week in a safe and friendly environment. All other week days, Cushing Elementary will be a closed campus during lunch periods. Procedures will not change for signing out, visitor's passes, etc. Thank you in advance for helping keep our school children healthy, happy and most of all safe.

### **Transportation after school(New 2019-2020)**

Transportation to the JH/HS will be provided for children of CISD employees only. All other students will need to have arrangements made to be picked up in the car rider line or ride the bus to their residence. Safety First!!!

### **Drop-Off**

Car Riders will be dropped off at the (main office) entrance. Parents should not exit their cars, but wait until their child is directed to them. It is not necessary for parents to escort their child into the building or to escort them from the building. For safety reasons, parents will not be allowed to wait in the building until school is dismissed. Additionally, standing and waiting outside for children to be dismissed creates a risk for your child and all children. Please wait in your car for your child to be delivered to you. Drive slowly, do not block traffic, and proceed with caution to assure student safety. Students should be at the cafeteria by 7:40 a.m. and will be dismissed at 3:00 p.m.

The Cushing Elementary 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 Cushing ISD Student Code of Conduct, which is a document adopted by the board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document may be found on the district's website at [www.cushingisd.org](http://www.cushingisd.org) 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 a teacher, the school counselor, or the principal.

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

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

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

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 superintendent's office, and an unofficial electronic copy is available at [www.cushingisd.org](http://www.cushingisd.org).

## **SECTION I: PARENTAL RIGHTS**

This section of the Cushing Elementary 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 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.*

### **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.



## **Guidelines for administering corporal punishment**

Corporal punishment is limited to spanking or paddling the student and will be administered only in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. The student will be told of the reason corporal punishment is being administered.
2. Corporal punishment may be administered only by the principal.
3. The instrument to be used in administering corporal punishment shall be approved by the superintendent.
4. When corporal punishment is administered, it shall be done in the presence of one other district professional employee or adult staff member and shall take place in designated place out of view of other students.

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, and physical, mental, and emotional condition of the student; 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 administered, the name of the person administering the punishment, the names of witnesses present, and the date and time of punishment. Disciplinary records shall be made available to parents or the student, whichever is appropriate. Parents must send written and signed documentation, if they choose not to allow their child to receive corporal punishment.

Coaches and physical education teachers may use reasonable physical exercises or activities as a disciplinary measure in their classes and activities, and these exercises or activities are not considered to be “corporal punishment.” No other employees may use exposure to the physical elements, e.g., standing outside in heat or cold, or physical exertion, e.g., running, sit-ups, etc., as a disciplinary measure.

## **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 shall 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.

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 year. [See the "Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information" included in the forms packet.]

As allowed by state law, the district has identified two directory information lists—one for school-sponsored purposes and the second for all other requests. For all district publications and announcements, the district has designated the following as directory information: include only those items listed as directory information for school-sponsored purposes in your FL(LOCAL). If you do not object to the use of your child's information for these limited school-sponsored purposes, the school will not need to ask your permission each time the district wishes to use the information for the school-sponsored purposes listed above.

For all other purposes, the district has identified the following as directory information: [list the directory information identified for all other purposes in your FL(LOCAL)]. If you do not object to the use of your child's information for these purposes, the school must release this information when the school receives a request from an outside entity or individual.

Also review the information at Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records.

## **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**

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

You may request that your child be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence. State law requires students in social studies classes in grades 3–12 to recite a portion of the text of the Declaration of Independence during Celebrate Freedom Week unless (1) you provide a written statement requesting that your child be excused, (2) the district determines that your child has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or (3) you are a representative of a foreign government to whom the United States government extends diplomatic immunity. [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 United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be in writing. State law does not allow your child to be excused from participation in the required minute of silence or silent activity that follows. [See Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence 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 needs 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
- 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 the student's education records. For purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is 18 or older or who is attending an institution of postsecondary education. These rights, as discussed in this section as well as at Objecting to the Release of Directory Information, 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 becomes 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* 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 principal OR superintendent is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The principal OR 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 1088 W. Bearkat Drive, Cushing, TX 75760. The address of the principal's office is: 1165 W. Bearkat Drive, Cushing, TX 75760.

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 school board 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, and Complaints and Concerns 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.cushingisd.org](http://www.cushingisd.org). 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 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. 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 superintendent OR principal for information.
- Consult with district administrators if your child has been determined by the district to have engaged in bullying and the board decides to transfer your child to another classroom or campus. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. [See Bullying, 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 another district campus OR 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 does only passes one semester of a two-semester course.

## **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.

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.

### **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 Stefani Jackson at 936-326-4890 x229

### **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 Dee Cruz at 936-326-4890 x229. [Also see policy FB.]

## **SECTION II: OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS & 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 Martha Lee at 936-326-4890.

### **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**

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

State law requires that a student between the ages of six 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.

##### ***Pre-kindergarten 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***

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 United States 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. 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, ○ Mental health or therapy appointments; or
- Court-ordered family visitations or any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the student's participation in the activity outside of school hours.
- As listed in Section I at 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.

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

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.

### **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 **six-month period** the school will send a notices to student's parent, as required by law, to remind 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 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 Shane Johnson. If you have any 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 sixmonth period in the same school year.

If a student incurs unexcused absences on ten or more days or parts of days within a sixmonth period in the same school year, the district, in most circumstances, will refer the student's parent to truancy court. [See policy FEA(LEGAL)]

### **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade (K-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.]

In determining whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences, the attendance committee will use the following guidelines:

- All absences, whether excused or unexcused, must be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days. If makeup work is completed, absences for 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 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**

The district must submit attendance of its students to the TEA reflecting attendance at a specific time each day. **Local tardy and attendance is taken at 8 a.m. 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**

When a student is absent from school, the student—upon arrival or return to school—must bring a note signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence. A note signed by the student, even with the parent's permission, will not be accepted unless the student is 18 or older or is an emancipated minor under state law. 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**

Within 1 day of returning to school, a student absent for more than three (3) consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the 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).]

### **Regular Attendance**

There is no Saturday School for truancy issues for violation of Compulsory Attendance laws. Violations of compulsory attendance laws may be referred to Truancy Court for prosecution.

### **Accelerated Instruction/Before or After-School Tutorials**

Cushing ISD has made an ongoing commitment to improve student achievement by holding after school tutorials/accelerated instruction for students having academic difficulties. After school tutorials/accelerated instruction will be held on Tuesday and Thursday of each week beginning at 3:00 and ending at 4:30 at which time buses will run.

Students who have failed a previous grade and/or STAAR test will be required to attend before or after school tutorials/accelerated instruction and/or summer instruction.

Accelerated instruction is required under state law related to SSI grade advancement (TEC 28.0211). Therefore, it is subject to state compulsory attendance law as specified by TEC 25.085(d)(3), which refers to “an accelerated instruction program to which the student is assigned under Section 28.0211.”

### **Accelerated Reader Program Guidelines**

Reading is a fundamental skill that all children must master in order to succeed, not only in school, but in the rapidly changing world. STAR Reading and Accelerated Reader software are two tools used by the District in grades 1-8 to help students improve their reading skills. Students’ reading abilities are assessed and reading levels and point goals are set based on individualized results. As student reading skills improve, the software adjusts so that students are always challenged with achievable goals each six weeks. The purpose of AR is to encourage reading practice by using positive outcomes – students are rewarded for their efforts each six weeks. In order to keep the program consistent throughout all grade levels, the district has set some basic rules: ☐ The AR program will be supervised and maintained by each campus’ library staff.

- A student’s baseline reading goal will be set using the STAR Reading Assessment. If a student consistently fails to meet or easily exceeds the 85% goal, a student’s goal may be

raised or lowered incrementally at the discretion of the reading teacher, taking into account the student's IEP, 504, or intervention goals. No across the board goals. Goals are set for the individual student.

- STAR testing will be used multiple times throughout the year to help adjust student reading goals. Student goals should always be individualized; the same point goal should not be applied to all students. This will ensure that goals are reasonable, achievable and reflect an accurate measure of student reading improvement.
- All reading classes in grades 2-8 will participate. Grade 1 will participate in the program, but students will not have individual goals.
- Tests must be taken at school, between 7:30 am and 3:30 pm.
- Students must test on their home campuses.
- Students taking AR tests must be supervised by a non-related, adult staff member.
- Students must read and answer test questions independently without adult or peer intervention unless specified by the Reading teacher, IEP or 504.
- Books must remain closed during AR testing.
- Students may test on books from home or public libraries if AR tests are available. They must have the book with them in order to test.
- Students may not test on movies unless they have also read the book.
- AR scores are not to be used as the six weeks reading grade, but can be used as one of the 12 required grades (i.e. average score of all AR test taken in that six weeks). At the elementary level, using Accelerated Reader practice quizzes for a grade requires principal approval (i.e. novel read by entire class).
- Students meeting their six weeks goals will be rewarded as determined by library staff and approved by the campus principal. Semester awards, if any, will be at the discretion of the campus library staff and principal.
- Students with discipline issues may be excluded from participation in AR field trips as determined by the campus principal.
- Students should never take a quiz for someone else, copy answers, or give another student the answers to a test.
- At the elementary level, AR Reading Logs are to be kept current. Recording inaccurate grades in order to gain reward or recognition will be perceived as cheating.

#### **Consequences:**

- The first incident of not following the AR Testing Guidelines will result in the student losing all AR points accumulated up to that point.
- The second incident of not following the AR Testing Guidelines will result in the student being unable to participate in the AR program for the remainder of that school year, including all rewards, parties, etc.



## Accountability Under State and Federal Law

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

- The Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) for the district, compiled by TEA, the state agency that oversees public education, based on academic factors and ratings;
- A School Report Card (SRC) for each campus in the district compiled by TEA based on academic factors and ratings;
- The district's financial management report, which will include the financial accountability rating assigned to the district by TEA;
- The performance ratings of the district's evaluation of community and student engagement using the indicators required by law; and
- Information compiled by TEA for the submission of a federal report card that is required by federal law.

Information about all of these can be found on the district's website at [www.cushingisd.org](http://www.cushingisd.org). 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>.

## After-School Detention (ASD)

Teachers may assign students to after school detention for chronic misbehavior, not completing work in class, and failing to return completed homework on time. After-school detention will be held after school from 3:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. Parents will be given at least one day's notice before detention is served. Transportation is the responsibility of the parent and students will have to be picked up promptly at 4:00 p.m. If your child misses detention due to illness, school closing, etc., detention will be served the next scheduled detention day. If your child chooses not to attend after school detention (without a valid doctor's note), he/she will receive an extra after school detention day(s), Saturday school, and/or a full day of In-School Suspension (ISS) 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the principals discretion.

We know that you want your child to have a successful school experience. Please help your child by seeing that he/she is here on time each morning and is not picked up early. Check your child's folders each day for notes about behavior and for homework assignments. If you feel there is a vital issue preventing your child from coming to school or from completing homework, please let us know so that we may better assist you. You can call us at 936-326-4890 ext. 229 for more information or any concerns.

## Awards and Honors

Students in grades three and above may be eligible for honor roll based on the following guidelines:

- Bearkat Honor Roll: The student must have a grade of 90 or higher in the core subjects of English, spelling (if listed separately), reading, mathematics, science, and social studies.
- A/B Honor Roll: The student must have a grade of 80 or higher in all subjects and no more than 3 grades in the 80's among the core courses of reading, English, spelling (if listed

separately), math, science, and social studies.

- Honor Roll: No grade below and 80 in the core subjects of English, spelling (if listed separately), reading, mathematics, science, and social studies.

All honors will be determined by the fifth six weeks of the school year.

All A's field trip if offered means all A's including conduct.

In order to make any honor roll, a student must have a conduct grade of at least an 80 or above.

- Elementary Academic Excellence Award: A student in grades 3-5 must maintain proper attendance, have at least an 80 or above in conduct, and an overall average of at least a 93 the core subjects of reading, English, spelling (if listed separately), math, science, and social studies. The award will be determined by the fifth six weeks of the school year. A transfer student may be eligible for an award, provided he or she completes the entire fall semester of the awarding year.
- Attendance Award: In order to qualify for the school year's perfect attendance award, a student must be in attendance five hours each day. If a student is suspended, the student will not qualify for perfect attendance. If a student is tardy five (5) or more times, or is picked up before the end of the school day five (5) or more times, the student will not qualify for perfect attendance. If a student visits a doctor's office during the morning and the parent brings the child back to school the same day with proof of the doctor's or dentist's visit, the child will be counted present for the day.

## **Birthdays-Invitations and Parties**

Invitations for individual parties may not be passed out at school unless every student in the invitee's grade receives an invitation. Cupcakes may be sent to school for a student's birthday if there is enough for their homeroom class. The cupcakes may only be served in the afternoon sometime after lunch has been served.

## **Bullying**

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.]

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, Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation, Hazing, policy FFI, and the district improvement plan, a copy of which can be viewed in the campus office.] discrimination.]

## **Celebrations**

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 and Birthdays-Invitations and Parties]

## **Child Sexual Abuse and Other Maltreatment Of Children**

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children, which may be accessed at [www.cushingisd.org](http://www.cushingisd.org). 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/parent/child-abuse.html>
- <http://taasa.org/resources-2/>
- <http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/cvs/what-we-can-do-about-child-abuse-1>
- <http://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 Schedules**

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.

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

## **Complaints and Concerns**

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 or on the district's website at [www.cushingisd.org](http://www.cushingisd.org).

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**

### **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.

### **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.

### **After School Detention (ASD)**

ASD begins at 3:00 pm in designated room and will end at 4:00 pm. Parents are responsible for transportation. Failure to attend assigned ASD will result in further disciplinary action.

## **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 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.

#### **Personal Counseling**

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 let school personnel. 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 and Suicide Awareness.]

## **Credit By Exam**

### **If A Student Has Taken The Course/Subject**

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).]

### **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 2019-2020 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.]

### **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.

## **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, And Retaliation**

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 [www.cushinisd.org](http://www.cushinisd.org). [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) 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.]

## **Distance Learning**

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 TxVSN.

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.

## **Distribution Of Literature, Published Materials, Or Other Documents 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 and the yearbook 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 before selling, posting, circulating, or distributing more than the number listed at FNAA(LOCAL) that defines distribution 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 the front office 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 for prior review. The principal 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 the front office 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 noncurriculumrelated 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 nonschool materials distributed under these circumstances must be removed from district property immediately following the event at which the materials are distributed.

## **Dress and Grooming**

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:

- Foot attire must be worn at all times. House-shoes are inappropriate. (Socks are required if needed.) PK – 1<sup>st</sup> grade students may wear flip-flop style shoes only if the shoes have a heel strap.
- No clothing shall be worn in a manner for which it was not intended (backwards, inside out, suspenders must be worn over the shoulders and buckled as designed.)
- No clothing shall be worn that contains racially related symbols, emblems, pictures, words, or slogans.
- Wearing articles of clothing that promote gangs, alcohol, tobacco, or drugs are prohibited.
- Clothing with language, pictures, or drawings, which may be interpreted to be obscene, will not be acceptable.
- Immodest dress will not be allowed, which may include strapless dresses, see-through materials, tank tops, low cut dresses, blouses, or shirts.
- Students are not allowed to wear diapers or pull-ups unless medically necessary. Appropriate underwear must be worn at all times.
- Sun dresses and like apparel may be worn provided they are not cut too low in the front, armpit area, or the back for proper decorum. Shoulder straps must be at least two inches in width. Halter-style or one-shoulder style dresses and blouses are not allowed.
- Inappropriate sleeveless shirts, mini-skirts, or clothing which reveals a bare midriff are not allowed.

- Headdress will not be permitted in the building. Headdress articles may include curlers, sweatbands, bandanas, caps, hats, or other head ornaments.
- Sunglasses (except by written permission of physician) or improper eyewear will not be permitted in any building. Sunglasses may not be worn on the head. All shirts, blouses, or any top garment must be buttoned appropriately.
- T-shirts may not extend below the fingertips in a normal standing position (i.e., below the bottom of the shorts or skirts.)
- Belts are required as needed. No “sagging” pants, jeans, or shorts may be worn.
- Any attire considered to be in poor taste or judgment that could cause a possible disruption will not be allowed.
- Shorts must be hemmed. Shorts cannot be spandex, wind, plastic, or gym (soffe).
- All garments must meet minimum length requirements. Exact length requirements for shorts are no shorter than five inches from the top of the kneecap. (Students in question will be asked to extend their arms down to their sides and their fingertips must at least extend to the bottom of hem of the garment.)
- Exceptions to the dress code may be made for special events such as pep rallies, spirit day, etc.
- Gang related insignia are not allowed.
- No visible tattoos are allowed unless they are temporarily affixed for pep rallies, spirit days, etc.
- Unusual or non-traditional jewelry will not be permitted. Male students will not be allowed to wear earrings or any other piercings at school. Female students will be limited to wearing no more than 3 earrings per ear. No nose rings, eyebrow rings, lip rings, tongue rings (or any other visible piercing through skin other than the ear) Note: putting tape over the piercing is not sufficient, it must be removed.
- Wearing of heavy chains or spiked jewelry is unacceptable. (Examples: wallet chains, chains attached to belt loops, etc.)
- Clothes must be free of unnecessary pins.
- Hair will be neat, clean and well-groomed. Hair must be kept out/above the eyes. A variety of hairstyles are acceptable if the following extremes are avoided:
  - Geometric or unusual patterns shaved or cut in the hair.
  - Unnatural color or color variation in hair, e.g. scarlet, purple, blue, red, green, pink.
  - Mohawks or rattails.
  - Male hair must not exceed the collar of a button style shirt.
  - No jewelry is allowed in male hair.
  - Students may not wear mesh or any other see-through fabric.
- Clothing must be appropriate for school. No gym suits, lycra or spandex suits, swimsuits, or pajamas should be worn.
- Boys must wear an undershirt with sleeves under tank tops.
- Face makeup may only be worn for spirit days or dress-up days.

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 will 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.

These policies will be enforced to insure that the appearance of the student body reflects dignity, pride, and good grooming.

**The principal shall have the final authority in dress code cases.**

## **Electronic Devices and Technology Resources**

### **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 parent may pick up the confiscated telecommunications device from the principal's office for a fee of \$15.

Confiscated telecommunications devices that are not retrieved by the student or the student's 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 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.

**The following consequences are separate from any consequence listed in the Code of Conduct under Class Three Misconduct. Class Three Misconduct will be applied if inappropriate material is found on the cell phone.**

### **Consequences**

- Offense #1: Cell phones will be confiscated and returned to student the following day at 3:15 PM after paying a \$15 fine.
- Offense # 2: Cell phones will be confiscated and returned to student's parent at the end of three school days at 3:15 PM. Student must pay a \$15 fine before phone is returned.

- Offense # 3: Cell phone will be confiscated and returned to student's parent at the end of serving three days of ISS. A \$15 dollar fine will also be assessed. Student is banned from possessing a cell phone on school property for the remainder of the school year during the school day.

The district will not be 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 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.

### **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.

## **English Language Learners**

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.

## **Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations**

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.]

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 inter-district 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.uilTEXAS.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.state.tx.us](mailto:curriculum@tea.state.tx.us).

[See <http://www.uilTEXAS.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 or International Baccalaureate 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 is allowed in a school year up to 12 absences not related to post-district competition, a maximum of 5 absences for post-district competition prior to state, and a maximum of 2 absences for state 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.

### **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: class favorites.

## **Fees**

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.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- 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.]
- 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 principal or counselor. [For further information, see policy FP.]

## **Fundraising**

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 ten (10) days before the event. [For further information, see policies FJ and GE.]

## **Gang-Free Zones**

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

## **Gender-Based Harassment**

[See Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation.]

## **Grading Guidelines**

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

Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences for additional information on grading guidelines.]

In grades Pre-K and Kindergarten, achievement is reported to parents as a report of progress of certain age appropriate skills. In grades 1-5, achievement is reported on a numerical grading system. Any grade below 70 is failing. In P.E. student grades are based upon their participation, conduct, and a skills test over the unit that has been covered over the 6-week grading period. The following is the grading system that is used: E-Excellent; S-Satisfactory; and N-Needs Improvement.

### **Grading Policy**

A minimum of 10 grades should be given in English Language Arts, Mathematics and Reading. A minimum of 6 grades should be given in Social Studies and Science, during each six-week grading period. Teachers are encouraged to have a sufficient number of grades to allow multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of the TEKS.

Student mastery of subject matter may be assessed in a variety of ways. It is not necessary, therefore, for all grades to have as their source written paper work. Nor is it always necessary to receive a grade for every paper produced. Although the teacher will monitor and provide feedback to students for any activity, which they assign, the feedback does not always need to be in the form of a grade. Assessment should always follow a period of guided practice and/or independent practice.

Major grades i.e. projects and test may be counted twice in the grade book.

Grades are to be current (up to date) and recorded at the conclusion of each week. Test given shall be entered in grade book no later than 2 working days after the test date.

### **Academic Integrity**

Cushing Elementary considers cheating or academic dishonesty to be a serious violation of school rules. Academic dishonesty can result in each party receiving a zero on the particular assignment and/or other disciplinary action.

Cheating includes, but limited to, intentionally giving or receiving aid or notes on test, papers, class assignments, projects, or homework intended to be complete on an individual basis.

### **Harassment**

[See Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation.]

### **Hazing**

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 and policies FFI and FNCC.]

## **Health-Related Matters**

### **Nurse**

Cushing ISD has a full time RN on their campus. The nurse will provide first aide to students as needed. The nurse will also supplement the health education program by presenting lessons to students in the classroom on various health and safety topics. However, it is not the responsibility of the school nurse to make medical diagnosis and/or treat previous injuries occurring at home. Please see your family health care provider for these needs. Vision, Hearing, and Spinal screenings will be conducted by the nurse as mandated by State Guidelines. When a child becomes ill or has a medical concern, the teacher will refer him/her to the nurse's office. The nurse will make an assessment and either treat the child in the nurses office or notify the parent/guardian of the need for a referral. It is very important to the let the school know of any changes in work, home. Or cell phone numbers so parents can be contacted in case of an emergency. In addition to notifying the teacher, please send note to the front office so the changes can be made on the school records used by the nurse.

### **Student Illness**

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

Additionally, you may be asked to pick up your child from school if he/she is unable to participate in school activities due to illness without symptoms identified above (at the digression of 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.

If your child is hospitalized during the school year, he or she must have a medical release in order to return to school.

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 between grades 7 and 12, and state guidelines recommend this vaccination be administered between age 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 Immunizations for more information.]

### **Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)**

If nurse suspect's student has possible pink eye or conjunctivitis must see a physician and may not return to school until the child has applied a prescription antibiotic eye drop for a 24 hour period or has a written release for the child from a physician.

### **Fever**

Normally, the parent will be called to pick up a child that has 100 or more degrees temperature. Students should stay at home until the child is free of fever for 24 hours without the need of medication, or has a written release from a doctor to return to school.

### **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.

Head Lice is an easily treated condition that is generally not associated with any serious medical complications. If head lice are located on your child, you will need to pick up your child from school for treatment. The parent should take the child to the school nurse's office upon returning to school. The child may not ride the school bus until the nurse has checked for nits. The child may return to school the morning after the treatment with a head lice shampoo if all live nits have been removed as determined by the school nurse. A student cannot attend school if they still have live nits. If you have any questions, call the nurse at 936-326-4890.

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

### **Varicella (Chicken Pox)**

All students entering Pre K are required to have 2 Varicella vaccines.

[See Student Illness under Health-Related Matters.]

## **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 [www.cushinsd.org](http://www.cushinsd.org).

[Also see policy FFAF and Celebrations.]

## **Medications**

The following requirements must be followed if your child must take medication at school:

1. All prescription drugs must be in their original pharmacy containers and labeled by the pharmacist. The label must include the following:
  - Student name
  - Physician's name
  - Name of drug
  - Amount to be given
  - Frequency of administration
  - Date prescription filled
2. All non-prescription drugs must be in their original containers
3. All medications must be accompanied by a written request (form available in nurse office). All forms must be completed and signed by parent/guardian.
4. It is the parent's responsibility to deliver all medications to the school nurse. Parents are required to pick up medication by the last day of school.
5. All medications will be stored and dispensed ONLY in the school nurse office or principal's office, UNLESS, after review of medical necessity, the nurse grants individual permission to carry self-dosing medications.
6. In accordance with the Nurse Practice Act, Texas Code, Section 217.11, the campus nurse has the responsibility and authority to refuse to administer any medication(s) that, in the nurse's judgment, is not in the best interest of the student. Medications will not be administered more than 3 days without a physician's order.
7. This medication policy covers general medication administration on our campus.

In addition, we ask that you refer to the campus wide Emergency Health Care Permission form. By signing this form, you will be allowing all first aid and emergency medications to be given to the

student if the medical need arises on campus. If there are any concerns related to this medication/treatment list, contact the school nurse immediately.

### **Physical Activity Requirements**

In accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, the district will ensure that students in full-day prekindergarten through 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.

### **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)**

During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) held meetings. Additional information regarding the district's SHAC is available from the school website at [www.cushingisd.org](http://www.cushingisd.org). 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 for additional information.]

### **Student Wellness Policy/Wellness Plan**

Cushing ISD 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 Denise Derby 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 school principal to obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.

#### **Vending Machines**

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

#### **Tobacco and E-Cigarettes Prohibited**

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, ecigarettes, 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**

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 the District at 936-326-4890.

## **Pest Management Plan**

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 United States 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 school at 936-326-4890.

## **Homeless Students**

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's homeless education liaison, Gina Gresham, at 936-326-4890.

## **Homework**

Homework is an effective tool for practicing learning /skills, developing study habits, and demonstrating increasing levels of responsibility. It is an extension of the instructional process and involves the home in the student's curriculum.

1. Homework must be purposeful, related to classroom experiences, and be age and grade appropriate.
2. The directions for the assignment must be clearly communicated and preceded by instruction that adequately prepares the student to do the task independently and successfully.
3. Homework is not an appropriate venue to introduce new concepts to students. Students are expected to complete all homework assignments.
4. Homework is not to be assigned on weekends or during school holidays with the exception of make-up work, previously scheduled special reports, and/or projects.
5. Because students work at different paces, it may take some students more or less time to complete assignments. Teachers must use discretion about the amount of work given, so that homework does not frequently nor consistently exceed time limit guidelines.
6. Following parent notification, students may be required to come before or after school to complete late homework assignments.

## **Homework Guidelines - Grades K-5<sup>th</sup>**

Grades K-5<sup>th</sup> should not exceed 20 minutes of homework each night and NO HOMEWORK SHOULD BE GIVEN TO ANY STUDENT ON WEDNESDAY NIGHTS. WEDNESDAY NIGHTS ARE DESIGNATED FAMILY NIGHTS.



## **Grading Homework**

Homework will be graded in a variety of ways depending upon the purpose or intent of the assignment. At times, checking for completion is appropriate. At other times, a complete analysis of procedure, content, and/or correct answers is appropriate.

Graded assignments should be returned to the student in a timely manner.

## **Reteach and Reassess: Mastery of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills**

Cushing Independent School district has provided a well-balanced curriculum scope and sequence based on state prescribed Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Students who participate in this curriculum will have the opportunity to master the knowledge, skills and competencies established by the district curriculum and the state standards.

CISD will utilize assessments to determine which students need value-added strategies (remediation, reteaching, and intervention). The use of formative assessments, teacher-made test, performance assessments, and/or teacher observations will determine which students are not mastering instructional objectives.

- Teachers will monitor and identify students who need reteaching.
- Teachers will provide interventions, including but not limited to, reteaching as necessary.
- Students will be reevaluated after reteaching has occurred. Reevaluation may include, but is not limited to, oral examination, special assignments or formal testing.

## **Intervention**

Intervention is an integral part of the instructional program and is an ongoing process. Frequent evaluation, both formal and informal, will determine the need for intervention to accelerate student learning. Intervention:

- Provides frequent reinforcement and review so that a student does not “get too far behind”
- Occurs at the time the need is identified
- Allows the student to progress systematically through content without experiencing extended, frustrating periods of non-achievement
- Offers a variation in instructional approaches – uses a new technique, strategies, materials, opportunity for review, and practice
- Includes, but is not limited to, targeted small-group instruction, tutorials, and extended day, week or year.

## **Illness**

[See Student Illness under Health-Related Matters.]

## **Immunization**

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 life-long 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**

### **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**

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.

- 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. Under no circumstances will a child in elementary or middle school be released unaccompanied by a parent or adult authorized by the parent.

## **Lost and Found**

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

## **Makeup Work**

### **Makeup Work Because of Absence**

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

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

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

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

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

### **DAEP Makeup Work**

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

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

A student removed from the regular classroom to in-school suspension or another setting, other than a DAEP, will have an opportunity to complete before the beginning of the next school year each course the student was enrolled in at the time of removal from the regular classroom. The district may provide the opportunity by any method available, including a correspondence

course, another distance learning option, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. [See policy FO(LEGAL).]

## **Medicine at School**

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 medication to give to a student. 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.

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**

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, Cushing ISD 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: Michael Davis at PO BOX 337 Cushing TX 75760.
- ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Dee Cruz at 1165 Bearkat Drive, Cushing TX 75760.
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the superintendent, Michael Davis at 1088 W. Bearkat Drive, Cushing TX 75760.
- [See policies FB, FFH, and GKD.]

### **Parent and Family Engagement**

#### **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.]
- 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 936-326-4890 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.]
- Becoming a school volunteer. [For further information, see policy GKG and Volunteers.]
- Participating in campus parent organizations. Parent organizations include: PTO.
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees, assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. [For further information, see policies at BQA and BQB, and contact principal.]
- 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.]
- 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**

Students are required to undergo screening for hearing and vision issues, or for abnormal spinal curvatures.

[Also see policy FFAA.]

### **Pledge of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence**

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

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.

Over the years, teachers and principals have found a wide variation in the physical and mental maturity of the children in our schools. Some students advance faster than others, some need more individual help than others, and some have set backs due to health or other related factors. It is our belief that some students will have a better chance for future success if they are given the opportunity to master the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in future grades with early retention.

### **Elementary Promotion**

1. Students in grades 1-5 must achieve an overall average of 70 or above in reading, ELA, and mathematics and/or passing 2 of 3 subjects for promotion.
2. A student who fails both reading and math will not be eligible for promotion.
3. If a student does not pass any section of the STAAR Test a student may only advance to the next grade level by a unanimous decision made by the Grade Placement Committee
4. Students who have failed reading or mathematics and/or a STAAR exam(s) must successfully complete accelerated instruction during extended year to meet promotion requirements. Successful completion requires 90% attendance and mastery of the objectives for that grade level.
5. Students who fail reading or mathematics and/or a STAAR exam(s), and who do not successfully complete accelerated instruction during extended year may only advance to the next grade by a unanimous decision made by the Grade Placement Committee (GPC).

The GPC may decide in favor of promotion only if the GPC concludes, upon review of all facts and circumstances and in accordance with standards adopted by the local school board, that the student is likely to perform on grade level given additional accelerated instruction during the next school year. A student may be promoted only if the GPC's decision is unanimous. The review and final decision of the GPC must be appropriately documented as meeting the standards adopted by the local school board.



These standards may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Component 1: evidence of satisfactory student performance, including grades; portfolios; work samples; local assessments; and individual reading and mathematics diagnostic tests or inventories. The following information will be used to determine evidence of satisfactory student performance:
  - a. Writing Folders  
*Satisfactory scores on writing assignments*
  - b. Benchmark Assessment Scores  
*Passing grades of at least 85 or above on reading and math tests*
  - c. Report Card Grades  
*Students must pass each core class (reading, English, math, science, and social studies) in order to be promoted.*
  - d. Norm-Reference Test
  - e. Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System Results
  - f. TELPAS Reading (ADVANCED)
  - g. Checkpoint Test  
*Average of 85 or higher on checkpoint test in reading and math*
  - h. Teacher observation
  - i. Inclusion information through the ARD
2. Component 2: the recommendation of the student's teacher(s)
3. Component 3: extenuating circumstances that have adversely affected the student's participation in either the required assessments or accelerated instruction
4. Component 4: The following information will be considered as appropriate:
  - a. Enrollment data: mobility and attendance
  - b. Previous records of retention and student's age
  - c. Universal Screening Data
  - d. Record of previous intervention
  - e. Previous referrals for special education
  - f. Documentation of early intervention
  - g. Schedules and notes from parent conferences
  - h. Parent Contacts
  - i. Any other information from the student's cumulative folder
5. Elementary students whose report card grades in any subject area are less than a 70 may be removed from electives during the succeeding three-week period. At the end of the three-week reporting period, if a student's grade is 70 or above, he/she may return to their elective.

### **Elementary Retention-Second time**

With approval of a committee consisting of at least the student's teacher or teachers, campus administrator, and permission of the parents or guardian, a second retention within grades K-5 may be allowed.

## **Elementary Placement**

- a. A student may be placed in the next grade level by the building principal if he/she is not achieving at a level that is not significantly lower than other students at the grade level.
- b. Students placed in a grade level will be assigned to a mandatory remedial program.

## **Remedial Programs**

- a. Tutorial Classes (before/after school)
- b. Accelerated Instruction during Extended Year (summer intervention)
- c. Computer Intervention

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

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. The student will instead take the corresponding EOC 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.]

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 classified as English language learners—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.

## Registering Your Child

Registration is held each spring for Pre-K and Kindergarten students who have not attended PreK. Any Student not previously enrolled in Cushing ISD should report to the elementary office and present a birth certificate, immunization record, and social security number. Students transferring from another school must show evidence of prior enrollment. **All students must be potty trained before the time of enrollment.**

Be sure your child has on file a current notarized copy of the *Authorization for Consent to Treatment Form* and a *Field Trip Authorization Form*. Your child cannot attend field trips without this notarized form.

### Enrollment

To enroll in Cushing Schools, the following items must be presented to the school:

- a. Valid certified birth certificate.
- b. Social Security card.
- c. Withdrawal form from former school
- d. Completed emergency form.
- e. Medication permission form.
- f. Bilingual survey.
- g. Signed acknowledgment form pertaining to discipline management

### Release of Students From School

Because class time is important, doctor's appointments should be scheduled, if possible, at times when the student will not miss instructional time.

A student who will need to leave school during the day must bring a note from his or her parent that morning and follow the campus sign-out procedures before leaving the campus. Otherwise, a student will not be released from school at times other than at the end of the school day. Unless the principal or superintendent has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the instructional day.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the student should receive permission from the teacher before reporting to the school nurse. The nurse will decide whether or not the student should be sent home and will notify the student's parent.

For safety reasons, students will only be released from the office. The parent has to sign the student out and may only pick the child up from the office. Students will not be allowed to wait for someone to pick them up at the front door.

IF A STUDENT IS NOT LEAVING CAMPUS IN THE USUAL MANNER, PARENTS MUST SUBMIT A WRITTEN NOTICE. HAVE AFTER-SCHOOL INSTRUCTIONS CLEAR WITH YOUR CHILD BEFORE HE/SHE LEAVES HOME.

**NO TRANSPORTATION CHANGES WILL BE MADE AFTER 12:00 P.M.**

IF A STUDENT GOES HOME WITH ANOTHER STUDENT, WE MUST HAVE A WRITTEN NOTE FROM THE PARENT OF THE VISITING STUDENT AND THE PARENT OF THE STUDENT WITH WHOM THE VISITING STUDENT IS GOING HOME.

[See Leaving Campus.]

## **Report Cards / Progress Reports and Conferences**

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

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period, parents will be given a written progress report if their child's performance in any course 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 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.]

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 cards 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 acknowledgement instead.

## **Retaliation**

[See Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation.]

## **Safety**

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

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or others at risk.
- Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, teachers, or bus drivers.
- Remain alert to and promptly report to a teacher or the principal any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student or staff member.

- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

### **Accident Insurance**

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

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

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:

Radio: KFOX 95.5 FM, KJCS 103.3 FM, KYKS 105.1 FM

Television: KTRE Ch. 9, KLTN Ch. 7, KLSB Ch. 19

K-12 alert: School -2-Phone

## **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 Cafeteria is open to students before school, beginning at 7:30 AM

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

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 Denise Derby to apply for free or reduced price meal services.

State and federal law, as well as board-adopted policies, define when, where, and by whom competitive foods, which are foods not sold as part of the regular meal program, can be served or sold on school premises during the school day. [For more information, see policies CO(LEGAL) and FFA(LOCAL).]

### **Library**

The library is a learning laboratory with books, computers, magazines, and other materials available for classroom assignments, projects, and reading or listening pleasure. The library is open for independent student use during the following times with a teacher permit: during school hours.

## **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 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 for more information.]

### **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.]

## **Sexual Harassment**

[See Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation.]

## **Special Programs**

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 office 936-326-4890.

## **Standardized Testing**

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

#### ***Grades 3–8***

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

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

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 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.

## **Students in Foster Care**

In an effort to provide educational stability, the district strives to assist any student who is currently placed or newly placed in foster care (temporary or permanent custody of the state 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.

A student who is placed in foster care and who is moved outside of the district's attendance boundaries is entitled to continue in enrollment at the school he or she was attending prior to the placement until the student reaches the highest grade level at the particular school. In addition, if a student in grade 11 or 12 is transferred to another district and does not meet the graduation requirements of the transferring 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.

Please contact Gina Gresham, who has been designated as the district's foster care liaison, at 936-326-4890 with any questions.



## **Student Speakers**

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

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

## **Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention**

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 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**

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**

Summer school may be provided on an as needed basis.

## **Tardies**

All students are expected to be in attendance in their regularly scheduled classes by the time the bell rings to begin class. Students who arrive late to school must report to the office upon arrival at school. Repetitive tardiness at the start of the day or during school hours may result in the school pursuing action for habitual truancy. If an elementary student arrives late three (3) times and/or leaves early three (3) (any combination of three) without a doctor's note, the office will assign after school detention.

## **Textbooks, Electronic Textbooks, Technological Equipment, and Other Instructional Materials**

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**

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

[See Safety Transfers/Assignments, Bullying, and Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education Services, for other transfer options.]

## **Transportation**

### **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.

A parent may also designate a child-care facility or grandparent's residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated facility or residence must be on an approved stop on an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off location, you may contact Jason Davis 936-326-4890.

[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 or e-cigarettes in any district vehicle.
- Observe all usual classroom rules.
- Be seated while the vehicle is moving.
- Fasten their seat belts, if available.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the vehicle and before crossing in front of the vehicle.
- Follow any other rules established by the operator of the vehicle.

Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct; the privilege to ride in a district vehicle, including a school bus, may be suspended or revoked.

## **Vandalism**

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**

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**

### **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.

## **Volunteers**

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 Martha Lee at 936326-4890 for more information and to complete an application.

## **Withdrawing from School**

A student under 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.

## 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 United States History.

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

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

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

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

**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.

